

FFA NEW HORIZONS

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION | December 2009

A Greater Cause

California members
raise service dogs

The Water Way

Johnson County FFA members
operate a state-of-the-art

Alternative Farming Center

tip

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WEB POLL

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Dove
6%

Hogs
11%

Gators
11%

Deer
72%

Thanks to FFA Nation user **remington cowboy** for creating this poll.

The Buzz Online

Do you **volunteer** like the FFA members featured on page 14? Discuss service projects in the Discussions section.



Log on to see this month's

FFA Giveaways

Discussions

"What do you think it means to be an **FFA** member?"

► **Matthordner**

Log in to FFA Nation to respond.

FFA NEW HORIZONS.ORG



Need a past issue? Click on ► **Virtual Magazine** for current and archived editions.

"ON MY FIRST DAY IN HIGH SCHOOL, MY AG TEACHER ASKED ME TO BE ON THE CHAPTER'S JUNIOR OFFICER TEAM. I DIDN'T KNOW THEN, BUT THAT FIRST COE WOULD CHANGE MY LIFE FOREVER."

Brittany Dale,
Broken Bow
FFA, Okla.

Go online to submit your FFA experiences.

State Scoop

Read special inserts from other associations in ► **State Scoop.**

What's New

Check out our ► **convention page** for stories, photos, videos and more from the 82nd National FFA Convention, held in October.



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On the Cover

Christian Maurice, Johnson County FFA, Tenn.
Photo By Ian Curcio



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Johnson County FFA members grow plants through hydroponics.

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What's On

Get cooking with FFA.



Each year, Templeton FFA members BUILD elaborate shop projects, then auction them as a chapter fundraiser.

Combining Talent With Tradition

California's Templeton FFA members are a crafty group. As part of their supervised agricultural experience programs (SAEs), these FFA members create quite the elaborate shop projects, from six-foot oak cabinets to patio furniture to livestock panels.

Each year, the projects are put on display for judging, then auctioned off to raise money for the chapter. The auction has been held for the past 10 years, and in 2009, 46 students completed projects, which sold for an average of \$500 each.

Just Joking

What do you get if you cross a steer with a tadpole?
A bullfrog.

What is a horse's favorite sport?
Stable tennis.

What kind of money do fishermen make?
Net profits.

What do you call a carton of ducks?
A box of quackers.



FFA Welcomes New Leadership

Dr. W. Dwight Armstrong of Dayton, Ohio, joined the National FFA Organization in early October as its chief operating officer.

Since 2008, Armstrong has served as the founder and principal at JDA Consulting, LLC. From 2000-2008, he served at Provimi, a global nutrition company, as group vice president and director of the Americas and as president and CEO of North American Nutrition Companies, Inc.

Armstrong is also a former FFA member from Kentucky, and he recently served as chairman of the National FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board.



FFA On Parade

On New Year's Day 2010, keep your eyes peeled for a Tournament of Roses Parade float featuring FFA.

Longtime FFA sponsor RFD-TV will present a tribute to the National FFA Organization on its 2010 Tournament of Roses Parade float titled "FFA Today," incorporating floral-filled scenes of the FFA emblem, the iconic blue corduroy FFA jacket and symbols of agriculture past and present.

The 2010 Tournament of Roses Parade theme is "A Cut above the Rest," and that ties in perfectly with today's FFA.

Thanks to RFD-TV for sponsoring this tremendous opportunity. Be sure to tune in!

Holiday Spirit

Twin Valley FFA members in Pennsylvania are creating a win-win situation in their community. After the holiday season, community members drop off their real Christmas trees at a local tree farm, and FFA members relocate the trees to wooded areas. The trees provide habitat and a food source for wildlife throughout the winter, and the community members are able to easily dispose of their Christmas trees.

Other facts about evergreen trees and their environmental benefits:

- Growing Christmas trees provides a habitat for wildlife.
- Evergreen trees remove dust and pollen from the air.
- Recycled trees are also used to make sand and soil erosion barriers and are often placed in ponds for fish shelter.
- Artificial trees will last about six years in your home, but for centuries in a landfill.



FYI

YOUR TURN

Keep us informed!

This is your chance to be a part of *FFA New Horizons*. Send us a short article about your latest chapter activities, awards you've received or even your involvement outside FFA.

Be sure to include a high-quality color photo and your contact information.

Want an easy way to send your story? Visit ffanewhorizons.org and click on ► **Tell Us.**

Or, send to:

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Win a Chevrolet T-shirt

Chevrolet, the sponsor of FFA Faces, will award a T-shirt to featured members.

Nominate yourself by following the steps below. *Questions? E-mail ffanation@jnlcom.com.*

Create

Go to ffanation.ffa.org and sign up for an FFA Nation profile.

Describe

Upload a profile photo and fill out the fields to tell us about your FFA experiences.

Nominate

Under the FFA Faces thread on the Discussions page, tell us why you should be featured.



OR

Trae Baker

Chapter: Pilot Rock FFA

This high school freshman is serving as his chapter's Greenhand president and is busy developing his supervised agricultural experience program (SAE) in greenhouse work. Trae has participated in the FFA Creed speaking, general knowledge and beginning woodworking career development events (CDEs) and placed second in beginning arc welding.



NJ

Leevon Lacy

Chapter: Woodstown FFA

Leevon, a high school senior, first joined FFA as a sophomore, and she immediately became involved in nearly every aspect of membership. Since then, she has been a member of a horse CDE team that competed at the national FFA convention, won first place in the state individual demonstration event and is currently serving as chapter vice president.



TN

Brandy Eastwood

Chapter: Dyer County FFA

Brandy, a high school junior and chapter vice president, says FFA has helped model the person she is today. Shy and reserved when she first joined FFA, Brandy says she now has lots of friends and can barely keep quiet! She has even competed in public speaking CDEs and won Chapter Star Greenhand and Chapter Star Farmer. She also serves as her chapter's vice president.



AR

James Stone

Chapter: Delight FFA

James, a five-year FFA member, believes that this organization has helped him shape his future and provided experiences that he couldn't have found elsewhere. A high school senior, James has shown pigs, lambs and goats, and he exhibited the grand and reserve champion market goats at the 2008 Arkansas State Fair. James also maintains his FFA chapter's website.



VA

Wes Kline

Chapter: Turner Ashby FFA

After joining FFA by accident his ninth-grade year, Wes found a love for agriculture and a career path – agricultural education. This chapter president recently won the state FFA agricultural education proficiency, an honor he says he is very proud of achieving. Wes has also attended Washington Leadership Conference and plans to run for state FFA office.



MN

Rebekah Landmark

Chapter: Monte FFA

Rebekah, a high school sophomore, has achieved both the Discovery FFA Degree and the Greenhand FFA Degree. She was also named Star Greenhand for her chapter in spring 2009. Rebekah has participated in more than five CDEs, serves as chapter parliamentarian, and has an SAE in equine science and diversified crop production.

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Story by Chris Hayhurst
Photography by Ian Curcio

The Water Way

Johnson County FFA members process fish and learn
HYDROPONICS at the school's Alternative Farming Center

If you ever find yourself in Mountain City, Tenn., chances are, it will be for one of two reasons: You either belong to the Johnson County FFA Chapter, which makes its home there, or, more likely, you're visiting the chapter's state-of-the-art "Alternative Farming Center," an aquaculture-hydroponics lab that people come from all over the world to see.

"We've had people from 38 states and 18 foreign countries," says FFA chapter advisor Harvey Burniston. "Everyone from university students doing research projects to Korean scientists come here to see how our geothermal system works."

That geothermal system, it turns out, is the key to heating and cooling the program's centerpiece greenhouse, a 9,000-square-foot facility used for growing fish and plants that the chapter then sells.

"It's a triple-crop system," Burniston explains.

The fish, including tilapia and koi (25,000 pounds worth at any given time), are raised in 100,000 gallons of water in five separate raceways. That's crop number one. The second

crop includes water-garden plants, which float with the fish, and bedding plants, grown on roll-top tables just above the water. And the third crop?

"Ferns in hanging baskets," Burniston says. "We water them with the fish water."

The fish and plants are grown year-round, as are a variety of vegetables in the chapter's three other greenhouses (totaling an additional 13,000 square feet).

An onsite fish-processing facility allows chapter members to process

fillets as quickly as they can pull fish from the water, and a retail area is used for selling their products directly to the public.

The facility runs year-round, and students who are interested can work there in the summer as part of their supervised agricultural experience program (SAE).

"A lot of people, even the students here, have no idea how high-tech we are," says Emily Sajdak, one of three chapter vice presidents. "The standards here are really high. I feel blessed. To have a facility like this, right here, it's amazing."

BOUNCING BACK

Burniston says that back in the mid '90s, Johnson County FFA was in need of help. Because of limited program offerings, enrollment was low. But a large grant helped turn that around, and by 1997, the aquacenter was up and running.

Today, nearly a third of the students at Johnson County High School are enrolled in agricultural education and FFA.

"We have about 200 members now, and the changes in our students



There's no soil needed when growing hydroponic lettuce.



JOHNSON COUNTY AGRICULTURE TEACHER AND FFA ADVISOR HARVEY BURNISTON DISPLAYS SOME OF THE FLOWERS GROWN IN THE SCHOOL'S GREENHOUSES.



JOHNSON COUNTY FFA MEMBER GINNY LAY INSPECTS TOMATO PLANTS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL'S GREENHOUSE.

have been incredible," Burniston says. "They've gained so much self-confidence and self-esteem. Now, wherever these kids go, they're the center of attention. They've been winning competitions, we've had state and national finalists, and we've gone to nationals in agricultural sales the last three years."

Much of that success is a direct result of the responsibilities that all FFA members have for the greenhouses.

"The entire program is set up like a small business," Burniston says, noting that in addition to the aquaculture facility, the program also has everything else you'd expect: a large agricultural mechanics shop, for example, and courses on subjects like forestry, floriculture, animal science and animal care. "The students raise plants from seed to sale. They raise and sell hydroponic lettuce and cucumbers. They raise the fish to when they're a pound-and-a-half filet."

He adds, "When you spend so much time in there, things click, like the periodic table in chemistry. Because they have to test the water when they're learning hydroponics and aquaculture, they've seen firsthand why they had to study that stuff in their chemistry classes. Or logarithms. PH is logarithmic, so they'll say, 'Oh, that's why I had to learn that in math class.'"

READY FOR THE FUTURE

According to senior Tara Mahan, all that direct involvement is just part of the Johnson County FFA experience. And no matter where your interests lie, almost all of it is fun – or at least interesting.

"I've fed the fish, filleted fish, helped with sales and done general maintenance," says Tara, who plans to study equestrian science and business management in college. "But my favorite part has been working with the customers who

come in and the face-to-face time that I get with them. I guess I'm more of a people person than a dead-fish person."

Christina Maurice, a former chapter president and valedictorian of her class, would probably concur – although her plans for next year include studying wildlife ecology and conservation at the University of Florida, where fish will almost certainly be part of the picture. "My experience here has been great," says Christina. "Everything has been hands-on. It's so much better than just sitting in a classroom and learning from books. You go over there and you feed the fish, you do the pH levels, you do all the testing, and you actually learn what it's like to run things."

"I really believe that everything I've learned here, and all the time I've spent here, has really helped me learn everything I need to know to be ready for college."



TEXAS FFA

DECEMBER 2009

News

AMERICAN FFA DEGREE

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Go **Green**

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Making History One Step at a Time

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We've got a brick with your name on it.

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TEXAS FFA NEWS

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Texas FFA Association
614 East 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

tel: 512.480.8045 fax: 512.617.8219

E-mail: allison@vatat.org

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KODY KALE



Hey FFA members!

Doesn't it feel good to know that this semester is almost over? Time to relax and enjoy the holidays! It's time to hang out with family and friends and go hunting, fishing, shopping or whatever else you do for fun – it's all good! No more cramming for tests, practicing sports, studying and preparing for LDE events or waking up at 4:30 in the morning to compete.

It's really been a busy semester, but it wasn't that bad! Now that you have a less hectic schedule for a couple of weeks, take some time to think about everything you accomplished this past year. Did you set goals? Did you achieve your goals? Did you just drift along and do whatever your parents, teachers and advisors told you to do? You may have been close to achieving your goals, or you may have surprised yourself and exceeded your goals.

As the New Year approaches, think about new goals. Set your goals a little higher for next year. Think about taking a chance by trying something new – something that interests you. Often you do not know how good you can be at something until you try.

Take the initiative to complete your projects, and don't wait to be reminded. If you find that you are struggling in accomplishing these goals, seek advice from your parents, friends, teachers and coaches. Have a great holiday season! It looks like next year will be even busier!

Sincerely,
Kody Kale

AREA VIII TEXAS FFA VICE PRESIDENT:

DAKOTAH WILLIAMS



What's up Texas FFA!

It seems like only a few days ago we were dancing in Dallas at the state convention! During the past few months, I hit rewind many times – replaying all of our good times together. On the final day of convention, ten of us made a commitment to you, the Texas FFA. We promised to serve, as I'm sure you too made a similar promise to your chapter. I left you in "Big D" with some words through the "Cupid Shuffle," but none more meaningful to me than those that encouraged all of us to seek the wisdom of each other and especially of those advising us.

Being mindful of words spoken to me by someone on Sunday mornings, my pastor, Randy Mac, frequently states "Saying it does not make it so." Whether we share a word of encouragement at LDE competition, help clip a pig at a county or major show or even visit a school to conduct a leadership workshop, service must involve action!

The advice of Randy Mac lingers in my mind every day. It is not good enough to say we are going to do something... *we must do it!* Words don't make things happen, *actions do!* One last piece of advice I have heard my entire life... "Don't forget where you come from or who you belong to." Well, I am proud to say that I come from the Texas FFA and belong to the One that we serve daily!

God Bless You All!
Dakotah Williams

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Benita Hodge...

Making History One Step at a Time

- John Hawley, Caney Creek FFA



Many great accomplishments have been made through the National FFA Organization over the last 81 years. Our generation has seen barrier upon barrier be broken, and now, showing respect to those who broke those barriers for us, we look to them for example.

Benita Hodge, a former A&M Consolidated FFA member, now an alumni member at her former high school, has made her mark on history. The different take on Hodge's mark is she didn't even realize what she had accomplished. She was simply too busy looking towards her future to realize her great triumph. So when she took those steps across the stage at the National FFA convention on November 1,

2003, she soon discovered her feat. Benita Hodge had become the first African American woman to receive the American FFA Degree, the highest degree the National FFA Organization can bestow upon a FFA member.

"At the time I didn't even know I was making history," said Hodge "I had great ag teachers who had informed me of the ins and outs about the degrees, but we had no idea, said Hodge."

Since the merger of the New Farmers of America and what was formerly called the Future Farmers of America in 1965, several male members have received the degree, but until 2003 no African American females had crossed the stage. Like so many other past FFA members who have received the degree, Benita had to work hard and be very involved to accomplish what she did.

"I tried to do all I could," said Hodge. "I participated in chapter conducting, quiz team, job interview, dairy judging, landscaping, horticulture and floriculture. Receiving her American FFA Degree was only one of many rewards Benita has received. She also won a state proficiency for vegetable production in 2001.

Hodge was a very involved student throughout high school. In addition to her involvements through the FFA, she was involved in track, basketball and shot put. Successfully managing a busy schedule, like Benita's, is something many FFA members statewide strive to do and her parents took note.

"They are amazed, and to them it seems like I have had a lot of firsts," said Hodge. "My grandparents were very proud because they were the ones who have inspired me all along to be involved in agriculture in some way or another."

Hodge, holding an incredible amount of love for her family, looks up to her grandparents and the small farm they maintain. "One day I hope to manage a small farm like my grandparents do."

Hodge graduated from A&M Consolidated located in College Station, Texas in 2002. She then attended Prairie View A&M University, and became involved in the agricultural experiences they offered.

"Prairie View doesn't offer a collegiate FFA program, but they did offer many other agriculturally related experiences that were very beneficial to me."

Hodge is now employed as an agricultural statistician for the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service at the Iowa Field office. She takes part in several censuses that help farmers and ranchers nationwide, making the impact that took the very steps she and so many other notable FFA members have taken. As one of Hodge's daily routines she strives to exemplify the FFA motto: "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live and Living to Serve."

Like Hodge we can all take positive steps throughout our lives by being involved members of our community. We have already taken the first step by becoming a part of one of the best youth organizations around, now it is up to us to complete the rest, one step at a time.



Photo: Among many awards Benita has received, in 2006 she was the recipient of The Association of Research Directors' Certificate of Achievement. This award recognized her for outstanding achievement in emerging technologies for undergraduate student competitive papers.



Rebuilding After Ike

Anahuac's Story

- Ashley Harriman, Angleton FFA

The calm of Galveston Bay, the buzz of the Dairy Queen and the preparation for the Friday pep rally does not depict the storm that ravished this community, just miles from the Gulf Coast a little over a year ago. However, talk to Anahuac High School FFA members and you'll hear a different story about the devastation from Hurricane Ike, the recovery effort and the things that are still left to do.

"It sounded like a train outside," Charlie Copeland, Anahuac FFA member, said. The senior stayed home and rode out the storm. "The whole house was shaking. You could hear trees and barns coming apart." Copeland described how chickens, ducks and cows floated by during the storm. "Things my family worked on for generations were gone," Copeland said. Even the 200-year-old oak trees were pulled out of the ground and floated away.

Afterward, debris was piled up to 30 feet high in some places. Still visible are the debris lines at the tops of standing pine trees. "Dead cows were on our road and in our pastures that had floated across the bay from High Island, Crystal Beach and Galveston," Copeland said.

Some people's homes flooded, including Anahuac High School sophomore Cole Turner's home. "The water was off at my place and we'd go outside and get dirty each day working cattle. The water got into our house, so we'd try to get a little water on us to wash the mud off."

Still today, one house sits in a field 100 yards across a road from its steps and pilings, in which the storm water floated it away.

Recovery in Anahuac was a community effort. Ranchers, including Copeland, drove 7,000 cattle over the Intercoastal Canal Bridge, to holding pens. Copeland's pens were one of few around that withstood Ike. "They call them the elephant pens," Copeland said. Organizations such as the Fellowship of Christian Farmers, among others, provided hay, troughs and feed. Barbers Hill Volunteer Fire Department hauled water to ranches. Many ranchers trucked their herds to sales as quickly as they could. Prices on cattle were down, because people weren't buying after Ike, so ranchers lost money selling their investments in cattle.

With the impact of Ike on Chambers County, many jackpot

livestock shows were postponed. This affected the weight limits of the show animals. "They had 300 to 400 pound hogs coming in," Anahuac ag teacher Nick Dow said.

The turning point for most of these families affected by Ike was the Chambers County Fair in May. The sales were record setting, brought in by businesses in the community.

The second weekend in September, Anahuac's annual Gator Fest, was the unofficial celebration of Hurricane Ike's one-year anniversary. "Last year Ike happened during Gator Fest, so this year it was like the celebration," Anahuac High School junior Ericka Humphrey said.

Today, if you visit the rural community of Anahuac, made up mostly of ranchers and rice farmers, you will see the recovery effort is still holding strong. Backhoes and bulldozers are still sorting through pastures, knocking down acres and acres of pine trees to gather and sort through debris. The town is being asked to conserve water, so farmers can have the extra water to irrigate their crops. Unfortunately, between the salt water content in the soil and the drought, farmers are still having trouble growing crops and cutting hay.

"We just tilled up our land to plant rye grass before Ike, and we couldn't replant because the salt water content was so high," Turner said. "That still affects us right now." A new grass, which only grows in sandy soils, has spread around Anahuac ranches. It is able to take over because other grasses have died off. The County Extension Agency has discovered this grass is native to the area.

Fences along the roads have since been repaired, but ranchers have yet been able to repair the fences dividing cattle among neighbors, so cattle are mixed together. "We moved our cattle north of I-10 before the storm," Copeland said. "After Ike we had around 120 cattle. We've moved them back and we worked them the other day and counted only 30, because they're so mixed together."

The FFA chapter barn was also lost during the storm. "The tin came off," Turner said. "We're trying to rebuild it." Overall, the 2A school and small community are seeing progress and will continue to rebuild after the devastation of Hurricane Ike just over a year ago.

