

**Cattaraugus County  
Farmer-Neighbor Dinner**



**April 10, 2024**

**West Valley Fire Hall**

*West Valley, New York*

# Photos from the 2023 #FNDinner



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# **Welcome to the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Cattaraugus County Farmer-Neighbor Dinner**

*Brought to you by:*

**Cattaraugus County IDA**

**The Pillittere Group**

**Farm Credit East, ACA**

**Cattaraugus County Agricultural  
and Farmland Protection Board**

**Cattaraugus County Department  
of Economic Development,  
Planning and Tourism**

**Cattaraugus County Soil and  
Water Conservation District**

# **Menu**

## **Appetizers**

*Bison Meatballs*

*Veggie Platter*

*Cheese, Cracker & Pepperoni Platter*

*Spinach Dip*

## **Dinner**

*Salad*

*Beef*

*Turkey*

*Vegetarian Manicotti*

*Mashed Potatoes*

*Buttered Carrot Medallions*

*Harvard Beets*

*Dinner Roll*

## **Dessert**

*Carrotcake Cupcakes (3C's Catering)*

*Brownies (Reid's Food Barn)*

*Variety of Cupcakes (Cupcaked)*

# **Program**

## **5:30 Welcome**

**Vendor Tables & Hors d' oeuvres**

**Music - Homemade Jam**

## **6:45 Dinner**

**Buffet with locally grown foods,  
prepared by the West Valley  
Firemen's Auxiliary**

## **7:45 Presentation of Awards**

**Farm of the Year**

**Friend of Agriculture**

**Ag Legacy**

**Conservation Farm of the Year**

# Farm of the Year

## Valley View Farms

Nathan and Chelsey Nelson along with their children, Paisley, Tucker and Everett, own and operate Valley View Farms, located in Machias, NY.



Valley View Farms was founded in 2013. The farm is situated on 160 acres that was originally farmed by Nathan's grandfather,

Cecil Perkins. Cecil operated a dairy farm on the property from 1957 until 1984. In 1988, Nathans parents, Dave & Sue, purchased the farm. The dairy was no longer operational, however, they had a few beef cattle and pigs. In 1990, they started a family and raised their 2 sons, Nathan and Nicholas, there. Growing up helping his dad take care of his cows and pigs, Nathan developed a passion for farm life. In 1999 the old dairy barn collapsed due to heavy snow, and only fields were left. The interest in farming only grew stronger as Nathan grew older. In 2002, Nathan started his first job working on a local dairy in town. He worked there through his school years until he started college.

In 2009 Nathan began his college career at Alfred State College as a Heavy Equipment Truck and Diesel Technician major. Chelsey was also attending Alfred State as an Agricultural Technology student. After graduating, Chelsey made the move from her families 40 cow dairy in northeastern PA to Nathans home farm. Their goal was to bring the farm back to life. When their daughter Paisley was born in 2012, they made the decision for Chelsey to stay home and raise her while Nathan worked full time at Java Farm Supply Inc.

They purchased their first 3 beef cows from a neighbor. Those cows quickly grew into the 60 head they have today. With the growth of the beef herd, they built a barn to house their cows. After the birth of their

sons Tucker (2016) and Everett (2018) they purchased the farm from Dave and Sue.

Having 3 small children and cattle prices being uncertain due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Nathan and Chelsey decided to diversify their operation to include direct to consumer beef, pork, and chicken sales, along with produce, pumpkins and hay sales.

Their passion for providing their customers with a sustainable product has become the main focus of their business. In commitment to providing a safe meat supply, the Nelsons have become Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certified producers, Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) certified producers, New York State Cattle Health Assurance program (NYSCHAP) certified producers, and recipients of the NY Beef Farm of Excellence award. Their beef and pork is NY Grown and Certified.

They are members of the New York State Beef Producers Assoc. where Chelsey serves as a chairperson for Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties,

Cattaraugus County Farm Bureau members, and active with 4-H at the Cattaraugus County Fair.

