

The 69th National FFA Convention

PROCEEDINGS

November 14-16, 1996



Opportunities for premier leadership, personal growth and career success at the national FFA convention are endless, including (clockwise from top left): The FFA National Agricultural Career Show, where students visited more than 300 exhibitors to learn about educational and career opportunities; business sessions and committee meetings, where delegates recommended new ideas for the FFA and voted on key issues; surfing the Internet and exploring National FFA Online (<http://www.ffa.org>); and participating in the floriculture career development event, one of numerous national finals events held during the convention.



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Letter from the Editor

A record 41,275 members, advisors and supporters flooded Kansas City to witness the spectacular displays of leadership, effort and dedication to long-held dreams realized on stage in Municipal Auditorium. Kansas City welcomed the FFA, and FFA members showed their appreciation to the city for hosting the convention for 69 years. Although in two years the blue and gold will fill the streets of Louisville, Ky., in October instead of Kansas City in November, the friendships we have made and the support we have generated in Kansas City will last forever.

Wherever convention is held, the vitality and energy of FFA members carry the same spirit. And the same as this year, we in the newsroom will be busy day and night trying to capture the essence of you, the members, in your excitement, your achievement, your energy and your laughter. You make our job easy, and for that, we keep coming back. In the pages that follow, your faces truly show that FFA members are leaders with a vision.

One person who has positively affected everyone in FFA, especially those fortunate enough to work with her, was unable to join our annual gathering, but she was in our hearts. We dedicate this volume of the Proceedings and our best wishes for a speedy recovery to Roni Horan of the National FFA Communications Resources Team. Roni embodies the spirit of convention and dedication to FFA more than anyone we know.

We hope this, the official record of the 69th National FFA Convention, leaves you with warm memories of an inspiring week, or awakens new possibilities you may have never imagined. Whichever is the case, we hope you'll be part of the 70th edition. See you next year!

Best wishes,
Lynn Hamilton, Editor

The 69th National FFA Convention

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Volume LXIX

November 14-16, 1996

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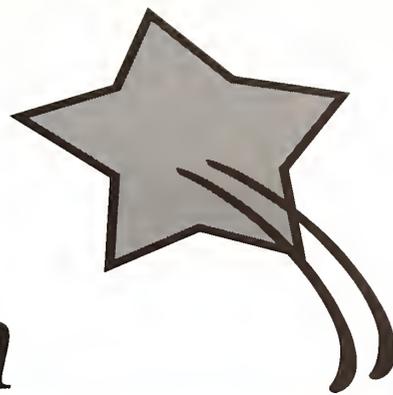
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Leaders with a Vision



The weather in Kansas City wasn't suited for tropical flowers, but these members tried to brighten the streets of the city and the career show as they transported flowers to their Hall of States exhibit.

Seeing is believing. If you can dream it, you can do it. Nothing is impossible when you have a dream. Every goal is within your reach.

While these statements may strike some people as clichés, reiterated time and again as part of every pep talk or keynote speech, there is truth in each of them. The key element of these sayings, and all the others like them, is vision.

Vision allows us to see, not just in the literal, physical sense, but also in understanding ourselves and the world around us. To have a vision is to have a clear goal in life, a driving force, a passion which constantly pushes us to make things better for ourselves and others.

FFA members understand what it means to have a vision. From the time they enter the organization as

Greenhands, they are motivated to explore all the opportunities available to them, and to develop a path that leads to personal fulfillment. Whether they want to be chapter president or to become a veterinarian, FFA members are presented with options limited only by their imaginations. Anyone can succeed in school, careers and life.

The national FFA convention is a place where all these dreams can come true. FFA members can investigate careers, win career development events, realize visions. New ideas, new visions, are born at the convention, too. When the current and future leaders of agriculture come to Kansas City and see the impact and potential of their leadership abilities, their eyes open wide. They become leaders with a vision.

(Continued on page 4)



The Eyes Have It

The cold wind and rain that chilled Kansas City during the convention did little to dampen the spirits of participants. Warm smiles brightened the chilly mornings, and the cold opened more than 41,000 pairs of eyes wide to the possibilities available to them through the FFA.

Members took in the sights, whether at tours of local museums or company headquarters, or just staring up at the towering buildings of downtown. Passers-by gazing out the windows of cars, buses and taxicabs saw a sea of blue jackets sprawling across the city.

Convention participants realized the dreams that brought them there, fulfilling a vision of being the best public speaker, agriscience student or judging team. As finalists stood starry-eyed on convention stages, they were cheered on by capacity crowds who saw in these winners a chance to achieve dreams of their own. Eyes blinked back tears of joy as members shared their outstanding accomplishments with the world.

The convention also had its share of "eyes." Delegates deliberated issues and recommendations designed to help the National FFA realize its own vision as a leader in agriculture. Thousands of members received a vote of confidence as they earned FFA's highest honor, the American FFA Degree. Municipal Auditorium rang with cheers of support as six leaders realized their goal of becoming a national officer. Few things, however, received as much overwhelming approval as the messages conveyed by the many keynote speakers, who addressed the convention theme by offering unique perspectives on achieving success.

The only thing many eyes may have missed was the chance to rest. Sleep did not come easily to those who spent all hours of the day and night determined to experience every moment of the convention's excitement. Some got up early to make the trip into downtown, others stayed late to dance the night away, and still more just "hung out" with newfound friends, talking into the wee hours of the morning. No matter what they did, members found ways to see it all.



John R. McClendon and Carroll A. Campbell Jr. were happy to receive FFA Achievers plaques from Clara-Leigh Horn, national FFA vice president. Both former FFA members, McClendon is a spokesperson for the soybean industry, and Campbell is a former governor of South Carolina. FFA Achievers are recognized every three years and are honored in a display in the Hall of Achievement at the National FFA Center.

"My vision is to use agriculture and FFA as a background to prepare me for my college education."

— Sandy Fizer,
FFA member, Pulaski, Va.



The 1995-96 national FFA officer team started off the convention with the Reflections session on Wednesday evening. The setting was the National FFA Archives and the officers reflected on the lessons available in FFA history and the possibilities the future holds.

"My father and grandfather, in operating their farm, set forth a tradition of innovative techniques. I'd like to be able to take some of the techniques I've learned in FFA back to the farm and hopefully maintain it so that my children continue to carry on the tradition."

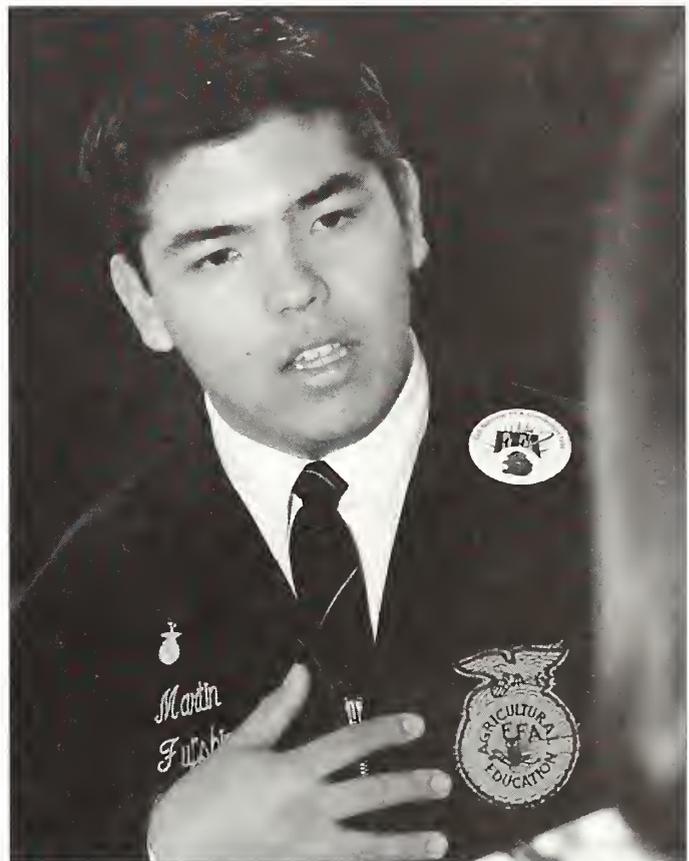
— Martin Fujishin, FFA member, Adrian, Ore.