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Spotlight On...

AREA VII

- Rhandee Lewis, Hondo FFA

One of the main goals of Area VII this year is to increase member participation in order to make it the largest active area in Texas. On September 19, 2009, Area VII held their area Greenhand camp which turned one of the highest attendance rates among members over the past couple of years, a total of 207 Greenhands participated in this annual event.

"The Greenhands were energetic throughout the entire day and seemed excited to be a part of the FFA," said Area VII President Daylon Koster.

Two of the Texas FFA 2009 State Officers, Tyler Bradfield and Miles Vann, conducted a small workshop informing the Greenhands of all of the opportunities in the FFA and where the organization can lead the members in their next four years of participation. The Greenhands were served lunch, received a FFA backpack, an area Greenhand camp T-shirt and there was even time for a Tug-O-War competition in which the girls gave the boys a run for the prize.

The theme of the Greenhand camp was "Lucky Seven." The theme reflects Area VII because they are all lucky in so many ways.

"We all are lucky and blessed with things that make us great, but it's our attitude that allows us to use these resources to our benefit. We are all given lemons, some don't recognize their potential and let them rot, and some make lemonade," Koster said. "We are trying to show everyone to use their talents and have them live life to their fullest potential."

Area VII is helping members recognize their potential and utilizing this potential in order to be successful. They are trying to show them their talents, have them step out of the box and let them recognize how much they have been blessed with.

Area VII has it all, from the beautiful landscapes to the communities. This allows the area to be diversified and see agriculture from all different angles. According to Koster, he feels it's great to see people from all different backgrounds unite together under the FFA organization.

In October, Area VII sent four area officers to represent Texas at the National FFA convention. "We were excited to represent our state and Area VII on such a large level for the first time," said Koster. The officers chose different committees to serve on in order to improve tasks that were brought forth to the participants. The Area VII officer team continues to attend individual camps and meetings and is prepared to work hard in helping their area in any way possible!



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Every BOOTS Has Its Story

- Stevie Hall, Frankston FFA

As arena dust fills the air, Frankston FFA member Matthew Pittman breathes it in as if it were better than oxygen. Bones have been broken, sweat has fallen and blood has been shed in the rodeo arena, but the one thing that has yet to fail Pittman is his boots.

Invincible. When you put on that certain item whether it be a hat, a special shirt or in this case your boots, you feel like you can take on the world. The power that comes from the faithfulness your boots have proved gives you the confidence that they won't let you down today or any other day. They've lasted through several bucks off a horse, countless hours in the hayfield and thousands of steps in various dances, so how could they ever give in?

In the movie *Forrest Gump*, Tom Hanks says, "Momma always says there's an awful lot you could tell about a person by their shoes. Where they're going, where they've been."

There's something much deeper in a pair of boots than their rugged, worn-out, throw me away look; they tell a story - a story of hope, perseverance, strength and trust.

Think back to the day when you received your first pair of boots. Some of us can't remember because we were too young, but others were overwhelmed with excitement because the new boots would

finish off their cowboy look, make that new dress look so much cuter or they were just a much needed good ol' pair of shoes. Who would have ever thought your boots would endure such great adventures and be involved with so many fond memories?

If we were to ask Pittman's boots their story, you would hear of the times he has depended on them to walk around the school campus day after day, supply his feet with the comfort needed when showing his heifer, the many rodeo arenas they have strolled and the late nights he spends practicing as the sweat falls before them.

Every pair of boots has their own story to tell, and if your boots could talk what story would they tell? Would they brag of the long hours you've worked shedding sweat and blood? What about the many fences you've built or tractors you've driven? Or that championship you never thought you'd win?

No matter if your boots walked hundreds of miles, spent countless hours in the rodeo arena or just accompanied you to a dance, your boots fulfilled some sort of purpose in your life. If you don't tell the stories of your great adventures, the boots on your feet will tell it for you because every pair of boots has their own story.



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Photo by Joey West





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John Justin

STANDARD OF THE WEST

2009-10 STATE FINALIST PROFILES

The "Standard of the West" Award was created to recognize FFA members who exemplify the spirit of agriculture, along with its work ethic and family values. Award selection is based upon the individual's integrity, honesty, helpfulness, perseverance, grades and school attendance.



William Kilpatrick

AREA IV ~ MERKEL FFA

- ★ Chapter Vice President
- ★ Chapter Treasurer
- ★ Lone Star Degree Recipient
- ★ Swine Proficiency Award
- ★ Chapter Conducting, Quiz LDEs
- ★ Livestock, Cotton and Meat Judging CDEs
- ★ National Honor Society Reporter
- ★ Varsity Basketball
- ★ Gilbert Cook Memorial Team Roping
- ★ Texas Pork Producers



Claire Luensmann

AREA VII ~ LA VERNIA FFA

- ★ Chapter President
- ★ State Convention Delegate
- ★ Floriculture, Dairy Foods, Poultry Evaluation CDEs
- ★ First Place Individual for National Poultry Judging CDE Contest
- ★ Quiz, Chapter Conducting LDEs
- ★ National Honor Society President
- ★ Class Treasurer
- ★ District UIL Feature Writer
- ★ Clemens 4-H Club President

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YOUR AREA OR
FFA CHAPTER COULD BE
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TEXAS FFA NEWS

(SEE PAGE H FOR THIS ISSUE'S
AREA VII SPOTLIGHT)

WHAT IS YOUR CHAPTER
DOING THIS YEAR?

DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN A UNIQUE ACTIVITY,
FUNDRAISER OR COMMUNITY SERVICE
PROJECT? DOES YOUR AG SCIENCE
INSTRUCTOR TEACH
A REALLY COOL LESSON?

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Ty Barrientes

AREA X ~ SHARYLAND FFA

- ★ District President
- ★ Chapter Vice President
- ★ Ag Sales Proficiency Award
- ★ Agricultural Education Proficiency Award
- ★ Beef Cattle Proficiency Award
- ★ Livestock, Land, Citrus, Vegetable CDEs
- ★ Senior Skills Demonstration
- ★ Texas Beef Young Leaders
- ★ LEO Club
- ★ Toys for Tots, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Kids 4 Kids Buyers Club

Go GREEN with Texas FFA!

- Brittany Selph, Wall FFA

"Going green," is a phrase seen or heard just about anywhere you turn these days, but what does it really mean to go green? Making a collective effort to improve the environment for the current community and the future generations to come is what it takes to earn a "Going Green" title. Many FFA chapters across the state of Texas are joining this environmentally friendly movement and doing their part to help their surroundings.

The Menard High School FFA is doing their part for the environment by making an effort to incorporate eco-friendly fuels into their agriculture department. "In order to become greener our FFA has made efforts to include biodiesel into our program," said John Osburn, the Menard agriculture teacher.

Biodiesel is an alternative, clean burning fuel that is biodegradable and nontoxic. Not only does it help the environment by producing significantly lower emissions than regular diesel, it also helps the economy because it is made and distributed within the U.S. "There are numerous ways for an FFA chapter to help out their community and get involved with cleaning up their environment. They just have to find the right program that fits their school," said Larissa Murray, a student from the Uvalde FFA.

For many people the first thing that comes to mind when they hear the phrase "Going Green" is the saying "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." This

year the Uvalde High School FFA has made new efforts to considerably reduce their amount of paper use.

"This year our agriculture program has done away with the large paper record books and has transferred them to computers. Now instead of issuing a book to every student we can enter all of our information online and in turn help out the environment," said Murray. There are countless ways for an FFA chapter to get involved, all that is needed is a little motivation! If you are interested in improving the environment find something that affects your school and community and create a program that helps to overcome the issue. Some environmental problems include excessive amounts of un-recycled bottles and paper or rising pollution within a community. Use your chapter to educate others about a more eco-friendly world, start recycling together as a group or set aside an afternoon to pick up trash. There are also many small yet affective ways to help out the environment from inside the classroom. Going green can be as simple as setting aside an accessible box to put recyclable paper in that can be reused for class assignments, notes or any other classroom work. Much like Uvalde's program it is also environmentally friendly to convert paper documents to computer files.

The environment is very valuable especially to the agricultural world and it is up to us to give back and improve our surroundings for our community. It's time to go green with the Texas FFA!

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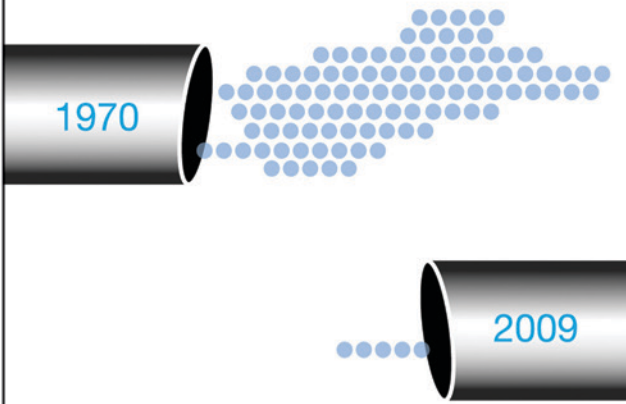
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The FFA

Changing Lives, Changing the World

- Johnna Schwartz, Wall FFA

From viewing young children show their first livestock animal, to watching state officer candidates compete for the coveted 'President' title, it is really simple to see the FFA organization constantly inspiring and changing countless lives. With thousands of dollars of scholarships, opportunities to meet new people and the chance to climb the ladder up to a high office, the FFA inspires individuals to be the best they can be and to accomplish everything they could possibly dream of achieving.

"Before joining the FFA, I was under the impression that a high school student couldn't make a true difference in the world. I was wrong. After becoming an active member of the Texas FFA, I was able to see some of the many opportunities we have to change things. It was my involvement in FFA that began my journey in helping those around me. I have become a firm believer in the idea that by helping others become better people I, too, can become a better person," said Texas FFA State President Allison Grainger.

By getting involved with the FFA, many occasions arise with the opportunity to explore various communities and meet hundreds of new and exciting people. Livestock shows, animal and plant judging contests, conventions, meetings, community activities and many other competing events are easy ways that the FFA helps instill confidence in its members. Whether it is a big or small change, the FFA helps everyone from students, agriculture teachers, parents and alumni get more involved in their community and make a positive difference in the world.

"I think FFA has given me a better understanding of who I am and what I value. We all know that the Texas FFA instills in each of us the work ethic and leadership skills to be successful later on. Additionally, though, students who take an active role in FFA events or programs often stumble across what else is important to them. I have found that I value compassion and professionalism. This knowledge that the FFA provides for us, in turn, allows us to begin making a positive impact on the world around us by focusing on what we feel strongly about," Grainger said.

Not only changing lives, FFA also makes positive differences in hundreds if not thousands of communities. Many FFA chapters are now implementing "Go Green" projects such as recycling and using energy efficient equipment to save power. One FFA chapter may make a small difference; however, when combined with hundreds of other FFA chapters, these projects certainly add up and end up making a HUGE change!

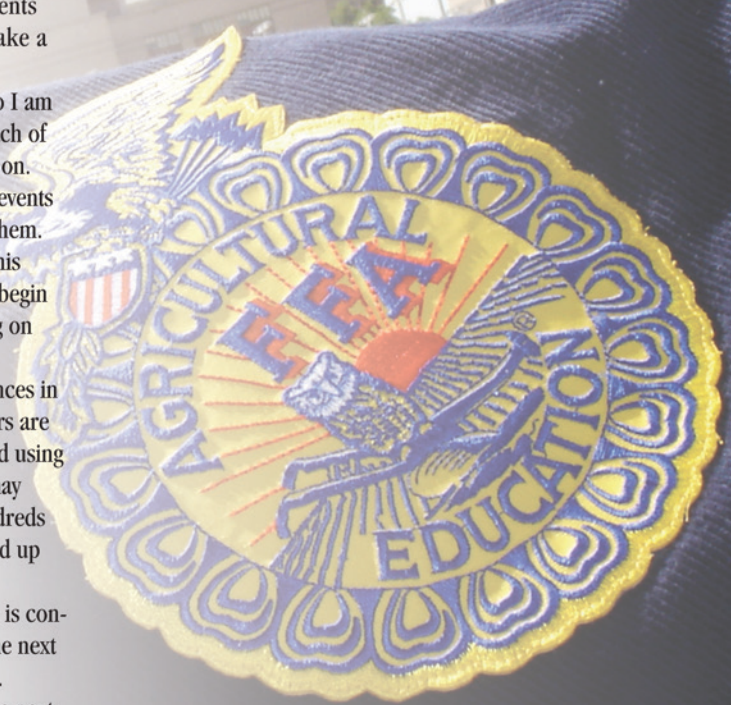
FFA doesn't stop there! The Texas FFA State Officer team is constantly thinking up new ideas and goals to complete within the next year to help further involve members in the FFA organization.

"Our team recently sat down to outline our goals for this next year. We plan to develop programs or activities that specifically

target minority students, to create a day of service that students in all communities could participate in, to secure a camp ground for FFA activities and to develop promotional videos, etc. for the Texas FFA. You will certainly see more to come in each of these areas throughout the next year," Grainger said.

When it comes to the FFA, it does not matter what your background is, or where you come from. The FFA has the same, powerful effect on all of its members. This organization constantly challenges members, seeks the good in every outcome, has countless new opportunities and provides innumerable memories to cherish for a lifetime. If it wasn't for the FFA, thousands of lives would be a little less interesting without that special spark that the FFA organization gives its members.

Lastly, Grainger stated, "There is, in fact, something for everyone in the Texas FFA. The students that I have been blessed to meet throughout my travels have inspired me far beyond anything I can put into words. I have certainly learned how to appreciate the smallest details of what makes us unique."



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OUTLOOK

Official Publication of the Oklahoma FFA Association • December 2009

Alumni Association to sponsor THREE busses to WLC

Missouri. Illinois. Indiana. Ohio. Pennsylvania. West Virginia. Maryland. Virginia. Tennessee. Arkansas. And, Oklahoma. That's a pretty impressive list of states if you're keeping track of all the places I've been' as a high school student. What's even more impressive is that it can all happen with some of your closest friends!

Oklahoma FFA is one of very few states that organizes a bus trip to the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) held in Washington, DC each summer. And for the first time ever, the Oklahoma FFA Alumni Association is sponsoring three buses making a total of 145 seats available.

"Because of the demand, we're adding a third bus!" explained Kent Boggs, Oklahoma FFA executive secretary.

This year's trip will be June 6-14, 2010 and is certain to be a highlight of the attendee's FFA career. Just ask anyone who has gone before.

"Growth wise, there is no doubt. WLC was awesome. The best thing though was to be with and relate with students on a level that is totally unique," said Maverick Squires, Noble FFA member and WLC '09 scholarship recipient. "That was an experience I will never forget!"

For many Americans, the opportunity to visit the Nation's capitol doesn't come around. That's why since the 1970s, the Oklahoma FFA Alumni Association has insured that FFA members have an affordable way to get to Washington, DC.

WLC 2010 Trip Facts

- \$950 includes the conference fee and round-trip travel
- WLC Scholarship Recipients receive first priority for the bus trip
- Scholarship Applications must be postmarked on or before March 1
- Buses will fill on first come, first serve basis
- Final registration is May 15



Heather Campbell, Depew and Carla Ott, Oklahoma Union working during service day near the Potomac River.



Heather Campbell, Depew and Owen Hossack, Owasso in front of the US Capitol.



Marty Jones, Owasso with State President Amy Peel on the bus before departure. "The whole experience changed me, inspired me, and allowed me to grow as a person in ways I never imagined," Jones said.

"Seeing all the monuments and places that are what we read about in our history and then realize that you're up close and personal with those places is so rewarding," said Heather Campbell, Depew FFA member who received an \$850 WLC scholarship.

Kurt Murray, the trip's organizer, explained the details. "On the way up we drive all night then stop in Indianapolis to see the National FFA center and we go to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway where students ride around the speedway. We then travel onto Cambridge, OH where we get to stay all night and have a pizza party. The next morning we drive into DC for the conference that begins on June 8. Coming home we drive straight through taking the southern route that puts us through a lot more states."

Sightseeing, premier leadership training, and traveling aside, Squires says, "The bus ride was by far the very best part!"

Go to okffa.org for much more WLC trip & scholarship info.



National FFA week idea sharing

Most all of Oklahoma's 357 chapters celebrate National FFA week. To help in your planning effort, here are some unique ideas from some of the National Three Star Chapters in our state.



Matthew Kane, Pawhuska FFA member, holds a show steer for middle school students to get their hands on him. The idea is to have the opportunity to teach the students about different livestock and how those animals affect their everyday life. FFA members also share with the middle schoolers about FFA and what the organization has to offer.



Joseph Harrison, Kingston FFA member, primes a water pump to demonstrate for elementary students some of agriculture's history. The Marshall County Antique Iron Club also brings tractors and a corn shucker to the school for students to see. Each elementary student that participates in the day gets to take home a "bean baby" from a presentation given by the chapter officers that teaches students about how seeds grow. Students learn how to care for their babies and get to watch at home until their beans sprout.



Cheyenne FFA Chapter holds a coloring contest within each elementary class. Here advisor Nathan Torrance and members Phylli Black, Chelsea Hay and Destony Sturgeon visit classrooms to explain the contest and what FFA week is all about. The winners are rewarded with an ice cream party. Other activities during FFA week at Cheyenne include a luncheon for the school's faculty and staff served by the chapter. Dusta Kimzey and Adrian Rodriguez are shown here watching over the grill. The members are invited to attend a church service together at the beginning of the week.



How the date is chosen for National FFA Week

At the July 19, 1947, board meeting, it was decided that the week of George Washington's birthday would be designated as National FFA Week. FFA Week always runs from Saturday to Saturday, so the dates are selected to encompass February 22 – Washington's birthday.



Oklahoma FFA



2009-10 Oklahoma FFA Association Officers
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McKenzie Clifton, Kelli Shenold,
Robby Branscum, Emily Beanland & Josh Goff

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2010 FFA Events

January 19-28.....State FFA Officer Goodwill Tour
February 13-14..... State Officer Nominating Committee
February 15..... FFA Day at the State Capitol
February 20-27.....National FFA Week
March 12-22 Oklahoma Youth Expo
April 1 Connors FFA Interscholastics
April 6 Murray FFA Interscholastics
April 7 Cameron FFA Interscholastics
April 8 OSU Technical Institute FFA Interscholastics
April 9 EOSC FFA Interscholastics
April 9-10 NEO FFA Interscholastics
April 14 Redlands FFA Interscholastics
April 16 TCC FFA Interscholastics
April 23-24 State FFA Interscholastics
April 27-28 State FFA Convention
June 6-14 WLC Alumni Bus Trip
June 21-25 Future Ag-Ed Teacher Academy
June 27-30 Alumni Leadership Camp #1
June 30-July 3 Alumni Leadership Camp #2
July 4-7 Alumni Leadership Camp #3
July 7-10 Alumni Leadership Camp #4
July 20-22 OSU Big Three Field Days

In Oklahoma FFA...

