



# NEWSLETTER

## *President's Message*

### *Will Labor Shortages Plague Lake County Ag in 2019?*

After a soggy winter, I am excited that spring is on the way. Spring brings a burst of color and fragrance with spring flowers and signals the start of the growing season. We have enjoyed a wet winter, recharging our water supply, but farmers face other challenges. It appears that labor shortages will continue to be at the top of the list of concerns in the agricultural community.

California Department of Food and Agriculture released statistics for 2017 noting that California agriculture received over \$50 billion in cash receipts producing over 400 commodities. California Employment Development Department noted that there were 420,500 agricultural employees in 2017 that made this possible. So by now you are probably asking "What's all the fuss about? This all sounds really good!"

The California Farm Bureau Federation recently conducted their third survey on labor to find out how farmers are adapting to reduced farmworker availability. The 2017 results of this survey found that 55 percent of farmers reported labor shortages, and it was even worse for farmers who were dependent on seasonal workers.

Competition from other industries, crops in other geographic locations that are ready to harvest, the aging of our current workforce and uncertainty with immigration laws pose big challenges for finding enough workers. This, combined with new laws affecting pay and overtime as well as required training, add to the headaches that growers are facing in 2019.

To deal with fewer workers, some growers are turning to increased mechanization, especially for larger operations. Others have elected to go the H-2A visa route to ensure that they will have sufficient people, especially when it comes to harvest time.

The H-2A visa process is complicated and expensive. Jobs that can be filled under this program must be temporary or seasonal in nature. Employers have to attempt to fill the need with U. S workers before filing a petition under the H-2A program. Once the employer has approval, there are still a number of requirements including special rates of pay, providing housing and even transportation if employment requires overnight travel. The contract between grower and worker must be guaranteed for a total number of hours equal to at least 75% of the work period specified in the contract.

So what is the impact of this labor shortage? In addition to the potential financial losses that growers face when there are not enough workers to grow and harvest their crops, there is the very real potential impact that might hit all of us in choices in our local produce aisle as well as higher prices and more imports.

The March issue of Eating Well magazine has an interesting article on the subject entitled "From the Fields to Your Table." I confess that I have given scant thought to the fruits and vegetables that are grown here in California and require hand labor to harvest.

According to the Eating Well article, California produces more than 90% of the broccoli, celery, and avocados plus nearly 80% of the cauliflower, strawberries, raspberries, and lemons, all crops that are hand-harvested. Like the delicious Lake County Bartlett pears that we are so proud of, it takes large numbers of employees to not only pick the crop, but also to work in packing houses to get the produce to our local grocery stores.

We enjoy a bountiful supply of California grown fresh fruits and vegetables all year at reasonable prices. What happens to this picture if the worker shortages are not resolved?

Farmers are a creative group and use what the article referred to as the 4-S strategies. Satisfy the workers that you have – higher pay, benefits, bonuses, etc. This translates to higher prices for consumers. Stretch their productivity – mechanical aids, improved field conditions, etc. Substitute machines – think mechanical harvesters in our vineyards – where possible. And finally, Supplement the workforce with immigrants on temporary work visas.

While these strategies help, immigration reform is needed to provide legal status for our workers who are here without papers now, and an improved guest worker program. Without meaningful changes, the alternative seems pretty clear – rather than a bounty of California grown fruits and vegetables, the grocery aisles may feature more produce imported from outside of the U. S.

Ever the optimist, I am hopeful that we will see movement on the sticky subject of immigration to help solve these problems. Stay dry as you stop to smell the spring flowers!

