



Southwest/Southland Dairy Farmers'

# DAIRY LINE

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INSIDE: Smokey Mac N Cheese



## Jim Hill To Retire as CEO of Southwest Dairy Museum, Inc.



The Southwest Dairy Museum, Inc. (SWDM) announces the retirement of James C. Hill, Chief Executive Officer, effective March 31, 2025. Hill has overseen all the activities of the regional dairy promotion agencies Southwest and Southland Dairy Farmers since September 2004. He has been involved with the dairy industry since 1972, when, upon graduation from Oklahoma State University, he began employment with the Federal Milk Market Administrator's Office (FMMA) in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma as a Field Auditor. He earned a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Central Oklahoma in 1976. His tenure with the FMMA continued for over 28 years as he rose to the level of Assistant Milk Market Administrator before taking early retirement in 2000. In 2004, he was appointed the new CEO of Southwest Dairy Farmers, replacing the retiring Gene Dunham.

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# Chocolate Milk Grants

Southwest/Southland Dairy Farmers continue to promote chocolate milk as The Original Sports Drink in several ways. Our chocolate milk grant program allows high school athletes to recover from their practices and competitions with chocolate milk to receive the nutrients that are essential for restoring energy and rebuilding muscle. Bixby High School was a recipient of our chocolate milk grant in the Fall of 2024. Recently, we had the opportunity to film a new video advertising the grant program at Bixby High School, with the help of their football team and coaches. Be on the lookout for the new video on the Southwest/Southland Dairy Farmers website. 🐄

## 2024 Fair Success

The 2024 fair season has begun, and the Southwest / Southland Dairy Farmers are attending fairs all over our producer-funded areas. Our live milking demonstrations saw great crowds at the Kentucky State Fair, the State Fair of Oklahoma, and the Kansas State Fair. In addition, at the Kentucky State Fair we handed out over 50,000 *Go-Gurts* to fair attendees.

We will have an upcoming presence at fairs in Texas, Oklahoma, North Carolina and Virginia. All of these state fairs will have the Mobile Dairy Classroom with educational presentations. The State Fair of Texas will also have free chocolate milk giveaways every day of the fair in the GO TEXAN Pavilion, sponsored by Southwest Dairy Farmers. 🐄

### Smokey Mac N Cheese

#### INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz. elbow pasta
- 1/4 c. butter
- 1/4 c. flour
- 1 c. heavy cream
- 1 1/2 c. whole milk
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 1 c. shredded Monterey jack cheese
- 2 c. shredded white cheddar cheese

#### FOR TOPPING:

- 2 Tbsp. butter (melted)
- 30 Ritz crackers (crushed)

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
2. Boil the pasta according to directions. While pasta is boiling, use a heavy saucepan to make a roue, by melting the butter and then adding flour and stirring constantly for a minute or two. Slowly add in the heavy cream and milk, then cook for about 3 more minutes, while stirring constantly. Add in the salt, pepper, smoked paprika and onion powder. Then add in the cream cheese until it is melted and add in the shredded Monterey jack and the shredded white cheddar.
3. Drain pasta completely and combine with cheese mixture. Pour into a lightly buttered 9 X 9 or 13 X 9 dish. Prepare melted butter and crushed cracker mixture and sprinkle on top of the mac and cheese.
4. Bake for 15-20 minutes or just until the cracker topping is lightly browned.
5. Double all ingredients for a large crowd.



## Virginia Tech Milkshake Cups

Milkshakes are back and benefitting a great cause! Southland Dairy Farmers are continuing to provide attractive cups for the famous Virginia Tech milkshakes that will be sold at the 24/25 home football and basketball games. Proceeds from the milkshake sales go towards The Dairy Club at Virginia Tech which funds a variety of events throughout the year, from study abroad opportunities for club members to the Little All-American Dairy Show and Hokie Dairy Day. 🐄

## New Employee Highlight: Janine Knight



Janine Knight

Janine Knight joined the Southwest Dairy Farmers team in August 2024 as an Executive Administrative Assistant in the Tulsa, OK office. She graduated from Oklahoma State University with a bachelor's degree in animal science, with a concentration in business. Following graduation in May 2024, she got married and moved to Oklahoma. Janine is from Oakdale, CA, where she was raised on a dairy farm and was active in FFA judging dairy cattle and showing goats. In her free time, she is hanging out with friends, playing with her dog, playing board games, or enjoying a nap! 🐄

# Jim Hill To Retire as CEO of Southwest Dairy Museum, Inc.

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Bill Burton, Chairman of Mithoff Burton Partners in El Paso, Texas remembers when Jim came to Southwest Dairy Farmers (SWDF), "We worked for the organization prior to Jim's arrival as the new CEO, and whenever there's a change at the top, for agencies, that's always an "uh-oh" moment. We didn't know what to expect. It took one meeting. When Jim left our offices in El Paso, our team at MBP knew this guy was marketing savvy, he was very clear how he wanted to promote dairy and the dairy farmer, and he had a unique perspective on growing Southwest Dairy Farmers. There was trust on both sides, and on that foundation, we became a partner for Jim and best of all, we became very, very good friends."