Looking Back

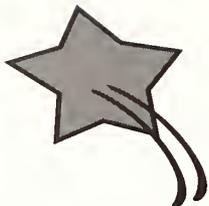
Learning to realize a vision can come from understanding the links to the past. Seeing where others have gone before and the progress created by change can provide the key to reaching our own goals. This was the main idea behind the Reflections opening sessions Wednesday night. National officers pored over contents in a replica of the National FFA Archives, looking at FFA's past, from the first conventions in Kansas City to the incorporation of the New Farmers of America to the present day. Each event demonstrated how the FFA has grown in response to the changing needs of its membership, and how members have played a role in the evolving vision of the organization.

At other times during the convention, participants looked to the past for inspiration. Former members were honored as FFA Achievers for their ongoing commitments to agriculture, and FFA program sponsors were recognized for decades of providing opportunities to members. Above all, FFA members learned that they have a legacy to preserve for the future.



This was the third national FFA convention for Martin Fujishin, from Adrian, Ore. "(The convention) gives me an opportunity to reflect upon my experiences in FFA," the high school senior said. "I hope all the knowledge I've gained will help me when I go to college." Fujishin's father and uncle both are former Oregon state FFA officers.

(Continued on page 6)



A Vision for Tomorrow

As Corey Rosenbusch, the new national FFA president, pounded the gavel to mark the end of the 69th National FFA Convention, the events of this year became yet another part of FFA's history. But for many of the members, advisors and guests in attendance, these events awakened a new resolve to pursue their dreams, to do whatever it takes to realize their visions for themselves, their chapters, their communities and their nation.

As the FFA prepares to move the convention to Louisville, Ky., in 1999, the organization's future takes on a new vision. And though the traditions of the past are fondly remembered, at this year's convention they were embraced by the spirit of change, and the belief that the heart of the FFA convention will beat just as strongly wherever it takes place. That vision is deep within every member, every leader.

"I foresee agriculture as an ongoing pursuit of technology. We are fortunate to be involved in an area that has tremendous career potential."

— Daryl Wragge, advisor,
Putnam County FFA,
Granville, Ill.



From hats to CDs to t-shirts, there were hundreds of items to tempt FFA members in the FFA Shopping Mall in Bartle Hall. Shoppers spent more than \$800,000 in the Shopping Mall during the convention.



"I think the future of agriculture is going to be about diversity and difference. Our society is changing. What we've got to do is make (students) aware of the global impact of agriculture."

— Cletus Wise, advisor, Como-Pickton FFA, Como, Texas



FFA members found unique ways to express their excitement for the convention and show that they were reaching for the stars.

"My vision is to live and work on a good farm."

— Jeff Heatwole, FFA member, Spotswood, Va.



The national FFA convention provides an excellent opportunity for members of FFA's international programs to interact with each other and with Americans from all over. These students are on a six-month exchange program. Sergei Moisajenko (left) and Dimitriy Ryabinin (second from left) are from Russia and currently are living in Burley, Id. Tatiana Tysluk (right front), from the Ukraine, also is living in Burley. Natalia Golov (right back), on an exchange in Geneva, Utah, also is from Russia.



Stars Over America

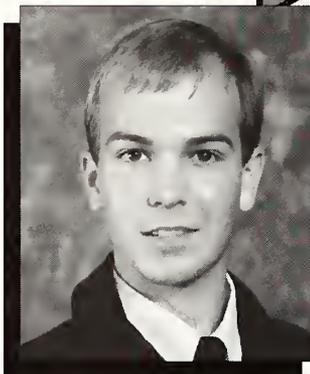


Film sponsored by Farm Service Agency/U.S. Department of Agriculture and Universal Dairy Equipment Inc. Cash awards sponsored by the executive sponsors of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.

The air was electric in Municipal Auditorium Thursday night as the finalists for the American Star Farmer and American Star in Agribusiness awaited the announcement of FFA's most prestigious award.

The tireless efforts of these eight young people were not lost on the audience; they were treated to a visual tour of each farm and agribusiness via a film highlighting the stars' impressive enterprises.

All national finalists received a \$1,000 cash award and a plaque, as well as an invitation to participate in the 1997 travel seminar to Costa Rica. The American Star Farmer and the American Star in Agribusiness each earned an additional \$1,000 cash award. In honor of their efforts, the parents of each finalist received the Honorary American FFA Degree.



*Chad Bischoff, 21,
Marshall, Mich.
Marshall FFA Chapter
American Star in Agribusiness*



*Richard Russell, 20,
Basin, Wyo.
Riverside FFA Chapter
American Star Farmer*

Bischoff started sawing and selling wood to help his family's finances. He and his father then started the Chad & Dad Saw Shop, and expanded to include lawn and garden equipment, boats and motors. 1996 sales are projected at \$600,000.

Russell took out a \$9,000 loan when he was 12 to buy 13 breeding cows. Today he owns 240 acres with his brother and rents another 200 acres on which he grows malt barley, spring wheat, corn and alfalfa. He uses computers extensively to manage his enterprises.



Richard Russell and Chad Bischoff bask in the glory under the spotlight after being named American Star Farmer and American Star in Agribusiness respectively.

AMERICAN STAR IN AGRIBUSINESS FINALISTS



*Darl Korthals, 22,
Pipestone, Minn.
Pipestone/Jasper FFA Chapter*

Before he could drive, Korthals pulled a lawnmower behind his bicycle to clients' yards. Now he owns four riding mowers, lawn maintenance equipment and a pickup, and plans to expand service to a three-state area.



*Todd Muench, 21
Cissna Park, Ill.
Cissna Park FFA Chapter*

Muench spotted his business opportunity when his father decided to phase out his small engine dealership. The younger Muench took over and enlarged it into a successful small engine service company, with sales exceeding \$150,000 last year.



*Sloan Dean "Pokey" Varner, 20,
Bristow, Okla.
Bristow FFA Chapter*

Varner started in the livestock auction business at age five with goats, expanded to cattle at age 12, and has been at it ever since. Today he buys and sells cattle throughout several states, in addition to feeding out cattle of his own.



AMERICAN STAR FARMER FINALISTS



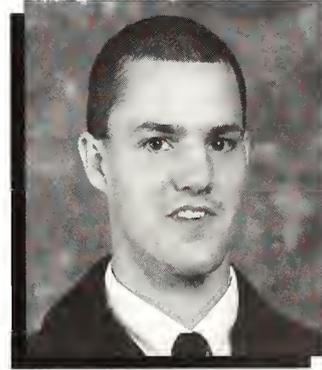
*Justin Day, 22
Middletown, Ind.
Shenandoah FFA Chapter*

Day started his farming career at age seven with one calf. Today he feeds out 112 head of cattle and raises about 400 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat and hay. He does most of his own veterinary work and pays careful attention to the bottom line.



*Ricky Joe McWilliams, 22,
Halls, Tenn.
Halls FFA Chapter*

McWilliams farms 2,000 acres of cotton, corn, soybeans and wheat, and raises 10 head of Polled Hereford cattle.



*Russell Zeedyk, 21,
Bryan, Ohio
Fairview FFA Chapter*

When his father died, Zeedyk's 600-acre family farm was sold. Not all of it, though—Zeedyk, then 11, and his three siblings pooled their money to buy 180 acres. Today he and his brother farm 1,300 acres of no-till corn, soybeans and wheat.





National Prepared Public Speaking Contest

Sponsored by FMC Corporation, Agricultural Products Group

Public speaking petrifies most people, but the nerves were not noticeable in the National Prepared Public Speaking Contest participants. The four national finalists squared off Friday afternoon, addressing topics from meat safety to grazing policies. Each contestant presented a six- to eight-minute speech, then answered judges' questions.

