

# TESTING

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goes to the science side. Brilliant minds like Marty Burke, Paul Hergenrother and Timothy Fan who were a part of that.

*Were you nervous when you were called upon?*

This is a medical test, so we wanted to be sure that we were following all the protocols and that the staff was safe and that we were administering the tests in a way that would get good results for people to know if they had COVID so they could quarantine and isolate and protect the rest of the community so that was the part that was most stressful.

*Circling back a bit to your award, those are the kind of the circles you run*

*with, right?*

I've been in the chancellor's office and then went and worked in the foundation for a time before going back to the chancellor's office. I've worked with presidents and chancellors over the years. I've lost track of how many. They're all smart people who do good work and work hard.

*What's your involvement with commencement?*

I plan it.

*The whole thing? From soup to nuts?*

Yes. My staff, there are five of us in the special events office, plan UIUC commencement, convocation, groundbreaking dedications, advancement events, premium seating for the president at football and basketball games, things like that.

*Did you even imagine this?*

No! Not at all! I really thought I'd be a librarian or an attorney. Something with the written word is really what I thought, and this is really more of a social type of career. It's a lot of behind the scenes, setting up big events like commencement where you have 20000 people, but it's communicating with people and helping them celebrate their great achievement. It's a fun job, but a lot of stress when you think about the scale of something like that.

*What sort of advice would you give to someone who says "that really sounds like fascinating work. Maybe I want to try it?"*

I would say to get experience, because that's what

I did, and also to say yes when someone asks you to work on a project, because that all leads to more experience that you can use later, and you can turn to in the next role or the next project. People tell me that they want to be a wedding planner, which I would never want to do, to be honest, I didn't even want to plan my own! <smiles> People need whatever experience they can get. There are numerous event planners on campuses.

*What's the future hold? How many more years are you going to do this?*

I've been there for 25 years. Liam's still a senior in high school so I still have quite a few years I would imagine. 25 years has flown by though.

## IFB Director's Douglas County August Ag Update

By Larry W Dallas

August in Douglas County has not been what we usually see. We have had adequate moisture in what is often a dry month. The heat is not appreciated but it is moving the corn along toward maturity. When we pulled samples for our yield checks, some of the kernels were beginning to dent. The soybeans are still green and flowering. Overall things look pretty good.

Douglas County Farm Bureau has done a corn yield check for many years. The quick explanation is that we count the number of stalks with ears in a thousandth of an acre, then pull and count the number of kernels on three ears from that strip of row. This year we had 80 samples from all over the county. Using a constant of 80,000 kernels per bushel, we estimate the Douglas County corn yield to be 221 bushels to the acre this year. The estimates have been reasonably accurate through the years.

My column had an error last month. Brazil intends to increase soybean acres by 3 percent when they plant that crop late this year. That will be equivalent to about a third of the beans Illinois grows each year. I erred by saying it would be the same acres as Illinois plants. It is a lot of soybeans either way, with Illinois planting around 10 million acres each year.

U.S. agriculture was dismayed to hear that African Swine Fever has broken out in the Dominican Republic. This is the hog disease that devastated China's pork industry now just a thousand miles from our country. It does not affect humans but is always fatal to hogs. No vaccine has been developed to combat ASF. Depopulation is the only remedy currently.

ASF in this country would be a disaster, not only for the livestock industry but for grain farmers as well. Foreign exports of grain get the headlines, but domestic hogs, cattle, and chickens still eat a lot of corn each year. The byproducts of ethanol production go mostly to livestock feed too. Loss of that market even briefly would wreck grain prices. That could linger because, in China anyway, the disease has proven difficult to eradicate.

The latest U.S. Department of Agriculture crop production report came out on August 12. They project the average corn yield at 5

bushels below trend line yield and soybeans were a bushel below the July estimate. Neither of those sounds like a big change but, in the case of corn, there were 93.7 million acres of corn planted this year. That 5-bushel change is nearly 470 million bushels of corn. Both corn and soybean prices made nice jumps after the report.

Trend line yield is a concept used in the grain trade to come up with a projected yield before the crop is even in the ground. The yields of all crops have trended higher through the years. Fitting a line to those yields gives you a guess for the next year. It is a place to start when forecasting crop numbers. The USDA tends to hold tightly to those numbers.

Because of the production problems we have talked about before, U.S. production is more important than ever. Brazil has such a shortfall in their corn crop there is talk they will import corn for domestic feed use. The wheat-producing areas of the Black Sea region have been dry all season. The spring wheat areas of North America continue to be dry. They grow more soybeans than in past years, so that is one reason prices are so volatile.

I saw a rainfall map of Iowa that showed an area in the central part of the state that was 21 inches of rain below the average for

this time of the year. We average 40 inches a year, so they are possibly behind half their yearly precipitation. The US drought monitor map calls that extreme drought.

Many elevators and other groups will be making yield checks in the coming weeks. The much-watched Pro Farmer tour kicks off Monday, August 16th. They hit all the Corn Belt states working toward a national average. Farmers, the grain industry, and end-users try to get a handle on what the final corn and soybean yields will be. Getting a jump on the rest of the industry might mean lower costs or better profits.