## Calendar

**Mar. 28** Lake Co. Ag and Natural Resources Day Lake Co. Fairgrounds Lakeport, CA

**Apr. 4** Lake Co. Chapter Social Fore Family Vineyards, Kelseyville CA

**Apr. 4-6** American Agri-Women Mid Year Mtg. Las Vegas, NV

**May 6-7** SWM and Legislative Visits Sacramento, CA

**June 9-12** American Agri-Women Fly-In Washington D.C.

**Sept. 7-8** SWM and Ag One BBQ Fresno, CA

**Nov. 1-2** SWM Merced, CA

**Nov. 7-9** American Agri-Women Convention Portland, OR

~ Terry



## SENDING SUNSHINE

We would like to send our very brightest sunshine, beautiful rainbows, and a wee bit o' the green to the following, who are in our thoughts and hearts:

PAMELA KIRKPATRICK, TONNETTE BROWN, MELODY TUTTLE, MARILYN HOLDENRIED, QUINCY ANDRUS, KEITH PETTERSON, CHUCK MARCH and PAT McGUIRE.

And our deepest condolences to the family and friends of former Lake County Historian and Rancher RUBY GLEBE, who recently entered greener pastures at the age of 104 1/2!



## SHOUT OUT!

We are pleased to give a hearty SHOUT OUT to the following:

- ❖ SHARRON ZOLLER, who was honored with the Star of Lake County Agriculture Award (see article), and who recently traveled to Raleigh, N.C. and Washington D.C. where she met with Senator Diane Feinstein and Congressman Mike Thompson at a Singenta Conference!
- ❖ BRENNAN SULLIVAN and DEBRA SOMMERFIELD who were responsible for the recent Crop Insurance Seminar - and who go above and beyond to assist those in agriculture!
- ❖ MARGARET EUTENIER who has recently rejoined the LCCWA Board and taken on the role of LCCWA Recording Secretary!
- ❖ CONGRESSMAN MIKE THOMPSON, who continues to support Lake County agriculture and various non-profit entities — most recently with wife Janet at the Lake County Wine and Chocolate Affair Fundraiser at Mount Konocti Event Center— stating “Lake County Wines are Second to None.”!
- ❖ BLAISE BAHARA AND BESS GIANNAKAKIS and their DANCING POLY FARM AND FOOD venture— who also partake in local fundraisers, including the recent Wine and Chocolate Affair! (see article)
- ❖ ALL OF THE AMAZING WOMEN who have taken on the challenging ranch business and who were featured in the Press Democrat’s Sunday Review (Jan. 13, 2019) article “Female Ranchers Reclaiming the West”!
- ❖ THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE for offering millions of dollars in grant funding under the Budget Act of 2018 to support what they call Climate Smart farming practices across the state!
- ❖ SAUSHA RACINE who continues to work hard in leading LCCWA’s scholarship program!
- ❖ TERRY DERENIUK, our LCCWA President, who also works hard wearing many hats in the Lake County Agriculture realm!



On January 7th, a crop insurance seminar catering to Lake and Mendocino winegrape growers was held at Blue Lakes Lodge in Upper Lake. The seminar was presented by the Lake County Winegrape Commission, Lake County Farm Bureau, Mendocino County Farm Bureau, Mendocino Winegrowers, California Association of Winegrape Growers and Allied Grape Growers.

## SHARRON ZOLLER - STAR OF LAKE COUNTY



Sharron Zoller has devoted her life to agriculture in Lake County —farming, leading, educating, advocating, representing, developing and promoting agriculture.

Since 1978, along with her husband Broc, she has helped plant, tend and harvest many acres of Lake County pears, wine grapes and walnuts. They were partners in Adobe Creek Packing for 20 years. Despite farming's ups and downs, twists and turns, their ranch continues to thrive.

Sharron has worn many hats during her years in Lake County agriculture. Among the most notable are Co-Chair with Marilyn Holdenried of the Kelseyville Pear Festival for ten years and on its committee for a total of 20 years; Co-Grand Marshall with Marilyn of the Festival in 2017; Member of the Lake County Chapter of California Women for Agriculture (LCCWA) organization since 2009; Vice President then President of LCCWA two terms; committee member of their AgVenture and school Mini-grant projects; and webmaster of the organization. She is currently Northern District Representative for

statewide California Women for Agriculture (CWA) where she has worked tirelessly to help improve the organization, including expanding chapters in other areas (Yuba and Sutter Counties); representing constituents; and promoting Lake County agriculture. She has also promoted CWA at local service organizations.

