



Bustos visits Big River Resources

Rep. Cheri Bustos talks with area farmers like Dana Fuhr, right, at Big River Resources in Edgington on Monday, Oct. 19, about her recent trip to Cuba with the Illinois Cuba Working Group. Bustos announced she is working to support or develop legislation to end the cash advance requirement for trade with Cuba, work on a farmer exchange that will get their farmers into Illinois – 17th District – and see how we do farming, and work to get an Illinois Cuba Working Group office open in Havana.

Kevin Van Trump set for Market Outlook

Kevin Van Trump, president and founder of “The Van Trump Report,” will be the featured speaker on Thursday, Nov. 19 at the Lavender Crest Winery, 5401 US Highway 6, Colona. The evening will begin with a buffet dinner at 6:15 p.m., followed by an update from Gold Star FS Grain Merchandiser, Mike Schaver.

Kevin Van Trump is a leading expert in agricultural marketing and analysis, he also produces an award-winning and world-recognized daily industry ag wire called “The Van Trump Report.” With over 20 years of experience trading professionally at the CME, CBOT and KCBOT, Kevin is able to “connect-the-dots” and simplify the complex moving parts associated with today’s markets in a thought-provoking yet easy to read format.

With thousands of daily readers in over 40 countries, Kevin has become a sought-after source for market direction, timing and macro views associated with the agricultural world. Kevin is a top featured guest on many farm radio programs and business news channels here in the United States. He also speaks internationally to hedge fund managers and industry leading agricultural executives about current market conditions and “black swan” forecasting.

Kevin is currently the acting Chairman of Farm Direction, an inter-



Kevin Van Trump

national organization assembled to bring the finest and most current agricultural thoughts and strategies directly to the world’s top producers.

Cost for a single session is \$25 (if not pre-registered, cost will be \$30). Reservations must be made by Nov. 12 to guarantee a meal. Reservations made after Nov. 12 will be charged the \$30 fee and on-site reservations do not necessarily guarantee you a meal.

To make reservations, please call the Henry County Farm Bureau (309) 937-2411 or the Rock Island County Farm Bureau (309) 736-7432.

Additional speakers for the series will include: March 10, 2016 – Mike Russo, Senior Weather Analyst, EarthRisk Technologies; July 12, 2016 – Dan Basse, AgResource Company (Lavender Crest Winery will be the location for all Market Outlook seminars).

The Market Outlook Series is sponsored by the Henry and Rock Island County Farm Bureaus, Gold Star FS, Steve Sim – Country Financial, BankOrion, Wells Fargo, 1st Farm Credit Services CHS Annawan, and Big River Resources.

Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER

- 16 Farm Bureau board meeting
- 17 County Board meets to approve 2016 budget for RI County
- 19 Kevin Van Trump at Lavender Crest Winery 6:15 (reservations required)
- 26 Office Closed for Thanksgiving
- 27 Office Closed for Thanksgiving
- 30 District 3 Resolutions Review Meeting

DECEMBER

- 5-8 IFB Annual Meeting in Chicago
- 15 Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy meeting (see article in this paper)
- 17 On the Road with Kevin Rund(see article in this paper)
- 21 FB board meeting
- 24-25 Office Closed for the Christmas Holiday
- 31 Office Closed for New Year’s
- 1 Office Closed for New Year’s

County budget has 16.8% tax increase

By the time you receive this in your mailbox the Nov. 4 Truth in Taxation Hearing and Budget hearing will have been held and the County Board will be preparing to vote on the budget at their Nov. 17 County Board Meeting. The Farm Bureau will already have been present and commented on that budget at the Nov. 4 hearing. Know that your board of directors and staff have been analyzing the budget and communicating their concerns to staff and elected board members.

The RICFB met with County administrator Dave Ross and Board Chairman Moose Maranda on Oct. 26 to learn more about the state of the county’s finances and where the 16.8 percent property tax increase would go. As of press date, Oct. 30, county increase will generate an additional \$3.7 million and approximately \$1.4 million will go to pay back a note that Hope Creek Nursing home borrowed from the General Revenue Fund. Here is an excerpt from the County Administrator’s budget message included in the 2016 Proposed Budget report, which is available online at the county website – www.rockislandcounty.org.