When the judges were done deliberating, Brenda Schumann from Bellville, Texas, was declared the winner. Her speech, "Safe Meat—A Challenge for the Beef Industry," earned her a \$300 prize. The second, third and fourth place winners, listed below, earned \$275, \$250 and \$225, respectively. In addition, each of the four finalists receive a \$1,000 scholarship from FMC Corporation, Agricultural Products Group.

NATIONAL WINNER:

Brenda Schumann
Bellville, Texas

SECOND PLACE:

LaRena Smith
Thomas, Okla.

THIRD PLACE:

Eric Deal
China Grove, N.C.

FOURTH PLACE:

Katie Bolzendahl
Payette, Idaho

Safe Meat—A Challenge for the Beef Industry

by Brenda Schumann, Bellville, Texas

Picture a small child writhing in excruciatingly painful spasms, contractions, cramps and the loss of lung functions. This is what happened to Mary and Aundrea Dolan.

From the moment they saw Jack-In-The-Box going up in their Seattle neighborhood, they wanted to eat at the new restaurant. Finally, they had their chance when their father took them for a hamburger, fries and a drink. That should have been the end of the story, but six days later, Mary was rushed to a local hospital with severe cramps. The next day, Aundrea came down with the same symptoms. The girls had both been infected by contaminated hamburger meat.

This may sound like a plot from a Steven King novel, but this tragic event actually occurred in January 1993. Mary and Aundrea were lucky, they survived, but two-year-old Michael Nole wasn't so fortunate. He went to a Jack-In-The-Box and happily tore into a \$2.69 "Kids' Meal." The next night he was admitted to a local hospital and died 10 days later from kidney and heart failure. He, too, was affected by contaminated hamburger meat.

What caused these tragic events? Scientists say that the victims were given hamburger meat that contained *Escherichia Coli* 0157:H7, which is a pathogen that can cause serious infection and disease in humans. According to the Centers for Disease Control, as many as 20,000 cases of *E. Coli* infection may occur annually, and they can be deadly. According to Bob Peterson, the CEO of Iowa Beef Producers, the nation's largest beef packer, this invisible pathogen has the potential "to bring the beef industry to its knees."

Studies show that the bacterial count in cattle rises during the warmer months, and that unsanitary slaughter and dressing procedures lead to the contamination with *E. Coli*.

Transmission of the pathogen from hide to meat through direct contact or on the hands of workers is also a possibility.

Mike Espy, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) secretary at the time of the outbreak, said: "We will not settle for the status quo in meat inspection and I hope that the special review of the meat packing plants sends a clear message that we are serious about strict inspection enforcement." Subsequently, 30 meat packing plants were shut down.

The media lashed out against the meat producers. Major television networks and newspapers focused on the health hazard, resulting in a critical public relations crisis for the beef industry. Consequently, consumers' confidence in beef as a safe food slipped dramatically.

So what are the meat industry and the USDA actually doing to make beef safer, and also to boost consumer confidence? While the government recently issued a new inspection program called Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), beef producers and government officials are still arguing about the best reform. The public hears negative comments by people in the beef industry about the safety of beef; these comments highlight the bad image of red meat. For example, a spokesman for a major beef packer said: "If we start condemning *E. Coli* positive carcasses, we'll have consumers demanding 100 percent pathogen-free beef." While this statement may be valid, it certainly is

not reassuring to the American consumer. Meat producers and the food industry must adopt a proactive stance concerning food safety.

The USDA's primary reaction to this very serious problem was to launch a microbial testing program to detect this pathogen in ground beef at retail stores and processing plants. Carcasses would be inspected individually, and trimming would remain the only way to meet zero tolerance levels. The National Cattlemen's Association responded to this by saying:

"The recently announced micro biological testing program for *E. Coli* is not an aggressive action that works toward real solutions. Microbiological testing of the end product for *E. Coli* provides only at best a very costly and limited identification of problems after they have already occurred. In addition, focusing on ground beef unfairly discriminates against beef producers since poultry is exempt from this testing program."

The beef industry's primary response is to promote processes to control and prevent the contamination of the carcasses as a reasonable alternative to the USDA's inspection and trimming program. They would also use a pre-evisceration wash and carcass bacterial rinses to further ensure that the meat is free from pathogens. The USDA has shown some interest in this approach. Recently, the Federal Safety Inspection Service agreed to try the washing process on a trial basis.

The beef industry also has several new technologies in the experimental stage to control this deadly organism. Among these are irradiation and the use of pulsed light to destroy the bacteria on foods. These new technologies, however, need more research before they can become conventional practices in the meat industry.



The four National Prepared Public Speaking finalists relaxed enough to pose for a photo after delivering their speeches Friday afternoon. They are (clockwise from left): 3rd place winner Eric Deal, runner-up LaRena Smith, 4th place winner Katie Bolzendahl, and national winner Brenda Schumann.

Although there is considerable controversy between the various segments of the beef industry regarding how to best ensure meat safety, the most critical question for the beef consumer is: "How can I best protect myself from this deadly pathogen?" The major precautionary measure available to consumers is to thoroughly cook ground beef, which means no pink meat. "The days of the rare hamburger are over," says the American Meat Institute. If the meat is cooked to at least 160 degrees Fahrenheit, the *E. Coli* bacteria will be killed. A new rule on safe handling and cooking instructions for raw meat has also been proposed by the USDA. This rule calls for all raw meat to be accompanied with safe handling and cooking instructions.

In summary, the Jack-In-The-Box tragedy and subsequent negative media reactions have been major public relations disasters for the beef industry. All new technologies must be utilized to ensure that consumers have the assurance of safe meat. Aggressive research efforts should be expanded to develop means of addressing the problem. Beef industry representatives must be proactive and convince consumers that they are committed to ensuring the healthfulness of their product. As Iowa Beef Producers CEO Bob Peterson stated: "Most importantly, food safety is the biggest challenge of the 20th century—one we can't ignore."





National Extemporaneous Speaking Contest

Sponsored by American Farm Bureau Federation

Extemporaneous speaking contest participants enjoy the uncertainty and adrenaline of drawing a topic and preparing and presenting a speech in just 30 minutes, then having judges ask them challenging questions about the topic.

NATIONAL WINNER (\$300):

Gina Jacobs
Craig, Colo.

SECOND PLACE (\$275):

Aimee Woulfe
Ardmore, Okla.

THIRD PLACE (\$250):

Steve Hall
Chapman, Kan.

FOURTH PLACE (\$225):

Dan Arnsperger
Salisbury, Mo.

Whose Responsibility is the Future Investment in Technology for the Agricultural Industry?

by Gina Jacobs, Craig, Colo.

Last January I was in downtown Denver for a political awareness program involving myself and several other students from our school. We were headed across the street with our baggage and we saw a car coming. We began to run and, unfortunately, I caught my toe on the cement. The result was eight stitches in my chin. Much the same as the pavement provided an astonishing slap in the face for myself, technology can do the very same thing for agriculture. So today I am going to ask the question: "whose responsibility is the future investment in technology for the agricultural industry?" I would have to answer resoundingly that the responsibility lies on the shoulders of the American agriculturists.

Today I'm going to begin by depicting some of the types of technology which agriculture is facing in the future. Secondly, I will illustrate exactly why it is

that agricultural involvement is so very important in deciding these technological advances. It seems there are many different kinds of technology which face agricultural development today.

The first one is very, very controversial; the subject of biotechnology and genetic engineering. An article from *Maclean's* in March of 1996 tells us that through the use of both genetic engineering and biotechnology, farmers and ranchers across the United States could increase their yields by as much as 25 percent. Through using technology like this, agriculturists can soar to new heights that they hadn't imagined before.

Another agricultural advancement, which many of us may not have heard of if we come from places where we are used to livestock rather than actual crop farming, are advances such as radar for precision farming.