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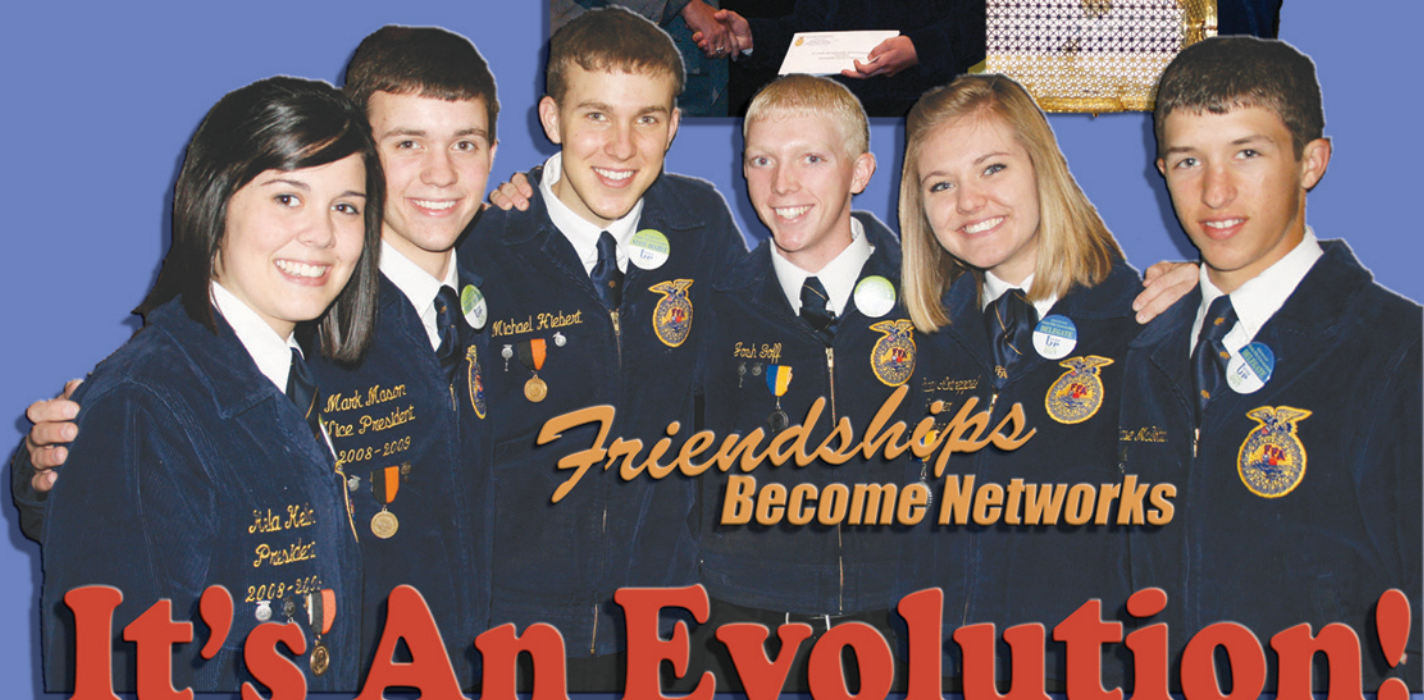
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Become Springboards*



*Projects
Become Careers*



*Friendships
Become Networks*



It's An Evolution!

Reporter's symposium names winner

The article below, written by Ivy Hill of the Coyle FFA Chapter, was selected as the best news release at the 2009 FFA reporters symposium. It is reprinted here in its entirety.

Coyle FFA members attend reporter's symposium

CUSHING, Okla. - Katie Brake and Ivy Hill of the Coyle FFA chapter recently attended the FFA Reporter's Symposium on July 28 in Cushing.

Hosted by the Cushing FFA chapter and presented by Oklahoma State University agricultural communications students, this year's event focused on 46 participants creating a sample FFA newsletter and news release to take home with them to utilize as samples within their own chapters. Participants were divided into small groups to better focus on effective writing skills, photo staging and FFA scrapbook and portfolio requirements.

"I've had a great time, and have learned so much that I'm going to take back and apply in my chapter," said Katie Brake, chapter member about her time at the symposium.

The symposium was presented in part by state FFA officers Amy Peel, Kelli Shenold and Robby Branscum, with special attendance from several OSU agricultural communications professors. The group was also treated to lunch sponsored by the Cushing FFA Booster Club.

Each participant took part in a news release competition. Each group winner received their registration money back. Group winners included Laurie Fitch of Stillwater FFA, Kera Parker of Spiro FFA, Cyriece Oliver of Owasso FFA and Ivy Hill of Coyle Hill. The overall winner was Hill.

The Coyle FFA chapter includes 37 students and is advised by Bert O'Hara. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential growth and career success through agricultural education.

FFA prepares students for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture. For more info., visit <http://okffa.org>.

###



Fairland FFA shows appreciation to troops *By Kelsey Allman, chapter reporter*

On August 1, 2009, seven Fairland FFA members assisted the "All American Beef Battalion", (AABB) by helping to prepare and serve steaks to over seven hundred troops and their families with the 31st Brigade Air Defense Artillery stationed at Ft Sill, Lawton, Oklahoma.

Members of the chapter were invited to help and be honored for their part in raising funds to support the AABB. For the past two years, members of the Agricultural Mechanics class have built free standing swing frames to be auctioned off at the labor auction held in March with the proceeds from the sale of the swings being

forwarded to the AABB to help defray the cost of the steaks served to troops.

A total of \$1,350.00 has been raised for this effort thanks to the winning bidders of the swings.

This effort is a way for the Fairland FFA to say thanks to the troops for protecting us and an opportunity to promote the Beef industry. The goal of AABB is to serve good steaks to deploying or returning troops and to let them know that the American Cattleman and others like them support and appreciate their sacrifices.



McKenzie Clifton
State FFA Secretary

McKenzie's Favorites

color **Green**

drink **Chocolate Milk**

book **"The Last Lecture"**

band **Eli Young Band**

movie **"The Bucket List"**

food **Mexican**

FFA activity **Livestock Evaluation**

Live life to the fullest *a letter from McKenzie Clifton*

I have come to realize that no matter what you think you want in life, or what others want for you, the thing that truly matters in the end is what God has planned just for you.

I have been through some tough and challenging situations. However, I have been fortunate throughout my life to grow up with an ideal role model, best friend, and mentor. My older sister, Chelsea, has been my "everything" – much more than I could have ever imagined. The most important lesson she has taught me is that hard work is the ultimate secret to success in life.

Growing up on our Kingfisher farm, I recall that every day during the summer my sister and I would wake up and go to the barn to work with our show lambs, and then do other farm chores as assigned. My problem was that I am absolutely not a morning person! My sister had to literally drag me out of bed. Even though I disliked it then, I

thank God, my sister, and my parents every day for instilling in me the important life skills that have made me the person I am today.

I developed this philosophy after joining the FFA in the eighth grade. I appreciate so much being a member of a successful FFA chapter that pushed me to get involved and to give everything I had

when I participated in livestock shows, competitive events, and leadership activities.

Yes, both my family and the FFA have been powerful forces in my development as a person. But the best thing they helped me to discover is to "live my life." We all

have a path we are destined to follow. Don't let anyone tell you how you are supposed to live your life, the road you are supposed to take, or what you are supposed to do.

FFA members, I challenge you to live your life to the fullest.

“ We all have a path we are destined to follow. ”

Build your best *a letter from Kelli Shenold*

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. His boss was sorry to see his good worker go and asked, as a personal favor, if he could build just one more house. The carpenter said yes, but over time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to sloppy workmanship and used cheap materials throughout the house. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work, his employer came to inspect the house. Then he handed the front-door key to the carpenter and said, “This is your new house – it is my gift to you.” The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.

FFA members, it is the same with many of us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into our work. Then we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we would do it much differently; however, the

truth is, we cannot go back and do it again.

I am blessed with the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to serve the FFA as a state officer. I can assure you that I did not reach this position by simply building my house with whatever was convenient at the time. No, I used all the wonderful materials FFA provided to me. It wasn't always easy. There were times when I thought,

“What teenager wants to spend Friday night memorizing a speech or placing a class of dairy cows?” But now I realize that those materials were building the foundation of my strong house – a house that will last through the storms and struggles I will face.

You are the carpenter of your own life, and every day you hammer a nail, place a board, or put up a wall. Someone once said, “Life is a do-it-yourself project.” Your attitude, and the choices you make today, help build the “house” you will live in tomorrow. FFA members, build wisely!

“

*‘Life is a
do-it-yourself project’*

”

Kelli's Favorites

SAE **Goats**

food **Ice Cream**

pastime **Scrapbooking**

TV show **King of Queens**

Bible verse **Jeremiah 29:11**

actor **Will Ferrell**

color **Pink**



Kelli Shenold

Central District Vice President

Visit okffa.org for more pictures and information about your state FFA officers.



FFA lays foundation for McNiel

by Shelly Peper Sitton

At age 31, Skye (Varner) McNiel may be “young” by some standards, but a quick glance at her résumé leaves no doubt this former Bristow FFA member embraces life’s opportunities – and challenges – with enthusiasm.

She’s an integral part of her family’s business, a wife, a mother of two, and the Oklahoma state representative for District 29. She credits FFA for her strong communication skills as well as her dedication, determination and professionalism.

“There was never a question I would be in FFA,” McNiel said. “It is the one high school experience I would do over and over again.”

As an FFA member, McNiel developed skills through her supervised agricultural experience program, which included showing cattle and sheep as well as managing feedlot cattle, commercial cattle and land for grazing and haying. She also gained public speaking expertise.

“Extemporaneous public speaking was the most challenging FFA experience I had,” she said, “but it gave me a boost for what I do today.”

McNiel’s hard work and leadership skills earned her the Oklahoma Star In Agribusiness award in 1996, just three years after her brother, Pokey Varner, captured the same title. Joe Stephens, their former FFA advisor, said he remembers having Skye in the chapter.

“Skye had a strong back and a strong mind,” Stephens said. “She was not afraid to voice her opinion about what our FFA chapter needed to be doing.”

After high school, McNiel attended Oklahoma State University and earned an agricultural communications/animal science degree in 2000. Her collegiate experiences included serving as an agricultural legislative intern.

“Although I originally wanted to be a lobbyist, politics were always in the back of my mind,” McNiel said.

Before entering the political arena in 2006, however, McNiel worked in marketing for Community Bank in Bristow and then owned and operated her own floral shop. When she



FFA Champion
State Rep. Skye McNiel

decided to run for state representative, she was eight months pregnant with daughter Jamison. Her husband, Pecos, and older daughter Paike Marie, now age 6, supported her throughout the campaign as did Stephens.

“When Skye first told me she was running, I was a little nervous for her because she was so young,” Stephens said. “But to me this is just an extension of all the things that went on in FFA.”

“It does not surprise me she is successful because she is so dedicated to what she does and so self-motivated to do the right thing.”

Now in her second term, McNiel continues to provide a voice for Oklahoma agriculture.

“You have to put yourself out there and take a chance,” she said.

She serves as vice chairwoman of the Natural Resources, Budget and Appropriations committee as well as the Republican Caucus. She serves on the CareerTech and Higher Education committee and the Economic Development and Financial Services committee. She also was appointed by Speaker Chris Benge to the Speaker’s Leadership Team.

When she’s not fulfilling her state representative duties, McNiel still does bookkeeping for Varner and Varner, her family’s order-buying business.

“I always make time to go back to my roots and help with the family business,” she said. “I want my girls to grow up knowing family is our first priority.”

McNiel said her success is due in large part to her family’s support, which has allowed her to follow her dreams.

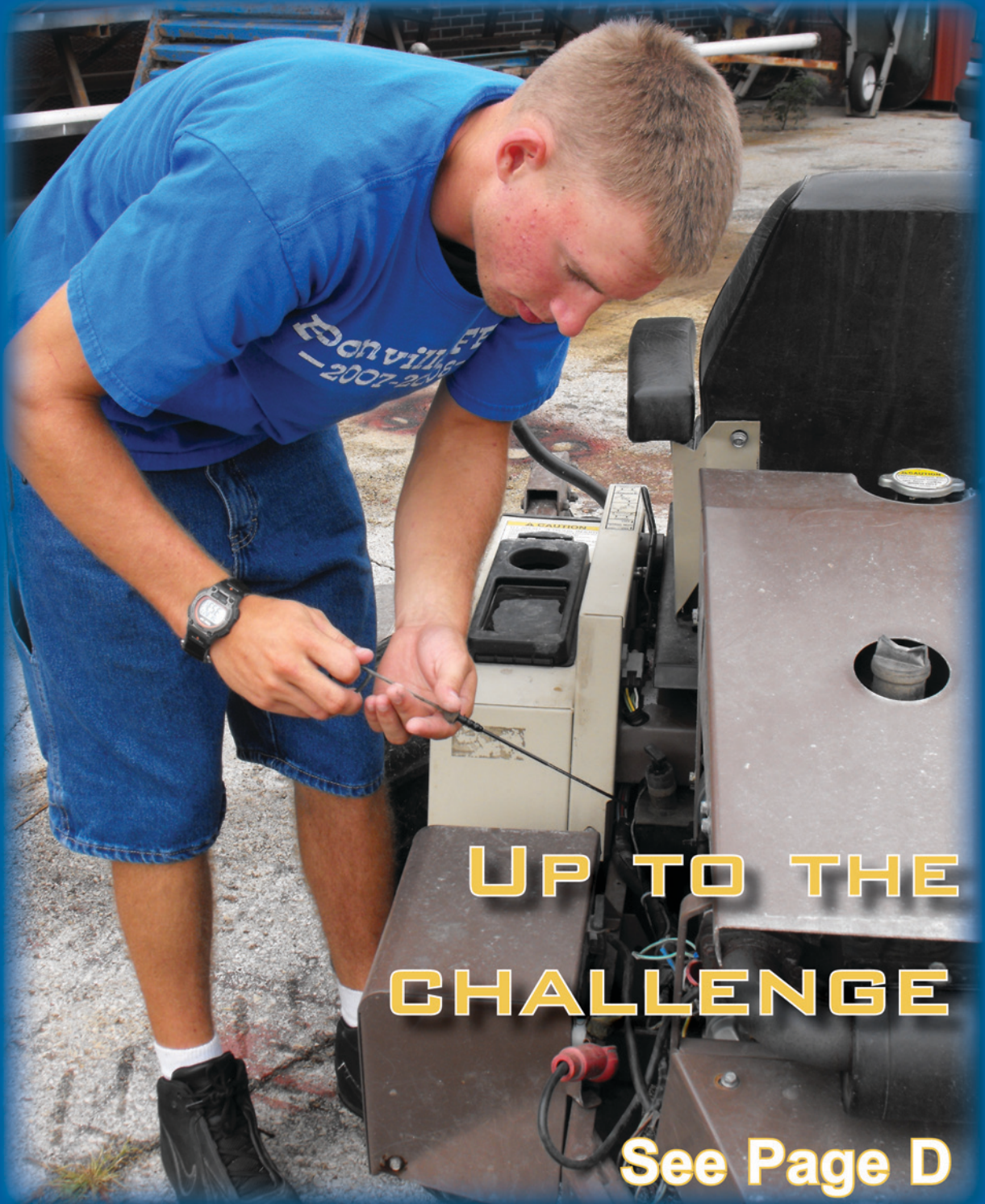
“Paike Marie tells me ‘Mommy, I love you to the Capitol and back,’” McNiel said. “It’s great to know she’s proud of what I’m doing.”

Even with the champion-level success McNiel has achieved, she is quick to give credit to the FFA for the foundation it provided.

“FFA is the one thing I will require of my daughters,” she said. “Everything you do [in FFA] just prepares you for life.”

Missouri FFA TODAY

December 2009



UP TO THE
CHALLENGE

See Page D

2009/2010 STATE OFFICERS

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5	Elizabeth Crane Troy
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P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102
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Missouri FFA Today • Joann Pipkin, Editor
3674 S. State Hwy N • Republic, MO 65738
Email: j_pipkin@sbcglobal.net
Phone: (417) 732-8552

This Issue...

ABOUT THE COVER:

Boonville FFA member Newt McGuire rose to the challenge of owning his own business, launching him to win a National AgriEntrepreneurship Award.

—Photos submitted by Newt McGuire. See story on Page D

FEATURES

- Lessons Learned — Page C
- Opportunities Abound — Page G

IN EVERY ISSUE

- Samantha Says... — Page B
- FFA Calendar - Page G

Samantha says...

BY SAMANTHA WARNER STATE FFA PRESIDENT

It was April of my senior year of high school. I was almost done with one stage of my life and ready to move on to the next! Unfortunately, I was not there yet. Before graduation day arrived I had so much to do.

I distinctly remember one stressful night in April. I had a ton of homework because my teachers were trying to cover as much material as they could before seniors took their final exams. It was also right before State Convention, so I needed to be studying for my state floriculture contest, practicing my FFA speech, writing a retiring president's address for chapter banquet, and a million other things. There was no way I was going to get everything done and not make any mistakes. What was I going to do?



The logical answer would be to do a better job of scheduling and not have as much to do at once. However, this was not the first or last time that I would feel a sense of panic because I had so much to do. I have found that the best cure for this problem is to keep

Continued on Next Page

CONT'D FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

working. Even though you may want to stop and call it quits, you have to push through the stress. If you do you will make it through.

When you set goals for yourself they do not happen overnight; you have to work for them. You might get into a bind, and you might make a mistake. The important point to remember is that as humans we are going to make mistakes. Even when things are tough, you have to stick with what you started—otherwise, you will never accomplish anything. Conrad Hilton said, "Success seems to be connected with action. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit." If you are going through a stressful time to stick with it, you will make it through!

LESSONS LEARNED FROM A GOOD COWBOY

Ouch! I can't breathe. Maybe I should just give up.

These were all thoughts I had running through my head one night at a rodeo when I had a 550-pound steer laying on me. As I did every Tuesday night, I was steer wrestling at a rodeo. On this particular night things didn't go as I had hoped. Instead of going over on his back, this steer out smarted me and just folded up his legs and laid down on top of me.

As I laid there trying to breathe, I had almost convinced myself to just let go of the steer so I could get up and catch my breath, but then I remembered something. I was leading in the season standings and if I gave



up I could kiss my chances at winning that buckle good bye. So, I decided to hold on. When

CONTINUED ON PAGE G

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Up to the Challenge

BY BEVERLEY KREUL

OWning a business is one of the most daunting tasks that a high school student can take. School, FFA, and other extra curricular activities are enough to keep any student busy. However, for Newt McGuire, a senior in the Boonville FFA Chapter, owning a business comes almost second nature. McGuire is a 2008-2009 recipient of the National Agri- Entrepreneurship Award.

The National Agri- Entrepreneurship Award was created to increase entrepreneurship among FFA chapters across the country. It

was the hope of the National FFA Organization that with increased knowledge in entrepreneurship more students would be inclined to start their own business. The FFA awards students who have recognized an open market and have set up a plan to pursue this opportunity.

McGuire started his own business, Spectacular Lawn Care, in 2007. He is involved in mowing lawns, trimming trees, leveling land, foundation sealing, snow shoveling, leaf removing, and much more. After only two years in business, McGuire has climbed the ranks to become a National Agri- Entrepreneur.

"I didn't think I was going to get too far at first," said McGuire. "Then on August 12, all the sudden, I had won. It was like I didn't know anything, then all of the sudden I knew everything."

McGuire joins 10 other students in the nation with this honor. Each student had the opportunity to set up a booth at the National FFA Convention and showcase his or her success to students from all across the country. Since winning, McGuire has reinvested every penny into new equipment for his operation. This includes the \$1,000 prize for finishing as a top 10 finalist.

McGuire started his SAE project his sophomore year after earning some cash from a calf crop. This paid for his first set of equipment and once his hard work and skill was seen, customers were waiting in line



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for Spectacular Lawn Care. In fact, word of mouth is his only advertising.

"I work between 45 and 60 hours a week," said McGuire. "It is hard, but if you keep track of your finances and don't procrastinate it all works out."

This was the same advice McGuire offered to other students who aspire to become an entrepreneur. After receiving the application in February, McGuire waited until his busiest season to actually begin filling it out. Fortunately, having good financial records helped with the application process

McGuire will be attending the Missouri Institute of Science and Technology next year and majoring in mechanical engineering. He plans on taking about half of his equipment with him and continuing his business outside of school, especially

Boonville FFA member Newt McGuire says having good financial records helped him apply for a National AgriEntrepreneurship Award.



now that he has been recognized on a national level.

"I am proud of my accomplishments, but I don't get the feeling that I am better

than anyone else," said McGuire. "I am sure that all the projects were close. If you want to win, you have to work hard."

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Opportunities Abound!

“Just try it for one year.”
These were the words of



MEREDITH JONES
STATE V.P., AREA 2

advice
issued by
my older brother regarding my
consideration of joining FFA. I

had no intention of being in FFA, despite the encouragement of my family. My plans for the future didn't include farming so why did I need FFA? My focus was on sports. My plans were to play softball in the fall, basketball in the winter, and finish the school year with track. I certainly would not have time for FFA.