Its been said *“you can do anything as long as you have the passion, the drive, the*

*focus and the support.”* Valley View Farms would not be the success it is without the help and support of our families, customers and landowners, and for that we **“THANK YOU!”**



*Congratulations,  
Valley View Farms!*

# Friend of Agriculture

## Rhonda Lindquist



Rhonda Lindquist developed an interest in agriculture at a young age through her responsibilities on her family's beef farm and involvement with 4-H. She resides in Chautauqua County with husband, Bob. Her son, Max, resides in Berkeley, CA.

Rhonda is passionate about helping others. She has been employed by WNY Crop Management Association for over 17 years as a Farmstead Planner. Her responsibilities include evaluating facilities and providing recommendations, developing environmental plans, procurement of grants for farms to implement best management practices, consulting with engineers, interpreting regulatory requirements and working closely with farms to maintain compliance, advocating for farms at state and local levels, and disseminated agricultural information as needed.

Rhonda has volunteered throughout Western New York at "Visit the Farm Day", "Sundaes on the Farm", and other educational events designed to teach public agricultural practices and the importance of agriculture in our communities.

She has served on the following committees: NYS CAFO Workgroup, NY Water Quality Workgroup, Cattaraugus County Water Quality Council, Chautauqua County Water Quality Council, and the Cattaraugus County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Steering Committee.

Rhonda would like everyone to know It has been a privilege to work with so many producers in Cattaraugus County and Western New York. She will always value the relationships she has made with the farms and partnering agencies over the years.

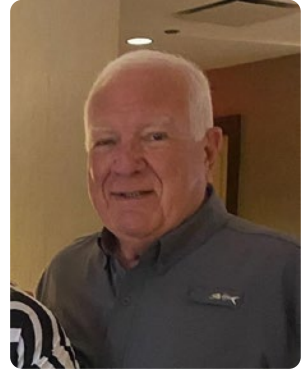
## *Congratulations Rhonda!*



# Agriculture Legacy

## Dick Rivers

Richard Rivers, “Dick”, grew up on his grandparent’s dairy farm where he joined 4-H when he was 12 years old. Dick was a Member of Adventurer’s 4H Club, Treasurer of Broome County 4H Council and attended Arnot Forest 4H Conservation Camp in 1957-59. Dick was able to plant several thousand seedlings as a 4H project.



Dick served many roles for the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), which included Cattaraugus CCE Board of Directors, Director and Board President in the mid 1980’s. Dick also served as the Executive Director of the Cattaraugus County Cooperative Extension 2018-2023 where he was instrumental in establishing Southwest Dairy, Livestock and Field Crop Teams.

During his time at CCE, Dick established Farm-to-School Programs in three Schools, re-established the Master Gardener Program and was able to successfully negotiate a contract with Town of Ellicottville for the lease of space in Town Center. He also coordinated the design and remodeling of CCE space including a new entrance to building. Dick coordinated with the CCE board and Farm Bureau to hold joint Annual Meetings and was a member of NYS Farm Bureau, NYS Forest Owners Association, Cattaraugus County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board.

Dick’s other Professional Experiences and Community Activities include: Industrial Arts Teacher – Johnson City High School, School Counselor – Broome-Tioga BOCES, Building Principal - Cattaraugus BOCES, Director of CTE – Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES, Member and President of Bertrand-Chaffee Hospital Board of Directors - 80’s, Member of Blue Shield of WNY Board of Directors (84 – 93), Volunteer Fire and EMS Service (1966 – Present), Member of Ellicottville Fire Company, Fire Chief of Vestal Fire Department, Cattaraugus County Fire Investigator, Member of Catt. County Arson Task Force

*Thank you, Dick, for all you do to support agriculture in Cattaraugus County!*

# Conservation Farm of the Year

## Mike Jones, Mekka Farm

Mike Jones was born and raised on his family's dairy farm in Randolph, NY. He was an active FFA member throughout his years at Randolph Central School. Mike began his own farm in 1978 where he raised Holstein heifers, draft horses and other various animals.

Mike is married to Pamela and has three children, Kurt Jones, Karah Mattern and Megan Crosson, and seven grandchildren.

Mike is presently raising Registered Black Angus and owns a team of Clydesdale horses and one riding horse.

Mike enjoys his family, golfing, attending horse shows and working the farm, caring for his animals and property.

