



IMPORTANT 2016 CONVENTION NOTICE

January 7, 2016

TO: All Agents, County and Local Presidents & Secretaries
FROM: Paul Jackson, Secretary & Convention Coordinator
RE: 2016 CONVENTION EVENTS & TICKET SALES

GENERAL INFORMATION:

“Insuring Rural Tomorrows” is the theme of the two-day 111th AFR Convention scheduled February 19-20, 2016 at the Embassy Suites Hotel & Conference Center, 2501 Conference Drive in Norman. All activities will be in the conference center except for an off-site tour.

The first activities on Friday, February 19 will be an Agent CE Session for 1 hour of credit on “Seven AFR Endorsements You Should Offer” with Dennis Stone, followed by an AFRMIC Technology presentation with BriteCore CEO Phil Reynolds and CFO Chris Reynolds, comments by AFRMIC CEO Richard Herren and then conclude with the Agent Recognition Lunch. A separate notification will be sent to RSVP for the CE class. The first General Session begins at 1:15 p.m. Registration and voting will open on Friday morning. While the convention will adjourn after the banquet on Saturday night, a worship service will be held Sunday morning.

GENERAL CONVENTION SPONSORS:

We welcome a new major sponsor for the convention which is community-based banking partner *BancFirst* who will underwrite general convention expenses. The merger of previous farm credit sponsors lead to the creation of *Oklahoma AgCredit* resulting in the new entity increasing their sponsorship to equal our first major sponsor *Willis Re*. All three are \$10,000 sponsors.

TICKETING:

Tickets for the Agent Lunch, Women’s Brunch, Made in Oklahoma Reception and Convention Banquet will be pre-sold/reserved and may be charged to your County, Local or Agency, or paid by cash or check. Paying by credit card is not an option. Pre-registration is required for these events whether complimentary or not. Tickets will be packaged and available for pick-up during in Boomer A after 9 a.m. February 19. AFR will serve only as a contact point on-site for unneeded purchased tickets and will not do ticket refunds as meal commitments to the hotel are final. Tickets will be collected at the door of each activity.

Please RSVP the number of individuals attending these functions no later than Monday, February 8, 2016, by completing the attached form--preferably e-mailing to teresa.davis@afrmic.com; faxing to 405-218-5585, or by mailing to AFR-Tickets, Attn: Teresa

Davis, P.O. Box 24000, Oklahoma City, OK 73124. You may also call Teresa Davis at 1-800-324-7771, extension 5577. Please confirm receipt of your faxed or mailed order by emailing Teresa to ensure we have received your order.

EMBASSY ROOMS:

The Embassy is again currently completely sold out. More rooms may become available later as they are released. We can put you on a stand-by list to contact if and when rooms are available. If you do not plan to use rooms you have booked please release them ASAP, so that others may utilize the space at the convention rate and before the AFR room block discount is released. Each year rooms within the block go unfilled because of last minute cancellations. If you cannot get a room at the Embassy then the Holiday Inn Express & Suites is across the street. The phone number there is 405-928-5300. AFR does not have a block of rooms reserved at this hotel.

EMBASSY DIRECTIONS: From I-35 heading south: Exit Tecumseh Rd, left on Tecumseh Rd to 24th St. Right on 24th St. and left onto Conference Dr.; From I-35 heading north: Exit Robinson and turn left on Robinson. Turn left at 24th St. and right onto Conference Dr.

MEMORIAL ROLL/RESOLUTIONS:

Remember to provide information needed for the “AFR Memorial Roll” electronically or by fax. Print or type the individuals’ names so we can assure it is correct for the booklet and convention video scroll. The list of names should be returned to Marilyn Sanders by January 15. Final policy resolutions should be returned to State Secretary Paul Jackson.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

REGISTRATION AND VOTING:

Registration and voting open Friday morning and will remain open until 9 p.m. Friday. The voting will re-open at 8 a.m. on Saturday, February 20 and will close at 2 p.m. that afternoon. At registration, enjoy the NEW name badge holders *sponsored by Custom Promotions*.