It was nearing the end of eighth grade and our counselor was helping us select classes for our freshman year. I recalled stories my brother had told me about his FFA experiences. He served as an officer and won several awards and scholarships. He spoke of how

much fun it was and how many great friends he had made. So, I did it! In a weak moment, and with great uncertainty, I signed up for Ag class. Little did I know that this “questionable” decision would have such an impact on my life.

FFA offers opportunities for all who choose to participate and helps prepare its members with the skills necessary to meet future challenges. FFA teaches leadership, public speaking and develops high moral character and a strong work ethic. I encourage every one of you, from the farm or from the city, to get involved in what this organization has to offer. I'm a product of rural America, and I'm proud to be an FFA member!

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LESSONS LEARNED CONT'D FROM PAGE C

I tried turning the steer over on its back, I heard a seasoned cowboy yelling at me to stand the steer up. Standing that thing up and wrestling it again was the last thing I wanted to do but the cowboy had always given me good advice, so I stood the steer up and wrestled it until I finally got a time.

After it was over, the cowboy told me that the steer's leg I couldn't see was turned back to where it wouldn't have come off the ground when I turned the steer over and this would have given me a no time.

Thinking back on this night, I realized there were two lessons to be learned. First, think about how the decisions you make now will impact you later. If I had opted to turn the steer loose I wouldn't have won my buckle at the end of the year. As teenagers we all get too caught up living for the moment and we forget about tomorrow. The truth is sometimes we have to sacrifice what we want now to accomplish what needs to be done to make a brighter future.

Second, listen to those older and wiser than you. Part of growing up is learning to make decisions on your own, but it doesn't mean you're dumb or immature if you ask for guidance and take advice from those older and wiser than yourself. Sometimes you won't understand why your parents, bosses, or advisers make you do the things they do. You just have to trust they can see the things you can't and someday you will understand why they did it.

Greenhand Conferences Scheduled for January

Jan. 5 8:30 a.m. • Area 1
MWSC, St. Joseph

8:30 a.m. • Area 8
LU, Jefferson City

9 a.m. • Area 6
UCM, Warrensburg

11:30 a.m. • Area 1 & 2
MWSC, St. Joseph

12:30 p.m. • Area 7
UCM, Warrensburg

2 p.m. • Area 14
Sullivan

Jan. 6 8:30 a.m. • Area 2
NMC, Trenton

9 a.m. • Area 11
MSU, Springfield

Jan. 6 9 a.m. • Area 15
SEMO, Cape Girardeau

2 p.m. • Area 12
MSU, Springfield

4 p.m. • Area 16
SEMO, Cape Girardeau

Jan. 7 9 a.m. • Area 4
MU, Columbia

9 a.m. • Area 9
MSU, Springfield

2 p.m. • Area 10
MSU, Springfield

4 p.m. • Area 5
Bowling Green

FFA CALENDAR

December

- 1.....Building Our American Communities Grant Apps. DUE
- 1.....University of Missouri Scholarship Apps. DUE
- 4-5.....Missouri Livestock Symposium - Kirksville
- 6..Missouri Farm Bureau Public Speaking Finals - Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach
- 6....Mo. Sheep Producers Public Speaking Finals - Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach
- 6-8.....Missouri Farm Bureau Annual Meeting - Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach
- 11-12.....Missouri Cattle Industry Convention - Springfield

January

- 16.....Central District FFA League Shoot - UCM, Warrensburg
- * Greenhand Motivational Conferences - See above for dates & locations.

February

- 1.....Mo. Agribusiness Academy Applications DUE
- 1.....Mo. State Fair Youth in Ag Scholarship Apps. DUE
- 10-11..Missouri Pork Association State Public Speaking Finals - Columbia
- 19-21.....Western Farm Show - Kansas City
- 20-27.....National FFA Week



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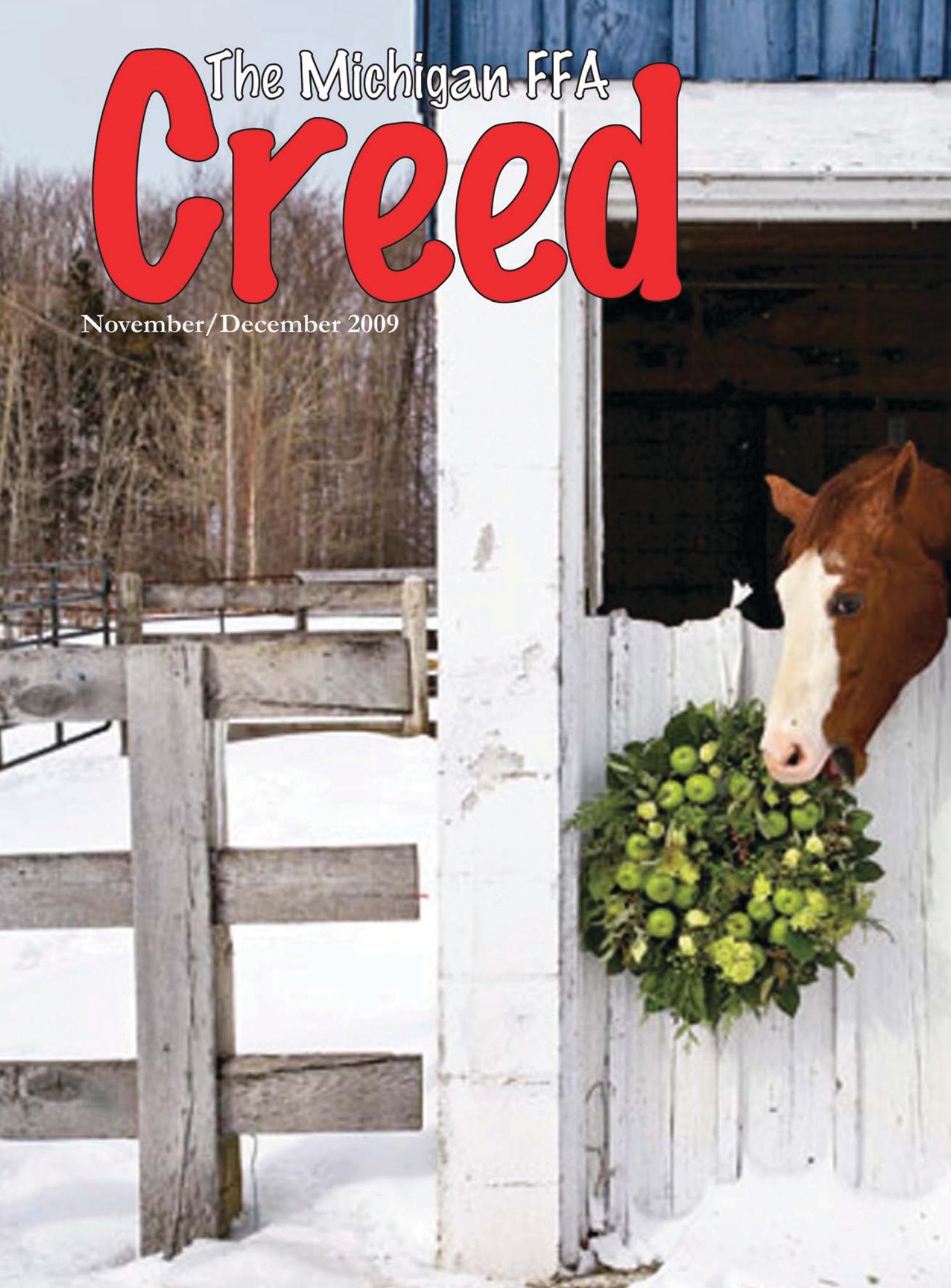
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The Michigan FFA Creed

November/December 2009



The Michigan FFA Creed

Issue 2 Volume 8

The State FFA Office
108 Natural Resources
East Lansing, MI 48824
www.michiganffa.com
association@michiganffa.com
(517) 353-9221
(517) 432-5632 (fax)

C I Believe In...

Read some words of insight about appreciating every moment in your life, written by your State Secretary.

D Member Highlight

Explore what six members of this state are doing within their chapters and communities.

F Our Motto in Motion

Check out how chapters and members around Michigan are serving their communities.

J Promoting Animal Agriculture

Read about a discussion between PETA and MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources students about Animal Welfare.

L Whats the Word?

Sit back and relax, while also broadening your horizons by completing FFA puzzles.

N Rest of the Story

Learn more about two of your state officers.

The Michigan FFA will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, weight, sexual orientation or disability. Any student requiring an accommodation as a result of a disability should contact the chapter advisor to arrange such accommodation.

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I believe in...

A blue corduroy jacket.

We're all familiar with the blue (sometimes purple) corduroy jacket that defines Official Dress. They can make us look like flight attendants and feel invincible all at the same time. So what is it about those blue jackets that seem to transform us? Is it the corduroy? Or maybe it's the gold stitching? In my first years of membership, I wondered if my jacket was magical. Then, I learned that other members felt the same way! So what do they put in that material? On my quest to figure this out, I turned, of course, to Google™ for the answer. This is what I found:

“Originally created to be worn by the Fredericktown Band of the Fredericktown FFA Chapter by Dr. Gus Lintner the Official FFA Jacket was adopted in 1933 as the Organization's Official Dress.” There is not anything in there about magic, so I kept looking. On the pages of a blog these words were written:

“Think of an FFA jacket. It may be brand new or faded, but it is still a jacket. When it is being worn, it represents all of the opportunities you have as an FFA member” So then I got to thinking, what about when we're not

wearing our jackets; do the opportunities leave us?

After six years of being involved in this organization, I am confident that I now know what makes our jackets so special. Nope, it's not the corduroy or corn gold; it's the members who wear them. As members of the largest youth organization in the world, we truly have the power to make a positive difference in life. The ability however, comes not only when we are wearing our famous blue jackets, but every day.

The next time you put on your jacket, I hope you are reminded of all the opportunities the National FFA Organization offers, but remember that the opportunities don't leave us when we remove our jackets. Capture the amazing feeling that wearing your jacket brings and never let it fade.

Dates to Remember...

November

- 2 Broiler Weigh Date
- 5-6 Contest for Broilers-Fowlerville Poultry Processing
- 10-11 Fall PDI/MFE/ALD Conferences
- 13 Fall Membership Rosters and Program of Activities Due

December

- 1 The following items are due to the State FFA Office:
Regional Grant Applications and Star Candidate Applications (includes star battery and state degree application) Star Candidate Applications must be in the state office by Dec. 1. Those received after this date will not be considered
- 14 MFB/FFA Ag Career and Leadership Conference - Kellogg Center, MSU
- 14 Board of Directors Meeting - MSU 5-8 p.m.

Member

Region I

Kara Bosserd-Marshall FFA

Kara Bosserd is a senior at Marshall high school and an active member of the Marshall FFA Chapter. Throughout her FFA career she has participated on the Greenhand Conduct of Meetings team and Demonstration team, as well as participated in many other chapter and state events. She has attended National Convention, State Convention and has served as the Marshall FFA President for three years.

Besides being very involved within her chapter, Kara has a well developed SAE in the area of Equine Science. Bosserd has worked on Crystal Morgan Horse Farms since she was 12, where she cares and works with horses. She is a member of the Marshall Equestrian Team and has shown her horse in numerous circuits. Besides her equine SAE, Kara has a well developed SAE in Beef Production. She lives on a family owned beef cattle operation and currently owns her own cow calf herd that consists of six shorthorn heifers. She has also raises steers for her county fair, state and national shows.

After high school Kara plans on attending college and majoring in Agribusiness Management.



Region II

Destini Forbes-Waldron FFA

Destini is a senior at Waldron High School, and an active member of the Waldron FFA chapter. She has participated in many FFA events such as National Convention, State Convention, and the chapter labor auction. In addition to participating in many events she is currently serving as the Waldron FFA Secretary.

Destini's Supervised Agricultural Experience is in the area of Rabbit Production, where to she breeds and markets her rabbits.

After high school, Forbes has aspirations of becoming a State FFA Officer, as well as attending college to become a prosecuting attorney.

Region III

Jordan Henry-Alma FFA

Jordan Henry, a senior at Alma High School and the President of both her Region and Chapter, has been studying nutrition as her newest Supervised Agricultural Experience. Being her newest SAE, Jordan is really working on expanding and building onto it within this year. So far, she has worked with elementary students, teaching them about how certain foods grow, including fruits and vegetables. She also works on teaching them the food pyramid and the difference between whole food and processed food. Jordan said, "The best thing was teaching them how to grow it and seeing them actually harvest what they grew." Her other SAE is Diversified Livestock Production, where she has raised sheep and beef and exhibited them at the Gratiot County Fair for Youth. Beyond FFA, Jordan is active in student council, being a class officer, her high school NHS, 4-H, playing basketball, track and drama club. Jordan plans on attending Michigan State University in the fall to achieve a degree in Nutrition or Counseling.



Highlights



Region IV

Megan Luchenbill-Durand FFA

A junior at Durand high school, Megan Luchenbill has enjoyed a truly “diversified” FFA experience, participating in the Broiler Project, Greenhand Conduct of Meetings, Land Conservation, Demonstration, Washington Leadership Conference and several hog shows within her SAE of Swine Management. Megan also shows horses and has served as Durand’s chapter Treasurer, Vice President and the 2009-2010 Region IV Vice President in addition to active involvement in 4-H, Color Guard, Competitive Cheerleading, Track and Field, the DFUMC Youth Group, and Durand’s Equestrian Team.

After graduating from high school, Luchenbill plans to attend MSU to major in Elementary Education or Psychology.

Region V

David Hickey-Lakewood FFA

David Hickey of the Lakewood FFA chapter has been actively involved in all aspects of FFA, from serving as a chapter Sentinel, from excelling in Agriculture classes to preparing an outstanding SAE. David has been improving his Swine Production SAE over the past two years. This year he was awarded Grand Champion Carcass hog for the second year in a row and made it through the first round of Senior Showmanship at the Ionia County 4-H show as part of the Ionia Free Fair. Along with showing his own hogs, David helped out his FFA chapter by stepping up and showing the chapter’s hogs as well. He also raises his own Pheasants to sell.

After graduating high school David hopes to move on from serving his FFA chapter to serving his country through the National Guard.



Region VI

Jessica Aube-Alpena FFA

As a senior in the Alpena FFA Chapter, Jessica Aube is a busy young lady. Throughout her FFA career she has participated in many different FFA events like the Region VI Decathlon, FFA Week, chapter fruit sale, local parades, SLCCO, SLCRO, Region VI Leadership Camp and WLC. She has also participated in Greenhand Conduct of Meetings and Agricultural Issues Leadership Contests.

Currently, Jessica is the Alpena FFA Secretary and the Region VI Reporter.

Her SAE is Diversified Livestock where she raises steers and market hogs to show and sell at her county fair. When asked what she has gained from the FFA she replied, “From being involved in the FFA I have gained public speaking skills, leadership skills, and most of all friendships!” After college she plans on going into radiology and owning a small farm.



Our Motto in Motion

Learning to Do



By: Haley Schulz
Baker College Nursing Major
&
Elizabeth Hager
MSU Engineering Major

Educating children in the ways of Agriculture has been essential to the future of our communities and agricultural practices. Project RED was first developed at a Farm Bureau event in Ohio. Agricultural Education being a new importance, Deb Kubacki and Charlene Hagen decided that it would be a great idea to implement this program throughout Michigan. Rural Education Day, otherwise known as Project RED, started in 1998, is a yearly presentation put on by high school students to inform the public about the importance of agriculture through demonstration. Every year at the beginning of September, elementary students from the thumb of Michigan visit the Huron County Fairgrounds where there are a number of booths, demonstrations, and activities for the youngsters to take part in. The stations vary from teaching kids about growing crops to how to raise farm animals. "Project RED has not only influenced third graders, but it also benefits the FFA members who put together the demonstrations," explains Laker FFA Ag advisor Don Wheeler. The motto of Project RED is, "To create a better tomorrow, today," by educating the public about agriculture, that's just what local high school students are doing.

Since 1998, Huron County's Project RED has expanded to now include nineteen area elementary schools and approximately six hundred and fifty third graders participate in Project RED yearly. Over the eleven years, 7,150 students have been influenced by agriculture. Third grader Jimmy Leitch from Laker Elementary says, "Project RED is a lot of fun because it teaches the kids who

don't live on a farm how much work you have to do and we get out of school for a day!" Not only is Project RED fun for the students, teachers, elders, and other community members enjoy it also. Approximately 250 community members come to support Project RED every year. Wheeler quotes, "I feel it is important for my students to understand the need to educate people and students about agriculture because it affects us daily. Education is the key. Project RED is a fun way to educate the community."

Over the past eleven years, the Huron County Farm Bureau has selected the Laker FFA to demonstrate agriculture through presentation. The students are given the overall theme of Project RED and then it is up to the group of students to come up with their presentation. This year the theme is Everyday Crops, and the Laker FFA came to a consensus that they would like to educate the third graders on one of their favorite foods, the potato. The Laker FFA Officer Team has been hard at work for three weeks, putting together the content of their presentation. The officer team consists of Nick Holzwart, Andrea Schuette, Nick Verhaar, Sam Engelhardt, Bret Foltz, Taryn Wessels, Carmen Zwemmer, Kaite Smith and Tiffany Kreh. The team agreed that potatoes are a very relatable food for all young children. Nick Holzwart says, "Potatoes come in kids' favorite forms: French fries and chips. We hope that by choosing something that is very common, they will be very attentive and be interested." Their presentation mainly consists of a short skit telling the history of where the potato came from and then how it quickly moved all throughout the world. They will also be showing how to plant a potato and the different stages of the potato growing, and then how they are harvested. Then they will have a "farmer" sell his potatoes to a local diner, "Potato Palace," to use to make their best seller, French fries. Within the diner another demonstration takes place and shows how the fries are cut and the different ways it can be prepared. Following that they have a short game and trivia planned to test the knowledge that they have learned. For the kids participation every student will be receiving a coupon for a small fry at Wendy's. This year over six hundred and fifty coupons will be given out.

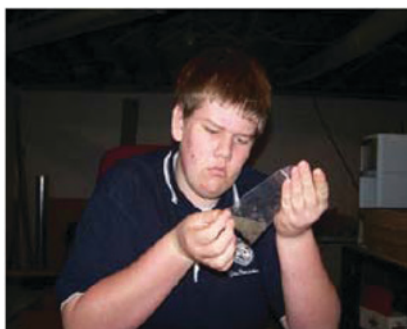
The Laker FFA takes pride over their demonstration at Project RED and for the past nine years has received very positive feedback from parents, advisors, the newspaper, and of course the elementary students. The officers would like to thank Huron County Farm Bureau for allowing them to be apart of Project RED and hopes that they will continue to sponsor Project RED, for they feel it is very beneficial for everyone.



Doing to Learn

By: Beth Oliver
MSU Agribusiness Major
&
Jeff Schmitt
MSU Agribusiness Major

As a child growing up in Ravenna, Michigan, Jasper Cunningham shared the dreams of many other children, envisioning a day when he would influence the lives of civilians as a doctor, lawyer or policeman. Now, the high school senior plans on saving the world in a different manner, thanks to involvement in a very unique Supervised Agricultural Experience.



Jasper started his project.

Upon joining the Ravenna FFA Chapter his freshman year of high school, Jasper discovered a career pathway that satisfied both of his passions; agriculture and helping others. With the ultimate goal of a Food Science career,

The first to admit that he didn't want just an "average" SAE, Jasper was determined to launch a truly extraordinary project. As a freshman, he approached his advisor, Mrs. Melanie Block, and asked, "What makes an SAE not just good, but great?" Her response was "A great SAE is made by someone who will put time and effort towards a goal they set about their SAE. Also, a unique plan can make a great SAE, especially if the plan has a certain sense of rarity to it." Still searching for ideas, Jasper turned to his community, noting a need for a local seed supplier. With the push for reducing carbon footprints and buying locally, Jasper's idea hit at just the right time and was turned into action as Seed Boy Seed Company.

"Seed Boy is a one-hundred percent sole proprietorship that strives to deliver a high-quality product, while maintaining a service standard of excellence and creating a quality guaranteed product at a reasonable price," Jasper says. His business offers garden seeds, food plot seed, pasture mixes, flower seeds and field seeds. He also recently expanded by renting space in Ravenna School's greenhouse where he grows numerous types of flowers, peppers, and tomatoes, which he sells as retail flats.