Instruments such as these are discussed in an issue of *The Economist* from February of 1996, which enable farmers and ranchers to use what is called precision farming. Precision farming enables farmers and ranchers to decide how much herbicide and insecticide they want to apply and to apply it to certain areas of their fields and not others. Processes like these are extremely detrimental to the development of agriculture, since insecticide and herbicide involve direct risk to agriculturists through several different channels. Through not only the eyes of the public and how they perceive the chemicals which we put onto our crops, but also from the standpoint of whether or not we save or spend money. These are several reasons why it is excruciatingly important for agriculturists to pay attention to this technology.

But you are probably still wondering, why should the responsibility be on the agriculturist rather than on, say, the government? This is a very simple answer which comes to us in two parts. The first part is of course one of the main things which American society in general concentrates on: money. It's no big secret,

obviously, as the results are backed up in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in February, 1996, once again. Agriculturists will save money by using technology. Of course the initial investment in this technology will not come cheaply. But once the technology is implemented, it will allow them to cut down on the amount of chemicals they apply to their fields. It will enable them to produce more efficient, more able-bodied herds from which they can produce offspring. It will also enable farmers to open up a whole new area of research. Farmers will be able to control genetics, they will be able to control the outcomes of their herds. They will be able to control some of the factors that are so very, very damaging to agriculture today.

The second main reason why technology is so important for agriculturists to pay attention to comes from one of our most important counterparts, the American consumer. The American consumers are the ones who make agriculture completely possible. Through agricultural involvement

in technology, consumers will be much more likely to trust our products. If they know that farmer Joe down the road has had a say in whether or not he puts this new herbicide on his tomatoes, or if he poisoned these insects, they'll know that he takes pride in his product. He's a lot more likely to influence them positively than someone who perhaps doesn't know as much about agriculture.

In retrospect, we can see through my two main areas of analysis that it's excruciatingly important for each and every person in this room to be involved in the technological advancement process. Through our decisions not only will we be able to decide what kind of technology can go into agriculture, we can also control how the public perceives us and what kind of products we produce. In the end, through agriculturists controlling and being involved in the whole technological process, not only will we have economic advancements, we will have stronger ties between the two most important counterparts in the economy: we, the agriculturists, and our counterparts, the American consumer.



National Extemporaneous Speaking Contest finalists: (back) Aimee Woulfe, Steve Hall, and (front) Dan Arnsperger and Gina Jacobs, national winner.





National Officer Candidates

National Officer Candidates reception and dinner sponsored by Bayer Corporation, Agriculture Division

Every year is an election year for national FFA officer candidates. The 38 state leaders who vied for the six coveted positions had endured a week of rigorous interviews and written exams as part of the selection process. Though the atmosphere was like a pressure cooker at times, the candidates remained poised and professional, always ready with a smile.

Each candidate had prepared for this moment for months, even years. National officer candidates are nominated by their states, and must hold the American FFA Degree.

The national nominating committee, a group of nine delegates, had the difficult task of selecting the six officers to lead FFA for the coming year. The results of their efforts are listed on page 75, where you can meet the 1996-97 national FFA president, secretary and four regional vice presidents.

ALABAMA: William C. Jones, Billingsley
ALASKA: Jason J. Miller, Palmer, Homer
ARIZONA: Travis J. Zimmerman, Deer Valley
CALIFORNIA: John J. Moffatt, Kern Valley
COLORADO: Rachel N. Fehringer, Peetz
FLORIDA: Susan J. Shiver, Graceville
GEORGIA: Ashley L. Edwards, Jackson County
IDAHO: Darin G. Mann, Parma
ILLINOIS: Ryan M. Tate, Northwestern (Sciota)
INDIANA: Terri Tempel, Heritage Hills
IOWA: Paul C. Hansen, Red Oak
KANSAS: Brad C. Montgomery, Cheylin
KENTUCKY: Clay A. Sullivan, Pendleton County
MICHIGAN: Matthew G. Smego, Cassopolis
MINNESOTA: Mark A. Jirik, Mahanomen
MISSISSIPPI: Damon Ladner, Carthage
MISSOURI: Angie Whitesell, Lockwood
MONTANA: Lyndsey K. Fosbery, Flathead
NEBRASKA: Kevin M. Sagehorn, Logan View
NEVADA: Leslie Oakden, Churchill County
NEW HAMPSHIRE: Brett J. Mongeon, Coe-Brown Academy
NEW MEXICO: Jesus Trujillo, Artesia

NEW YORK: John W. Wagner, Stockbridge Valley
NORTH CAROLINA: Raymond A. Starling, Midway
NORTH DAKOTA: Peter Foss, A.S. Gibbens
OHIO: Holly L. Bentley, East Clinton
OREGON: Erin E. Hansell, Hermiston
PENNSYLVANIA: Jenny C. Zerby, West Snyder
RHODE ISLAND: Tina Sarachick, Chariho
SOUTH CAROLINA: Scott K. Gantt, Pelion
SOUTH DAKOTA: Dawn M. Nagel, Gettysburg
TENNESSEE: Brian M. Bechtel, Bradley Central
TEXAS: Corey Rosenbusch, Glen Rose
UTAH: Shantell Ogden, Richfield
VIRGINIA: Dana A. Fisher, Central
WASHINGTON: Hollie L. Matthews, Winlock
WISCONSIN: Luke Wiedenfeld, Lake Mills
WYOMING: Teresa H. Cole, Cheyenne East



Thirty-eight FFA members aimed for the ultimate level of service—to become a national FFA officer. Each went through an extensive interview process and eagerly awaited the results which came on Saturday during the ninth and final session of the convention.



Agriscience Student Award

Sponsored by Monsanto Crop Protection

Exceptional students who apply scientific principles and new technologies to agriculture are rewarded in the Agriscience Student Recognition Program.

At the 69th National FFA Convention, Clay Sellers of the Broadway FFA Chapter in Linville, Va., won first place recognition. His project explored the structure of the parasitic protozoan, *Perkinsus marinus*, and its detrimental effects on the eastern oyster, *Crassostrea virginica*. Sellers was one of eight national finalists and received \$7,000 in cash scholarships and a plaque for being named the national winner.

The national runner-up was Leah LaLiberty of the Cascade, Mont., FFA Chapter. She received \$5,500 in cash scholarships for her project comparing different substances to effectively protect stallion sperm from freeze damage.

NATIONAL WINNER:

Clay Sellers
Linville, Va.

RUNNER UP:

Leah LaLiberty
Cascade, Mont.

NATIONAL FINALISTS:

NEW MEXICO: Stacy N. Graham, Des Moines

COLORADO: Gabe Schreiber, Woodlin

WASHINGTON: Ashley M. Martinson, Sumner

WISCONSIN: Jason M. Warziniak, Waupaca

IOWA: Joshua J. Engelbrecht, Starmont

WASHINGTON: Rhonda R. Newbury, Sumner



Clay Sellers celebrates after winning the Agriscience Student Recognition Program.



Agriscience Teacher of the Year

Sponsored by Ford Motor Company Fund and Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.

R.J. Terrell Jr., advisor of the Southern Guilford FFA Chapter in Greensboro, N.C., was named Agriscience Teacher of the Year Friday evening at the convention. His program successfully uses aquaculture to spark enthusiasm for science projects in his school.

The Agriscience Teacher of the Year recognition program is designed to award those agriculture teachers who are integrating agriscience technology in their schools and getting students involved and excited about agriscience.

NATIONAL WINNER:

R. J. Terrell Jr.
Greensboro, N.C.

NATIONAL FINALISTS:

CALIFORNIA: Lori A. Steward, Tracy

FLORIDA: Gene A. Starr Jr., Hamilton County

OHIO: Dennis H. Finley, Wayne County



National FFA Secretary Cody Wagner presents the Agriscience Teacher of the Year award to R.J. Terrell Jr.