AGENT’S RECOGNITION LUNCH:

The luncheon will be held in Oklahoma Ballroom H-J with doors opening at 11:15 a.m. Each agency will be given two (2) complimentary tickets with additional tickets available at \$40 each. Agents with multiple agencies will be limited to two (2) complimentary tickets. Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner John Doak is invited to speak. The event is *sponsored by Willis Re*.

TRADE SHOW:

Once more a trade show will be located in Oklahoma Ballrooms B-E with a variety of booths. They will include things for purchase, organizations, educational, insurance, tours, etc. Be sure and stop by the Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association Booth to bring your empty Ralgro wheels to drop (everyone equals \$1 in contribution) and sign the petition for an Oklahoma Beef Checkoff, get your boots/shoes shined (*sponsored by DIFEE Ford Lincoln*), pick up a cinnamon roll or slice of bread from the *Oklahoma Wheat Commission* and sign up for the Ag & Historic fall membership tour to Oregon. And, drop your entry for the Grand Door Prize – John Deere Lawnmower and P&K gift card (*sponsored by Oklahoma AgCredit and P&K Equipment*).

BUSINESS SESSION:

This session includes general and financial reports overview of the company and organization by company and convention officers, candidate speeches, by-laws and articles consideration, and policy consideration and adoption. Proposed by-laws consideration will focus on expanding the board of director seats from 7 to 9 directors with a designated independent and agent seat in each of the four districts and one at-large statewide independent seat.

RECEPTION:

NEW this year will be a Made In Oklahoma (MIO) reception on Friday evening from 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. Experience the finest fare the state has to offer. Heavy hors d'Oeuvres will be served including Sirloin Kebobs *donated by the Oklahoma Beef Council* and Chicken Satay *donated by The Poultry Federation of Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma*. Exhibitors from all over the state are expected to bring their MIO goods for you to sample throughout the reception. This is an event you don't want to miss! It's free but be sure to RSVP. Tickets required!

YOUTH PROGRAM:

Outstanding AFR/OFU youth participants will be recognized Friday evening following pre-session entertainment by the Cast Iron Bluegrass Band. The Northwest Area meeting is also scheduled for Friday evening.

PAC AUCTION:

Don't miss the chance to be featured in this year's NEW PAC catalog. For the first time the PAC auction will have a special catalog to highlight all those who contributed to the auction. To be featured in the catalog send your registration form into Meghan Albright by Friday, February 5, 2016. Live Auction will be Friday evening and the silent auction begins Friday afternoon and concludes Saturday at noon. Local and county funds cannot be used to donate or purchase PAC items. Contributed items must be individually contributed. Individually donated items should be brought to Boomer A prior to 3:00 p.m. on Friday, February 19.

MILK & COOKIES BREAKS: Take advantage of the refreshments Friday afternoon and Saturday morning and afternoon *sponsored by DairyMAX, COX and Oklahoma Agricultural Cooperative Council.*

AGENT RESOURCE ROOM:

The resource room returns for agents to update their photos, learn about the Assistance in Marketing program, provide updated agency information on social media efforts, enjoy "fun photos" and collect samples of the latest AFR marketing promotional items.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20**MORNING GENERAL SESSION:**

Risk Management Programs will be the topic of Terry Peach, Oklahoma State USDA-FSA Director and Francie Tolle, Regional Director, USDA-RMA. Mason Mungle, President, Farmers Royalty Company will share about the recently released "Drill Bits & Plow Shares" corporate history book of the company and its' ties to the Oklahoma Farmers Union. Heather Buckmaster, Executive Director, Oklahoma Beef Council, provides an update of the Beef Check-off Program

as it celebrates 40 years. Oklahoman Jean Lam, NFU Beginning Farmers Institute will speak about her experience with the Institute program followed by a federal legislative update from Chandler Goule, NFU Senior Vice President of Programs, Washington, D.C. Richard McConnell and Tina Williams finish the morning with an appetizer to an afternoon session on “Proper Stockmanship – Avoiding Personal Injury” continuing on the risk management theme.

