FFA new horizons

The magazine of the National FFA Organization

September/October 1999

the road to louisville

What to see and do in Louisville

Preview the 1999 National FFA Convention

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September/October 1999 Volume 48 Number 1

FFA new horizons

Official Magazine of the National FFA Organization

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The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff as an equal opportunity employer.

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convention '99

Check out National FFA Online www.ffa.org

Shop for FFA merchandise online www.ffaunlimited.org

ffa unlimited

On the cover: The 1998-99 National FFA Officer Team riding in style. Photo by Shane Morgan

one on one with

Abby Dougherty

What have you been up to lately?

I just got back from a national officer team retreat in the Canadian wilderness. We all got together to prepare our hearts and minds for the upcoming national FFA convention. We talked about our retiring addresses and just had some fun as a team.

Did you see any grizzly bears?

No, but we really roughed it. We went to a remote lake and had to portage twice to get there in our canoes. We followed an animal trail and ended up losing it. Thankfully we had a compass, so we survived.

How do you like living out of a suitcase?

I've really enjoyed it. After the year is over, however, I'll look forward to a closet and some drawers.

How is being a national officer different than being a state officer?

They are quite similar, but everything is on a larger scale as a national officer. You speak to more people and, of course, you travel greater distances. The experience is just a little more intense.

What is your dream job in agriculture?

I have two dream jobs—either to be an agriculture teacher or to be involved in agricultural chemical sales.

Any favorite hobbies?

I really enjoy watching movies and hanging out with my friends. I also like to cross-stitch—and my mom is teaching me how to quilt right now. In high school I enjoyed showing beef steers and heifers.

What has been most memorable about the last year?

Attending state FFA conventions and conferences in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Hawaii, Arizona, Indiana and Colorado. That's when you really get to see the personality of the states. You learn a lot about agriculture and you get to interact with lots of FFA members.

Describe your hometown of Whiteland.

It,s a small town just about 35 miles south of the National FFA Center in Indianapolis. Agriculture still plays a big role in the life of the town, and everybody pretty much knows everyone else.

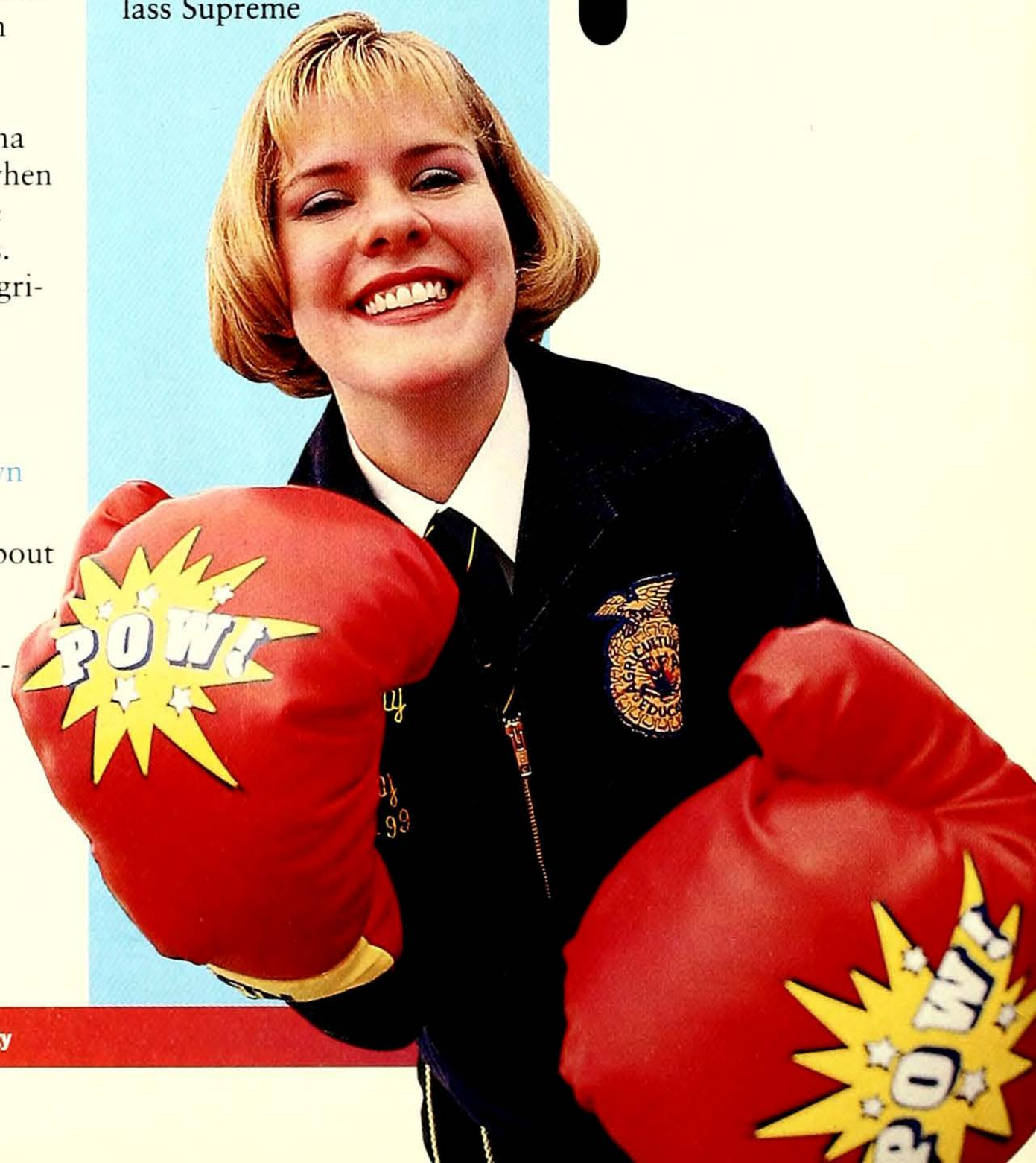
VITALS

Hometown: Whiteland, Indiana
Age: 21
Chapter: Whiteland
Advisor: Hartley Crover
SAE: Beef production
Education: Sophomore at Purdue University
Major: Agricultural education
Last good movie: Austin Powers sequel
Favorite musician: John Mellencamp
What I'm reading: Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
Favorite TV re-runs: Seinfeld
Car: '97 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme

TIMELINE

Age

- 14 • joined FFA
- • lost state creed speaking competition
- • elected greenhand chapter vice president
- 15 • lost district public speaking
- 16 • elected chapter and district secretary
- • lost district public speaking
- • won district beef production entrepreneurship proficiency
- 17 • elected chapter and district president
- 18 • won state leadership ambassador competition
- • elected state secretary
- 20 • elected national secretary



National secretary: Abby Dougherty

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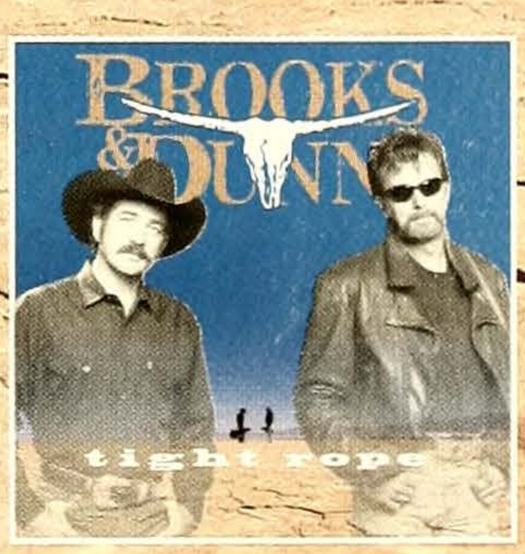