Agri-Entrepreneurship Awards

Sponsored by the Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership Inc. at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

Entrepreneurship is the trend for the 90s, and FFA is in the heart of the action with the Agri-Entrepreneurship Award. In its second year, the program recognizes FFA members who were inspired to create their own niche in the business world. The 10 national finalists in the Agri-Entrepreneurship Awards program each received a plaque and a check for \$1,000, presented Friday afternoon by Dr. Marilyn Kourilsky, vice president of the Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership Inc. in Kansas City, Mo. In addition, each

finalist's FFA chapter received a check for \$500 to promote agri-entrepreneurship.

The Agri-Entrepreneurship Education Program is a joint activity of the National Council for Agricultural Education, the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers' Association (NVATA), the National FFA Alumni Association, the U.S. Department of Education and the National FFA Organization. The businesses started by these innovative FFA members are listed below.



NATIONAL FINALISTS:

Kyle Bailey of Millersburg, Ind., owns and operates Kyle Bailey Horseshoeing, and shoes show and gaming horses in north central and northeastern Indiana.

Jonathan David "JD" Chambers of Greensboro, N.C., designed and now produces vertical planters for hydroponic plants. His planters have special educational features, such as windows for viewing root development.

Melissa Gomes of Le Grand, Calif., owns Big Tree Bunnies, and focuses on quality and customer service in her meat and breeding rabbits. She exhibits at many local rabbit shows and uses the shows as a large part of her marketing campaign.

Zachary Horn of Sullivan, Ill., started with a push mower and trimmer, and now is mowing a large percentage of the commercial properties in the Sullivan area. He brings in business from up to 60 miles away.

Jami Kaptein of Fallbrook, Calif., owns and operates an animal care service, gives horse-back riding lessons, has a horse exercising/training service, and manages a model horse brokerage service.

Brian Phelps of Milford Center, Ohio, started selling feed when his steer was selected as the Ohio State Fair Reserve Champion. Now he has a long list of clients and has added other items to his sales list including embryo recipient heifers.

Casey Sharber of Sapulpa, Okla., started propagating water plants in an old bath tub. Her business has expanded to 30 different varieties of water plants which she supplies to commercial nurseries.



Mandie Koch Valentine from Custer City, Okla., shares her entrepreneurial SAE with FFA members in the Career Show. She became a finalist in the competition by raising and marketing thousands of mice and gerbils.

Veronica Shippy of Capitola, Calif., owns the Forget-Me-Not Flower business which specializes in fresh arrangements, and Twigs and Things, a dry arrangement business. She continues to operate her business while attending California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Andrew Tygrett of Tipton, Iowa, owns a greenhouse and raises, cultivates and shows annual bedding plants, vegetables, and gladiolus spikes and corms. He provides

gladiolus spikes and corms to local customers, farmers' markets and florists.

Mandie Koch Valentine of Custer City, Okla., purchased a pair of breeding mice from a pet store and now raises thousands of mice and gerbils which she markets to pet stores, research laboratories and the Oklahoma City Zoo.



FFA Career Development Events



Concentration is key when participating in a National Career Development Event. Here, a member focuses on fern identification in the Nursery and Landscape CDE.

They tested, tasted, fixed, examined, reasoned, calculated and ranked. They were participants in the National FFA Career Development Events, and they came to Kansas City with one goal in mind—to do their best in this most elite competition. All teams already had won in their states, and the level of skill apparent in the events was unmatched.

Various businesses and agencies in the Kansas City area hosted the competitions, from forestry to floriculture and meats evaluation to marketing. Results were announced at breakfasts Saturday morning, and winners were recognized on stage during the convention session. Top teams and individuals received plaques, and some event sponsors provided scholarships to the first place teams and individuals. Those events were agricultural mechanics, agricultural sales, dairy judging, horse judging, farm business management, floriculture, livestock, meats evaluation and technology, and parliamentary procedure.



AGRICULTURAL MECHANICS

Sponsored by Firestone Agricultural Tire Company in conjunction with Bridgestone/Firestone Trust Fund
First Place Team: North Shelbyville FFA Chapter, Shelbyville, Mo.
High Individual: Darren Hawkins, Shelbyville, Mo.

AGRICULTURAL SALES

Sponsored by Asgrow Seed Company
First Place Team: Dayton FFA Chapter, Dayton, Ore.
High Individual: Rebecca Johnston, Dayton, Ore.

DAIRY

Sponsored by Associated Milk Producers, Incorporated and Babson Bros. Co./SURGE
First Place Team: Hilmar FFA Chapter, Hilmar, Calif.
High Individuals: Denise Josi, Tillamook, Ore.; and Wendy Cory, Eatonton, Ga.

DAIRY FOODS

Sponsored by Mid-America Dairymen, Inc.; Dairy Management, Inc.; and Patz Sales, Inc.
First Place Team: East Central FFA Chapter, San Antonio, Texas
High Individual: Michelle Gibbs, Hanford, Calif.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Sponsored by John Deere
First Place Team: North Callaway FFA Chapter, Kingdom City, Mo.
High Individual: Mark DeJong, Lynden, Wash.

FLORICULTURE

Sponsored by American Floral Endowment; Ball Horticultural Company; The Solaris Group—Ortho•Roundup•Greensweep; Witco Corporation and Scholarships by Sun Company
First Place Team: Chatham Central FFA Chapter, Bear Creek, N.C.
High Individual: Aaron Stegemann, Lakefield, Minn.

FORESTRY

Sponsored by Champion International Corporation; Schrade Cutlery; and Union Camp Corporation
First Place Team: Lincoln FFA Chapter, Lincoln, Ala.
High Individual: Brad Ponder, Lincoln, Ala.

HORSE

Sponsored by Chrysler Corporation Fund—Dodge Trucks; and Manna Pro Corporation, "The Calf Manna@ Company"
First Place Team: Ellsworth FFA Chapter, Ellsworth, Kan.
High Individual: Mark Huseman, Ellsworth, Kan.

LIVESTOCK JUDGING

Sponsored by Purina Mills, Inc.
First Place Team: Atascadero FFA Chapter, Atascadero, Calif.
High Individual: Tami DeRose, Atascadero, Calif.

MARKETING PLAN ACTIVITY AWARDS

Sponsored by Rhône-Poulenc Ag Company
First Place Team: Buffalo Lake-Hector FFA Chapter, Hector, Minn.

MEATS EVALUATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Sponsored by Excel Corporation; Hormel Foods Corporation; and Oscar Mayer Foods Corporation
First Place Team: East Central FFA Chapter, San Antonio, Texas
High Individual: Kyle Wieters, San Antonio, Texas

NURSERY/LANDSCAPE

Sponsored by Chipco Specialty Products—Division of Rhône-Poulenc Ag Company; Kubota Tractor Corporation; Valent U.S.A. Corp.; American Association of Nurserymen; and Wholesale Nursery Growers of America, Incorporated
First Place Team: Heron Lake-Okabena-Lakefield Chapter, Lakefield, Minn.
High Individual: Jeremy Daberkow, Lakefield, Minn.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Sponsored by Ciba Plant Protection
First Place Team: Carthage FFA Chapter, Carthage, Mo.
Runner-up Team: Nettleton FFA Chapter, Jonesboro, Ark.

POULTRY

Sponsored by Tyson Foods, Inc. and American Proteins, Inc.
First Place Team: Klein Oak FFA Chapter, Spring, Texas
High Individual: Trey Strickland, Spring, Texas



Agricultural Proficiency Awards

Nowhere was the diversity of FFA programs and membership more evident than in the National Agricultural Proficiency Award Pageant. Newly expanded to 40 award areas, the pageant recognized a record 159 national finalists on stage Friday. New categories included agricultural communications, environmental science, emerging agricultural technologies, and food science and technology. More traditional areas were divided this year into placement and entrepreneurship awards. The finalists had earned their spot on the stage through years of hard work in their supervised agricultural experience programs. Each winner received a cash award and plaque. Each finalist also has the opportunity to apply to be one of 37 participants in the 1997 travel seminar to Costa Rica. National winners appear below in bold face type.

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS

Sponsored by R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company and Farm Progress Companies, Inc.