While serving as president of our local chapter she faithfully attended statewide chapter meetings and conventions and legislative Sacramento meet-with-a-politician gatherings, making strides with local and statewide politicians, educating, promoting and, at times, opposing controversial agricultural issues. She and Broc attended the state capital rally this past August 20 where a large group opposed the amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. Their sign read "Food Grows Where Water Flows" - farmwater.org.

For the past ten years Sharron has served as Secretary of the Lake County Wine Alliance. Their annual evening gala raises money for the local philanthropic and charity organizations in our county. This year \$135,000.00 was distributed. The event is also designed to promote the sustainability of wineries and the wine-growing community in Lake County.

Sharron has also been a strong advocate for youth in agriculture. Counted among her volunteer work has been 4-H sheep leader, and year after year helping to prepare the LCCWA Kelseyville Pear Festival pear pies and turnovers used to raise scholarship funds for deserving agriculture-career-bound students. She has also promoted the mini-grant opportunities for teachers who wish to educate and/or involve students in agriculture.

We congratulate Sharron on her well-deserved award, and are grateful to have such hard-working agriculture advocates among us!



~ Lori McGuire



## DANCING POLY FARM AND FOOD

We are pleased to feature DANCING POLY FARM and FOOD in this issue. Proprietors BLAISE BAHARA and BESS GIANNAKAKIS have been LCCWA members since 2017. We'd like to share their mission statement and invitation, interview, and ongoing class information.



“At Dancing Poly Farm we relish great food: growing it, harvesting it, cooking it and serving it. We think you might love it as well. Our mission is to turn fresh, farm grown and locally sourced produce into the most amazingly delicious food imaginable. Cooking has been our passion for over thirty years—from commercial catering, to fun and informative classes, to creating our own very successful restaurant. Our lovely old barn, nestled among row crops, vineyards and orchards and transformed into a commercially licensed kitchen, has become the hub of many wonderful gastronomic events. We warmly invite fellow food lovers to join us. We'll be happy to serve wonderful food at your event of 20 to 500 people, have you with us for a class or happy hour, or supply your order of tasty food products. Dig into Delicious!”

**Interview with Blaise:****How did you arrive at the name Dancing Poly Farm and Food?**

We have a statue that moved here with us. She's recycled out of the inside of a cement truck and her name is Polyhymnia, the Greek Goddess of Many Harmonies. That seemed long for a farm! But one morning the sun was rising over Konocti and it fell on her as I was working and I said “She looks like she's dancing!” And so it was.

**What was your search like to find the right property/venue?**

We searched for over a year. We were also selling our B&B in Austin Texas so all the timing had to be right. We did a lot of flying that year. We very much wanted a rural area but also one with a food forward movement happening. We didn't want to be somewhere where the food scene was already well established and ruled by star chefs. We saw Lake County as the best of both worlds.



**The much watched “Diners, Drive-ins and Dives” host, Guy Fieri, came to visit Bess’s restaurant in Minnesota and had glowing things to say about her culinary talents. When and how did that happen?**

That was the Colossal Cafe in 2010. Restaurant patrons drive that process; they write in and based on that, the TV show contacts you. The filming is a long process but it certainly is good for business! (Bess grew up in a cooking and restaurant family. She's been in the professional culinary scene for 35 years.)

*(Continued on next page)*

**DANCING POLY CONTINUED****What is a normal day like on the Farm?**

There really is no normal but it is somewhat seasonal. In the height of summer we'll spend about 4 hours in the field, maintenance and harvesting. Six hours + of cooking either for an event that day or in prep for something coming up. Four hours on desk work responding to catering requests, handling reservations, social media & marketing and event planning. And then there is always something that needs to be repaired!

**You have been the culinary backbone of many a Lake County fundraiser.****What is it like to cater such events as the recent Wine and Chocolate Affair held at Konocti Growers?**

These are some of our favorite events. First, we want to support the organizations like Lake Family Resource and the Wine Alliance and all the organizations and programs they support. Second... we like to up the game and do something as extraordinary as possible for masses of people. Finally, we just love to be there. Everyone in Lake County works very hard either at their jobs or for the community. It's nice to see everyone out and enjoying, in their Sunday best.