WOMEN’S COOPERATIVE AWARDS BRUNCH

NEW this year -- the Women’s Cooperative will host a brunch on Saturday from 10 a.m. –11 a.m. – replacing the annual luncheon. This will be a one of a kind event for ladies to come, mix and mingle. Awards will be given for those active in the 2015 Women’s Cooperative Food Drive. It’s complimentary but you must reserve your spot!

LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON:

Don’t miss this unique opportunity to gain valuable skills in advocating for rural Oklahoma at the first ever LEADership luncheon on Saturday at convention. Get your purchased ticket to hear Riley Pagett, Director, Government & Nonprofit Relations, National FFA Organization. Riley is a product of the AFR/OFU youth speech contests and a dynamic speaker that will have you energized to effect change in our state. Enjoy a Chicken Fried Steak and a look at what the new Leadership Exploration And Development (LEAD) program has in store for members across the state in 2016. Those involved or interested in LEAD as well as local and county leadership should attend this event. This event is *sponsored by Oklahoma AgCredit*.

MEMORIAL SERVICE:

Chaplain Lendell Birdsong will lead memorial activities including a video tribute to honor members who passed.

GENERAL SESSION:

The subject of “SQ 777 – the Right to Farm” and its’ impact on the agriculture industry will be handled by panelists Michael Kelsey, Executive Vice President, Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association; Roy Lee Lindsey, Executive Director, Oklahoma Pork Council; and R.J. Gray, President & CEO, Oklahoma Agricultural Cooperative Council.

BREAKOUTS:

Richard McConnell and Tina Williams continue with the main course on “Proper Stockmanship – Avoiding Personal Injury”. Annual Agent’s Association meeting convenes as well.

MESONET TOUR:

The on-site breakouts not appeal to you? Then jump on the bus with the LEAD program and travel to the National Weather Center. This breakout session will give attendees a behind the scenes look at the Mesonet. Limited to the first 55 that sign-up on-site at convention in Boomer A (ticketing), this event will give you an inside look at how the Mesonet helps to predict the weather that Oklahoma Farmers and Ranchers rely so heavily on every day. A charter bus will take the group from the convention center at 3:15 to the center for the tour and have everyone back by 5:30 to get ready for the banquet. This tour is *sponsored by Oklahoma AgCredit*.

DRAWINGS:

Be sure and get to sessions early this year as drawings are being *sponsored by MIDCON, LegalShield, Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association* with items also from the *Oklahoma Cotton Council and Oklahoma Peanut Commission*. Approximately \$500 in beef certificates will be given away!

BANQUET:

The Banquet begins at 7:00 p.m., Saturday, February 20, in the Oklahoma Ballroom. Pre-seating is available at 6:30 p.m. with entertainment by Oklahoma FFA State Convention talent winner Bobby Ramming who promises to bring a little Johnny Cash to the stage. Banquet tickets are \$30 (thanks to the *Oklahoma Pork Council entrée sponsorship*) and should be purchased in advance. There will be limited reserve seating for a few guests and VIP's with open seating for all other ticket holders and guests. Dinner entertainment is provided by Nashville comedian Rik Roberts with "It's Funny Now".

COUNTY LEADERSHIP ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:

The top overall county and a county with new initiatives will be recognized at the banquet on Saturday evening. County Leadership Awards are based on leadership, community involvement, and AFR program participation. This year a formal application will not be used. Participants are asked to describe chapter activities and provide photos of activities during the year. Please direct applications to the State President's office – Attention: Terry Detrick. The deadline is Feb. 5.

GRAND DOOR PRIZE:

The grand prize is the Z255 48" deck Z-Trak Mower with a 22hp V-twin engine, Hydro-Gear EZT transmission, 7.0 mph mowing speed, 15-inch seat with armrests, 2-year/120-hour bumper-to-bumper warranty, AND a \$600 P&K gift card. **The package is valued at \$3,600.** It is *sponsored by Oklahoma AgCredit and P&K Equipment*. It will be awarded at the banquet and the winner must be present to win! Only one entry allowed per person. Employees and/or their families are not eligible.

WORSHIP SERVICE:

Back by request, Chaplain Lendell Birdsong will lead a Sunday morning non-denominational worship service for those who can't make it home to their home church. Uplifting music and message are promised to put the finishing touches on the convention.