CALIFORNIA: Erin Hunt, Fullerton

MINNESOTA: Benjamin C. Ekern, Rushford-Peterson

WASHINGTON: Jacob E. Nelson, Cathlamet

WISCONSIN: Patrick Sternitzky, Granton

AGRICULTURAL MECHANICAL/TECHNICAL SYSTEMS—ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sponsored by CARQUEST Corporation and Chrysler Corporation Fund—Dodge Trucks

CALIFORNIA: Matthew Pawlak, Littlerock

IOWA: Michael D. Read, Marengo

WASHINGTON: Richie Verbree, Lynden

WISCONSIN: Matthew J. Norberg, Prairie Farm

AGRICULTURAL MECHANICAL/TECHNICAL SYSTEMS—PLACEMENT

Sponsored by Case Corporation

CALIFORNIA: Todd Hartill, Arbuckle

GEORGIA: Daniel Anderson, Claxton

MINNESOTA: Mathew A. Fronning, Fergus Falls

NORTH DAKOTA: Jeffrey T. Kuss, Carrington

AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING

Sponsored by Ag Processing Inc./ Consolidated Nutrition LC and Archer Daniels Midland Company

FLORIDA: Charles Pollard, Hamilton County

IDAHO: Jere Stewart, Kuna

SOUTH DAKOTA: Chad Lambert, Clark

UTAH: Harv Van Wagoner, Wasatch

AGRICULTURAL SALES AND/OR SERVICE

Sponsored by Case Corporation; CHEVY TRUCKS; The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company; and Vigortone Ag Products

ILLINOIS: Ryan Payne, Hillsboro

MINNESOTA: Josh Meyers, Plainview

VIRGINIA: George Smelley, Park View

WASHINGTON: Jennifer M. Simonson, Ritzville

BEEF PRODUCTION—ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sponsored by Mallinckrodt Veterinary, Inc. and Nasco Division/Nasco International, Incorporated

COLORADO: George S. Reid II, Crowley

County

KANSAS: Travis Barrett, Chapman

NEBRASKA: Dallas L. Choat, Cedar Rapids

WISCONSIN: Kurt Lehman, Reedsburg

BEEF PRODUCTION—PLACEMENT

Sponsored by Cactus Feeders, Inc.; Evergreen Mills, Inc.; Fort Dodge Animal Health; and Kent Feeds, Inc.

NEBRASKA: Stanley J. Cuba, Fullerton

NEW MEXICO: Marta T. Alire, Goddard

SOUTH DAKOTA: K. C. Gregg, McCook Central

UTAH: Scott Slagowski, Manila

CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION

Sponsored by GENEX FOUNDATION and Kellogg Company

ILLINOIS: Tracy D. Greer, Pinckneyville

MISSOURI: Clinton D. Boon, Chillicothe

OHIO: Lora Erdy, Benjamin Logan

OKLAHOMA: Derek Agan, Thomas

DAIRY PRODUCTION—ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sponsored by ABS Global, Inc.; Alfa Laval Agri Inc.; and Manna Pro Corporation, "The Calf Manna® Company"

MISSOURI: Derek L. Page, Mount Vernon

OHIO: Rebekah M. Powers, Fairbanks

SOUTH DAKOTA: Shane McGregor, McCook Central

VIRGINIA: Randy Mohler, Buffalo Gap

(Continued on page 18)



Erin Hunt of Fullerton, Calif., was excited about winning the National Agricultural Communications Proficiency Award. Her project started with working for the public relations firm which handles the Orange County Fair. Her goal is to own and manage her own agricultural public relations firm.

Agricultural Proficiency Awards (Continued from page 17)

DAIRY PRODUCTION— PLACEMENT

*Sponsored by Protiva, a Unit of
Monsanto Company*

LOUISIANA: Frankie Tate, Mt. Hermon
MISSOURI: Shane A. Haroldson, Schuyler
NORTH CAROLINA: Aaron J. Stegall, Piedmont
WISCONSIN: Tom Milz, Loyal

DIVERSIFIED CROP PRODUCTION— ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sponsored by Cargill

INDIANA: Jamie A. Scott, Whitko
KANSAS: Michael Springer, Neodesha
OHIO: Mark Baldwin, Greenfield McClain
SOUTH DAKOTA: Ben Roling, McCook Central



Josh Henslee of California was surprised and excited to win the National FFA Forest Management Proficiency Award, while other finalists looked on.

DIVERSIFIED CROP PRODUCTION— PLACEMENT

*Sponsored by National Crop Insurance
Services; AgrEvo; and United Agri
Products*

KENTUCKY: Brian Russelburg, Union County
NORTH CAROLINA: Adam T. Smith, Union
OHIO: Mark A. Schiff, Teays Valley
TENNESSEE: Bill Henderson, Crockett County

DIVERSIFIED LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION— ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*Sponsored by Mallinckrodt Veterinary,
Inc. and Wayne Feed Division/
Continental Grain Company*

IOWA: Luke R. Brown, Hawkeye
NEBRASKA: Mark Wolken, Diller
OKLAHOMA: David Mosburg, Thomas
WEST VIRGINIA: Daniel O. Shockey,
Ravenswood

DIVERSIFIED LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION— PLACEMENT

*Sponsored by Continental Grain
Company, Cattle Feeding and Pork
Divisions and Allflex USA, Inc.*

INDIANA: Brian Witham, Western Boone
IOWA: Luke J. Warrington, Hawkeye
NORTH CAROLINA: Jason M. Talton, Princeton
UTAH: Josh Keller, Manila

EMERGING AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

Sponsored by Caterpillar Inc.

ARKANSAS: Shannon Bale, Fayetteville
FLORIDA: Kimberly N. Pittman, Trenton
ILLINOIS: Kreg Ruhl, Galva
WISCONSIN: Christine Neumeier, Sun Prairie

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

*Sponsored by IMC Global Operations
Inc. and Carolina Biological Supply
Company*

MINNESOTA: Scott Hoberg, Benson
OREGON: Amanda Helmer, Baker City
WASHINGTON: Hillary R. Fulk, Sumner
WISCONSIN: Jason M. Warzinik, Waupaca

EQUINE SCIENCE

*Sponsored by Purina Mills, Inc.;
American Paint Horse Association and
Red Brand Non-Climb Horse Fence/
Made by Keystone Steel & Wire
Company*

ILLINOIS: Daymon Gast, Hinckley Big Rock
MONTANA: Bobbie Jo Bradley, Colstrip
OHIO: Nikki Linkous, Tecumseh
OKLAHOMA: Lori Majors, Franklin

FEED GRAIN PRODUCTION— ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*Sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred
International, Inc.*

ILLINOIS: Brian Stark, Central of Clifton
KENTUCKY: Neal Ballance, Greenwood
MINNESOTA: Bradley D. Baumgardt, Sleepy
Eye
OHIO: Brad Woodruff, East Clinton

FEED GRAIN PRODUCTION—PLACEMENT

*Sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred
International, Inc.*

INDIANA: Ryan J. Allbaugh, Carroll
MINNESOTA: Melissa Huhn, Litchfield
SOUTH DAKOTA: Josh Sakry, Garretson
TENNESSEE: Josh Goff, Lexington

FIBER CROP PRODUCTION

Sponsored by Sandoz Agro, Inc.

