

# STRONGER TOGETHER



92ND ANNUAL WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION

# STATE CONVENTION

DECEMBER 9-11TH, 2023 | CHULA VISTA | WISCONSIN DELLS

# CONVENTION AGENDA

## Friday, December 9th

- 11:00am Registration open - *Grand Ballroom Lobby*
- 12:00-4:30pm Groundswell: Climate Smart Ag in WI - *Lower Atrium*
- 4:30-7:30pm Convention Registration - *Grand Ballroom Lobby*
- 6:00pm Networking Dinner - *Lower Atrium Level*
- Silent Auction - *H&I*

## Saturday, December 10th

- 7:30am-6pm Silent Auction & Exhibits Open - *H&I*
- 7:30am Registration open - *Grand Ballroom Lobby*
- 9:00am Convention Official Business - *Grand Ballroom*
- 10:15am Networking & Exhibits - *H&I*
- 10:30am Workshops
  - Pull Together on Dairy Policy - *Grand Ballroom*
  - Farm Finances for Economic Resilience - *Lower Atrium*
- 11:15am Networking & Exhibits - *H&I*
- 11:30am Workshops
  - How a Crisis Brought Together Farmers, Mexican Workers - *Grand Ballroom*
  - Farm Bill 2023 Ag Outlook - *Lower Atrium*
- 12:15-1:15pm Awards Luncheon - *Lower Atrium*
- 1:15-1:30pm Networking & Exhibits - *H&I*
- 1:30pm Bylaws Discussion - *A-F*
- 2:15pm Networking & Exhibits - *H&I*
- 2:30pm Policy Discussion - *A-F*
- 4:00pm Caucus for NFU delegates & directors - *A-F*
- 5:00pm Family Time or Networking Social - *H&I*
- 6:00pm Silent Auction & Exhibits Close - *H&I*
- 6:00pm Convention Banquet - *Lower Atrium*
  - Fly-In and FUEL Program Reports
  - Keynote Address: Zach Ducheneaux
  - National Youth Advisory Council Address
  - Torchbearer Ceremony
- 8:30pm Networking Social - *Lower Atrium*