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N. MARIANA ISLANDS

Gina Cabrera

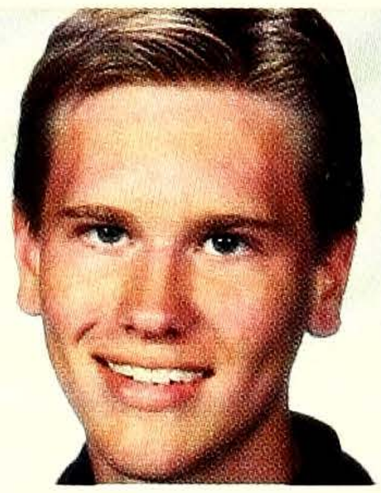
Prior to attending the 1997 National FFA Convention, Gina was an outstanding member of the Saipan FFA Chapter. Her shyness, however, prevented her from taking on leadership roles in the chapter. As a national convention delegate, Gina realized that a young woman could dream and be a leader. With elevated confidence, she returned home to become chapter president. Nineteen-year-old Gina has extensive work and SAE experience, including her work as a lab assistant in plant pathology at Northern Marianas College. She recently wrote an article on the Neem tree and Integrated Pest Management that appeared in the college's newsletter.

FLORIDA

Lacey Sisk

As one of the driving forces behind the Baker County Jr. FFA Chapter, Lacey, 15, is a dedicated FFA member and student. In addition to being chapter president and a successful competitor in prepared public speaking, she served on the Courtesy Corps at the national FFA convention and shows animals at the local fairs. While she enjoys shopping, talking on the phone and listening to music, Lacey still maintains an A average.

NORTH DAKOTA



Chandler Grant

As a greenhand, he became the first Wahpeton FFA Chapter member to ever win the state creed competition. As a sophomore, he won the district prepared public speaking competition and followed it up with a second place finish at state. Chandler, 17, is proud of these accomplishments, but he's also proud to be the editor of "FFA News and Views," the chapter newsletter, and to have recently spent a month in Russia as an exchange student.

COLORADO

Krissy Witchel

An aspiring veterinarian, Krissy, 17, is junior advisor of the Bennett FFA Chapter and president of the North Central FFA District and her 4-H and National Honor Society clubs. As if her resume needs more, Krissy recently took third place overall high individual at the state livestock CDE. This year she expanded her swine production SAE by obtaining two gilts for breeding fair pigs. Krissy plans to attend Colorado State University.

CALIFORNIA

Dane White

After climbing through the ranks as star greenhand, star chapter farmer, chapter president, sectional sentinel and treasurer, regional president, Dane is now the state sentinel. As a member of the Eureka FFA Chapter, 18-year-old Dane also earned his state FFA degree and devotes much time to his market sheep and market hogs SAEs. After his year as state officer, Dane plans to attend Chico State University, where he will major in agricultural education.

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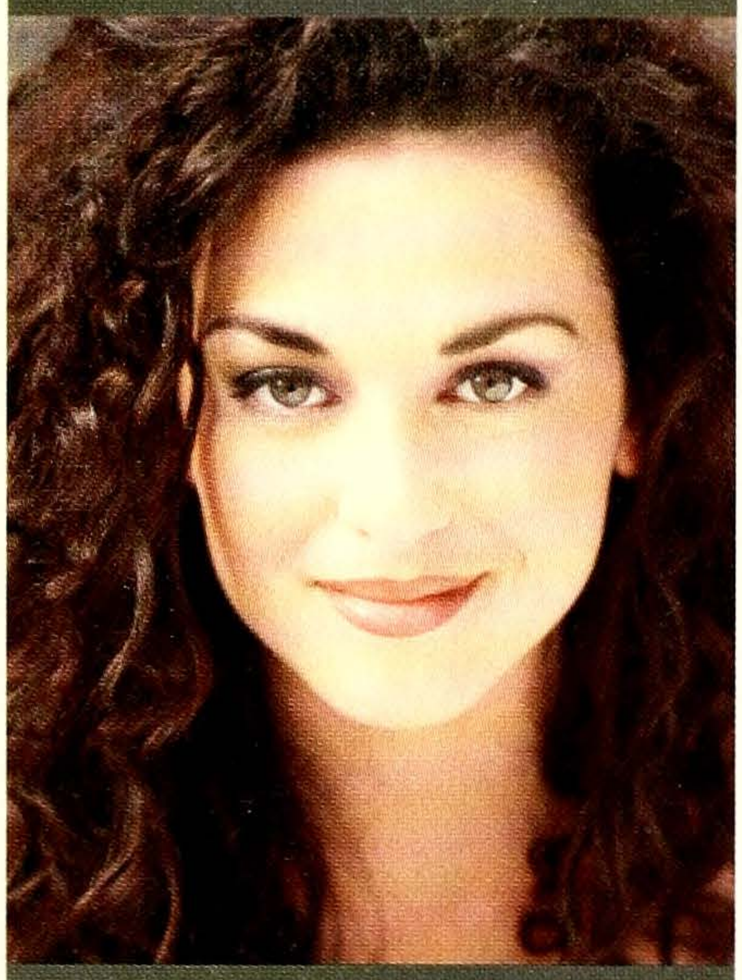

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1999 NATIONAL
FFA CONVENTION

stop by the booth to check
dates, times and the list of stars
you can meet!

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The Phantom Menace, the latest in the Star Wars series, strikes out despite the intense marketing blitz. Meanwhile, Stephen King, who was recently hospitalized after being hit by a car, will be pleased to see that you're reading his books.

Thanks to the Elko FFA Chapter from Elko, Nevada, for sending in the most What's Hot/What's Not surveys!

	hot	not
movie	The Matrix	The Phantom Menace
female actor	Sandra Bullock	Pamela Anderson Lee
male actor	Adam Sandler	Leonardo DiCaprio
artist	Michelangelo	Leonardo da Vinci
career	Veterinarian	Garbage collector
author	Stephen King	R.L. Stine
food	Pizza	Onions
pizza toppimg	Pepperoni	Anchovies
baseball team in '99	Houston Astros	Atlanta Braves

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Road to Loiusville

convention '99

With its new home in **Louisville, Kentucky,** the **National FFA Conventio**n takes on a new life

All the great events from conventions past will still happen, but there's a lot that's new. Did we mention the roller coasters and concerts? Here's a preview of what will be happening. Check it out!

The fourth of July—in October?