CALIFORNIA: Jason Ritchie, Redwood
FLORIDA: Michael Amerson, Hamilton County
TENNESSEE: Heath Pritchett, Dyersburg

FLORICULTURE

*Sponsored by American Floral
Endowment; BIOMAT, Inc.; and Valent
U.S.A. Corp.*

IOWA: Matt Whitlock, Linn-Mar
KENTUCKY: Phillip Baker, Reidland
MISSOURI: Steven Sapp, Columbia
NORTH CAROLINA: Jimmy C. Brown, Madison

FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

*Sponsored by General Mills Foundation
and Mariani Packing Co., Inc.*

CONNECTICUT: David E. Haversat, Woodbury
MISSOURI: Carmen L. Webb, Norborne
NEW MEXICO: Lindsay A. Sapp, Goddard
TEXAS: Cody Cribbs, Snyder

FORAGE PRODUCTION

*Sponsored by Gehl Company and
Northrup King Co.*

KANSAS: Josh Abeldt, Chapman
MISSOURI: Wesley A. Straatmann, Union
OHIO: Curtis Knueven, Leipsic
OKLAHOMA: Justin Warren, Harrah

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Sponsored by Chrysler Corporation Fund—Dodge Trucks; Homelite; and Stone Container Corporation

CALIFORNIA: Josh Henslee, Nevada Union
OREGON: Clayton J. Finley, Riverside
WASHINGTON: Jason Bodine, Elma
WISCONSIN: Tim Mikonowicz, Reedsburg

FRUIT AND/OR

VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Sponsored by Briggs & Stratton Corporation Foundation, Incorporated

MICHIGAN: Brian J. Wernstrom, Montague
MINNESOTA: Matthew A. Warmka, United South Central
OKLAHOMA: Matthew Jackson, Thomas
PENNSYLVANIA: Jeremy Dorman, Mifflinburg

HOME AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Sponsored by DeWALT High Performance Industrial Tools

IOWA: Matthew D. Berninghaus, Hawkeye
MONTANA: Jeffrey R. Rodrick, Stevensville
WISCONSIN: Shelly K. Hyke, New Auburn
WYOMING: Brian Zeller, Encampment

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Sponsored by Reiman Publications

FLORIDA: Damien P. Negley, George Jenkins
IDAHO: Brad Pickett, Burley
NORTH CAROLINA: Raymond T. Turner, Iredell Statesville
WISCONSIN: Jeremy Czarneski, Denmark

NURSERY OPERATIONS

Sponsored by Chrysler Corporation Fund—Dodge Trucks and Merck AgVet Division

INDIANA: Adam Warren, Wawasee
IOWA: Justin Myers, Mediapolis
TEXAS: Jerred Hurst, Idalou
UTAH: Jason G. Carr, Uintah

OIL CROP PRODUCTION

Sponsored by Chicago Board of Trade and Northrup King Co.

GEORGIA: Tony A. Morgan, Effingham
ILLINOIS: Rob Albrecht, Iroquois West
INDIANA: Brett Beckner, Carroll
MISSOURI: Travis E. Matthews, Norborne

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Sponsored by CHEVY TRUCKS; O.F. Mossberg and Sons, Inc.; and Schrade Cutlery

MINNESOTA: Aaron Fullerton, Martin County West
MONTANA: Josh Rigler, Park
UTAH: Shawn Pallesen, Manila
WISCONSIN: Danny B. Good, Edgerton

POULTRY PRODUCTION

Sponsored by Chore-Time Equipment Division of CTB Incorporated; Schering-Plough Animal Health; United Soybean Board; and National FFA Foundation General Fund

INDIANA: Kent K. Harness, Carroll
IOWA: Ryan D. Nelson, Manson Northwest Webster
MINNESOTA: Andrew Keranen, Menahga
OHIO: Darrin M. Karcher, Wynford

SHEEP PRODUCTION

Sponsored by Wrangler and National FFA Foundation General Fund
COLORADO: Jamie Jo Mekelburg, Yuma
IOWA: Heather L. Berninghaus, Hawkeye
NEBRASKA: Tye Kjeldgaard, Tekamah Herman
TEXAS: Si D. Beerwinkle, Springlake Earth

SMALL ANIMAL CARE

Sponsored by Sandoz Agro, Inc., Animal Health Division
ILLINOIS: Danielle Wegener, DeKalb
INDIANA: Chris Lusso, Wawasee
TEXAS: Clark Church, Snyder
WISCONSIN: Jennifer Barker, Reedsburg

SOIL AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Sponsored by American Cyanamid Company, Agricultural Products Division
ILLINOIS: Joel Sandeno, Seneca
INDIANA: Larry Kees, Harlan
MINNESOTA: Gary Stenzel, United South Central
OHIO: Keith Crooks, Hardin Northern

SPECIALTY ANIMAL PRODUCTION

Sponsored by Purina Mills, Inc.; American Dairy Goat Association; and Country General
ILLINOIS: Andrew Gano, Kansas
KANSAS: Ashley S. Riekeman, Chapman
TENNESSEE: Aaron M. Cope, Cherokee
WISCONSIN: Brianne A. Beisner, Weyauwega Fremont



Steven Sapp of Missouri (left) shared a proud moment with Joe Caffee, national FFA vice president, upon winning the national Floriculture Proficiency Award.

SPECIALTY CROP PRODUCTION

Sponsored by Elf Atochem North America, Inc.; Kubota Tractor Corporation; Na-Churs Plant Food Company; and Wilbur-Ellis Company
INDIANA: Benjamin F. Duttlinger, Kankakee Valley
NORTH CAROLINA: Frederick D. Sutton, North Lenoir
OHIO: Ryan Noggle, Wayne Trace
TENNESSEE: Jamie Mundy, Powell Valley

SWINE PRODUCTION—ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health and Purina Mills, Inc.
IOWA: Barry L. Fehr, Hawkeye
NEBRASKA: Jolene J. Quaring, Ravenna
OHIO: Jeff Adams, Fairbanks
SOUTH DAKOTA: Chris Howard, Miller

SWINE PRODUCTION PLACEMENT

Sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health and Carl S. Akey, Inc.
ILLINOIS: Brian Ottenschneider, Central
INDIANA: Jaime Hernandez, Carroll
IOWA: Ben VanSickle, Prairie Valley
MISSOURI: Aubrey L. Homan, Smithville

TURF GRASS MANAGEMENT

Sponsored by The Scotts Company
CALIFORNIA: Matthew B. Koop, Fresno Central
ILLINOIS: Zachary I. Horn, Sullivan
MISSOURI: Duane Gibson, Fair Play
WISCONSIN: Rusty J. Coyle, Granton

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Sponsored by Bass Pro Shops, Inc. and Buck Knives
ALABAMA: John F. Hendon, Randolph Roanoke
TEXAS: Jeremy Peters, Cotulla
UTAH: Charley Walters, Manila
VIRGINIA: Thomas Crowder, Park View



American FFA Degrees

Sponsored by American Cyanamid Company, Agricultural Products Division; Case Corporation; Farm Credit System; and Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.

National Award Winners Breakfast sponsored by Butler Manufacturing Company Foundation on behalf of Butler Rural Buildings, Butler Grain Systems and Lester Building Systems.

Proud parents, advisors and friends cheered as the 1,537 American FFA Degree recipients earned the FFA's highest degree. The degree ceremony, held during a special Saturday noon convention session, was preceded by a recognition brunch. On stage, each talented FFA member received an American FFA Degree key and certificate.



Dana Church (right), a past American FFA Degree recipient, came to the convention to support her sister, Amy Redgate of Waynoka, Okla. Amy received the prestigious golden key of the American FFA Degree during Saturday's session.