Since starting Seed Boy, Jasper has also expanded into growing and selling local produce at roadside stands and farmers markets.

Jasper's goal of an extraordinary SAE has certainly paid off. In addition to winning Proficiency and Star Awards at the Chapter and Regional levels, Jasper was the 2009 State Winner for the Agricultural Sales Entrepreneurship Proficiency and the State Winner of the Agri-Entrepreneurship award, placing Gold and Silver respectively at the National Level. The best part? He was still only a Junior in high school. He was also chosen as a National FFA Career Pathways Grant winner for Seed Boy. Although Jasper is proud of his accomplishments, he says no plaque or trophy is worth the lessons and skills he has learned through owning his own business.

Jasper currently plans on attending Michigan State University following high school to major in Food Sciences. After graduating college with a Doctoral in Food Sciences, he hopes to work for the FDA to change public policy of agricultural commodities and to promote safe and clean food production laws benefiting the American public.

As for his future in the FFA, Jasper plans to make the most of his remaining year in Ravenna's chapter. In addition to running for state office in the spring and his involvement in other FFA activities, Jasper intends to keep Seed Boy Seed Company running, eventually passing his Entrepreneurship project down to younger family members to ensure that his "unique" enterprise continues on. Jasper says that he sees FFA in his future at the collegiate level and throughout his life, as he can't turn away from something that has impacted his life so greatly.

Jasper shares the credit for the success of his SAE with the people that have inspired and assisted in its development. "My parents, Jack and Marie, have been helpful beyond words. They have been there through the troubles I have run into and helped me to continue on the road to success. My advisor, Mrs. Block has also been there every step of the way monitoring my progress and making sure that



I prosper. Mrs. Block has been my professional consultant in a sense making sure that Seed Boy continues to grow and develop to new heights. Some of the most important people who have made Seed Boy what it is today are my customers. Without your support I would not be where I am today! Finally, I would not have the support I do without my FFA friends!"

Earning to Live

By: Amanda Sumerix
MSU ANR Communications Major

Earning to live means more than just providing for yourself. It means that you can make a difference in others' lives as well as in your own. Recently, I talked to a respectable woman who knows what it takes to give unselfishly.

Carolyn Bloodworth is originally from Jonesville and is one of five children. She grew up in "town" and had many



friends who were members of the Jonesville FFA chapter, but really didn't know or understand the organization until she started working with the Michigan FFA Association back in 1994 through her job at Consumers Energy. She attended Western Michigan University right out of high school, studying business. While she was in

Kalamazoo, she got a part-time job working with Consumers Energy. Money was tough, so she opted to take a full-time position with the company and ended up finishing her education a few years later through Spring Arbor University (while still working for the company). She received a Bachelor's Degree in Management of Human Resources.

After working at Consumers for 28 years Carolyn has held many positions, all with increasing level of responsibility. "I honestly didn't have any thoughts or aspirations about doing the job that I do now. I always knew that I would want to work in some way with the public, but I was never completely clear on what I wanted to do!" Carolyn commented. She also said, "Working for a large company like Consumers Energy, there were always many

opportunities to test and grow my skills. I have been very fortunate to have landed in a position within the company that is a great fit for me, my interests, background and experience."

Mrs. Bloodworth is currently the Director of Corporate Giving and Secretary/Treasurer of the Consumers Energy Foundation, which she has held since 1993. This position consists of charitable giving and volunteerism for the company. Bloodworth said, "This is something that I was exposed to often while I grew up in a small community. It was simply a part of our lives - and the right thing to do. Today, that's what I promote within our company and that's what I do in my spare time!" Carolyn is one of several employees who have been actively involved with a host of FFA programs. The list includes judging leadership contests, proficiency awards, working with state officers on annual themes and programming, helping members prepare for National Office and serving on the Nominating Committee for state officer interviews several times.

"We are strong supporters of the FFA's leadership programs and believe that FFA members are among the best and brightest of our state's young people."

"I have gained a great deal from my involvement with the FFA. Over the past several years I have had the good fortune to meet some very dedicated and wonderful educators who really have gone out of their way to make an impact on their students. I have seen the results of that commitment and that has made a real difference for me professionally as I work with schools and educational programs every day. I see what the FFA can do and has done and that is often a measuring stick for other educational and youth leadership programs."

She also commented, "FFA has also made a difference for me as a parent, as I have seen first-hand the power and impact of the FFA's programs on its members. The growth, development, experience and education provided to FFA members and its leaders is among the best available. I wish that my own children could have benefited from this experience and have found that the FFA members are some of the best young people I have had the pleasure of meeting. Meeting so many of these members, watching them grow, develop and succeed is tremendously rewarding."

Over the years, Mrs. Carolyn Bloodworth has been extremely generous to the Michigan FFA, with a selfless attitude. We cannot thank her enough for her continuous support!

Living to Serve

By: Kelli Fulkerson
MSU Animal Science Pre-Veterinary Major
&
Jonathon Brewer
St. Clair Community College Computer Science Major

Ubly High School senior, Jordan Heiber certainly knows how to keep active! Currently a member of the cheerleading squad, the band, and National Honor Society, in which she serves as Historian, its hard to believe that she finds time to be active in her FFA chapter.

Having been a member of the Ubly FFA Chapter since seventh grade; serving as Vice President this year comes naturally. What is shocking however, is that Heiber is able to manage her extra-curricular activities, personal life and active membership in her chapter while maintaining six different Supervised Agricultural Experiences, or SAE's. She says, "of everything that I am involved with, I certainly enjoy my SAE's the most."

While she does have six different project areas, her largest project would most definitely be sheep production. Having started with a few Montadale lambs, over time she has successfully increased the size of her flock, which is currently the largest in the state. Heiber, like her fellow producers, quickly learned that in order to have a successful program you must not only increase in numbers but in quality as well. For her, this was accomplished through selective breeding and flock management.

As with any livestock producer, Jordan hopes to improve her flock each year. To do this, she is extremely selective when choosing which ewes from her lamb crop she will retain and introduce to the flock. She also increases the quality of her animals by purchasing rams that are of superior genetic quality. Those lambs that aren't up to par are typically sold to finance the project. Over the years, she has racked up several outstanding achievements, including numerous championships at the Huron County Fair. She has also exhibited her animals at the state fair for many years and has experienced similar successes. At the national level she has managed to be quite competitive as well, having raised two national champion rams. Last year she

was fortunate enough to be named the 2008-2009 National Montadale Queen saying, "it has been an amazing experience. I didn't think I would have ever been competing at the national level, but I did, and my lambs were competitive."

By utilizing the profits received from her flock, Jordan has enabled herself to become the diversified producer she is today. Each year she purchases beef cattle and swine to raise and exhibit at a variety of shows. The hard work that she has put into her project has clearly been paying off, as portrayed by her show ring success and her success in the FFA. Last year, Heiber was named the 2009 State Proficiency winner in sheep production and will be competing in the national contest for this project area this fall. She has also received silver awards for her beef production, swine production and diversified livestock production SAE's.

In addition to these projects, she also shows horses and exhibits small animals. When asked what sparked her animal interests, she replied, "I have always been around livestock, my grandfather raised a variety of animals and I have always enjoyed spending time with him doing chores. So, I guess it just came naturally when I joined the FFA." She also credits her advisor and her family saying, "I have learned so many applicable things from Ms. Cantrell, and my mom pushes me everyday helping me to succeed!"

After graduation, Jordan plans on attending North Dakota State University to major in either Animal Science or Meat Science. After completing her studies, she intends to expand her Beef project in hopes of producing club calves for future FFA and 4-H members to exhibit at the county, state and national levels.



MICHIGAN FARMERS ADVOCATE FOR ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

By: Andrew Walker
MSU Political Science Major

Imagine a world where the only meals available on the menu at your favorite steakhouse or restaurant include fruits, vegetables, grains and tofu. Imagine a place where Sunday afternoon cookouts didn't consist of hotdogs and hamburgers but simply carrots and squash. Imagine a life where meat is not an option and individuals are forced to maintain a vegan lifestyle. This scenario is not just a far-fetched tale for one group, but a lifestyle that PETA members would like to make a norm for all people.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, better known as PETA, is the largest animal rights group in the world. PETA focuses on ensuring that animals are treated humanely. However, in many of its campaigns it partakes in activities that are either violent or obnoxious to others. It is through these tactics that this organization tries to promote its extreme agenda. Nothing short of protests,

indecent exposure and targeting children will stop the many activists that make up the membership of PETA.

Recently, Michigan found itself as the target of a PETA visit. It was the launch of a new campaign that brought both PETA and debate to Michigan State University in mid-September. Senior Vice President of PETA, Dan Matthews, arrived on the campus of MSU on September 10th to help re-launch PETA's Liberation campaign, and to have a question and answer session with local individuals. The new campaign, launched by peta2, which is a division of PETA for the younger generation, focuses on a long term goal of freeing all animals that are held in captivity. This includes animals on farms, in zoos and in any other form of captivity, excluding some pets. The exhibit compares animal cruelty to that of human torture in cases like the civil rights movement and to concentration camps in Europe during World War II.

Matthews talked to a group mainly consisting of MSU students. Though a few PETA enthusiasts showed up for the lecture to show their support, the hall consisted of a much larger group of members from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. It was made clear what PETA's message was when Matthews declared, "Of course we would love to see a vegan world." It was messages like this that prompted agricultural supporters to exemplify the role that agriculture plays in the state of Michigan and in the whole nation.

Animal agriculture in Michigan and in the United States is concerned greatly about the welfare of all animals on farms. Because of this, the United States has the safest food supply in the world. In addition, agriculture and food processing help to employ over one million residents, right here in Michigan. As the second most agriculturally diverse state in the nation, Michigan produces more than 200 commodities ranging from milk and meat to apples and



Dan Matthews of PETA explains how he got involved with PETA and what his organization advocates and why they do so

cherries and everything in-between. This helps to ensure that quality meat and produce are being grown close to home, in clean and safe environments. Of the 53,315 farms in Michigan over ninety percent are family owned. In addition, Michigan agriculturalists are using the newest technologies to help improve every aspect of their farms. This allows farmers to stay competitive in a globalized economic system, while allowing them to bring farm fresh products to Americans.

Farmers truly care about the animals that help them



MSU students inform students about Animal Agriculture and ask questions about PETA beliefs

make their living. It is important to each farmer that the livestock are being cared for to the best of their ability, because without quality care, livestock will not produce enough to keep Michigan farmers in business.

Therefore, it is to the farmer's advantage to give quality care to their flock of

sheep, herd of cattle or any other group of animals. Agriculturalists throughout the state and nation have recognized this for many years now.

To deal with the rising pressure surrounding the animal welfare industry, the Michigan legislature has found itself looking to add its input. Legislators are dealing with two separate ideas on how to establish animal welfare regulation in the state. Michigan farmers primarily support legislation that would establish an advisory council to the Michigan Department of Agriculture. This council would consist of veterinarians, farmers, an MSU animal science researcher, and a number of other individuals with the responsibility of reporting recommendations to the Department of Agriculture on how animal humaneness should be handled in the state. This board would be appointed by the governor.

On the other end of the spectrum, some animal rights activists are pushing for more controversial legislation that would prevent Michigan farmers from tying or

confining veal calves and making sure that pregnant sows and egg laying hens would be in an area that would be large enough for them to move freely.

These differing animal welfare ideas in the state simply show the difference in how individuals perceive the future of agriculture. However, if groups such as PETA are able to accomplish their ultimate goal, Michigan agriculture would be changed considerably, cutting out all forms of livestock production.

The only way Michigan's animal agriculture industry is to stay healthy is by pushing consumers to realize that Michigan farmers care! By informing consumers of the measures agriculturalists in the state are taking in order to ensure safety, humanity and quality products, the world will come to find that farmers are not the enemy, but the local hometown heroes that devote their lives to feeding the nation.

Imagine a world where, every day, individuals have to fight to keep an occupation alive that has been around since the dawn of mankind. Imagine a nation whose farmers may have to one day turn all of their livestock out into the forests, fields and highways, where game animals roam. This day is here. Without the help of producers and consumers alike, all people are at risk of having to change their lives dramatically. Farmers need to continue to spread the word of their humane practices they use in livestock production and the next time you eat your favorite burger, remember who is fighting to keep that on your plate.



MSU College of Agriculture Student stay after the meeting and ask questions and discuss more about animal agriculture

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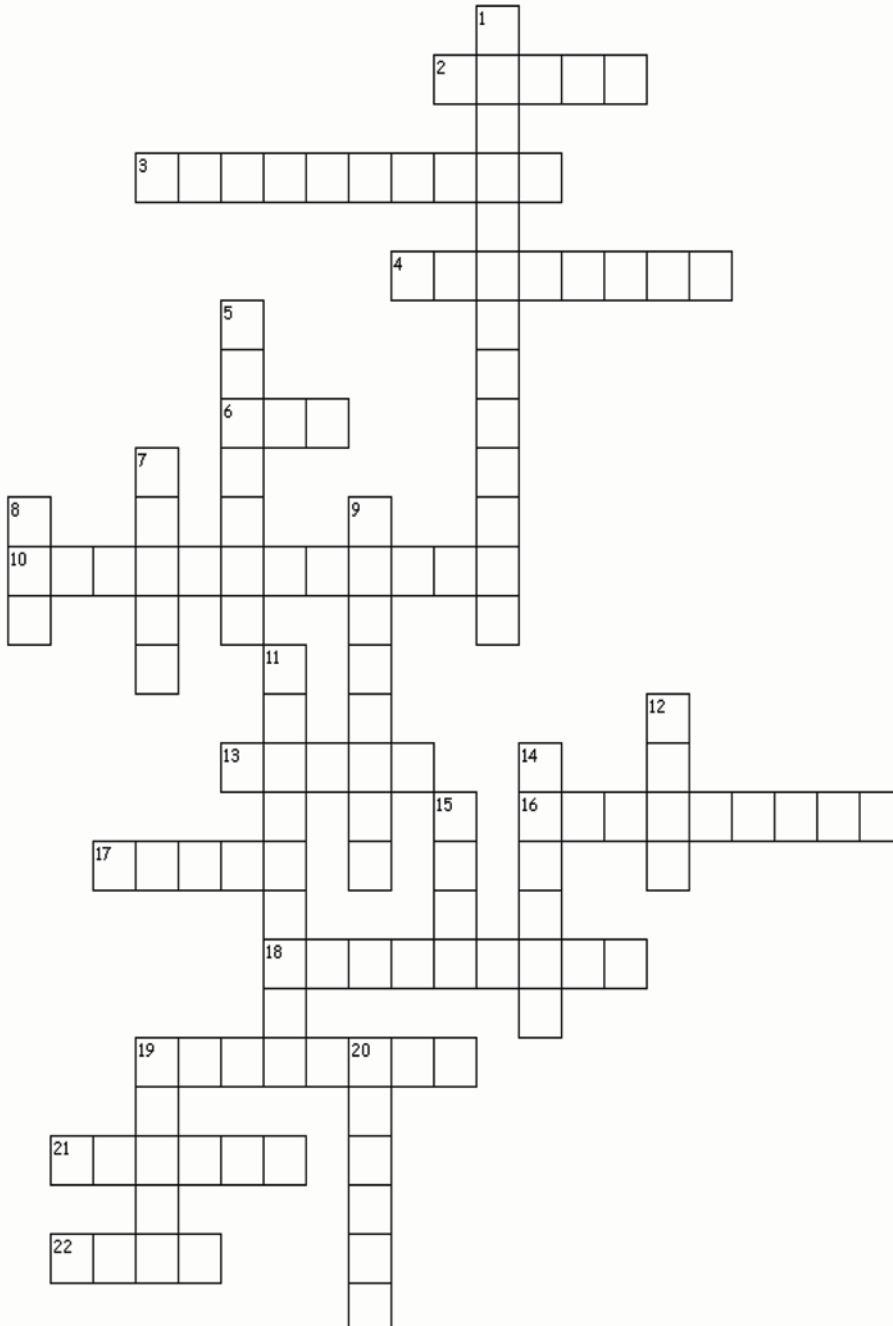


www.michiganffa.com



What's the word?

By: Meghan Bonthuis
MSU Agriscience Education Sophomore



Across

2. The state Treasurer for this year
3. Who designed the FFA jacket?
4. FFA colors are national blue and ____
6. The 3 components of an Ag. Instruction Program are SAE, classroom and ____.
10. Where is National Convention?
13. Region V V.P.
16. What is the Secretary stationed by?
17. The Region I V.P.
18. This person wrote the Creed?
19. Who is the state Secretary
21. How many State Officers are there?
22. This person represents Region IV.

Down

1. FFA focuses on premier leadership, personal growth and ____.
5. State President
7. State Vice President
8. How many regions are in Michigan?
9. Who is the Region III V.P.?
11. Who calls meetings to order?
12. The Vice President is stationed by?
14. What is the name of the State Officer who is stationed by the flag?
15. Who represents Region II?
19. Who is the 2009-2010 Sentinel?
20. The Region VI V.P.

The Rest of the Story...



Chapter: Ravenna

SAE: Agricultural Drainage

College: Michigan State University Sophomore

Major: Agriscience Education with specialization in Crop and Soil Science

Person you look to for strength & guidance: Melanie Block, Advisor

MEGHAN BONTUIS
STATE REPORTER

Word that describes yourself: Determined

FFA Member that has inspired you: Andrea Kerbuski

Favorite Quote: "The only way of finding the limits of possible is by going beyond them into the impossible."-Arthur C. Clark



Chapter: Ionia

SAE: Beef and Swine Production and Horticulture Placement

College: Michigan State University Freshman

Major: Engineering

Career Goals: Obtain a position working with alternative energy sources, specifically ethanol

High School Activities: Softball, Volleyball, Bowling, NHS, French Club

ELIZABETH HAGER
REGION V STATE VP



Favorite thing to do with friends: Make taxidermy squirrels

Favorite FFA Activity: Bus rides to FFA events, especially the rides to National Convention

Theme song that describes my life: Don't Stop Believing-Journey

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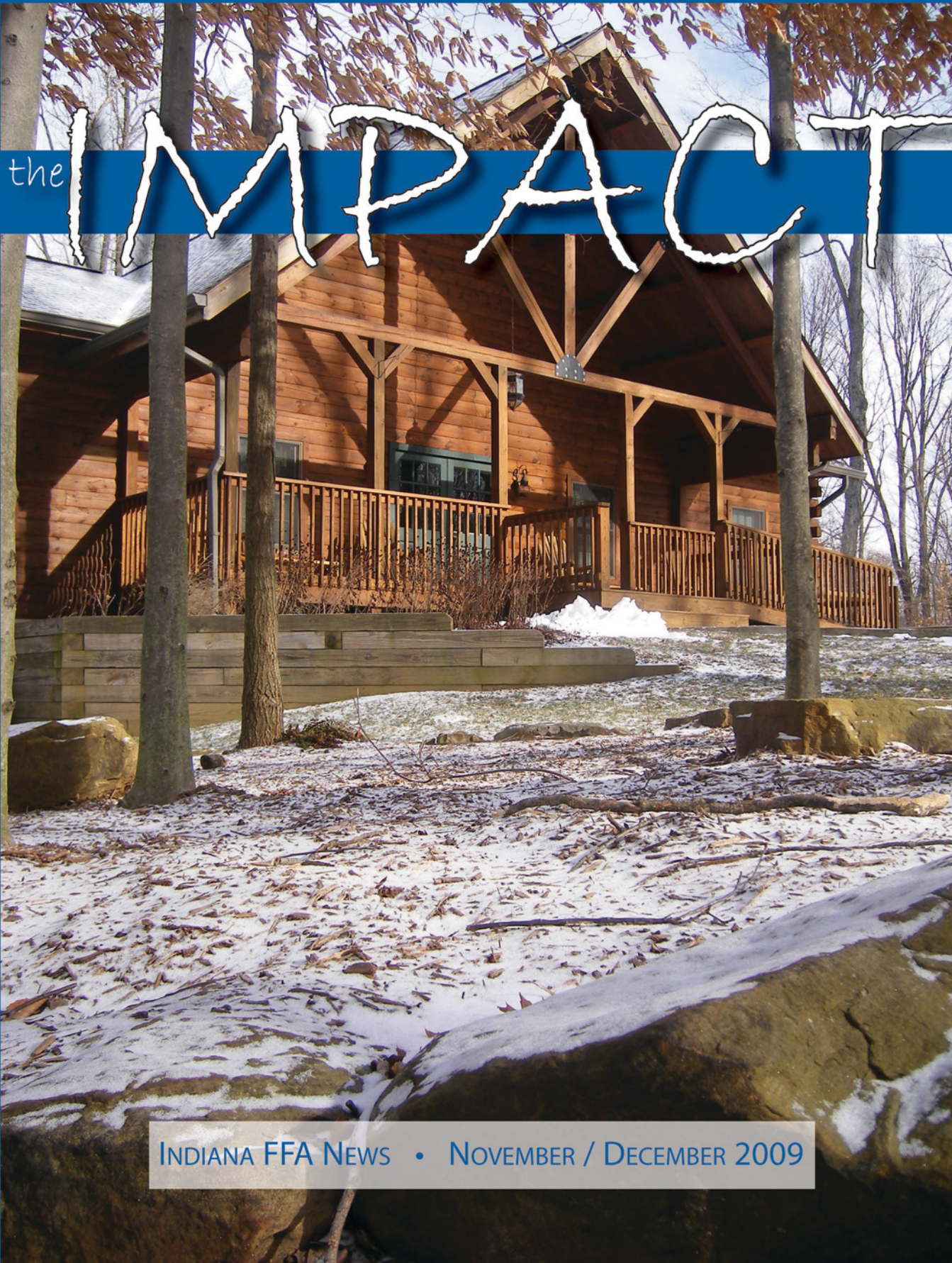
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the IMPACT

INDIANA FFA NEWS • NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2009

Live from Trafalgar...