Okay, it's not the Fourth of July, but can't we have a huge fireworks display anyway? After all, it's not every day that you get to attend one of the largest youth gatherings on Planet Earth. It's called "Lighting Up Louisville" and that's exactly what we intend to do. This monstrous fireworks display happens Wednesday evening, following the final reflections session. FFA members will join together on the front parking lot of Freedom Hall to watch, as WAMZ 97.5 FM will provide a live remote broadcast from the event, starting at 7 p.m.

talking the talk

Hollywood screen star Danny Glover (you've seen him with Mel Gibson in the Lethal Weapon series) comes to the convention to speak to FFA members at the two opening sessions on Thursday. When he's not throwing bad guys in jail on-screen, Glover is committed to community involvement and serves as a powerful advocate for literacy. He frequently speaks to students around the nation about the joys of reading and education. Speaking on Friday will be motivational speakers Dave Roever and Emory Austin, both of whom are back by popular demand. Mount Everest climber Jamie Clarke takes the stage Saturday.

continued ▶

convention '99

edu-tainment tours

You might have so much fun on FFA's official tours that you'll forget you are learning at the same time. You can watch a piece of Northern White Ash being lathed into a Louisville Slugger baseball bat, or walk through Churchill Downs, the home of the prestigious Kentucky Derby. Other tour stops include the following: United Parcel Service, Bernheim Forest and Arboretum, Koetter Woodworking, Forestry Discovery Center, Purina Mills Chow Plant, Rohm and Haas, Food Processors Tour, Louisville Water Company, Louisville Tractor, Ford Motor Co., Kroger Distribution Center, Aquaculture Research Center, Lexington Horse Farms and more. See pages 18-20 for more official and unofficial tours and attractions in the Louisville area.

working it out

No need to worry about not getting into a workshop this year. We've solved that problem with our expanded workshop schedule. Be sure to bring a pen and notebook because you'll want to take notes, on topics ranging from time management to leadership to job interviews.

Rule the Kingdom This will be the first national FFA convention where you can experience The Quake, Mile High Falls, Hellevator, Twisted Sisters, Chang and T2—oh, and about 100 other rides and attractions at Kentucky Kingdom, the full scale thrill park adjacent to the convention grounds. The park will be open to members on Friday night for a special Halloween evening (bring your costume) and all day Saturday.

clickety-clack

You can check your e-mail and your favorite Internet sites at the computer lab, which is available Thursday through Saturday and will be located just off the primary Food Court in the east wing of the convention facility.

the ffa times is back!

After a three-year absence, The FFA Times, the newspaper of the National FFA Convention, is back. Check on the day's events and look for photos of friends. You can find copies at select hotels and at the convention. If you have story ideas, call Molly Avis at 317-802-4235 or e-mail her at mavis@ffa.org

career launchpad

It's back. And it will be bigger, better, loud and busier than ever. It's the 34th National Agricultural Career Show, and it promises to be a good one. Drop by for the chance to win a restored John Deere 4020 tractor, or to visit with some of the 75 college and university representatives. Or, talk to professionals from major agribusiness companies who wouldn't miss this opportunity to scope out future employees. Or just kick tires on the latest cars, trucks and tractors on display. Bring your shopping bag because exhibitors like to give away lots of stuff.

name that tune

You won't even have to leave the building to attend high-octane concerts by some of country music's hottest musicians. It all happens at Broadbent Arena. Call 1-888-332-2668 to buy your tickets in advance.

Kicking off the concert series is the split bill of **Sherrie Austin & Diamond Rio** (5 to 7 p.m. Thursday)

Sawyer Brown takes the stage the following day for a foot stomping show (5 to 7 p.m. Friday).

Don't forget your camera!

Ricochet blows in later that night to close it all down (9:30 to 11 p.m. Friday).

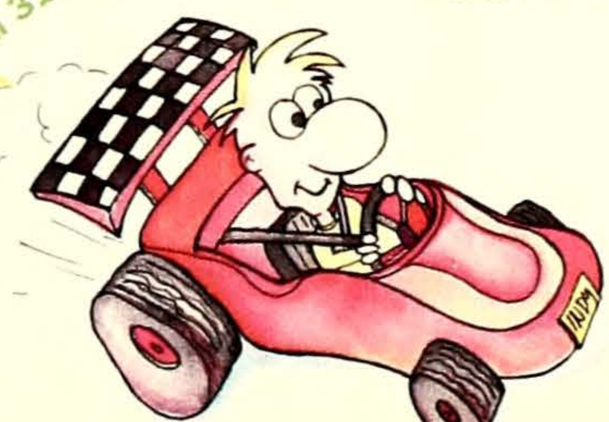
Sawyer Brown

with a Thump and a Twang Whatever your musical tastes, you won't want to miss the convention lances on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights. The DJs will be spinning ountry, rap and everything in between. Thousands showed up each night last year, expect the same. Bring your casual duds and mix it up with FFA members from all over the country.

shopping spree

Looking for a new pair of boots, or the new Alan Jackson CD, or an FFA shirt to wear to your next fundraiser? How about a souvenir from the first convention to be held in Louisville? Then stop looking, and head on over to the FFA Shopping Mall. Here you'll find stores operated by the official FFA catalog store and other retailers. The stores will be open from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday. Don't forget your wallet.

Meet Me in Indy Indianapolis is just a couple of hours north of Louisville, so if you want to take a tour of the National FFA Center, this might be your best opportunity. Call 317-802-6060 to schedule an appointment.



convention '99

Like to Plan Ahead?

If so, here are the future National FFA Convention dates:

October 25-28, 2000
October 24-27, 2001
October 30-Nov. 2, 2002
October 29-Nov. 1, 2003
October 27-30, 2004
October 26-29, 2005

Spreading the Word

On Wednesday, October 27, approximately 60 state FFA officers will participate in an agricultural literacy program by serving as ambassadors to more than 40 fourth grade classrooms throughout the Louisville community. The National FFA Community Outreach Committee is working on the project with Junior Achievement; Ag in the Classroom; Food, Land and People; Gee Whiz in Agriculture; and other organizations.

lost and found

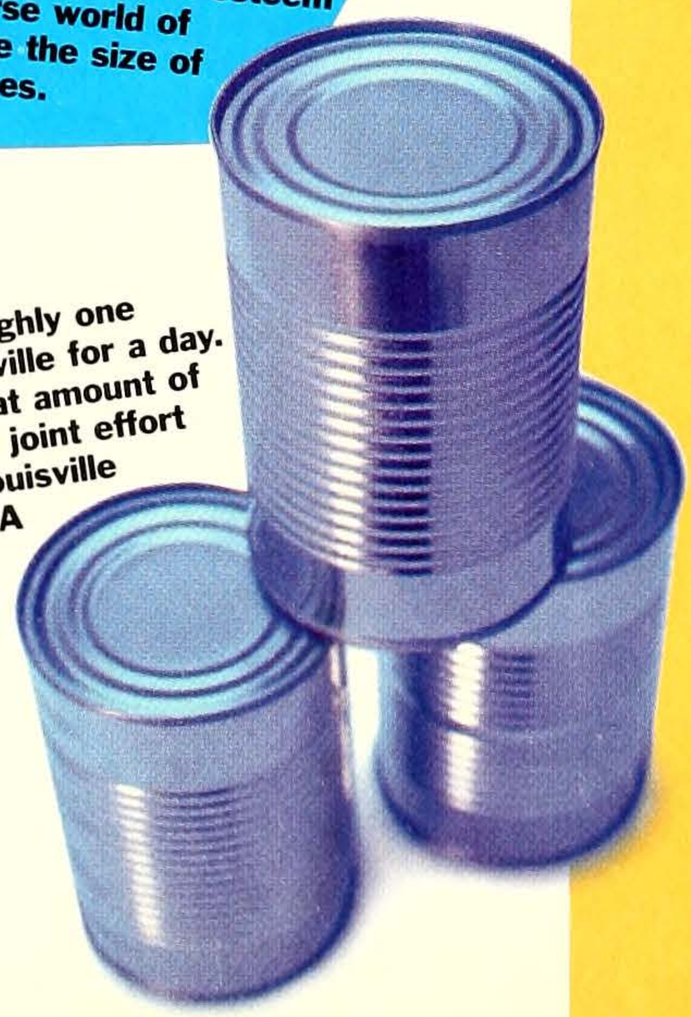
If you happen to get lost in Louisville, or in the one million square feet of indoor convention space, don't worry. When you reach the city limits, tune your radio to 530 AM for convention information. There will also be 18 hospitality stations located throughout Louisville—at the airport, key hotel locations and the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center (the site of the convention). These stations will be staffed by knowledge folks who can provide you with convention and city information, including schedules, maps and directions. If you need assistance at the convention itself, you can always grab an FFA member wearing a yellow Courtesy Corps armband.