He works closely with WNY Crop Management Association for crop rotation advice and soil erosion management.

Mekka Jo farms installed a **covered waste storage system** with the assistance of Cattaraugus County Soil and Water Conservation District through the Agricultural Environmental Management Program (AEM) and the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Many other local



engineers, contractors, suppliers, and ag support providers came together to make this project possible.

The Farm also installed a heavy use area, to protect high

traffic cattle crossings, roof runoff structures and drainage systems to help direct clean rainwater away from manure processing areas. These practices together will allow the farm to store manure during times when the ground is frozen or saturated. By storing the manure and applying it with the right site conditions the farm will utilize the nutrients more efficiently and protect water quality of Cattaraugus County

Mike appreciates this honor and will continue to strive to manage his property with conservation of the environment an important part of his strategy.

## *Congratulations Mike Jones and Mekka Farms!*



# In Remembrance

## Charles "Chuck" Couture



He was born July 5, 1942, in Nunda, a son of the late George and Alpha Ostrum Couture. He passed away Wednesday, March 27, 2024 in his residence at the age of 81.

He is survived by his wife, Phyllis (Merle) Couture, whom he married June 19, 1965 at the Attica Zion EUB. He is also survived by his children, Curt (Renee) Couture of Oneida, Brian (Grace) Couture of Colchester, Conn. and Stacy (Steven) Taylor of Panama; siblings, Carolyn Farrell of Brockport, Catherine "Kitty" Biven of Rochester and James (Ann) Couture of Durham, N.C.; as well as eight grandchildren; six great-

grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Chuck and Phyllis Couture have been active in various agricultural circles since they moved to Cattaraugus County in 1968. Chuck was an agriculture teacher at Springville Griffith Institute, retiring in 1995. While teaching there he was also a Future Farmers of America advisor, and had numerous Empire and American Farmers, and he was awarded the Honorary American Farmer Degree.

Chuck and Phyllis were 4-H leaders, served on the Cattaraugus County 4-H Program Committee and the Cattaraugus County Cooperative Extension Board of Directors. Their 3 children were all 10 year members of 4-H.

Chuck was very involved with the community over the years, "wearing many hats", on boards and committees:

- Chairman of the Catt. Co. Planning Board
- Catt. County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
- Southern Tier West Planning Board
- Seneca Trail RC&D
- President of the West Valley Chamber of Commerce

- Member/trustee and finance chair for St. Paul's United Methodist Church in West Valley
- Former Catt. County Legislator
- Former president/board member of the Catt. County Farm Bureau
- President of the State Ag. Teachers Association
- Councilman for the Town of Ashford
- Catt. County 4H
- Cornell Cooperative Extension

He also got his B.S. in soil science from Michigan University and did graduate work at Cornell University. In his free time, he enjoyed woodworking, working around his greenhouse, collecting model trains and other collectables, attending farm markets and gardening.

Chuck and Phyllis started Fox Valley Greenhouse as a “retirement project” in 1971 after Chuck took several horticulture classes to complete his permanent certification. This became a family project, encouraging a work ethic in the children and providing funds for recreation and vacations.



Chuck workin' a farmers market

All of the 8 grandchildren have spent part of their summers helping with the greenhouse and farm markets. Today, the greenhouse is the one remaining enterprise – so it is indeed a “retirement project”.

The F.N.Dinner wouldn't be what it is today as Chuck was part of the original committee that created sdfafs and was an instrumental part of each dinner.

Chuck & Grandkids at a farmers Market in Olean (2011)



# **Event Donors**

*CCIDA*

*Car-Bu Farms, LLC*

*Merritt Winery*

*Upstate Milk*

*Ford Brothers*

*Native Offerings Farm*

*WiLean Farm*

*Canticle Farm*

## **Agriculture Advocates**

*Benz's Sugar Shanty, LLC*

*Milliman Farms*

*Cattaraugus County  
Attorney's Office*

*Cattaraugus County EDPT*

*Cattaraugus County  
Department Heads*

*Cattaraugus County  
Legislators*

*Cattaraugus County Soil &  
Water*

*Cornell Co-Op Ext of  
Cattaraugus*

*Ginger Schroeder & Mark  
Heberling - D/B/A Waverly  
Pond Farm*

*La Tudelana Farms*

*Maple Ridge Bison Farm*

*Perfectly Blended Family*

*Telaak Farms, LLC*

*West Valley Chamber of  
Commerce*

*Wishing Star Farm*

# **Thank You to our Exhibitors:**

*Cattaraugus County EDPT*  
*Cattaraugus County Soil &  
Water Conservation District*  
*Cattaraugus County Cornell  
Co-op Ext.*  
*Cattaraugus County Dairy  
Ambassadors*  
*Dairy Farmers of America*