## Sunday, December 11th

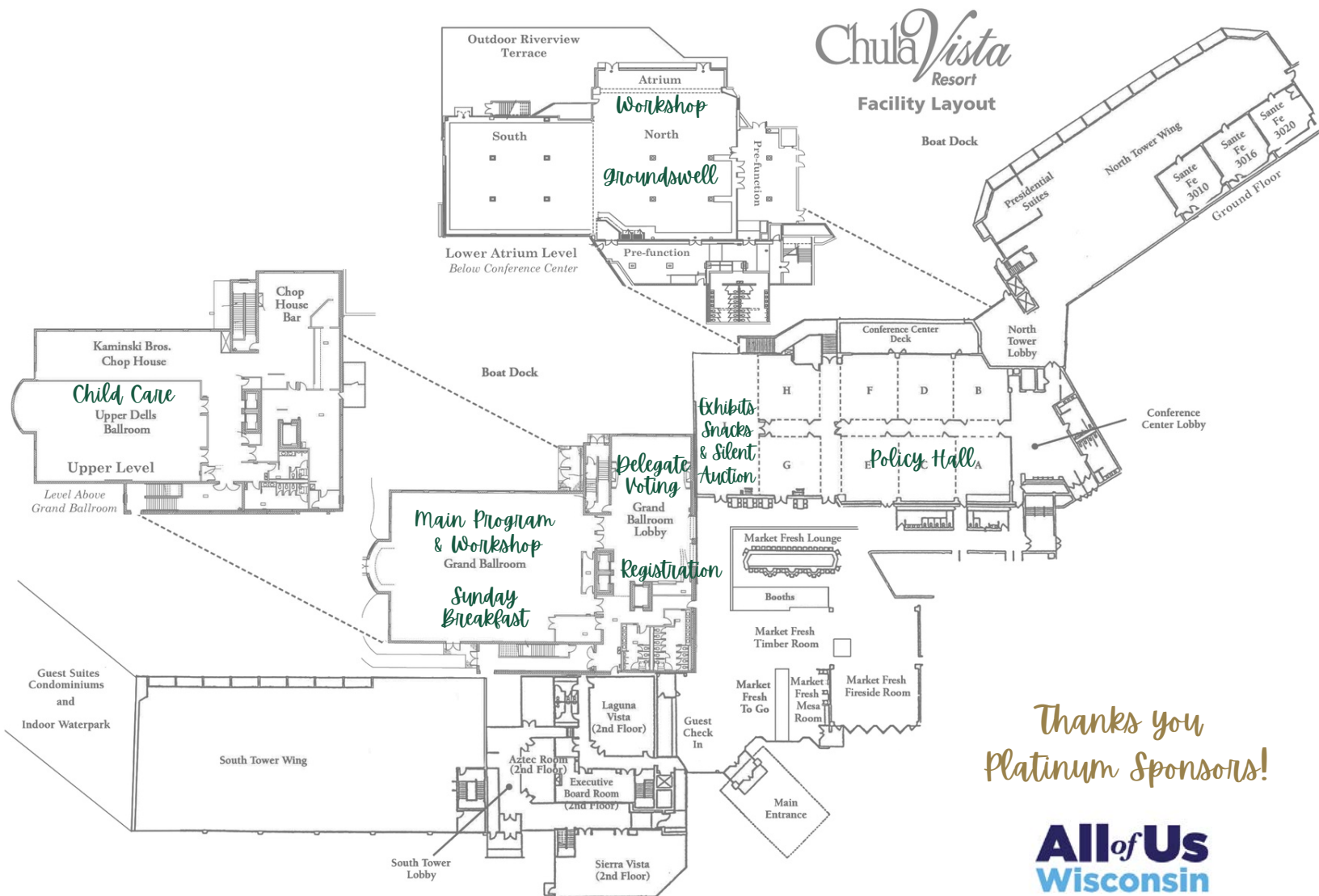
- 7:00-8:30am Delegate voting open - *Grand Ballroom Lobby*
- 7:00-8:30am Breakfast Buffet - *Grand Ballroom*
- 7:30am Exhibits open - *H&I*
- 7:30am Interfaith Worship Service - *Lower Atrium*
- 9:20am Policy Discussion & Voting Results - *A-F*
- 10:45am Networking & Exhibit - *H&I*
- 11:00am Policy Discussion - *A-F*
- 12:00pm Lunch - *Conference Center Lobby (Outside A-F)*
- 1:00pm Policy Wrap-up - *A-F*
- 2:00pm Adjourn

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# CONVENTION CENTER MAP



Thanks you  
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## Exhibitors

Be sure to snag some snacks and say hello to exhibitors in Rooms H&I!  
Silent Auction open in H&I Friday afternoon and Saturday 7:30am - 6pm

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# CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE IN WISCONSIN

## POLICY, PRACTICE, AND PROGRAMS

*Friday, December 9th  
@ the Lower Atrium*

- 12:00pm Lunch  
12:45pm Keynote
  - *Diane Mayerfeld, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension*
- 1:15pm Assessing Forest Management Vulnerabilities & Opportunities in a Changing Climate
  - *Brad Hutnik, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources*
- 2:00pm Climate Smart Resources Panel
  - *Lexie Meyer, Farm Service Agency*
  - *Randy Romanski, Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection*
  - *Meaghan Duberstein, Natural Resources Conservation Service*
  - *Patrick Robinson, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension*
- 3:00pm Break  
3:15pm Soil Health in Wisconsin Watersheds
  - *Tara Daun, Wisconsin Farmers Union*
- 3:45pm Engaging People About Integrating Conservation  
4:30pm Wrap-up



### *Event Keynote: Diane Mayerfeld*

Diane Mayerfeld is the sustainable agriculture coordinator for University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension. She helps educators and farmers learn about sustainable agriculture techniques and resources, including grants from the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. Current areas of focus include climate change, working with diverse farmers, and perennial cropping systems. She has a PhD from the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at the UW-Madison and researches silvopasture in Wisconsin.