What a Pal!

As part of the annual Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) conference, 700 third-grade students from Louisville and southern Indiana schools will be paired with 700 FFA members to build self-esteem and learn about the diverse world of agriculture. This is double the size of previous PALS conferences.

cans in your pants

It is estimated that it would take roughly one million pounds of food to feed Louisville for a day. FFA and Kentucky Harvest made that amount of food a goal when putting together a joint effort to help feed those in need in the Louisville area. Louisville residents and all FFA members attending the national convention will be asked to donate non-perishable food items. You can drop your food items at drop boxes located throughout the convention grounds. After all, what good is agriculture unless the food we produce gets to the people who need it?



Speak Out Against Drugs—And Win Big

The National FFA Organization and The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) are jointly sponsoring a Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest to heighten awareness of drug abuse problems among pre-teen youth and teenagers.

Eligibility:

FFA chapters and chapter members in good standing may enter the contest.

PSA Message Objectives:

Eligible messages include those that promote healthy activities, behavior and environments and that deter behavior that may lead to substance abuse among youth. Eligible PSA messages include those that: prevent drug abuse including underage tobacco and alcohol use; emphasize the connection between drugs and crime and violence; emphasize the connection between substance abuse/use and HIV/AIDS; emphasize substance abuse treatment options for youth; foster high expectations and self esteem for youth; provide opportunities for youth through programs and services in school and after school such as mentoring; educate and support the development of good parenting practices; encourage greater parental and caregiver involvement in a child's upbringing and effective drug-prevention parenting strategies; provide early childhood development programs that strengthen the parent-child relationship.

The Awards:

PSA entries will be sorted by geographic regions and media type. A Certificate of Merit will be given to winning entries from each region and media type (television, radio, Internet web banners, outdoor billboards, and print); unless the judges agree that no entry meets the message objectives and evaluation-criteria. Regional winning PSAs will qualify for placement in appropriate local/regional media outlets and are eligible for national award consideration. An Award of Excellence will be given to national winning entries in each media type (television, radio, Internet web banners, outdoor billboards, and print); unless the judges agree that no entry meets the message objectives and evaluation criteria. National winning PSAs will be recognized and shown at the annual FFA convention in October 2000 and qualify for placement in appropriate national media outlets, including internal FFA communication vehicles.

Entries will be evaluated on the following criteria:

The PSA meets at least one of the message objectives referenced above.

The PSA does not have commercial benefit or commercial advertiser identification.

The PSA directly benefits the cause of the FFA and the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign.

The PSA was created by a legally recognized non-profit organization. If the media created it, then it must be co-sponsored by an organization with non-profit status.

The creative quality is acceptable for the market.

PSA Formats: PSAs may be submitted in various media types—television, radio, Internet web banners, outdoor billboards, and print. The following formats are acceptable:

Television PSAs—3/4-inch and Beta tapes are acceptable.

Radio PSAs—For best quality, a digital audiotape (DAT) is preferable, but a standard audiotape also is acceptable.

Print PSAs—For best quality, a zip disk with high-resolution art is preferable, but a floppy disk, mechanical or velox print is also acceptable. In the case of zip disks with high-resolution art and floppy disks, Macintosh format is preferred. A printed hard copy of all print formats PSAs must be submitted for judging purposes.

Important Dates:

February 15, 2000:
Deadline for submission of PSAs to the Healthy Lifestyles Committee at FFA

March, 2000:
PSAs entries reviewed by Healthy Lifestyles Committee

June—August, 2000:
Winning PSAs submitted for placement in appropriate media outlets including internal FFA communication vehicles

October, 2000:
National winning PSA recognized and shown at annual FFA convention

For more information, please call Jennifer Conway at 317-802-424 or e-mail her at jconway@ffa.org

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Pizza topping _____

NOT

Movie _____

Female actor _____

Male actor _____

Website _____

TV personality _____

Career _____

Season _____

Planet _____

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might as well spend some time checking out the city's attractions. Here's your guide

Part Seven:
Louisville

See page 20 for detailed information on these attractions.

FFA HIGHWAY

Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory*

Trace the history of Major League Baseball from the perspective of the bat. See historic bats used by Ty Cobb, Lou Gehrig, Pete Rose, Sammy Sosa and Hank Aaron. When you're finished at the museum, you'll be escorted through the plant, where you will see major leaguers' bats being made before your very eyes. At the end of the tour, you'll receive a miniature souvenir bat.

Admission: $5
Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday
More info: (502) 588-7227
Address: 800 West Main Street
www.slugger.com

Louisville Science Center

Across the street and down the block from Louisville Slugger you'll find the Louisville Science Center. Here, you can catch a movie in the IMAX Theater, see some weird science in the Chemistry Kitchen, or see how things really work at the Tech Forum. Don't forget to check out the reconstructed skeleton of a humpback whale.

Admission for IMAX film plus exhibits: Ages 13 and up, $7
Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday-Saturday; Noon-5 p.m. Sunday; IMAX films shown hourly (reservations recommended for IMAX)
More info: (502) 561-6100 ext. 6111
Address: 727 West Main Street
www.lsclouienet.org

Churchill Downs and Kentucky Derby Museum *

Horse enthusiasts know that the greatest two minutes in sports happen right here at Churchill Downs, the site of the Kentucky Derby. Start at the museum, where you will experience a 360-degree multimedia presentation on the Derby. Explore the rest of the museum, then head out for a tour of Churchill Downs, the oldest continuously operated racetrack in the U.S.

Admission: Ages 12 and up, $6
Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily
More info: (502) 637-7097
Address: 704 Central Avenue

The Museum of the American Printing House for the Blind

This fascinating museum features a unique collection of artifacts relating to the educational history of people with blindness. Housed in a structure dating back to 1883, the museum's exhibits include tactile maps and globes, the first mechanical braille writers and early "talking" books.

Admission: Free
Hours: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
More info: (800) 223-1839
Address: 1839 Frankfort Avenue

Louisville Zoo

After seeing thousands of people at the FFA convention, head on over to the Louisville Zoo for an animal convention. Here, at this 73-acre park, you can roam with 1,300 animals representing 371 species. You'll see it all here, including a rare arachnid exhibit of spiders and centipedes. Other highlights include the exotic Islands exhibit, the HerpAquarium and the polar bear pool.