**When did you join LCCWA and who inspired you to do so?**

We joined in early 2017. We had met our neighbors, the Campodonicos, and joining LCCWA was one of the first things they suggested. We went to our first (LCCWA event) at the Ely Stage Stop.

**What are your dreams and goals for the future?**

We are "of an age" so this IS the dream. We just want to keep at it: keep making great food, making people happy, encouraging the next generation of small acreage farmers and cooks, helping to raise the bar on the Lake County culinary scene and supporting our community. We love it here!

**And, finally, here is their invitation (presented February 15th) to join their exciting class offerings:**

"Bring out the whisk, hone the knife and don the apron. Let's get cookin' in 2019. Beginning in just two weeks we will hold nearly two dozen cooking classes here at Dancing Poly Farm and Food. We'll cover such topics as wide ranging as Greek & Tuscan Feasts, Knife Skills, Breadmaking, French Sauces, Sausage Making and Brandied Pear Canning. Be sure to follow us... on Facebook to learn about a few very special classes involving guest chefs and some amazing special ingredients..."

We might add that also on Facebook you will find more info on their classes, beautiful photos, articles, the video of the Guy Fieri visit, etc. Their phone number is 612-877-0348 and their email address is dancingpoly@gmail.com. We would like to wish Blaise and Bess continued success in this most excellent venture!

~ Lori McGuire





## CWA NORTHERN DISTRICT DIRECTOR REPORT

The Advocate & Educate themed conference in Solvang January 11-13, 2019, was a great way to kick off the CWA year. There were two Friday tours. The first one focused on roses, seedling nursery and packed fruits and vegetables, and the second tour focused on commercial cannabis, life of the bean and Primus Labs process and testing. A new offering at the conference was a Trade Fair showcasing local agricultural products and chapters sharing their area's commodities and 'swag' for sale.

Guest speakers shared insights and information and were motivationally enthusiastic. Topics were "The Difference I Make", "California Ag & the Economy", and "Real Life Solutions on Climate Change." Saturday afternoon we listened to a very knowledgeable panel discussion from a group of women starting a business in Santa Barbara to grow, process and produce products with CBD oil for retail.

It's always energizing to get together with women passionate about all aspects of agriculture in California. The mid-March statewide meeting will be in Visalia. Biannually, CWA and the California Cattlewomen have a joint meeting. It's always a 'boot-kicking' event!

The Lake County Chapter is the third largest CWA chapter at 109 members! Congratulations!

~ Sharron Zoller, Northern District Director

## RECENT DONORS

We are so grateful for the generosity of our donors, without whom we could not reach our goals! Donors since our December newsletter include the following:

Shirley Campbell	\$20.00	(General)	Gabriele O'Neill	\$20.00	(General)
Jonas Energy	\$100.00	(General)	Marilyn Holdenried	\$120.00	(General)
Janice Stokes	\$50.00	(General)	Michelle Rohner	\$50.00	(General)
Karen Hook	\$25.00	(General)	Janis Eckert	\$20.00	(General)
Margaret Eutenier	\$25.00	(General)	Monica Rosenthal	\$70.00, \$50.00	(AgVenture, Scholarships)
Carolyn Henderson	\$10.00	(General)	Diane Henderson	\$50.00	(General)
Lianne Campodonico	\$70.00	(General)	Terry Dereniuk	\$100.00	(Scholarships)
Emily Luchetti	\$150.00	(Scholarships)			
Janet King	\$150.00	(Scholarships)			



## LAKE COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS



Save the date for the Lake County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 27th at Cole Creek Equestrian Center! Kelseyville FFA will be providing the meal and there will be fabulous Lake County wines during the evening social. LCFB will honor the Agricultural Appreciation and Heritage Awards as well as announce our 2019 Scholarship and Blue Jacket winners. This is LCFB's primary scholarship and youth program fundraising event. Please contact the office for more information!