Team Bonding

Imagine what you get when you have seven teenagers, free Big Mac's for an entire year and an adventure in Trafalgar, Indiana. If you have happened to be in Trafalgar in the past few months you might have seen the newest attraction in town.... a McDonald's.

As the seven of us state officers were coming back to the center from our weekend home, we heard about the grand opening of the McDonald's. Starting at five a.m. on Thursday morning, they would be giving away coupons for free Big Mac's for an entire year to the first two-hundred customers in line for breakfast. As a state officer, no one can turn down free food, especially for an entire year!

We had planned on waking up at four that morning to make sure we were part of the two-hundred to get free coupons. As we were going to bed the night before the big day, Daniel had the grand idea of going to McDonald's and getting in line that night... just to be sure we would get in. When Joe heard the idea, he instantly started grabbing blankets, sweatshirts and his keys. We were camping out in the parking lot!

As we pulled into the parkin glot, we discovered we were not the only people who had this same idea. We quickly made friends with five Indiana Creek students who had the same idea. They had been there since eight that evening and were planning on staying up all night! With their energy drinks, caffeine and snacks to keep them awake.... they managed to stay up the entire night! Due to state officer life, we had work to be done the next day for chapter visits and needed some sleep!

We split up between two vehicles and tried our best to get a few hours of sleep. As more people started arriving, we thought we should get in line and get ready to run in and get our free coupons. We did get them after waiting six hours with a crowd of people early in the morning. So far, we have had only a few meals of Big Mac's but I am sure there will be more to come in the next few months!

Blaire

2009-2010 Indiana FFA State Officer Team

State President
Travis Martin

**State Northern Region
Vice President**
Emmy Kratz

**State Southern Region
Vice President**
Joe Rust

State Secretary
Blaire Boyer

State Treasurer
Daniel Bechman

State Reporter
Heidi Melton

State Sentinel
Kyle Malcolm

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		O	Prepay to Repay
		P	Foundation Fundamentals

Indiana FFA State Staff: State Advisor, Lisa Chaudion; Executive Director, Anna Ariens; Foundation Executive Director, Brian Buchanan; Program Specialist, Denise Mills

By: Joe Rust

member moment



Gabby Harding
Attica FFA Chapter

Savvy SAE: "The Attica schools needed some improving on the Science part of ISTEP. For my SAE, I decided to coordinate a group of students and myself to go to the elementary school a couple hours a week and teach all the classes I can about agriculture and science."

Crucial CDE's: Crops Evaluation and Food Science Demonstration

Down the road: "I plan on attending Ivy Tech for a couple years for Neonatal Nursing, then transferring to Purdue."

Scrapbook moment: "While waiting for the crop judging results, we went and played Manhunt in Rural King where [my friend] Cole got stuck in a dog house trying to hide!"

Shining FFA Faces



Levi Willy
Seymour FFA Chapter

Savvy SAE:

Landscape Management

Crucial CDE's: Soils, Forestry, Livestock, Quiz Bowl and Plant & Soil Science Demonstration

Down the Road: "When I graduate from high school, I plan on attending a college where I can study civil and construction engineering fields. I plan to work for a construction operating company in the future."

Scrapbook Moment: My favorite moment in FFA would have to be State FFA Convention in June.

Chelsea Keller
South Adams FFA Chapter

Savvy SAE: Agricultural Sales

Crucial CDE's: Ag Farm Business Management Demonstration

Down the Road: Attend college and major in nursing.

Scrapbook Moment: "Attending State Convention as an 8th grader, where we went to Purdue University and got to spend time with other FFA members from across the state."



Send us the word on your chapter chatter or happenings!

what's the word?

By: Joe Rust



'Pulling' a Chapter Fundraiser to Success

There are so many expenses throughout the FFA school year. Whether it is transporting members to FFA events, buying FFA jackets, or hosting your own events, the total bill can be quite a chunk. So what do you do? You raise money through fundraising activities!



A lot of annual fundraisers can take years and a tremendous amount of hard work to become very effective. Well the Eastbrook FFA chapter took this challenge head on and created a successful annual fundraiser in two years. This fundraiser was called the

"Grant County Fall Finals, Truck and Tractor Pull."

They had a large variety in the pulls with different classes in tractors and trucks. This past year in 2009 they had 14 tractors pull in the 5,800 lb light modified class with nine tractors in the 10,000 lb altered farm tractors. They also had eight tractors in the 10,000 lb hot farm tractor class. And to forget the trucks, there were about 20 trucks in the 8,000 lb 4x4 superstock diesel truck class.

Although Eastbrook FFA started an annual fundraiser in just two years, it did take a tremendous amount of work out of the community, the advisor, Mr. Pluimer, as well as all the FFA members who worked together in this team effort.

Having an event this large can take a good amount of down payment. This did not slow Eastbrook down one bit. All Eastbrook FFA members helped raise the sponsorships which total just over \$6,000 from local businesses in the community.

The night of the pulls, "at least half of the members were there parking cars, selling tickets, working in the concession stand, and helping to register the pullers for the pull," Mr. Pluimer said.

The members' effort paid off allowing them to raise "approximately \$4500 [which] will be used to start establishing scholarships and to pay for kids to attend FFA activities and to help members receive their first FFA jackets," Mr. Pluimer added.

The attendance the first year in 2008 was 700 people. They worked harder the nest year and almost doubled the attendance for 2009 where they had 1,200 people attend the pull. Mr. Pluimer, Eastbrook FFA advisor, was very proud of his chapter and all their success with this pull to vitory.

Kyle Stockwell: Your 2009 National Star Farmer Finalist

By: Emmy Kratz

Why did you join FFA?

It was a tradition, my dad was involved in it and I wanted to become involved with agriculture in more than just working on the farm.



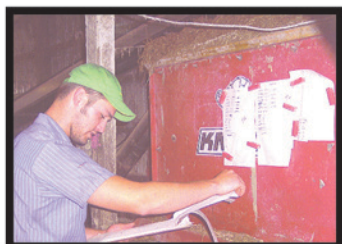
How did you begin in your SAE and why did you stick with it?

I began workin on the farmily dairy farm in third grade! I grew to love the farming and the dairy cattle!



How did you further your SAE after high school?

I attended Michigan State University in the Dairy Tech Program. In between my second and third semester I traveled to Shelby, Nebraska for an internship. During the 3 months I was there, they were transitioning from a 4,000 to 8,000 cow herd.



Do you manage the farm?

No I am the Herdsman, but my future plans are to take over the farm and keep the family tradition alive!

What is your favorite job on the farm?

I have always really enjoyed working with the fresh cows?

How has your involvement in the FFA and your SAE impacted your life?

It has become my life because I'm doing it every day now! Dairy cattle and the farm are my job and my life!

Stockwell Farms' Fun Facts:

200 head currently
expanding to 350 head
milking cows

150 finishing steers

1000 acres

8 employees

Established 1958

down the

Road

By: Kyle Malcolm



Lori
Randle



Whitney
Danker

Careers at National FFA: Making Convention a Success

Have you ever wondered how long it takes to prepare for National Convention and who works on planning National Convention? Well, Whitney Danker and Lori Randle are a few of those people that work on planning National Convention. Whitney has multiple things she has to prepare, one of those being Student Workshops. She is in charge of the 26 different workshops offered at National Convention with 62 different time slots. She hires facilitators to present workshops in the areas of personal growth, premier leadership, and career success. Whitney said, "Workshop presenters range from former state officers, National FFA staff, and Washington Leadership Conference staff to sponsors, businesses, and government agencies." She makes sure that every presenter has the supplies they need to make the workshops a success. Her second job at National Convention is planning the Leadership Dinner, which is also known as the WLC reunion dinner. "This event is for all students who are interested in WLC or other FFA leadership conferences. This is a 90 minute experience that provides a glance of what WLC participants experience for a week," says Whitney. It takes a lot of work to plan for the WLC dinner. There are so many people that have experienced WLC and want to take the opportunity to reunite with the people they met in Washington D.C. for that one week that changed their lives. If you already didn't think she had enough things to do for National Convention. Whitney is also in charge of the National Officer Selection Process. For eight days, she works with the 40 national officer candidates and nine nominating committee members. She explained to me that the nine nominating committee members are from nine different states across the United States. The committee members prepare weeks in advance before selecting the National Officers. They study several materials, including the National Officer Candidates resumes before coming to National Convention. She works with the nominating committee to ensure a fair and successful process. She tallies up the scores and works with the committee every step of the way, and makes sure the candidates have the attention they deserve. These three tasks entails Whitney's task for National Convention.

"We prepare for convention the entire year. It never stops. The week after convention ends, we will begin preparing for the next. In fact, National FFA has four divisions that we work in. Out of those four, a whole division is dedicated solely to making National FFA Convention a success. The other three divisions work on convention too, but that is not their only job."

Lori's job is a little bit different than Whitney's. Lori also works on National Convention, but she works on the Career Show. She works all year long to get sponsors and businesses to come to the Career Show. It takes a lot of hard work to make sure that all the space is filled and that the sponsors have what they need for the show. She said the thing she enjoys the most is when the companies tell her how amazed they are with the "sea" of blue jackets. Many people enjoy the Career Show the most out of anything at National Convention, because of all the different business and free give a ways. Without the help and planning by Lori no one could go to the Career Show.

As you can tell it takes a lot to prepare for National Convention and the people that work on National Convention truly are great at what they do. Without the help of Whitney Danker and Lori Randle, along with numerous other individuals, convention would not be the same.

where will FFA take me?

Emmy Kratz ... Stationed by the Plow

2009-2010 Indiana FFA State Vice President

By: Daniel Bechman

Emmy plans to attend college majoring in an agriculturally related field.



Emmy's FFA Timeline

- 7th Grade** - Joined FFA
Lost State Forestry
- 8th Grade** - Discovery Vice President
- 9th Grade** - Lost District Quiz Bowl
- 10th Grade** - Chapter Reporter
Lost State Quiz Bowl
Won State Farm Business Management
- 11th Grade** - Chapter President
District III Secretary
Won State Ag Marketing
- 12th Grade** - Chapter Secretary
District III President

Fast Facts about Emmy ...

Birthday: April 15, 1991
Parents: Dennis and Laura Kratz
Siblings: Laney and Elizabeth
Hometown: Brushy Prairie
FFA Chapter: Prairie Heights
Advisor: Ron Noll and Ben Leu
Favorite Food: Green Bean Casserole
Favorite Movie: Madagascar 2
Favorite Pass-time: Fun Outings with friends
Favorite Sport: Volleyball
Favorite Animal: Frogs and Goats
Favorite Color: Teal
Favortie Music: Everything!
Favorite Quote: "You might outgrow the jacket, but you will never outgrow the experience."

The state officer team voted ...

Emmy most likely to be inspired by King Julian to become a professional whistler even though she's already pretty amazing at it.

A few thoughts about Emmy ...

"Crazy, yes! Well, maybe a better word to describe her would be excited or eager. Either way my sister always makes life entertaining. I admire her spirit the most. She can do whatever she sets her mind to. FFA has helped Emmy grow in more ways than one and it gave her the confidence to be herself. She will love every minute of serving the FFA for a year and have fun meeting so many members!"

- Laney and Liz Kratz, Emmy's sisters

"There are many words I could use to describe Emmy. Lively, fun, social, involved, organized, effective, responsible, caring and dedicated are a few that come to mind. She has been very involved in our chapter and always livens up the group. She is not afraid to take on work or responsibility. It is exciting to see her continue to grow as she serves and shares her talents with the members of the Indiana FFA." - Mr. Ron Noll, advisor

"Emmy is a great role model, because of her strong values, morals and convictions. These characteristics have served her well in FFA and throughout her life. Emmy's enthusiasm is contagious like a cold, you catch it, if you want it or not. We are proud of her accomplishments and the young lady she has grown into."

- Dennis and Laura Kratz, Emmy's parents

Bridging Opportunities for



"A great way to show leadership skills and get younger kids involved."

~ Kara Schwarzkopf
Delphi FFA



THE INDIANA FFA 2009 CHAPTER



Destination: Increasing the
Members in D



"It showed a lot of the younger people about FFA. I learned a lot more about the camps. It was awesome!"

~ Stefanie Fuller
Hamilton Southeastern

or Leadership Development

By: Heidi Melton

A STATE OFFICERS R TOUR



Engagement of Indiana FFA Chapter Leadership Development Opportunities



"It showed us how to be a leader and how you need to watch your actions because people are always looking up to you. It was really FUN!"

~ Monica Richards
Hamilton Southeastern



"It was AWESOME!"

~ Derek Bradshaw
Delphi FFA



how to Be a Healthier You

By: Heidi Melton



It is almost a new year, why not start it off with a new healthier you! Here are eight easy steps to a new you!

1st step

Set a goal to eat healthier and get active

We have to decide on our own to step into a continuous walk of a healthy lifestyle.

2nd step

Find an accountability partner

An accountability partner is someone we can trust. They will help us on our tough road of getting out of bad eating and exercise habits. They would also encourage us to stay the course and never give up because they know our goal and want us to accomplish it.

3rd step

Select a health plan

We are all different and no one health plan works for everyone. Our doctors and/or dietitians can help guide the decision. Ask them what we should do for the healthiest results!

4th step

Set a schedule for activity

We are all very busy. We have to make time in our hectic schedules to get active.

5th step

Plan meals and make a list

Plan out meals, find a recipe and make a list.

6th step

Go grocery shopping

Going grocery shopping can be fun yet stressful because of our economy. When buying healthy foods, brand names doesn't always mean better taste.

7th step

Cooking meals

Can be the most enjoyable part of a new eating plan. Have fun and be creative with your healthy meals.

8th step

Stick to it!

Getting out of bad habits will not be easy! Remember the goal and the importance of being healthy!

Sources: Healthy Consulting: Michele Hagadorn, Michael Torchia "Easy Steps to Become Healthy and Fit for the New Year!"

December

12th - State Crops, Entomology & Forestry CDE



January

15-17th - Leadership Development Workshop #1

30th - State Meats and Dairy Foods CDE

29-31st Leadership Development Workshop #2

By: Blaire Boyer

Laugh **O**ut **L**oud [in] **A**griculture

Little Willie, being a city boy, had never seen a cow. While on a visit to his grandmother he walked out across the fields with his cousin John. A cow was grazing there and Willie's curiosity was greatly excited.

"Oh, Cousin John, what is that?" he asked.

"Why, that is only a cow." John replied.

"And what are those things on her head?"

"Horns," answered John.

Before they had gone far the cow mooed long and loud.

Willie was astounded. Looking back, he demanded, in a very fever of interest: "Which horn did she blow?"

Back Where

Favorite Festive FFA Stories..... from



Erica
Doyle

Section 4
Director

The month of December is a very busy month for me. Not just because of Christmas, semester finals, and my birthday, but because of my chapter's Toy and Food Drive. This event has impacted my life in many ways. Spending many hours, months ahead, preparing for this event, my December would not be the same without it. Last year my chapter and many volunteers throughout my community helped in delivering over 8.6 tons of food to nearly 90 families within my community. The best part of this whole event is knowing you changed someone's life. The Saturday morning kicking off my school's Christmas break, many FFA members and community volunteers remain at school to deliver all of the boxes of food, toys, fruit baskets, and laundry supplies. The excitement and feelings inside me are inspired from the many past years of delivering our gifts to the many homes. When a family opens the door and sees a few people holding boxes of food they grin from ear to ear as a tear runs down their face. The emotions I feel are unexplainable. To top this off, when a young kid sees all the gifts wrapped waiting for them to open it's hard not to smile and enjoy the moment. My chapter's Toy and Food Drive is one of our biggest events and one that I have many memories. When someone asks what it's like going to homes and making a difference, I say, "It is difficult to put into words. You just have to see for yourself."

Joris
Van
Roess



Garrett
Brown

Section 3
Director

My favorite FFA holiday memory has to be around Christmas 3 years ago. We just got done with taking canned goods to the county food pantry for the Million Can Challenge. It was our first year for our chapter to do the fundraiser and it was very successful. We ended up raising around 1000 canned good items from the surrounding schools. As a celebration for our great success we decided to have a Christmas party. We played secret Santa with gifts ranging everywhere from Wal-Mart gift cards to Candyland. After the gift exchange we ate pizza and watched the movie, "8 Seconds." Not really a Christmas movie but it was still a great movie to watch with my chapter. To finish off the night, we all went out to our school's football field and had the biggest snowball fight I have ever been in. Everyone was running around getting hit from snowballs left and right. It was such a great time just having fun with my friends doing things that we never had time to do. From helping people in need in the community or hitting friends with snowballs from the 50 yard line, it's all about having fun and helping others in the process.

I Come From

your 2009-2010 Section Directors

By: Emmy Kratz



Section 1
Director

About a month before our District 3 bonfire, I broke my leg wrestling a friend. Being the busy body that I am, I hated having a crippled leg. As the date of the bonfire quickly approached, I knew I would still be on crutches for one of my favorite events of the holiday season. I drug myself there, disappointed that I would not be able to compete in the tug-o-war or the haunted treasure hunt, expecting the worst. After arriving, I had all kinds of people asking me to tell the story of how I managed to break my leg! And even though I couldn't participate, I had loads and loads of fun watching District 3 FFA members enjoy an Indiana November with fun games, food and friends, not to mention the biggest bonfire I have ever seen!

Ethan Manning
Section 2 Director

Last year my chapter, North Miami, had a Fall Party. The idea originated with one of our chapter officers and everyone liked the idea, including myself. We decided to have our Fall Party around the time of Halloween in an officer's garage. There were about 30 North Miami FFA members present, along with our advisor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Jones. Also, there were some parents who decided to enjoy the party! We were all pushing for a successful party and it truly was! There was lots of delicious food, card games, and fellowship between members. The country tunes were cranked up and we were all dancing along! Everyone who went to the party had tons of fun. Our chapter's P.O.A. now includes the North Miami FFA Fall Party as an annual event! This new tradition is one I will never forget!



Do Your Part. The 2008 Farm Fatality Study shows there were 29 deaths resulting from farm-work related activities during the year, a sharp increase from the 2006 record low of eight deaths. The Indiana Rural Safety and Health Council wants to decrease this number. Do your part by always following safety precautions in the field, on the road, in the barn and at the elevator.