“Excluding bond and interest payments, the FY16 levy amount is \$24,519,323. Last year it was \$20,764,200. For purposes of Truth-in-Taxation, the ‘excluding bond and interest’ numbers are used for comparison. The cumulative 2016 levy amount is \$25,929,778 and the cumulative 2015 levy amount was \$22,194,099. The difference is \$3,735,679. Of that difference, the FICA and IMRF levies account for \$3,373,743 (or 90 percent of the increase). Without FICA and IMRF, the levy increase would be a 1.63 percent increase. The county has not been levying for employee FICA and IMRF for many employees for 18 years. Of the \$3.3M for the FICA and IMRF levies, \$2M of that is to build up those respective reserves so we can make

payroll each month without having to borrow. This means that the combined FICA and IMRF levies are set to drop by \$2M in FY17.

The 1.63 percent increase represents a combined slight increase to the General fund, highway, nursing home and bridge levies. There are decreases in the bond and interest levy and the mental health levy. The Health department, liability insurance, University of Illinois education, veteran’s assistance, and child advocacy levies remain almost unchanged.

The dollar increase this levy represents is \$38.62 per year, or \$3.22 per month, for an owner-occupied property with a market value of \$100,000. All else being equal, the \$2M reduction in 2017 will mean that same owner-occupied \$100,000 property will see a decrease of \$-22.82 for 2017. County property taxes make up approximately 8 percent of a property tax bill (depending on where in the county someone lives), and the approximate 16 percent increase in the levy is only applied to the county’s portion of property taxes. I have heard concerns from people that say their property taxes are too high. I understand that concern. They say that they pay “the county” a lot in taxes right now. After explaining that the county is where taxes are paid, but we are just a fiduciary for others local taxing jurisdictions. We turn around and immediately pay the schools, cities, villages, and other taxing jurisdictions their share – leaving the county only about 8 percent of what is collected. This 8 percent is used for all of the essential public services completed by county employees.”

One of the many concerns the county farm bureau has expressed is how can taxpayers be guaranteed that the \$2 million of the 2016 increase falls off in 2017? For further questions or comments – please contact DeAnne at the FB office.

Trucking seminar Dec. 17

It’s almost time for the legendary Kevin Rund On-the-Road Seminar on Dec. 17!

Trucking regulations got you scratching your head? Hearing conflicting explanations?

To sort truth from conjecture and fact from rumor, come join us at 9 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 17, at the American Legion, 501 Main St., Reynolds.

Rock Island and Mercer County Farm Bureaus are hosting this two-hour seminar that focuses on trucking laws for farmers — both new and well-worn. It will take a special look at the latest “Covered Farm Vehicle” exemptions and participants will have the chance to ask those trucking questions that you can’t seem to find the answers for anywhere else.

A lot of laws have changed in the past 18 months! In fact, just in mid-July the governor signed legislation adding a new exemption from the CDL. Prior to

that we’ve seen changes to regulations regarding: the medical card, hours of service limitations, equipment inspection requirements, ATV operation, mobile phone use, out-of-state CDL use, post-trip inspections, and more.

We’ll cover those recent changes and some of the more-established but still misunderstood rules, too, such as the USDOT Number, UCR registrations, and driver’s license classifications.

Presenting the seminar will be Kevin Rund who has specialized in farm transportation issues for the Illinois Farm Bureau for more than 30 years. Participants will receive take-home materials covering these topics.

The seminar is free courtesy of your county and state Farm Bureaus, but advance registration is requested. Please call RICFB at 309-736-7432 or email accounts@ricofarmbureau.org to reserve your place at the On-the-Road Seminar.

Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy informational meeting set for Dec. 15

Join the Rock Island County Farm Bureau, along with the Mercer and Henry County Farm Bureaus and Gold Star FS, for an informational meeting on the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy on Tuesday, Dec. 15, at the Camden Centre (formerly the Milan Community Center) located at

2701 1st St. E in Milan.

Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. A light breakfast will be served.

The meeting will begin promptly at 10 a.m. with Lauren Lurkins, Illinois Farm Bureau’s Director of

Natural and Environmental Resources, presenting “The Illinois Loss Reduction Strategy: What is it? How does it impact me?”

The discussion will primarily focus on the process by which the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRs) was formed, the details of the

agricultural portion of the NLRs, and what you can do to implement the NLRs on your farm.

If you would like to attend this very educational and timely meeting, RSVP by Dec. 11 by calling the Farm Bureau office at (309)736-7432 or emailing accounts@ricofarmbureau.org.