## FEATURED RECIPE: SAFFRON AND FENNEL SEED CRACKERS

This is a fun recipe that features a new product in Lake County—saffron, as well as olive oil produced in Lake County. Serve these crackers with local goat cheese from Yerba Santa Goat Dairy and a dot of Edenberry Farm raspberry jam. Makes about 30 crackers.

- ¼ teaspoon Peace and Plenty Farm saffron threads
- ¾ cup water (6 ounces), divided
- ¼ cup (2 ounces) Campodonico Olive Farm extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 ½ cups (12 ½ ounces by weight) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons fine sea salt
- 2 tablespoons whole fennel seeds for topping
- 2 teaspoons Maldon or other flaky sea salt for topping



Heat a small skillet over high heat until a drop of water dances on the surface. Add the saffron and shake the pan until the threads become brittle, no more than 30 seconds. Scrape the threads into a mortar and crush them with a pestle. Heat a ¼ cup of the water and pour it over the saffron threads. Cool to room temperature.

Pour the saffron-infused water, along with the crushed saffron threads, into a medium bowl. Add the remaining ½ cup cool water to the mortar to collect any saffron bits left behind and pour it into the bowl. Add the olive oil.

Stir the flour and salt together in a small bowl. Add to the saffron mixture all at once and stir with a rubber spatula until the water is absorbed. Add a few more drops of water as needed to moisten any flour left in the bottom of the bowl. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured board and knead about 10 turns, until dough is smooth. Divide the dough into two balls, flatten them, and cover with a towel while the oven heats.

Position two racks in the oven and preheat to 500°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.



Roll each piece of dough into a rectangle 1/16 inch thick and roughly 12 by 14 inches. Roll up one rectangle with the rolling pin and transfer it to a baking sheet. Repeat with the second. Poke the rectangles all over with a fork or a pizza docker if you have one. Cut the dough with a pizza cutter into triangles or squares. Moisten the dough with a pastry brush dipped in water. Sprinkle the fennel seeds and Maldon salt on top.

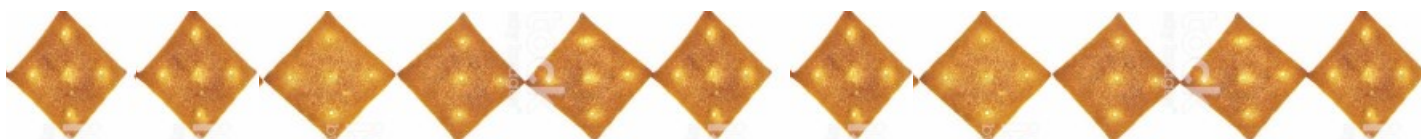
Bake, rotating the pans 180 degrees halfway through the baking time, until the crackers are well-browned, about 15 minutes.

Transfer the pans to a rack to cool.

When completely cooled, store the crackers in an airtight container at room temperature. They will keep for up to one week.

*-submitted by Lianne Campodonico*

*-adapted from The New American Olive Oil by Fran Gage*



## USDA CELEBRATES NATIONAL AG DAY WITH NEW YOUTH WEBSITE

We thought it would be important and fitting to share this press release as brought to our attention by LCCWA member Wilda Shock:

WASHINGTON, March 14, 2019 - Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture joins the nation in celebrating National Ag Day, which highlights agriculture's crucial role in everyday life, and honors the farmers, foresters, scientists, producers and many others who contribute to America's bountiful harvest. As part of this effort, USDA is launching a new Youth and Agriculture website to connect young people and youth-serving organizations with Department-wide resources that engage, empower, and educate the next generation of agricultural leaders.

"The future of agriculture in America depends on the investment and involvement of America's young people," said Deputy Secretary Stephen Censky. "Connecting with America's youth on National Ag Day is a tremendous opportunity to show that careers in farming, the agricultural sciences, and veterinary medicine are rewarding, essential, and profitable."

The USDA Youth and Agriculture website features three key components of agriculture in the classroom and beyond. Young people can learn about USDA summer outreach programs, youth loans for business projects, and outdoor volunteering. Community leaders can get tips on starting leadership development clubs and education programs. The site also highlights USDA partners, such as 4-H, the National FFA organization, minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS), Agriculture Future of America (AFA), and many others working with the Department to connect young people with opportunities in agriculture.