Admission: $7
Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily
More info: (502) 459-2181
Address: 1100 Trevillian Way
www.louisvillezoo.org

Thomas Edison Butchertown House

He played key roles in the developments of the telegraph, the light bulb, recorded sound and the motion picture. When all was said and done, the genius had 1,100 patents to his name. Need we say more? Check out the place he called home while working here for Western Union in 1866. Includes Edison inventions and memorabilia.

Admission: Adults $4; Students $2
Hours: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday
More info: (502) 585-5247
Address: 729 East Washington Street

more cool places to visit

Kentucky Kingdom*

Adjacent to the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, this full-scale amusement park boasts 110 rides and attractions. It is home to one of the longest, tallest, fastest stand-up roller coasters in the world. (502) 366-2231
www.kentuckykingdom.com/kentuckykingdom/

Speed Art Museum

It's Kentucky's first and largest public art museum. Its collection includes pieces dating back six thousand years. 2035 South Third Street; phone (502) 636-2893
www.speedmuseum.org

University of Louisville Football

If you're a college football fan, come see the University of Louisville Cardinals take on the University of Alabama-Birmingham on Saturday, October 30. (502) 852-5151
www.uoflsports.com

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Home of the Joseph A. Callaway Archaeological Museum. You must stop here if you want to see a 2,700-year-old Egyptian mummy. 2825 Lexington Road; phone (800) 626-5525
www.sbts.edu

Locust Grove

Visit the 55-acre Georgian plantation that was the last home of Louisville founder and Revolutionary War leader General George Rogers Clark. 561 Blankenbaker Lane; phone (502) 896-2146
www.locustgrove.org

McAlpine Lock and Dam*

Watch boat and barge traffic on the Ohio River from an overlook at the McAlpine Lock and Dam. Northwestern Parkway, 27th Street exit; phone (502) 582-5736

Zachary Taylor National Cemetery

Pay your respects to former U.S. President Zachary Taylor, who is buried here. 4701 Brownsboro Road; phone (502) 893-3852

Just across the river in Indiana . . .

Falls of the Ohio Interpretive Center

(Jeffersonville, Indiana)

Here you'll find the world's largest exposed Devonian fossil bed, which was once the ocean floor. See and touch 600 fossil species. 201 West Riverside Drive; phone (812) 280-9970

Forest Discovery Center

(Starlight, Indiana)

This is your one-stop shopping for information about trees. See videos, exhibits, an 1,100 square foot diorama and a working rough mill plant. 533 Louis Smith Road; phone (812) 283-4999
www.forestcenter.com

While our information is deemed reliable, we highly recommend that you call ahead for directions and to confirm hours and admission fees.

* Indicates that you can visit this site as part of an official National FFA Convention tour. Check at the convention registration desk for details.

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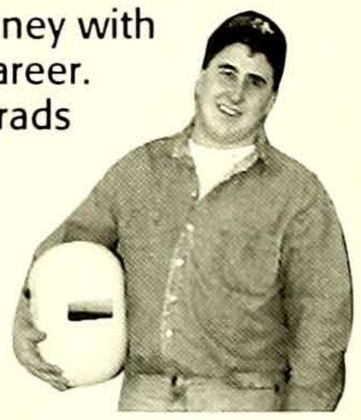

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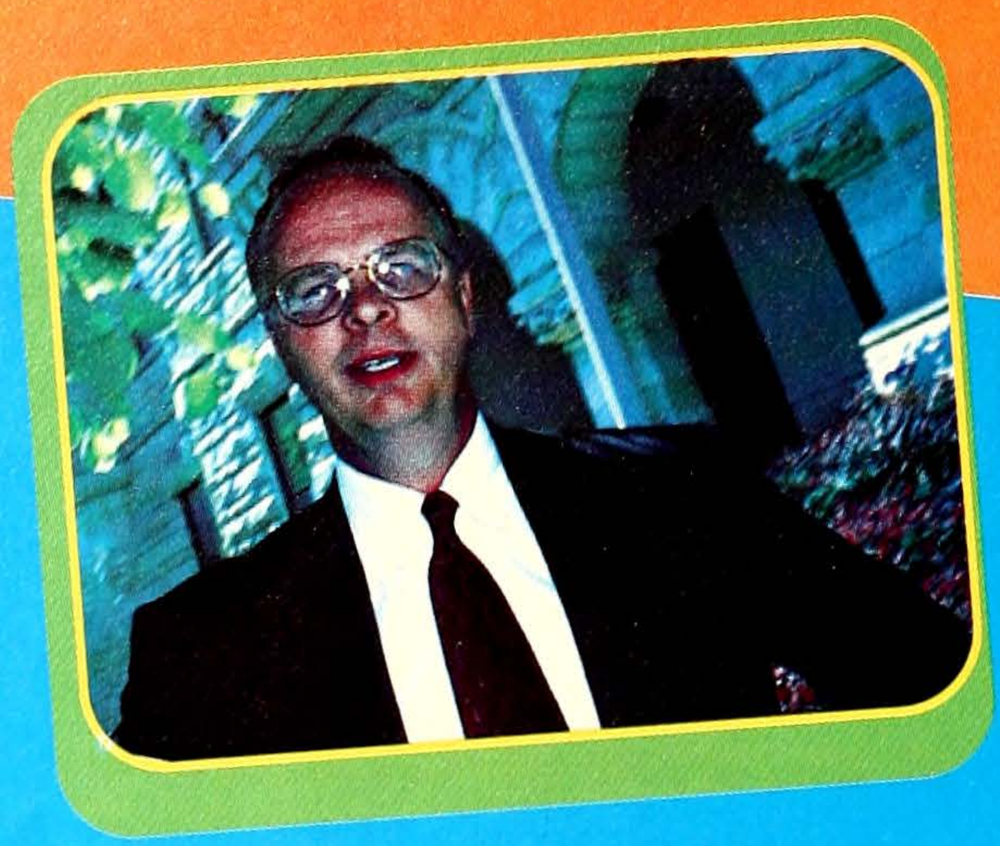

High school doesn't last forever. There comes a spring day when you have to move on, diploma in hand, to face the world. The prospect is daunting. Where, you might wonder, do you go?

According to Larry Moeder, Director of Admissions and Financial Aid at Kansas State University, the answer to that question is simple: college. Each year, Moeder and the rest of the K-State admissions staff sift through nearly 8,000 applications from eager high school students in search of college degrees. Their job: weed out the bad, accept the good. They know a winning application when they see one. Hoping to get the inside scoop on what it takes to apply to college, *FFA New Horizons* caught up with Moeder at his desk on the K-State campus.

Interview by Chris Hayhurst

listen up!

Larry Moeder, Director of Admissions and Financial Aid at Kansas State University, has some insider info you can use when putting together your college application

I want to go to college. How do I begin?

Moeder: As a high school student, maybe in your sophomore year, you should look at the requirements that you need to get into a college, and then work toward meeting them. You should also begin to think about what area of study you would like to go into. Junior year's a great time to visit colleges that you have an interest in.

Net Work. The Internet is a great source of college-related information. You can often download applications directly from a university's Web site.

Are standardized test scores important?