Douglas County Farm Bureau does not try to estimate soybean yields but some groups do. That is much harder to do with any accuracy. At this point in the season, you can count pods on a plant but mostly there is no bean in the pod yet. August weather is the make-or-break factor in soybean yields. Hot and dry weather the rest of the month will change the soybean yield prospect rapidly.

There are a myriad of things to do to prepare for harvest. Some are obvious. Combines and heads need to be gone over. There are other things you might not think of. We are looking at soil test information from our fields to determine what fields need lime to

correct soil acidity. If you have driven in the country, you may have seen lime being stockpiled to spread after harvest. Hauling it to the field now should speed up the application later.

We are also using the soil tests as we think about fall fertilization. We spread most of the fertilizer on a variable rate basis, changing the application rate according to the soil test levels. After a good crop, we might want to move the base level up to reflect the larger nutrient removal by high yields.

We have been slowly getting ready for harvest. We sweep out our grain bins and check aeration fans and heaters. The remaining grain can harbor insects. It is preferable that the fans run when you start filling a bin. Warm moisture-laden corn needs air moving through it to keep very long. It needs to be 15 percent moisture to be stored safely. Soybeans are usually lower in moisture, but they too need to be cooled down. The heat coming out of a bin of soybeans cut on an 85-degree day is amazing.

We might be into harvest before my next column. Please watch out for us as we move on the road to complete harvest. Thank you for reading about Douglas County agriculture this month.

## Obituaries Cont.

### Reuben W. Miller

Reuben W. Miller, 86 years, 5 months, and 13 days of Sarasota, FL formerly of Arthur, IL passed away at 1:15 p.m. on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, at his residence.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 29, 2021, at the Pleasant View School, 184 N CR 300 E in rural Arcola, IL. Pastor Duane Kuhns officiated. Burial was held in the Arthur Cemetery. Visitation was held from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday, August 27, 2021, and from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 28, 2021, at the Pleasant View School. The Edwards Funeral Home is assisting with arrangements.

Reuben was born on February 11, 1935, in Arthur, IL. He was a son of William G. and Katie Ann (Beachey) Miller. He married Fannie Schrock on March 29, 1956, in Arthur, IL. They lived in Holy Matrimony for 65 years, 4 months, and 26 days.

He is survived by his wife, Fannie Miller of Sarasota, FL; 7 children, Allen Miller and his wife Carolyn of Arthur, IL, Goldie Bontrager and her husband Kenny of Sullivan, IL, Dorothy Kauffman and her husband Gary of Lovington, IL, Lorene Otto and her husband Ed of Sullivan, IL, Sylvia Miller of Sarasota, FL, Leroy Miller and his wife Naomi of New Holland, PA and Becky Stutzman and her husband Phil of Sarasota, FL, 20 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, 1 brother, Harley Miller and his wife Martha Ann (Gingerich) of Arthur, IL, 1 brother-in-law Levi J.D. Herschberger of Arthur, IL, and 1 sister-in-law Edith Miller of Marion, MI.

He was preceded in death by his parents, 1 grandson, Reginald Miller, 3 sisters, Alta Chupp and her husband Jacob D., Mary Helmuth and her husband Albert D., and Lizzie Ann Herschberger, and 2 brothers, Jacob W. Miller and his wife Katie Ann and Elva W. Miller.

Reuben attended Living Word Fellowship in Arthur, IL and Sarasota Mennonite Church in Sarasota, FL.

Reuben grew up on a farm. He was a farrier for over 50 years. He was very influential in the farrier industry. He made horseshoes for the Budweiser Hitch, in Illinois, Texas and Florida. He taught and was on the Farrier License board in Springfield, IL. He worked at the Illinois Equine Center west of Farmer City, IL two days a week for over 20 years. He shod horses for George Bunn for over 20 years. He collaborated to create the Hartbar Horseshoe. Reuben was a specialist at his craft. Horses were brought to him unable to stand and they would leave walking.

Reuben's greatest joy was spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, they were very special to him.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to Living Word Fellowship in Arthur, IL.

## Thank You!!!

The Arthur Mennonite Relief Sale Board, would like to say Thank You, for the success of the 2021 Mennonite Relief Sale! There are many people to thank, including those who donated furniture, food, and other items and services. Most of all, thanks to the many volunteers who donate their time and energy. With your support and help we were able to raise approximately \$96,000.00 for relief efforts that will help those around the world as well as in our local community. The support of our community makes this all possible.

May the blessings of the Lord be with you in the coming year.

*Richard & Esther Beachy, DuWayne & Karen Miller, Ronnie & Lorene Schlabach, Cliff & Kathy Yoder, Justin & Kathy Petersheim, Martin & Wanda Plank, and Noah Yoder*

### Douglas County Clerk Judi Pollock announces change in 2022 Primary Election

County Clerk Judi Pollock wishes to announce that Senate Bill 825, Public Act 102-0015 signed by the Governor calls for several changes relating to Election Operations. The most significant change in this bill will be to the date of the 2022 Primary election.

**The new date for the primary:**

*Tuesday, June 28, 2022*

**Other important dates to remember concerning the Primary are:**

\* Petition circulation begins: January 13, 2022

\* Established party filing: March 7-March 14, 2022

\* Last day to file as a write-in for the primary: April 28, 2022

Please feel free to contact us at 217-252-2442, or [judi.pollock@douglascountyil.com](mailto:judi.pollock@douglascountyil.com).



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