## *Thank you to our Convention Committees!*

*Thank you to the following convention committee members for their dedication to making this event a success:*

### **BYLAWS**

Chair Darin Von Ruden  
Andrew Adamski  
Kristy Allen  
Les Danielson  
John Gehrke  
Dorothy Harms  
Erin Link  
Jeanne Lydon  
Harry Pulliam

### **ELECTIONS/CREDENTIALS/RULES**

Co-chair Dave Rosen  
Co-chair Jen Schmitz  
Skye Harnsberger  
Matt Sheaffer  
Joe Koch

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Co-chair Rachel Bouressa  
Co-chair Tina Hinchley  
Allison Bragger  
Jane Hansen  
Allison Hellenbrand  
Caleb Langworthy  
Bryce Lutterhand  
Dave Mickelson  
Harry Pulliam  
Scott Rosenberg

## 10:30am Workshops

### PULLING TOGETHER ON DAIRY POLICY

#### Grand Ballroom

The 2023 Farm Bill presents a critical opportunity to revitalize the dairy industry after years of depressed milk prices and record farm loss. The Dairy Together coalition of farmers and industry stakeholders is advocating for the Dairy Revitalization Plan, which research shows would boost farm income and stem the loss of dairy farms nationwide. Learn how we can create a viable dairy industry.

*Bobbi Wilson is the Dairy Together Program Coordinator for Wisconsin Farmers Union. Originally from Oregon, Bobbi moved to Wisconsin and joined the WFU government relations team in 2018, at the height of the dairy price crisis. She quickly learned of the challenges facing America's Dairyland and helped launch the Dairy Together campaign to seek meaningful policy solutions.*



### FARM FINANCES FOR ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

#### Lower Atrium Level

Inflation is at historic levels, and food and farm businesses are feeling the pain as record prices for feed, inputs and labor eat into profit margins. Learn about what is causing inflation and some basic strategies to increase your own prices and profits without losing customers.

*As a Farm Outreach Specialist with Food Finance Institute, Andy Larson works with entrepreneurial farm businesses in Wisconsin and beyond to build farm financial management capacity and access the capital they need to grow. He has expertise in farm business and marketing, agricultural lending, and grantsmanship. Andy grew up on a dairy farm and now lives with his family on a small-scale poultry farm, where they produce free-range brown eggs for local restaurants and retail stores.*



## 11:30am Workshops

### HOW A CRISIS BROUGHT TOGETHER MIDWESTERN DAIRY FARMERS & MEXICAN WORKERS

#### Grand Ballroom

Join veteran journalist Ruth Conniff for a discussion centered around her award-winning book, *Milked: How an American Crisis Brought Together Midwestern Dairy Farmers and Mexican Workers*. Discover the surprising connections of farming communities on either side of the U.S.-Mexico border.

*Ruth Conniff is Editor-in-chief of the Wisconsin Examiner and former Editor-in-chief of The Progressive Magazine where she worked for many years from both Madison and Washington, DC. Conniff is a frequent guest on MSNBC and has appeared on Good Morning America, Democracy Now!, Wisconsin Public Radio, CNN, Fox News and many other radio and television outlets. She has written for The Nation, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Los Angeles Times, among other publications. Ruth lives in Madison.*



### THE ROAD TO THE 2023 FARM BILL

#### Lower Atrium Level

The Farm Bill governs policy in many areas related to the agricultural sector, including farm income support, food assistance, trade, conservation, disaster assistance, nutrition, and more. We are due for a new Farm Bill in 2023. Gain a deeper understanding of the process behind this critical piece of legislation and learn how you can get involved in advocating for Farmers Union priorities.

*Mike Stranz is the Vice President of Advocacy for National Farmers Union. He works to advance and expand NFU's outreach to policymakers, partners, and the general public through communications and government relations efforts. He comes to NFU from the House Agriculture Committee majority staff, where he helped negotiate the 2018 Farm Bill. Prior to that, Mike worked as a government relations representative for both NFU and WFU. He grew up in rural Oconto County.*



### Friend of the Family Farmer

**Joy Kirkpatrick** has worked in the University of Wisconsin since 1993. She began her university career as a county-based Dairy & Livestock Extension Agent. In 2004 she became the Outreach Specialist for the Center for Dairy Profitability, earning distinguished status in 2019. She has facilitated hundreds of farm succession discussions with farm families, organizing programs like "Returning to the Farm" and "Shifting Gears for Your Later Farming Years." She also helps farmers address stress and access mental health care through Wisconsin's Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network. Joy grew up on a hog farm in Southern Illinois.