Indiana Rural Safety & Health Council
www.farmsafety.org

Joe Rust ... Stationed by the Plow

2009-2010 Indiana FFA State Vice President

By: Kyle Malcolm

Joe plans to attend Purdue University to study agricultural economics and minor in communications.



Joe's FFA Timeline

9th Grade - Joined FFA

Lost State Freshmen Extemporaneous Speaking

10th Grade - Chapter Reporter

Lost District Ag Sales Demonstration

11th Grade - Chapter President

District Treasurer

Lost State Extemporaneous Speaking

Received Hoosier Degree

12th Grade - Chapter President

District XI President

Lost State Proficiency, Outdoor Recreation

Lost State Male Leadership Ambassador

Fast Facts about Joe ...

Birthday: February 2, 1991

Parents: Sylvia and the late David Rust

Siblings: Victoria, Alex, Regina, Solomon and David

Hometown: Seymour

FFA Chapter: Seymour FFA

Advisor: Jim Stephenson

Favorite Food: Sirloin Steak

Favorite Movie: Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

Favorite Pass-time: Paintballing with friends

Favorite Sport: Football

Favorite Animal: Red-Tail Hawk

Favorite Color: Red

Favortie Music: Country and Rock 'n Roll

Favorite Quote: "The worst feeling that lasts the longest is regret. Do your best and work your hardest and you will live your life with little regret." ~ Dave Urbanski, Seymour High School Wrestling Coach

The state officer team voted ...

Joe most likely to go walk up to a random person and start a conversation.

A few thoughts about Joe ...

"Joe Rust was probably one of the best overall FFA members and agriculture students that I have had in 33 years of teaching. Joe is well liked by his peers and FFA members and adults like working with him. Joe likes to accept new challenges and is extremely well organized in his approach to working on projects. He exhibits a maturity that far surpasses his age group."

- Mr. Stephenson, Advisor

"Joe has always been a self motivated learner. When it comes to getting something done he gets it taken care of immediately. The reason that Joe is successful in all that he does is because he puts forth the time and effort. Joe has always been a great little brother and is my closest brother."

- David Rust, brother

"Joe has always done whatever is needed. He loves the outdoors and would help anyone if it involved being outside. If Joe saw something that needed done he would go do it. I think Joe is a good communicator because he would go talk to anyone and help anyone that needed it but the thing closest to Joe is his faith. Joe takes his faith in God as the center of his life."

- Sylvia Rust, mother

Repay *t^o Repay*

What is it?

Do you ever eat out? Do you like to shop at your favorite stores? Would you like to support the Indiana FFA? Well, here's your chance! The Indiana FFA is now participating in a gift card / scrip program that allows you buy a gift card, use the gift card, and by using the gift card, you donate to the Indiana FFA!

How does it work?

Here's how it works:
 buy a gift card (a variety of restaurants and stores available) from the Indiana FFA,
 e-mail or fax your order information.
 Pay with cash, credit or check.
 Indiana FFA sends you the gift card and receives a percentage of sales.
 Use the card—DONATING WITH ALL THE BENEFITS OF NOT DONATING!

Who can participate?

Anyone! Any person that can purchase and use a gift card can use the Scrip Program. The best part is that you can support the Indiana FFA by just using gift cards to stores and restaurants that you would already be spending your money at!

Questions? Call 317-878-4000



Indiana FFA Scrip Program

Order Form:

Quantity		Lowes (\$25, \$100)
___ AMC Movie Theatres (\$25)	___	Marathon Gas (\$25, \$100)
___ Amoco / BP Gas (\$50)	___	O' Charley's (\$25)
___ American Eagle (\$25)	___	Olive Garden (\$25)
___ Applebee's (\$25)	___	Papa Johns (\$10)
___ Arby's (\$10)	___	Pizza Hut (\$10)
___ Bob Evans (\$10)	___	Red Lobster (\$25)
___ Burger King (\$10)	___	Sears (\$25, \$100)
___ Chili's Bar & Grill (\$25)	___	Speedway /
___ Chipotle Mexican Grill (\$10)	___	SuperAmerica (\$25, \$100)
___ Coldstone Creamery (\$10)	___	Starbucks (\$10, \$25)
___ Cracker Barrel (\$10)	___	Subway (\$10, \$50)
___ Dick's Sporting Goods (\$25)	___	Texas Roadhouse (\$25)
___ Fazoli's (\$25)	___	Uno Chicago Grill (\$25)
___ Home Depot (\$25, \$100)	___	Wal-Mart /
___ Kohls (\$25, \$100)	___	Sam's Club (\$25, \$100)
	___	Wendy's (\$10)

All cards vary in dollar increments, amounts listed beside each vendor. Orders are placed after payment is received.

Name: _____

Shipping Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please charge my credit card \$ _____
 _____ Visa _____ Mastercard

Card # _____

Exp. Date _____ V-code _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Orders accepted via fax, email or mail only.

***Fax orders to 317-878-5428 or email to
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Mail to PO Box 9, Trafalgar, IN 46181



INDIANA FFA FOUNDATION

Sustaining a Legacy of Leaders

YES! I will support the Indiana FFA.

My/our tax-deductible contribution of:

☐ \$2,500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$100

☐ \$50 ☐ \$25

☐ Other _____

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Card # _____

Exp. Date _____ V-code _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

OR Pay online at www.indianaffa.org

Check if appropriate:

- ☐ FFA Alumni
- ☐ FFA Past State Officer
- ☐ Business / Organization
- ☐ Friend of FFA
- ☐ FFA Advisor / Staff
- ☐ Retired FFA Advisor

☐ Does your company have a matching gift program?

☐ I would like information on including FFA in my will/
estate plan.

Please remit payment to:

Indiana FFA Foundation
P.O. Box 9
Trafalgar, IN 46181
317-878-5464



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Constructing Leaders of Tomorrow

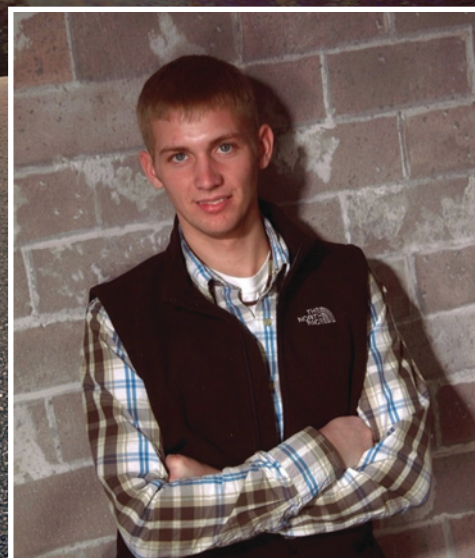
*Heritage and
Cooperative Award Tours* | **B**



State Fair | **C**



*Meet Your 2009-2010
State FFA Treasurer* | **D**
— Adam Herwig



Check out our
website



www.illinoisffa.org

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2009 FFA Leadership Camp

Over 300 FFA members from across the state gathered in Monticello, Illinois on July 29, 2009 at Allerton Park. After registration, the members met their teammates and began using their teamwork skills on the challenge course!

The members were involved in many activities throughout the week including team building exercises, Ag Olympics, quiz bowl, the talent show, and the red and blue war!

FFA members learned about teamwork and leadership skills. Throughout the week each student set goals for themselves, made new friends from across the state and were impacted by evening reflections.

If you haven't had the opportunity to participate in the Illinois FFA leadership camp, talk to your advisor and check out www.illinoisffa.org to learn more.



Heritage and Cooperative Award Tours

The Heritage and Cooperative Award Tours were a huge success this year. Both tours are sponsored by the Illinois Farm Bureau and affiliated companies. Participants from around the state traveled across the nation to visit our nation's capital. The students returned home with a keen understanding of our nation's heritage and how cooperatives operate.

Illinois State Fair

FFA Barnyard – Once again the Illinois FFA Barnyard was on display during the Illinois State Fair. The five majors and 25 section presidents spent their time holding chicks, ducklings, rabbits, and looking after piglets, sheep, donkeys and a calf. Thousands of people visited the FFA Barnyard throughout the fair to see the animals.

Sale of Champions – The sale of champions was held on August 18 during Agriculture Day at the State Fair. The Grand Champion of each species shown in the Junior Show was sold and the Illinois Foundation FFA received 10 percent of the sale. Congratulations to all champions.



.....
*Major State Officers
 with Tom Jennings –
 Illinois Director
 of Agriculture*



Major State Officers with Governor Quinn

Excellence in Teaching Award



Congratulations to Mr. Don Bumphrey of the Warsaw FFA Chapter, the 2009 Excellence in Teaching state winner!

Excellence in Teaching Award winners pictured with Orion Samuelson

DISTRICT 1 – Mr. Stan Toepfer – Eastland

DISTRICT 2 – Mr. Jeff Maierhofer – Seneca

DISTRICT 3 – Mr. Don Bumphrey – Warsaw

DISTRICT 4 – Mr. Adam Swigert – Blue Ridge

DISTRICT 5 – Mrs. Mindy McDermott – Waterloo

Meet Your 2009-2010 State FFA Treasurer – Adam Herwig

It was near the end of my freshman year and the Ashton Franklin Center FFA was about to elect a new chapter officer team. I thought I should try to run for an office because I really enjoyed being in FFA and I wanted to do more than just sit in class every day. I decided that I had a pretty good chance of getting an office. I had been to all the CDEs and other events that I could, plus my older sister was an officer the year before. I thought for sure that would give me an edge over the competition.

I turned in my officer candidate information form and patiently waited for the results. A few friends from my class also turned in the form. I thought to myself, "I know I can beat those kids, I do way more than them!" I waited anxiously, and when the results were announced, my friend's name was on the list. Mine was not.

I was baffled by the results and didn't know what to do. Should I just give up on FFA and focus on sports? However, I decided not to throw in the towel for something else. I made a promise to myself to be even more involved the following year. I would do whatever it took, even if it meant I had to miss a few football or basketball games. I would go to everything and then, when it came time to elect new officers I would make it. After all of that hard work I finally became an officer and I found a greater reason to serve. It's not about the title, but it's about the impact you have on others. It didn't matter if the other students were older or younger, they knew I was an officer and they looked up to me for that. Being an officer gave me a chance to help students and members of the community.

Every day we are faced with setbacks, but the greater judge of character is what we do after a setback. Do we just stop and avoid the chance of those things happening, or will we try to work harder to make it better? Illinois FFA members, when you are faced with a challenge, don't be the one who sits back and avoids it. Do everything you can to overcome the challenge!



National Convention

National Finalist, Star in

Agribusiness – Rodney Bingel from the Marissa FFA Chapter is the son of Bryan and Laurie Bingel, Marissa, Illinois. Rodney started his business at



the age of 13 by working for his family. After starting high school he began his Turf Grass Management program in 2005 with 16 contracts and working a total of 270 hours. He has been able to build his business to have a total of 1,465 hours with 118 contracts during the last four years. Rodney has built his business from a push mower to a lawn tractor and a Dixie chopper. He was the 2008 state winner in Turf Grass Management. His advisor is Mrs. Kim Portz.

National Winner,

Agri-entrepreneurship Student – Clayton Carley from the



Crescent-Iroquois FFA Chapter, is the son of Kenton and Lisa Carley, Milford, Illinois. Clayton started his vegetable production

enterprise his eighth grade year with .3 acre of sweet corn. The next year, he added vegetables and increased his sweet corn to one acre. This past year, he was able to produce 2.4 acres of produce. He sells his sweet corn at the Sweet Corn Shack located on the busiest street in Watseka. He has been able to grow a strong customer base and maintain good customer relationships. He was the 2008 District II Vegetable Production Award Winner and is this year's State Agri-Entrepreneurship Award Winner. He has participated in a number of career development events at the section, district and state levels, and served as a Section and Chapter officer. His advisor is Jeff Clifton.

National Finalist, Agri-science Student of the Year –

Rosemary Chapple from the



Waterloo FFA Chapter, is the daughter of Richard and Carey Chapple, Fults, Illinois. Rosemary's Agriscience

project this year was titled Lysine and Methionine Requirement of Chicks Fed Low Protein Corn-Soybean Meal Diets. The experiment was conducted to determine the minimum amount of crystalline lysine and methionine supplements needed to meet the requirement for maximum growth of chicks. She had four pens of chicks that were having a positive controlled diet. At the end of the 14 days she reweighed all the chicks and calculated the difference from the beginning of the experiment. She also concluded the average daily feed intake. Through this experiment, she was able to conclude that the chicks that weighed more at the initial weighing grew faster, but less efficiently than the chicks that were lighter at the beginning of the process. Her advisors are Mindy and Tim McDermott.

National Finalist, Ag

Communications – Caroline Bremer



from the Vienna FFA Chapter is the daughter of Jeff and Lisa Bremer, Metropolis, Illinois.

Caroline started her agricultural communications program while serving as chapter and section reporter in 2006. She spent 234 hours developing newsletters, writing press releases, creating videos for the chapter and section banquets, and conducting interviews for radio and television. In 2007, she served as section reporter and had an internship

with the University of Illinois Extension Press Department at the Illinois State Fair for a total of 586 hours. Her internship at the State Fair required her to write numerous press releases on agricultural events during the fair, work closely with the media, and strive to maintain positive public relations for agricultural activities. In 2008, she kept records of her Ag communications hours as section president and her internship with Illinois Farm Bureau and RFD Radio during the Illinois State Fair for a total of 428 hours. Her advisor is Bill Fairless.

National Finalist,

Agricultural Mechanics Energy Systems – Westin Montavon from



the Amboy FFA Chapter is the 2009 Agricultural Mechanics Energy Systems Award

Winner. He is the son of Martin and Lynn Montavon, Amboy, Illinois. Westin's supervised agricultural experience program involves his work maintaining and servicing hydraulic driven irrigation systems. He works with his father and two brothers to keep 14 different irrigators going. It is a big job that requires a lot of time and effort. Tasks include: changing the engine oil on the well and irrigator motors, towing irrigators and checking to make sure that all the irrigators are running properly. That includes making sure they are moving at the right speed and that water is coming out at the correct rate. He also does a lot of towing, which moves an irrigator from one water hook-up to another in the same irrigation lane. His advisor is Sarah Tweet.

(continued on next page)

National Convention

Continued

National Finalist, Agricultural Mechanics Design and Fabrication – Kirk Beutke from the Woodland



FFA Chapter is the son of Kenneth and Mary Beutke, Long Point, Illinois. Kirk operates his own metal

fabrication business that specializes in the design and fabrication of livestock gates. The gates are usually custom made to a specific size, but he also makes sets of gates that are a general size that can be used to create a corral. The gates are made to handle cattle sheep and hogs. Over the last three years, his business revenue has increased by 72 percent while his time to design and fabricate the gates has decreased as he gained experience and knowledge that made him more efficient. During the past year he made and sold 30 gates. He was the 2007 and 2008 District II Ag Mechanics Design and Fabrication Award Winner and is this year's State Star in Agribusiness Award Winner. His advisors are Dan Weber and Keri Poldek.

National Finalist, Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance – Brian E. Haas from the Mascoutah



FFA Chapter, is the son of Chris and Gina Haas, Mascoutah, Illinois. Brian was hired in

April, 2006 by Mascoutah Equipment, a local Case IH and Kubota dealership. At first, he was cleaning equipment and the shop. During the summer, he started going on service calls with the repairmen to repair combines. Over time, he became familiar with the Case IH combines and how they work and started going on service calls by

himself. He has also learned how to do a complete 120 point check on the combines as well as the basics on the new Case IH Pro 600 Monitor system. Brian has served as chapter points chairman, treasurer and president. He was the 2008 District V Agricultural Mechanics Repair and Maintenance Award Winner. His advisor is Keith Eschmann.

National Finalist, Agricultural Services – Jeffrey D. Barnes from the



Somonauk-Leland FFA Chapter, is the son of James and Danette Barnes, Leland, Illinois. Jeff's

supervised agricultural experience program in agricultural services involves his work with the family's custom hay baling business. Eight years ago, his family moved off the farm, but still had all the hay equipment so his father decided to start a custom baling business. The business covers roughly a 15 mile radius around the community of Leland. Over the years, Jeff has gained a good knowledge of the custom hay business and says he can now perform any function of the business that helps the business run smoothly. He averages about 250 hours each year with the business. His advisors are Dan Kuntz and Matt Wilson.

National Finalist, Dairy Production Entrepreneurship – Mitchell Eickmeyer from the



Nashville FFA Chapter is the son of Steve and Laurie Eickmeyer, Hoyleton, Illinois. Mitchell was

born and raised on the family grain

and dairy farm that consists of 2,000 acres of cropland and 200 head of Holsteins. He started his freshman year with 13 cows and at the end of 2008 he had increased his herd to 47 cows. When he first began his SAEP, he did everyday chores, milked, fed and cleaned the barns. As his SAEP progressed, he took on more of a managerial role in the dairy operation. Over time, he has learned about antibiotic treatments, hoof trimming, treating sick animals and vaccination programs. His sophomore year, he learned to artificially inseminate his cows and also does a majority of the AI for the whole herd. This past year, he worked closely with the Purina nutritionist in developing a quality, economically efficient ration for animals of various growth stages in the herd. He also set up a DHIA PCDART program for the dairy operation. The results have been thousands of dollars saved from better quality milk. He was the 2008 Section Dairy Production – Entrepreneurship Award Winner and is this year's Star Farmer of Illinois. His advisor is Julie Bond-Ledford.

National Finalist, Diversified Crop Production – Tyler Loschen,



a member of the Tri-Point FFA Chapter, is the son of Gary and Diana Loschen, Kempton,

Illinois. Tyler started his supervised agricultural experience program with 20 acres on which he grew corn and soybeans. He has expanded his acreage to 180 acres of corn, soybeans and alfalfa. With his increase in acreage, he was able to purchase a combine, wagons and other equipment. In 2008, his average yields were 52 bushel of soybeans, 218 bushels of corn and 6.7 tons of alfalfa per acre. He says he has learned about securing credit,

National Convention

Continued

marketing and government programs through his SAEP. Tyler has served as chapter greenhand president, vice president and president. He was the 2008 Diversified Livestock Production – Entrepreneurship and the Agri-Entrepreneurship Award Winner. His advisor is Diana Loschen.

National Finalist, Equine

Entrepreneurship – Kaleigh Gasperi



from the West Prairie FFA Chapter is the daughter of Scott and Mindy Riden, Good Hope, Illinois.

Kaleigh got her first horse when she was eight. Since then, she has purchased several horses to break and sell for a profit. She buys colts for a low price, breaks and trains them for show, shows them and then sells them for a profit. The Quarter horses and Paint horses she works with specialize in Western Pleasure and Halter. She currently has six horses she is working with. Her advisors are Ann Runner and Corinne Galvan.

National Finalist, Food Science and Technology – Naomi Harper



from the Chicago Ag Sciences FFA Chapter, is the daughter of Albert and Janelle Harper, Chicago, Illinois. Her

first year, she focused on science experimentation and exploring the scientific method. As she continued her SAEP, she developed a greater interest in nutrition and advanced technology. While searching for a program that would satisfy her new interest, she learned about the Research Apprentice Program from her advisors. She began her research

apprenticeship in the summer of 2007. Her second year in the apprentice program, she was partnered with a mentor as she worked in the laboratory of Immunophysiology at the University of Illinois. At the end of the program, she presented the results of her dose response to her peers and advisors. Her advisor is Lucille Shaw.

National Finalist, Fruit Production – Rodney Noe



from the Metamora FFA Chapter is the son of Ralph and Janet Noe, East Peoria, Illinois. Rodney raises watermelons

and pumpkins that are sold at local farmer's markets and grocery stores. He started raising watermelons in 2002 with about 200 plants. By 2008, he had increased the size of his project to two acres of watermelons (about 2,600 plants) and one-half acre of pumpkins. In 2008, he planted four varieties of watermelons that produce excellent fruit with yields of about 1,000 watermelons per acre. He plants Howden pumpkins because they produce a sturdy fruit that sells well and has excellent yields; however this variety of pumpkin is labor intensive because it is susceptible to powdery mildew and other diseases. His advisor is Steve Kieseewetter.