Moeder: You need to have a decent standardized test score to be admitted, but it's also important that you have a good score to receive scholarship assistance.

How important are extra-curricular activities?

Moeder: Some institutions look at extra-curricular activities when making an admissions decision. So do scholarship programs. Leadership roles in high school, church, and the community are all important.

Can test-prep classes help?

Moeder: They probably aren't going to give you any answers, but they will help you deal with the test itself.

continued ▸

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Who should write my recommendations?
Moeder: If you want a scholarship in a certain field, like biology, then a letter of recommendation from your high school biology instructor would be great. For admissions purposes, ask for a letter from a high school counselor. Make sure that you also ask if they'll give you a good letter of recommendation.

How important is the essay?
Moeder: It shows whether you have the ability to organize your thoughts and be precise. Never submit an essay without first having it read by at least one or two other individuals.

Should I take hard classes in high school?
Moeder: It's critical that you challenge yourself throughout high school, all the way to the end. At some institutions an admissions decision may be based on that final transcript.

Where should I apply?
Moeder: Look at in-state institutions and out-of-state institutions. Pick a public and a private that you really would like to go to. Send in the applications, and go for campus visits. If you visit a campus and you feel comfortable, that's a place you should keep on your list.

The Application. Be neat. There's nothing worse than a sloppy application. Mind the details (like your social security number), and watch your spelling, grammar, and punctuation. If you're applying to more than one school, see if there are any similarities in the individual applications. You may save time by recycling background information and essays.

What can I learn from a campus visit?
Moeder: Try to find out everything you can about the institution. Go with a solid list of questions-about curriculum, student activities, housing, and financial aid. Take an active role in the process. I see too many students come and just sit during their campus visit while mom and dad do all the talking. That doesn't make a good impression.

To whom should I talk?
Moeder: Go to someone in your area of study, like the department head. Ask to visit with someone in housing. One of the most important things you can ask is, 'Where will I live, and will I like it?' Arrange for a financial-aid visit. Go on a walking tour, and watch how others react to you. How do you feel when you look other students in the eyes?

Testing, 1, 2, 3. By the time you're finished applying to college, you'll feel like a lab experiment. Everywhere you turn you'll be subjected to tests: PLANs, PSATs, SATs, ACTs, even APs. Don't miss test-registration dates, and do your best!

Once accepted, how do I make sure I commit to the right school?
Moeder: Look at the quality of the institution's educational program. See how successful and satisfied its graduates are. Would they do it again? Look at the school's affordability. Most important, look at your comfort level.

Any final words of advice?
Moeder: Don't miss deadlines.

Take a look around you. You'll be surprised by who you know that may have attended the very schools to which you're applying. Ask them what they thought about their college experience, and if they have any advice. Also, go to your high school guidance counselor. Their help is invaluable!

Do you have any interviewing tips?
Moeder: Be an active player and show a thorough interest in the institution. Don't just sit back and wait for the questions to be asked.

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With the help of veterinarian technicians, Dr. Rick Pehta (right) prepares an emergency room patient for treatment.

an

On the ni

imal e.r.

nt shift at a Chicago emergency room

BY ERICH GAUKEL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHANE MORGAN

It's 9:06 on a warm, clear spring night. For the staff at the Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services, it's getting close to their busy summer season—a time when city cats and dogs are eager to be outdoors, where they are exposed to such dangers as busy Chicago streets, garbage can meals, and open windows in high rise apartment buildings.

In this, the third largest city in the United States, there are millions of people and a lot of them have pets. And, in this city that never quite sleeps (traffic jams are not uncommon at 3 a.m.), an emergency room for pets is a necessity.

In come the patients

The doors have only been unlocked for two hours, and already the waiting room and three exam rooms are packed. In the waiting room, a young couple waits with their sick Labrador. Across from them, a young man nervously watches Sneakers, his caged cat, which suddenly lost use of its back legs earlier in the day.

A couple of owners pay their bills and leave with their pets. Others continue to walk in with ailing cats and dogs. Among them, two young men, one of them holding Bruno, a nine-week-old boxer suffering from bouts of choking and coughing.

% of practicing vets who are male: 57

Down the hallway from the waiting room, Dr. Rick Pehta, who runs the show at this real life E.R. for pets, moves quickly through the exam and triage rooms. In a scene not all that different from TV's "E.R." (which, incidentally, also takes place here in Chicago), Dr. Pehta and his associate Dr. Jewell check the animals, scribble on charts and hold X-rays up to the fluorescent ceiling lights.

% of veterinary students who are female: 68

A night of cats and dogs

As they shout instructions to the six veterinarian technicians (vet techs for short), who are running in all directions with animals, towels, needles and X-rays, it seems like total chaos.

But it's not. It's a well-orchestrated operation that has happened every night since 1978, when Dr. Pehta first opened this E.R. designed specifically for pets. The E.R. is open mostly at night and on holidays—when other vets' offices are closed. The idea is to get the animals patched up and stabilized until the owners can take the pets to their regular vets the next morning.

Some pets like Sneakers (the cat from the waiting room that lost use of its legs), however, don't make it until morning. Sneakers has a blood clot preventing blood from reaching the back legs, rendering them useless. This points to bigger problems in the cat's heart and lungs. Dr. Pehta explains the situation to the owner and recommends that the cat be put to sleep with a lethal dose of anesthetic. Sorrowed by the sudden turn of events, the owner asks to be alone with the cat before the injection.

% of vets who work mostly or exclusively with small animals: 71

The E.R. can be a place where life ends, but it can also be a place where life begins. An hour after Sneakers was placed in cold storage (that's where the deceased go until they are taken away to be cremated), a pregnant pit bull arrived at the clinic. Her water had broken the day before, but still no puppies. The dog had been hit by a car a few weeks earlier, but apparently suffered no significant injuries. Worried now that there might be complications from the accident, the owners decided to bring her to the E.R.

% of vets who work mostly or exclusively with large animals: 13

Number of veterinary schools in the U.S.: 27

Dr. Pehta examines the pit bull's X-rays, which show no signs of damage from the car; the X-rays show that she is carrying at least eleven pups. Dr. Pehta gives the dog medication to help speed up the delivery. A vet tech then takes her back to the waiting room so her owners can take her for a walk—another tactic for speeding up labor.

Tomorrow begins

It's now 12:15 a.m. Dr. Jewell's shift ends. He is replaced by Dr. Landini, who throws on his white doctor's jacket, nametag and beeper. It's much quieter now at the E.R., so he takes a look at all the patients already here, many of whom will be spending the night and will be picked up in the morning by the pets' owners.

Dr. Pehta asks Dr. Landini to take a look at a cat that came in with respiratory distress. Dr. Landini agrees that it probably has pneumonia and diabetes. It's a serious condition, but it's treatable.

Kim, one of the vet techs, shows Dr. Landini a pigeon resting in a glass case in the back of the triage room. Someone had brought it in after finding it on the ground, unable to fly. Dr. Landini picks up the pigeon—a "rock dove" as he calls it. As he expertly holds its wings and torso, he looks it over for physical damage. There's none. "It's neurological," he says, noting that one of three things—head trauma, an infectious process, or a consumed toxin—is making this bird unable to fly. He gives it some antibiotics

Vet Careers

There are two career paths in veterinary medicine. The first is the veterinarian. The second is the veterinarian technician (vet tech). With a growth rate of 3% annually, the veterinary medical profession continues to be a stable career area.