In 2014, dairy producers in Kentucky, North Carolina, and Virginia inquired about bringing the Southwest Dairy Farmers programs to their areas to enhance local dairy promotion and education programs with their local check-off funds. To meet these requests, Jim developed the Southland Dairy Farmers division that continues to grow. Lee Robey, Kentucky dairy producer and the first supporting dairy producer in the Southland area, said, "Jim Hill is the most motivated and driven person that I have ever met involved with dairy promotion. The energy and drive he displays is second to none."

Dr. Oral Capps, Jr. Director of The Agribusiness, Food, and Consumer Economics Research Center (AFCERC) and Holder of the Southwest Dairy Marketing Endowed Chair, Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M University stated, "Perhaps, this expansion is the greatest legacy of Jim Hill to the dairy industry. The expansion occurred because dairy farmers from outside the Southwest realized that Jim's efforts, particularly involving the mobile classroom, were paying noteworthy dividends."

Burton further added, "The one thing I admired most about Jim was his constant refrain, 'I will work with any organization, anywhere, to promote dairy.' And he tried, and often succeeded. Jim was above petty competition when it came to marketing dollars — to him, they were all for the same goal."

In addition to the growth, Jim started programs such as the Ag Conservancy, revamped the college sports sponsorships, started a high-school chocolate milk grant program, increased and enhanced the Mobile Dairy Classroom program, implemented the "Wannabes" campaign calling out the "milk" copycats,

oversaw the development of dairy curriculum for school teachers at all levels, added consumer outreach via state fairs, festivals, and trade shows, started a dairy cooking and recipe program, produced a series of parent-focused child nutrition videos featuring nationally recognized child nutritionist Jill Castle, and launched the group's entry into online and social media advertising and engagement. That is just a small list of things for which Jim was responsible.

Peter Fraire, former President of Mithoff Burton Partners, and current senior marketing advisor for SWDF stated, "Jim Hill is the kind of man that can tell you what he thinks is a funny story and actually make you laugh. It's confidence. It's sincerity. It's honesty. Who could ask for anything more from someone you know as the 'Boss'?"

Jim will retire in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area with his wife of 45 years, Margaret, and spend more time with his two sons, Matt and Andy, and his five grandchildren. He hopes to spend time volunteering with some of the charitable organizations that he has worked with in partnerships with the Southwest and Southland Dairy Farmers. "This experience with the Southwest Dairy Farmers has personally been extremely rewarding for me to help the dairy industry in efforts to promote and educate young and old alike about the benefits of wholesome dairy products! I sincerely thank all our supporting dairy producers for putting their trust in me for these last 20 years."

Ted Boersma, longtime dairy producer in New Mexico and Kansas and former President of the Southwest Dairy Museum, Inc. Board of Directors said about Jim, "I don't know that words can express all the appreciation we owe for his dedication and sheer desire to put dairymen and the organization at the center of every decision and effort."

The Southwest Dairy Museum, Inc. Board of Directors has named Amanda Phelps, presently the Chief Operating Officer, the new CEO to succeed Hill effective April 1, 2025. Ralph Keel, presently the Director of the Mobile Dairy Classroom program, has been elevated to the position of Chief Operating Officer and Jay Crawford has been appointed to the position of General Manager in charge of the Sulphur Springs operations. John Crawford will continue in his position as Director of Operations for Southland Dairy Farmers in our Greensboro, North Carolina office. 🐄

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## Give the Gift of Cheese

Looking for the perfect holiday gift? Cheese gift boxes are available again this year with old favorites and new selections. To create a customized cheese box and to check for pricing, visit [www.southwestdairyfarmers.com](http://www.southwestdairyfarmers.com) or call (903) 439-6455 (MILK). In order to assure your shipped gift will arrive before Christmas, the deadline for ordering is December 18, 2024. 🐮



## E V E N T S

**September 27 – October 20, 2024**

State Fair of Texas; Dallas, TX

**October 4-13, 2024**

Carolina Classic Fair; Winston-Salem, NC

**October 17-27, 2024**

North Carolina State Fair; Raleigh, NC

**November 1-3, 2024**

Bass Pro Marathon; Springfield, MO

**December 14-15, 2024**

BMW Dallas Marathon Weekend;  
Dallas, TX