.....

National FFA Band –

Liz Harfst, Pontiac
Joseph Miller, Pittsfield
Perry Harlow, Seneca
Kaitlynn Miller, Pontiac
Jacob Dickey, GCMS
Ryan Haney, Bureau Valley

National FFA Chorus

Mallory McFee, Newark
Sarah Ziegler, Illini West
Andrew Lesch, Clifton Central
Michael Weber, Clifton Central
Hope Birch, Southwestern
Zachary Bishop, Brown County

FFA National Chapter Awards Three Star Chapters

Chicago Ag Sciences
Eastland
Goreville
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Paxton-Buckley-Loda
Pinckneyville
Pontiac
Seneca
Urbana
West Carroll

Two Star Chapters

Amboy
Ashton-Franklin Center
Blue Ridge
Bushnell Prairie City
Cisne
Cissna Park
Crescent Iroquois
Olney
Greenville
Indian Creek
Leland
Mendota
Mt. Vernon
Nashville
Oregon
Orion
Sullivan
Taylorville
Valmeyer
Warsaw
Waterloo

Officers' Tracks



State Fair (August 14-23) – Throughout the 10 days at the Illinois State Fair, the five major state officers were busy working in the FFA Barnyard. The 25 section presidents also contributed to the success. During the fair, the majors participated in other activities such as the Twilight parade, daily interviews, the Sale of Champions and the Annual Moo Moo Classic. Although it was a very busy time, the officers enjoyed the fair and were able to talk to thousands of people about agriculture.

GROWMARK Annual Meeting (August 27-28) – Amie, Ellen and Kiersten, along with Mr. Craft, attended the GROWMARK Annual Meeting in Chicago. The meeting was held on August 27-28. The three majors had some time to spend with other state officers from Wisconsin and Iowa.

DuQuoin State Fair (August 28-30) – On August 28, Adam and Caroline headed South for the DuQuoin State Fair. They represented the Illinois FFA in the opening parade and helped with the livestock judging contest on Saturday morning.

Farm Progress Show (September 1-3) – The five majors headed towards Decatur on September 1 to kick off the Farm Progress Show. Throughout the Farm Progress Show the officers helped with the FFA/Titan Tire auction and had the opportunity to spend time with the Indiana state officer team as well.

STAR Conferences – Amie, Caroline, Ellen, Kiersten and Adam conducted a Section Team Activities and Responsibilities conference in each District during the second week of September. The section officer teams began “Building their Blueprints” as a team. Throughout the one-day conference, the officers discussed ideas for Leadership Training School, discovered team skills and brainstormed about membership recruitment.

Reporter Workshops – Throughout the month of September Ellen was busy presenting seven reporter’s workshops around the state for chapter and section reporters. The reporters learned techniques for taking pictures, creating a newsletter and also learned new ideas from other reporters. Overall, the workshops went well and it was a great learning experience for everyone!

September State Officer Meeting (September 11-12) – The third Illinois FFA State Officer meeting was held in Decatur on September 11 and 12. The team discussed Illinois’ stance on National Convention issues and other upcoming events. It was nice for the team to catch up with one another before chapter visits are underway!

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A Greater Cause

Story by Chris Hayhurst

Photography by J. Kyle Keener

Lemoore **FFA MEMBERS** raise puppies to become service animals

It's been said that it is easier to tame a tornado than it is to raise a puppy. Numerous books have been written on the subject, and anyone who's been through it can tell you: Puppies are a handful.

They eat your favorite shoes. They cry when you're trying to sleep. They get into everything and, in their curiosity, they tear, shred, crumple, consume and soil.

Imagine, then, what it's like to raise a puppy that will one day become a guide dog. The pressure then comes with making sure that your puppy – your wildly playful puppy – learns its manners fast.

"It's a challenge," says Kalena Mellott, a senior at Lemoore High School in California and a volunteer "raiser" in Lemoore FFA's Guide Dogs Puppy Raising Program. "You do basic training – sit, stay, learning their names – but then you do a lot more. They learn to relieve themselves on command. You socialize them by bringing them to stores, to the mall, on buses, to school – everywhere you go. You want them to get used to being in all kinds of situations and places – all the places a blind person might go."

The puppies come from Guide Dogs for the Blind, a California organization that trains and matches Labrador retrievers to

visually impaired individuals, explains Sarah Wilson, a Lemoore graduate and now a student at the University of California at Davis. She plans to earn her master's in special education with an emphasis in guide dog mobility.

The Guide Dogs for the Blind group has used Lemoore students for years, relying on volunteers like Sarah and Kalena to shepherd their dogs "through the bad phase," as Kalena calls it.

Participants adopt a puppy, take it home, and raise it for the first 15 to 18 months of its life. Vet bills are covered by Guide Dogs, but all other costs, including that for food, are the responsibility of the raiser.

Sarah, who took her first pup, Moose, as a sophomore in high school and has since raised a total of four, says the process goes like this: You fill out an application, and if it's approved (approval is based on a number of factors, including the cooperation of your parents), it's forwarded to Guide Dogs.

Guide Dogs, in turn, puts you on their list. Then, Sarah says, you get a phone call.

"They call you and tell you there's a puppy ready and that its name will start with a certain letter," she explains. "They also tell you the color, but that's about it. It's



We've long known that FFA members are about more than just "cows, sows and plows." You are selfless, motivated, and most of all, unique.

Throughout this school year, we're highlighting FFA members who embody what today's FFA is all about.

This issue, meet Kalena and Sarah, our volunteers who offer their time to raise guide dogs.

Kalena and Sarah are FFA. Are you?

Lemoore FFA members Kalena Mellott and Sarah Wilson socialize puppies for the Guide Dogs for the Blind organization.

exciting, because you really don't know what you're going to get until you actually meet the puppy truck."

The "puppy truck" is the Guide Dogs delivery truck – full of puppies slated for temporary adoption. It comes from the San Francisco area, where Guide Dogs is based.

Students receive a puppy-raising handbook with their new dog, and they get plenty of support from their chapter, Sarah says.

"We bring them to school every

single day," she explains. "We have outside play areas where they can go potty. They come to classes and go on outings with us."

Those outings often include trips to local elementary schools.

"We give talks to third graders, bring the puppies in and do a presentation," Sarah says. "It's a way for us to show the community what we're doing and to hopefully get them to support Guide Dogs."

By the time a raiser has finished

his or her job, their puppy should be ready for the pros.

"It should be easy to handle and be comfortable being just about anywhere," says Kalena, whose Guide Dog experience has encouraged her to pursue a career in veterinary medicine.

Once the FFA members have completed their tasks, Guide Dogs takes the dog back, and a professional trainer begins the second phase of its training, teaching the dog to meet the specific needs of its future handler. It's tough letting go, Sarah says, but there is a silver lining.

"You have them for all this time, so you do get really attached. But you always know it's for a good cause," she explains.

That cause, she says, becomes crystal clear on "graduation day" – the day, months later, when the dog and its new handler officially become a pair.

"It's a big event, and you get to meet the person privately and sit down and have a conversation and get to know a little about them and their life and where your dog will be going," Sarah describes. "It's a very special day. You feel like you've really accomplished something."

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DAILY care is a major part of the FFA members' responsibilities.

Laila Hajji

National FFA Central Region VICE PRESIDENT

Laila Hajji calls herself “an FFA member by accident.” She grew up in Guthrie, Okla., a town of 8,000 people, and didn't have much knowledge about agriculture – or FFA for that matter – until she started high school. The school's agriculture teachers encouraged her to join FFA and become involved. She started by learning the FFA Creed, participating in livestock judging and preparing a speech. Soon, she established her supervised agricultural experience program (SAE) by raising her own beef cattle and sheep. This past year, Laila served as the 2008-09 National FFA Central Region Vice President. Learn more about Laila.

Q What has been your most memorable experience this year?

A I'll never forget running up on stage and hugging my new teammates, then turning around to stare up at my agriculture teachers in total shock. In that moment, I realized that all we (my teachers and I) had worked toward throughout my FFA experience contributed to that moment. I will never forget being on stage looking at my FFA advisors with the most unbelievable amount of gratitude in my heart.

Q What have you learned about yourself this year as a national FFA officer that will stay with you in your adult life?

A I've learned how valuable my family and closest friends are to me. National FFA officers are on the road about 320

days throughout the year. This year, I have learned how dependent I am on the people closest in my life to lean on, talk to, laugh with and spend good, quality time with. Until national FFA office, I had always felt very independent and capable on my own. But throughout this year, I have learned that the people in our lives are far more important than the roles we have.

Q What advice do you have for other members who might want to be “FFA entrepreneurs” too?

A When it comes to SAE projects, the number one rule is to do something you like! Really work with your agriculture teacher to come up with a project that you are interested in. When you are working on an SAE project you are passionate about, you are much more likely to succeed.



FYI

LAILA'S FAVORITES

This Oklahoma native likes to sing really loudly to pass the time while on long driving trips. Learn more about Laila and her favorites:

Sport: Football

Color: White

Career development event: Public speaking

Jewelry: Pearls

Ice cream: Chocolate banana shake

Hobby: Traveling

Language: French



Turn That Down!



Before you pop in those
EARBUDS, be sure you
know the risks



You know how before the days of iPods and MP3

players, parents were always harping on their teens to turn down the music? Well, Mom and Dad may have been right.

MP3 players are causing hearing loss among young people, and the main culprit is the music's high volume.

"Prolonged loud noise causes high-frequency hearing loss. Teenagers have a tendency to expose themselves to loud noises from iPods, MP3 players and other devices with headphones," says Dr. Herbert Silverstein, president of the Silverstein Institute, a group of four ear, nose and throat specialists in Florida. "If played too loudly, the music from headphones causes increased vibration of the inner ear fluids, which in turn produces damage to the hair cells of the cochlea. The hair cells transmit sound to the hearing nerve and the brain, and when they're damaged, they don't function as well."

While MP3 players may be one of the hottest electronic devices on the market right now, experts say listeners should think twice about using them. Hearing specialists are increasingly noticing levels of hearing loss once associated with old age in people as young as 20, and it is believed that hearing loss could affect 5 percent to 10 percent of MP3 listeners.

"Every once in a while we see a very young person whose hearing is a lot worse than it should be for their age," says Dr. Jordan Josephson, an ear, nose and throat specialist from New York City and author of *Sinus Relief Now*. "Kids come in with ringing in their ears and hearing damage associated with MP3s. We also see former rock 'n' rollers who might have been performing on stage 20 years ago and now have significant hearing loss."

Volume isn't the only problem with MP3 players. The tendency of people to pop their earphones in and listen for hours on end contributes to the danger.

"The longer you do it, the worse it is," Josephson says. "A gunshot, a jackhammer – any loud noise can cause hearing loss. But prolonged elevated volume is even worse."

Doctors are working to raise awareness about the dangers of MP3 players, especially among the younger population.

"Typically, kids think it's not going to happen to them; but it's already happening to them day by day if they're listening too loudly," Josephson says. "They'll regret it later on. Cell phones and speaker phones, when turned way up, can cause similar damage."

If you're worried you may already have hearing damage, it's a good idea to have your ears checked.

"If your ears feel stuffy or blocked or you experience ringing in the ears after noise exposure, damage to the inner ear has occurred, though it may be reversible at first," Silverstein says. "Voices sounding muffled, ear pain or sudden sensitivity to noise may also be signs of damage to the inner ear."

Experts realize teens aren't going to abandon their iPods completely. But limiting exposure to an hour a day and keeping the volume down are crucial if you want to keep your hearing at its best.

"A good test to know if the music is too loud is to take the earphones out and put them on your cheek about two inches from your ear," Josephson suggests. "If you can still hear it, it's too loud."

Want to get an idea of what may happen if you don't take care of your ears?

"Put cotton in your ears and put your iPod's earphones on top," Josephson says. "Then you'll see how you're going to be listening in 20 or 30 years. Music is great, but if you want to be able to enjoy it beyond when you're young, it's important to listen wisely."

– Jessica Mozo



Put your **BEST REPUTATION** forward with a multimedia-rich, web-based résumé

Paper résumés have been around for decades. But in the 21st century, where Google and Facebook are household words, it's becoming more important to go even further than the résumé when displaying your skills, experiences and talents for educational and professional reasons.

Enter the e-portfolio – an online tool that includes your résumé, photos, video, audio, samples of your work, and references from professors or former employers. Because it's online, it can be as creative and interactive as you want. Here are some tips to help you create your own web-based résumé.

1. GET SIGNED UP.

Check into portfolio hosting sites such as Coroflot (www.coroflot.com) and VisualCV (www.visualcv.com), where you can browse other portfolios for examples and set up your own.

Another option is to order your name as a domain name on a site such as www.GoDaddy.com or www.1and1.com. Then set up a blog (see www.wordpress.org and www.blogger.com) with your documents, photos and videos, and forward your domain name to it.

2. MAKE IT INTERACTIVE.

Dream of being a TV news reporter? Make a YouTube clip and post it on your page. Have a knack for land-scaping? Show photos of your projects.

3. PROCEED CAREFULLY.

It's no secret that anyone in the world can access online information. So don't include personal information like your Social Security number, and don't use language or images that might offend people. And if you borrow material from elsewhere, be sure to get permission and give proper credit.

4. LET IT GROW.

Keep your e-portfolio fresh by updating it regularly with new experiences and skills you acquire. Add new information and photos as you mature and change.

— Jessica Mozo



Car Smarts

Four QUESTIONS to consider when purchasing your own set of wheels

Buying a car is no easy task, no matter how old you are. But it can be even more difficult for young people.

"Teenagers can easily get talked into buying something they can't afford," says Danny Kofke, teacher and author of *How to Survive (and Perhaps Thrive) on a Teacher's Salary*.

But don't worry – Kofke has a few tips on how to purchase the right car for you without breaking the bank.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

First, decide which kind of car best meets your individual needs.

"Ask yourself what type of vehicle suits your lifestyle," Kofke says.

For instance, it may make sense to purchase a pickup truck with a bed, ideal for towing and storing gear, if you play sports. For others, a better choice may be a smaller, more compact car, which generally has better gas mileage and fewer impacts on the environment.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU AFFORD?

Kofke suggests determining how much you will pay for a vehicle – before heading to the dealership.

"Know your limit," he says.

In addition, it's a good idea to take other expenses into account

when deciding how much you're willing to spend. Be prepared for the unexpected: accidents, repairs and maintenance.

"Leave yourself some cushion room," Kofke explains. "Anything could happen."

DO YOU REALLY NEED NEW?

Consider buying a used vehicle.

"I definitely think you have to gear toward a used car," Kofke says. "A brand-new car loses a lot of value the second you drive it off the lot."

The reason for this is the depreciation factor; each year, a vehicle's value decreases by 15 percent to 20 percent. "Depreciation is the decline in a car's value over the course of its working life," explains Kofke.

CAN YOU PAY WITH CASH?

While it may be tempting to take out a loan to buy a fancier, newer vehicle, think twice.

"You don't want to start out in debt and have payments to worry about," Kofke says.

Another benefit to paying with cash? You may be taken more seriously, making the car-buying process easier.

"If you have cash in your hand, you can make a deal," he says. "You

can do some serious negotiating."

If you must borrow money, be aware that it may be difficult to secure a loan. It's important – if not crucial – to have credit history, which is a record of your paid and unpaid debts. Many times, teenagers will ask their parents to cosign on a vehicle, which allows the lender to pull credit history for both you and your parent, often securing a lower interest rate for your loan.

"A credit history helps a lender to determine whether a potential borrower has a history of repaying debts in a timely manner," says Kofke. "If you can't qualify for a loan, you don't need to be buying a car."

– Jessica Walker



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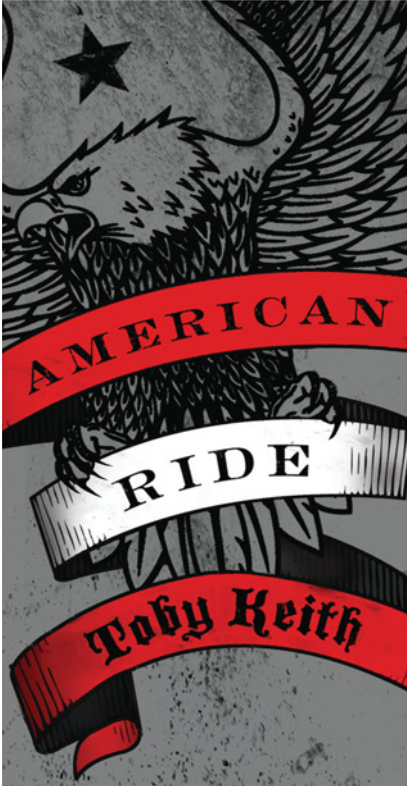
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Cooking, FFA-Style

Looking for a holiday gift for your culinary-minded agriculture teacher, FFA alumni president or even your own parents? Consider this new FFA cookbook.

The FFA Cookbook presents more than 200 recipes from current and alumni FFA members and is illustrated throughout with photos from the organization's past and present. Even the cookbook editor, Erin J. Heinen Petersilie, is an FFA alumna from Kansas.

To order your copy of *The FFA Cookbook*, visit www.voyageurpress.com.



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Convention Continues Online

The fun of the national FFA convention continues online!

Visit the convention page at ffanewhorizons.org for a recap of the 82nd National FFA Convention and links to stories, videos, blogs, microblogs, photos and more from the event.

If you attended the convention, you may even see yourself in a photo, video or blog post!

Also be sure to check out www.ffa.org/convention for lists of award winners, press releases, feature articles and more coverage of the 82nd National FFA Convention.

Win Cash For Your Chapter

Show off your chapter's knowledge and creativity with the FFA Sustainability Through Biotechnology video contest.

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Create and submit a three-minute video that shows how modern agriculture is helping our planet. Upload to the FFA Channel on SchoolTube.com by Dec. 15, 2009.

Check out the video page on ffa.org for official contest rules, submission forms, resources and more!



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17. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.		
Julie Woodard, National FFA Organization		

Emilie Bocker

Illinois FFA ALUMNA finds
a career in rural medicine



EMILIE BOCKER HOPES TO PRACTICE MEDICINE IN RURAL ILLINOIS.

Emilie Bocker first realized an interest in medicine while providing basic care to the livestock on her family's farm.

An FFA alumna of the Eastland FFA Chapter in Lanark, Ill., and a former FFA state officer, Bocker has combined her love of medicine with her agricultural background as a student within the Rural Medicine Education Program at the University of Illinois College of Medicine – Rockford.

The program, designed to encourage more medical doctors to practice in rural areas, is perfect for someone like Bocker, who plans to become a family medicine physician and practice in rural Illinois.

Q How have your FFA experiences and farm background helped prepare you for being a rural medical doctor?

A My interest in medicine actually started on my farm, but with the livestock rather than people. As I grew older, I realized how much I liked human medicine and how much I enjoyed being able to interact with my patients. Through FFA, I gained the leadership and communication skills that are essential to a career as a doctor.

Q Why do you think a career in medicine is a good fit for an FFA member?

A When most people think of career options in a rural area, they think of careers in agriculture. It is also necessary to have people around who are able to meet the needs of those who do work in agriculture. I am excited to work with patients who have similar backgrounds as mine. I think that because of my own rural background, I have a better understanding of what rural patients' lives are like and what might affect their health.

Q What advice do you have for FFA members who are struggling to determine their future careers?

A Explore your options. Opportunities are presented to us every day, and it's important that we keep our eyes open and take advantage of them. Ask a lot of questions. There is no better way to come to an understanding of what a career is truly like than by talking to someone who works in that field. I've also learned how important it is that you are prepared ahead of time by understanding what the career field is like. Job shadowing is also a good way to get experience firsthand.

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A full-page photograph of country music artist Jason Aldean performing on stage. He is wearing a light-colored cowboy hat, a blue t-shirt, and blue jeans with a chain belt. He is playing a black acoustic guitar and looking towards the audience. The stage is lit with warm spotlights. In the background, a crowd of fans is visible, many wearing cowboy hats and cheering. Neon signs for 'Wrangler' and a guitar are visible in the background.

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