Around 50% of veterinarians own their own practices. Private practices, industry, governmental agencies, schools and universities employ the rest. Most vet techs work for vets in these types of settings.

Salaries average above $30,000 for first year veterinarians. The average income for established veterinarians in 1998 was $57,507.

Vet techs typically earn a third to a half of what veterinarians earn.

It's a good idea to start preparing now if you are serious about a career in veterinary medicine. For aspiring vets, you will need all the science, math and biology you can get in high school. If you have access to animals through your FFA chapter, take advantage of the opportunity, and learn everything you can. It's also a good idea to spend time with your local vet, so you can see first hand what a vet actually does.

Vets typically earn a four-year bachelor's degree, then go on to veterinary school, which will take another four years. Vets must then be certified in the states in which they plan to practice. Vet techs are typically required to earn a two-year college degree.

Certification for vet techs is required in many states.

and anti-inflammatory drugs and returns it to the case.

Cats, birds and dogs are the most regular patients at the E.R. Dr. Pehta and his staff recall that there have been some others, such as the horse (which they had to turn away because it wouldn't fit in the building), a stolen monkey, a pot-bellied pig and a goat.

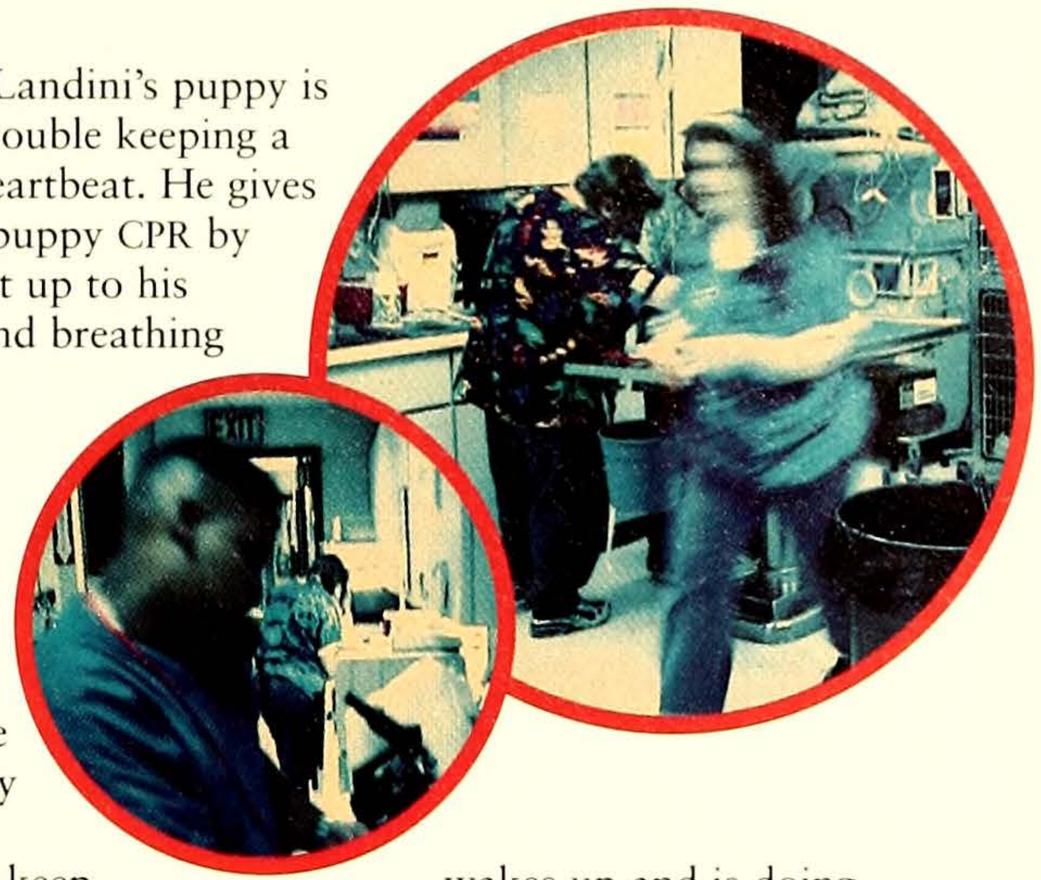
Puppies on the way

Meanwhile, the pregnant pit bull is making no progress. Dr. Pehta and the owners decide a cesarean section (a procedure where the puppies are surgically removed through an incision in the dog's abdomen) is the best and safest option.

Number of new vets entering job market each year: 2,100

As the operating room is prepped, one of the vet techs shaves the pit bull's abdomen. Dr. Pehta scrubs and dons his blue mask, cap and gown. The dog is given the anesthetic and taken immediately to the operating room, where Dr. Pehta, Dr. Landini and six vet techs—everyone on the shift—are now assembled.

Last minute adjustments are made, the pit bull's abdomen is scrubbed, and the operation begins. Minutes later, Dr. Pehta pulls out a puppy and hands it to a vet tech, who vigorously rubs it in a towel to gets its respiration system going. Dr. Pehta then pulls out six more in quick succession. Suddenly, everyone's hands are full. Dr. Landini's puppy is having trouble keeping a steady heartbeat. He gives the tiny puppy CPR by holding it up to his mouth and breathing lightly.



More puppies are pulled from the pit bull and there are barely enough hands to keep up. Eventually 13 puppies are pulled from the pit bull, and the E.R. is as quiet, but as busy, as it has been all night, as everyone concentrates on keeping the puppies alive.

It's 2:40 a.m., forty minutes after the operation began. The mother pit bull, all stitched up, wakes up and is doing fine. She rests in a cage while the anesthetic wears off. Ten of the puppies will make it through alive.

Dr. Landini is called to an exam room, where two sick Rottweilers with diarrhea are waiting for him. Dr. Petha, who has been here since 7 p.m., calls it a night.

Source for employment statistics and sidebar: The American Veterinary Medical Association (www.avma.org)

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The Vanishing Act

Is your money disappearing before your very eyes? Here are nine ways to slow your spending

If you continually find yourself low on dough—or if you tend to spend your money before you have it—you need to install a new brake system in your wallet.