For the career curious, the website provides information on internships and scholarships, USDA employment, and information on agriculture career fields such as forestry, robotics engineering, biochemistry, and food sciences. Storytelling will help young people learn from peers about youth-led innovations and success stories in agriculture. Follow the conversation on USDA, youth in agriculture, and national Ag Day on <http://links.govdelivery.com:80/track?type=click&enid=ZWfzPTEmbWFpbGluZ2lkP>

---

## 2019 SCHOLARSHIPS OPEN TO APPLICANTS

Scholarship applications are being accepted from graduating high school seniors and college or vocational students now through April 1, 2019 for the 2019/2020 academic year. Scholarships may range between \$500 and \$2000 per award. Applicants must be pursuing a degree that is related to agriculture and planning to attend a two- or four-year program as a full-time student. Lake County graduating high school seniors and college or vocational students who have a grade point average of 3.0 or above are eligible to apply. Application materials must be received by CWA on or before April 1, 2019. The application and criteria are available at [www.lakecountycwa.org](http://www.lakecountycwa.org).

For questions concerning the scholarship program, please contact Sausha Racine at 707.245.4787. Since 2013 the chapter has awarded over \$28,000 in scholarships to local students and in 2018, \$6000 was awarded to eight recipients for the 2018/2019 academic year. Stay tuned for information on applicants selected after the April 1st deadline. The scholarship committee typically meets in the middle of April to review applications and make selections. This is a very exciting and rewarding experience.

~ Sausha Racine





# 2019 CWA Spring Social

Thursday, April 4, 2019

5:30 - 7:30 pm

Fore Family Vineyards Wine Room

3924 Main Street, Kelseyville

Bring an appetizer to share

Wine by the glass available for  
purchase. Bring a friend who is interested  
in CWA

**Good company and Fun!**

***Bring a friend to find out about CWA!***

<b>President:</b>	Terry Dereniuk	terry.lcwa@gmail.com	707-337-2871
<b>Vice President:</b>	Sausha Racine	sausharacine@yahoo.com	707-245-4787
<b>2nd Vice President:</b>	Muffie Panella	muffiep@pacific.net	279-9371
<b>Recording Secty:</b>	Margaret Eutenier	meutenier@gmail.com	279-0412
<b>Corresponding Secty:</b>	Barbara Ehr	ehrhead@yahoo.com	
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Muffie Panella	muffiep@pacific.net	279-9371
<b>Past-President:</b>	Diane Henderson	syddiane@gmail.com	279-8672
<b>Area Representatives:</b>			
	Kelseyville: Karen Hook	jkhook70@gmail.com	279-4364
	Lakeport Jill Jensen	jill-jensen@leavitt.com	350-0738
	Upper Lake Colleen Rentsch	ncjarentsch@mchsi.com	279-4388(w)
	South County Karen Jones	karenjones@middletownusd.org	987-0602
<b>Nor. District Dir:</b>	Sharron Zoller	szoller@hotmail.com	279-4335
<b>Newsletter Co-Ed.'s:</b>	Lori McGuire	dpmcg@pacific.net	263-5735
	Brenna Sullivan	lcfarmbureau@sbcglobal.net	263-0911
<b>Farm Bureau Liaison</b>	Brenna Sullivan	lcfarmbureau@sbcglobal.net	263-0911
<b>AgVenture Contact:</b>	Brenna Sullivan	lcfarmbureau@sbcglobal.net	263-0911
<b>Pear Festival Co-Chairs:</b>	Andrea Adams	andreaanhs@hotmail.com	279-9191
	Morgen Wells	WellsM2@sutterhealth.org	330-510-9578
<b>Scholarship Chair:</b>	Sausha Racine	sausharacine@yahoo.com	263-7327/245-4787
<b>Publicity Chair:</b>	TBD		



Lake County Chapter, CWA

PO BOX 279

Finley, CA 95435