*Catt. Co. Farm Bureau*  
*Farm Credit East ACA*  
*Lake Erie Watershed  
Protection Agency*  
*Nannen Arboretum*  
*Southern Tier West*  
*Randolph FFA*

## **Special Thank You to:**

**West Valley Volunteer Hose  
Company and the West  
Valley Firemen's Auxiliary**

# Past Award Winners

## Farmer of the Year

2012 Telaak Farms	2018 Hills Valley Farm
2013 Pine Villa Farm	2019 Native Offerings
2014 Sprague's Maple Farms	2020/2021 Gibbs Apiaries
2015 Canticle Farm	2022 D-J Farm
2016 Angus Hill Farm	2024 Burdick Blueberries
2017 Pumpkinville	

## Friend of Agriculture

2012 Lisa Kempisty	2018 Jack Searles
2013 Rick Miller	2019 Chuck & Phyllis Couture
2014 Charlesworth Family	2020/2021 John Busekist
2015 Joan Petzen	2022 Brian & Jean Davis
2016 Jim Ellis	2023 Pat Walker
2017 Lloyd "Ev" Webster	

## Conservation Farm of the Year

2012 Nichols Farm	2017 Blesy Farm
2013 Pimm's View Dairy	2018 Bliss Dairy Company
2014 Tim Ploetz Farm	2019 Woloszyn Farms
2015 Triple R Farms	2020/2021 Colonial Hill Farms
2016 R&D Adams Dairy Farm	2023 Durow Farm

## Ag Legacy Award

2017 Joe and Jeannie Pagett	2022 Bill & Jean Jones
2018 Barb Andera	

## Pioneer Award

2019 Hi Y Farm	2023 Ellicottville Distillery
2022 Maple Ridge Bison Ranch	

## Volunteer Appreciation Award

2022 Homemade Jam
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# 2024 Farmer-Neighbor Sponsors

## *Premier*

Cattaraugus County Industrial Development Agency

Farm Credit East ACA

The Pillittere Group

## *Platinum*

Car-Bu Farms

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cattaraugus County

CH2M Hill BWXT West Valley

M&T Bank

Legislator Ginger D. Schroder and Waverly Pond Farm

## *Gold*

Cattaraugus County Soil &  
Water District

Dairy Farmers of America

Gernatt Asphalt Products

Lake Erie Watershed Protection  
Agency

Perry Veterinary Clinic

Southern Tier West

Wild Acres Family Farm

WNY Crop Management  
Association

## *Silver*

ERA Team VP Real Estate

Gabel's IBA

Nannen Arboretum

## *Bronze*

Erie and Niagara Insurance

Ortel Supply Inc.

# CATTARAUGUS COUNTY IDA



FARM CREDIT EAST

THE  
PILLITTERE  
GROUP



Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Cattaraugus County



*Merritt*  
WINERY



**Car-Bu  
Farms**

*Waverly Pond Farm*

**CH2M HILL BWXT WEST VALLEY**



# Economic Development, Planning & Tourism



## Ole Farmer Wisdom...

- Always drink upstream from the herd.
- A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.
- Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.
- Don't interfere with
- somethin' that ain't botherin' you none.
- It is a rule of nature that taking a day off on a farm sets a person back at least a week.
- Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.

**Thank you!**  
**From the Cattaraugus County**  
**Agricultural and Farmland**  
**Protection Board**

We will be posting the photos and information  
from this event at [FNDinner.com](https://FNDinner.com).

*We hope to see you at next year's  
Farmer-Neighbor Dinner on April 9, 2025*

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