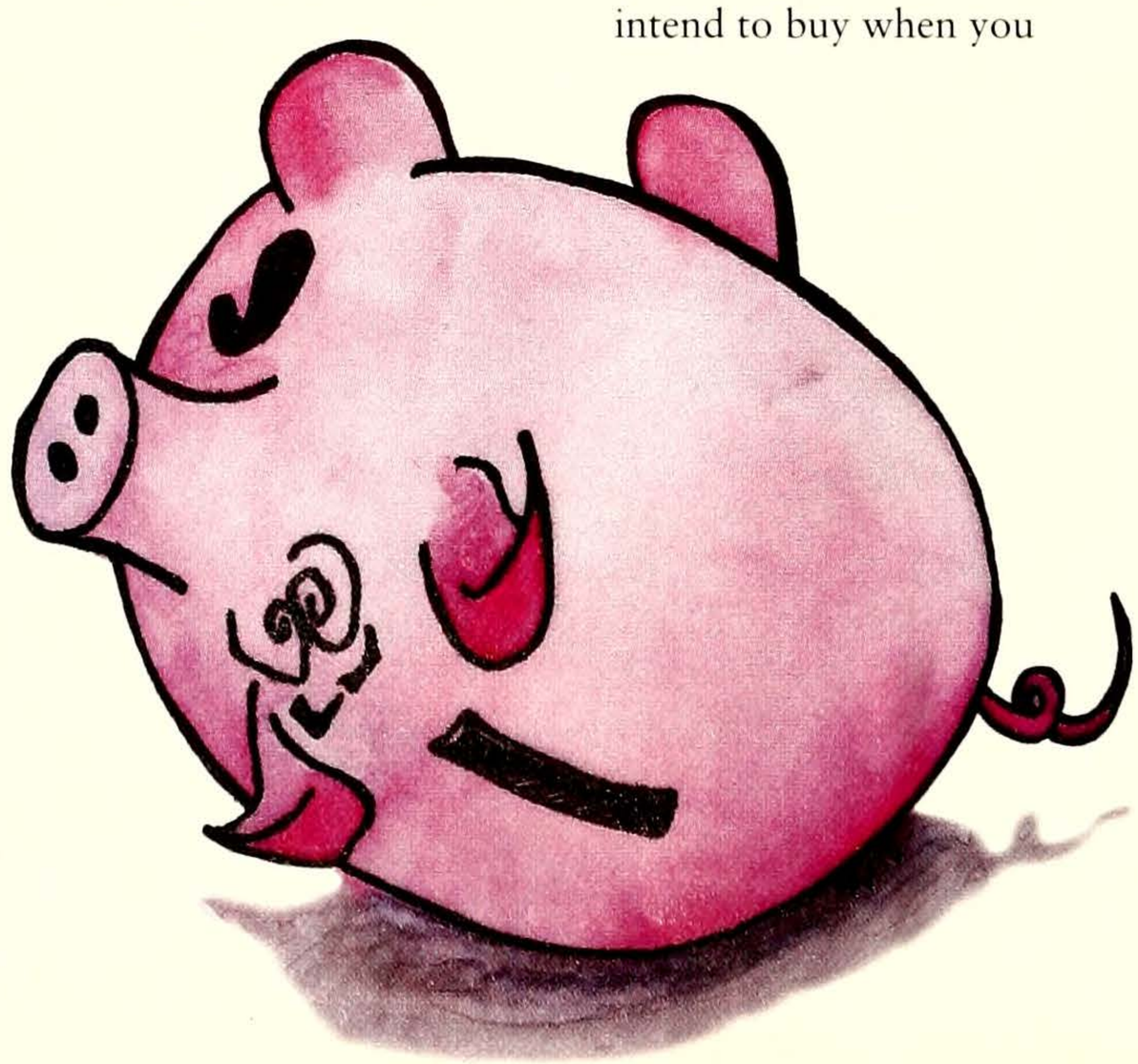
Let's face it—it's impossible to stop spending cold turkey. But just by looking at how, where and why you're spending your money, you can start reducing your spending and growing your savings.

1. Keep track of what you spend.

After just a week you should be able to see areas where you can cut back your spending. You can do this by writing down every penny you spend in a notebook at the end of each day. Or, for better results, carry a pocket notebook with you at all times—this way you won't forget to write down the little things you buy, such as gum, raffle tickets or a can of soda. Just knowing that you have to write everything down can cut your spending, so give it a try!

2. Make a habit of comparison-shopping.

You'll almost always find a better price if you shop around. Not only will you save money, but you will also keep yourself from making impulse purchases (anything you didn't intend to buy when you walked into the store). Who knows? After all that shopping, you may decide you don't need that camera anymore.



3. Buy what you need—not what you want.

Sounds easy enough, but sometimes it's hard to distinguish between the two. Think of it by asking yourself—Can I get along without this? Chances are, you can.

4. You can't spend it if you don't have it.

Try leaving your cash, credit card and bankcard at home. Getting by on less is easier when it's your only option. It's also a good idea to keep your extra cash in a savings account instead of your top dresser drawer—this way you will be earning interest on your money, and it will be harder for you to spend it.

5. Plan ahead.

If there's something you really want to buy, set a goal and start saving for it. Avoid using credit cards for major purchases unless you have the money to pay the bill off when it comes. Planning, like comparison shopping, prevents you from making those impulse purchases.

6. Don't hang out at the mall.

Spending time around cash registers—whether they're at the mall or any store—is tempting, and you'll likely drop several bucks before you know it.

7. Keep your mind clear when you're shopping.

If you shop while you're hungry, tired, depressed or in a hurry, you're more likely to make unwise buying decisions.

8. The full price test.

Here's a good rule to follow if you can't stay away from those sale-priced items: If you wouldn't buy it at full price, you probably don't really want or need it.

9. Make sure you're satisfied with your purchase.

If it's clothing, try it on first. If it's a car, drive it first. If you have problems with a product after you've bought it, return it. Remember, it's your money.

1994
Kenneth Hutchinson
Franklin, West Virginia

1995
Andrea Padgett
Marland, Oklahoma

1998
Kaylin Hedrick
Monroeville, Ohio

1996
Jessica Stokes
Lakeside, California

1997
Gregg Metzger
Larchwood, Iowa

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last laff

Q: Why do fish live in salt water?
A: Pepper makes them sneeze.

Kasey Campbell
Rogersville, Alabama

Q: Why is your nose in the middle of your face?
A: Because it's the scenter.

Stacy Worthy
Rogersville, Missouri

Q: What do you call a pig that trims bushes?
A: A hedgehog.

Chris Sollenberger
Curryville, Pennsylvania

Q: What is the best place to golf?
A: The Golf of Mexico.

Frank Tolsma
Sumas, Washington

Q: What's really small and washes up on beaches?
A: Microwaves.

Edward Rios
Visalia, California

Q: What do skeletons say before dining?
A: Bone appetit.

L.S. Owens
McCormick, South Carolina

Q: What did the skeleton put on his meatloaf?
A: Gravey.

Jessi Wedemeier
Clarksville, Missouri

Q: What did the boy octopus say to the girl octopus on Valentine's Day?
A: I want to hold your hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand!

Cheyanne Keith
Oologah, Oklahoma

Q: What did the hamburgers name their daughter?
A: Patty.

Dennis Jackson, Jr.
Elkmont, Alabama

Q: How do you tell the difference between a maple tree and a sheepdog?
A: By the bark.

Dawn High
Peachland, North Carolina

Q: What did one adding machine tell another?
A: See you later, calculator.

Jamie McElhany
Tuttle, Oklahoma

Q: What do you get when you cross a porcupine and a goat?
A: A stuck up kid.

Jeremy Reigle
Oregon, Illinois

FFA New Horizons will pay $5 for each joke selected for Last Laff. In case we receive more than one of the same joke, payment will be for the first one received. Contributions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

Address your jokes to:

Last Laff
FFA New Horizons
P.O. Box 68960
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FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

Agricultural Education Mission
The mission of agricultural education is to prepare and support individuals for careers, build awareness and develop leadership for the food, fiber and natural resources systems.

The next issue of *FFA New Horizons* hits the streets in late November.

Agrinuts by Jim Bradshaw and Michael Bettendorf

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