**Mandela Barnes**, the son of a public school teacher and a United Auto Workers member, became Wisconsin's first African American Lieutenant Governor in 2019. Mandela is a recognized leader on issues of economic justice, racial equity, and sustainability. Born and raised in Milwaukee, he attended Milwaukee Public Schools and Alabama A&M University. At age 25, Mandela was elected to the State Assembly, serving two terms. He chaired the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change, inviting Wisconsin Farmers Union to have a seat at the table. In his recent U.S. Senate race, Mandela took part in candidate forums co-hosted by WFU and ran a "Barnes to Barns" campaign, tuning into rural issues in a way that has too often been lacking.



### Builders Award

**Jane Hansen** is a longstanding officer of the Taylor-Price Farmers Union and shepherdess of Autumn Larch Farm, located near Ogema. Jane has opened up her farm to educate others about regenerative agriculture and to share the techniques she has learned in the pursuit of healthy sheep, high quality wool, environmental stewardship, and a commitment to the regional economy.

In 2022, Jane, who is also an active member of Three Rivers Fibershed, pulled together collaborative partners, including Wisconsin Farmers Union, for the inaugural Farm and Fiber Tour, which educated community members about climate-beneficial, pasture-based farming practices.

Jane is active in policy discussions, educating other farmers about the value of farmed fiber for textiles. Farmers Union is stronger due to her leadership and collaborative spirit.



### Emerging Leader Award

**Paul Adams** is a dairyman with deep roots in Eleva, WI. Until March of 2020, Paul and his wife and daughter worked one of the larger organic dairy operations in Western Wisconsin with over 900 dairy head of cattle. Under his care, Adams Dairy expanded and thrived for decades, before he was forced to close its doors and sell off the herd after an ongoing crash in organic milk prices.

Paul had been a dairy farmer since he graduated from high school in 1970, and the farm had been in his family for 150 years. Despite his loss, Paul continues to have a passion for farming and has become a strong advocate for solutions to the structural issues facing American agriculture, attending two fly-ins with Wisconsin Farmers Union this year.



### Bruce Miller Award

**Cathy Statz** wrapped up her 30th and final summer staffing Farmers Union Camps in 2022. Cathy has dedicated her career to cooperative education and advancing the quality of life for farm families, rural communities, and all people. While growing up on a 50-cow dairy farm near Sauk City, Cathy joined her family at Farmers Union meetings and attended Farmers Union Camp from the time she was nine years old. Prior to joining the WFU staff full-time, she spent four summers working on the WFU and NFU camp staff. Cathy embodies the cooperative spirit. Her reach in Farmers Union went far beyond the education department. Those who have heard Cathy share Farmers Union's history know that she carries a deep respect for the organization and instills institutional knowledge in those around her. This fall Cathy moved to Poland with her husband, Tom, where he teaches and she continues to pursue her passion: cooperative education.





### Keynote Address

**Saturday, 7pm, Lower Atrium**

Hear Zach's take on how family farms can persist and ways the USDA is working to make American Agriculture more resilient for all.

*Zach Ducheneaux serves as Administrator for USDA's Farm Service Agency, providing leadership and direction on agricultural policy, administering loan programs, and managing conservation, commodity, disaster, and farm marketing programs.*

*Prior to his appointment in 2021, Ducheneaux served as the Executive Director of the Intertribal Agriculture Council and as a tribal council representative for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. He has spent his career educating people about the critical role of improved food systems and value-added agriculture to respond to the enduring economic and social challenges facing Native Americans and reservations.*

*Ducheneaux also serves on the board of directors for Project H3LP!, a nonprofit founded by his family to benefit their local community by providing life lessons through horsemanship. His family still operates the 4th generation ranch on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation.*



### Silent Auction for WFO Kamp Kenwood

**Saturday, 7:30am-6pm, H&I**

Silent Auction funds will go toward updates to the kitchen facility at Wisconsin Farmers Union's youth camp, Kamp Kenwood.

Place your bids and check back throughout the day! Bidding will close at the start of the banquet. Winning bids should be paid for and items picked up promptly following the Saturday banquet.

### Youth Program & Child Care

A child care space is available for our youngest attendees during much of our regular programming. A movie night will be held Saturday during the evening keynote and social time.

*Participating youth must pay the registration fee and space is limited. Inquire at the registration table.*



### Saturday Night Social



Join us for live music by The Cutaways, beverages, and a chance to network with candidates for the WFO board of directors and NFU delegate roles. Prizes awarded to the ugliest holiday sweaters!

**Following the banquet Saturday night - Lower Atrium  
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*The Cutaways*



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