Teems, Mountain Home; Joe B. Washburn, Pochontas

CALIFORNIA: Kelly Adams, Jurupa Valley; Cameron Aguiar, Merced Golden Valley; Jennifer T. Alongi, Jurupa Valley; Rachel Amsterdam, Fullerton; Erin Anderson, Kerman; John A. Anderson, Atwater; Toby A. Arballo, Norco; Dario V. Avila, Atwater; Martha Ayala, Galt; Brandon Azevedo, Galt; Brad Baker, Chowchilla; Summer N. Baker-Beitler, Jurupa Valley; Gary Bates, Galt; Erin Bell, Hanford; Ryan Bertao, Tulare Western; Bobby Buckmaster, Tulare Union; Gary J. Cheda, Petaluma; Matthew P. Cholakian, Fowler; Matthew R. Claverie, Holtville; Travis Clements, Chowchilla; Curtis Collier, Fullerton; Cara Crye, Morro Bay; Mike Curry, Clovis; Elizabeth DaRocha, LeGrand; Stephanie C. Davis, Lincoln; Michelle DeCesare, Tulare Western; Peggy Decker, Santa Rosa; Brady Dempsey, El Capitan; Tom Deniz, Chowchilla; Kristofer Diaz, Fresno Central; Teddy Dietz, Merced Golden Valley; Jaime Dodd, Jurupa Valley; Bev Dodson, Galt; Chris Doster, Littlerock; Kevin Elliott, McFarland; Brad Ellis, Galt; Amy E. English, Arroyo Grande; Adria Epton, Elk Grove; Timothy R. Estabrook, Jurupa Valley; Sarah Faria, LeGrand; Jaimee Fiack, Hamilton City; Jamie Fischer, Blythe; Jesus Fuentes, Firebaugh; Jennifer Gant, Manteca; Steve Garcia, Brawley Union; Allison Goehring, Galt; Sandra Gonzalez, Galt; Nicole Greci, Madera; Lanee Green, LaHabra; Mia Guest, Jurupa Valley; Nancy Gutierrez, Kingsburg; Carl S. Hammond III, Etna; Christina Hammond, Etna; Matthew Hanks, Jurupa Valley; Kyle Hansen, Porterville; Dustin Hastin, Corcoran; Heather Hennes, Santa Rosa; Melissa A. Heringer, Chico; Jill Heuvel, Elk Grove; John T. Hopper, Fresno Central; Erin M. Hunt, Fullerton; Dale Impertrice, Santa Rosa; Norberto Irungaray, Holtville; Kevin Jarrett, Williams; Rebecca A. Jessup, Escondido; Summer R. Ketchum, Jurupa Valley; Matthew B. Koop, Fresno Central; Adolf Kuck Jr., Petaluma; Molly LaDou, Julian; Wendy LaGrande, Williams; Shanna M. Larsen, Quartz Hill; Thomas W. Logan, Coalinga; Eric Lourenco, Chowchilla; Kari S. Lowder, Ripon; Anthony A. Lucich, Atwater; Renee Maberto, Galt; Bruce J. Macfarlane, Bear River; Manuel Machado, Atwater; Todd Maddux, Chowchilla; Arthur H. Marquez II, Chino; Yvonne Mascorro, Fullerton; Jeff Mastin, Fullerton; Deanne Matthews, Fresno Central; Justin V. May, Red Bluff; Chris McNabb, North; Tonya McWilliams, Shandon; Dennis P. Melkonian,

ALABAMA: J. J. Bailey, Daleville; Brandon Cox, Smiths Station; David Friedrich, Vinemont; George W. Harper Jr., Russellville; Scott D. Helms, Woodville; Nathaniel D. Johnson, Southside; William C. Jones, Billingsley; John C. Key, Troy; Wade McCollum, Lineville; Wesley McCollum, Lineville; Jerry K. Miller, Lineville; Steven Pace, Russellville; Kyle Pike, Ider; Jerry Porter, Lineville; Jo Michael O. Rials, Enterprise; Simon L. Smith, Montevallo; Glenda B. Whitmore, Collinsville; Beth Williams, Talladega; Walter J. Wooden, Pisgah; Steven L. Woods, Pisgah

ALASKA: Jason J. Miller, Homer

ARIZONA: Michelle L. Better, Chino Valley; Jeff Bitterli, Peoria; Justin D. Brereton, Peoria; Brandi N. Dobson, Antelope; Christopher Dugan, Casa

Grande; Cheryl L. Eddy, Kofa; Jacob W. Hankins, Antelope; Jennifer Hume, Antelope; Brian K. Johnson, Peoria; Tonya Jorajuria, Antelope; Kimberly A. Kerr, Buckeye; Mathew E. Parks, Peoria; Tiffany M. Rush, Antelope; Austin R. Sabin, Safford; Jamin Smith, Peoria; Darci Stahl, Kofa; Shon D. Taylor, Peoria; Clayton W. Wade, San Simon; Trevor D. Widenski, Peoria; Travis J. Zimmerman, Deer Valley

ARKANSAS: Kevin J. Barenberg, Lincoln; James J. Carter, Prairie Grove; Marilyn G. Davenport, Yellville-Summit; Christopher S. Garvin, Valley Springs; Richard King, Mountain Home; Landon Logan, Green Forest; Blake A. Morrison, Mountain Home; Amy E. Prater, Ridgecrest; James Quinton, Prairie Grove; Robert T. Rhein, Mountain Home; Heather R.

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CONNECTICUT: Jonathan H. Griffin, Suffield; Sheryl L. Griffin, Suffield; Rob Schwindler, Southington; Kevin Sprafke, Suffield

DELAWARE: Keith W. Johnson, Indian River; Tera L. Pase, Lake Forest; Andrew Thomas, Caesar Rodney; Sam Urchick, Caesar Rodney

FLORIDA: Ila K. Allen, Suwannee; Christopher L. Brown, Kathleen Sr.; Jennifer L. Bruesser, Lake Weir; Jeremy Burris, Plant City; Sarah D. Carte, Suwannee; Cindy Chesser, Santa Fe; Travis D. Cooper, Dixie County; John P. Eubanks, Williston; Molly Freel, Lake Weir; Andrea J. Hessling, George Jenkins; Jason Land, Lafayette; Clint L. McWaters, Okeechobee Brahman; Kelly J. Philman, Bell;



Advisors often play a major role in motivating FFA members to strive for the National FFA Organization's highest degree. Megan Price of Adrian, Ore., shared a smile with her advisor, Paul Andeves, before receiving her American FFA Degree.

DeAnne Poveromo, New Smyrna Beach; Eric B. Puleo, Gaiher; Matt E. Ramsey, Sneads; Torrey C. Riley, Sebring; Keith Shiver, Lafayette; Kerry R. Smith, Frostproof; Amy E. Stotler, West Orange; Chris Urquhart, Bethlehem; Daniel B. Watson, Dixie; Bobbie L. Westcott, Bradford Voc Tech; Jennifer E. Wiggs, George Jenkins; Amy E. Williams, North Marion

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Heath Clodfelter, Olney; Karen Ann Corrigan, Seneca; Lee R. Craig, Galva; Dawn M. Dietz, Sycamore; Justin C. Ebert, Ashton; Amanda J. Ellis, Armstrong; Dan Glaenger, Waterloo; Martin K. Gaul, Wesclin; Carol D. Hall, Pope County; Curtis E. Ingram, South Central; Mike A. Kolweier, Waterloo; Trent McKeown, Alexis; Rusty A. Melhouse, Canton; Kylie Mills, St. Elmo; Keith A. Monk, Iroquois West; Ryan C. Moore, Southwestern; Todd Muench, Cissna Park; J. R. Mullinax, Olney; Jerry Neukomm, Cissna Park; Jestun C. Nutter, Liberty; Milton L. Oesch, West Richland; Robert C. Ohnemus, Liberty; Mark E. Payne, Galatia; Stephen D. Robb, South Central; Amy S. Rogier, Highland; Ryan Ruhl, Galva; Quentin Schaumburg, Milford; Adam R. Schleef, Iroquois West; Shannon R. Schnitz, Serena; Sheila M. Stanton, Sycamore; Caroline Stead, Lincolnwood; Kyle Swigart, Blue Ridge; Timothy G. Talbert, Iroquois West; Janelle A. Tjaden, Liberty; Gwendolyn Tromblee, Aledo; Nic Weber, Cissna Park; Ty Wingert, Pearl City

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(Continued on page 22)

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Angela D. Darlage, Seymour; Justin Day, Shenandoah; Brian K. Emenhiser, Woodlan; Bryan Freeman, Owen Valley; Nicole Gray, Clinton Central; Dawn A. Greer, Clinton Prairie; Chad M. Hart, Switzerland; David W. Hefty, DeKalb; Kevin D. Hilbert, Hagerstown; Michael Jones, Rossville; Galen R. Kane, North Daviess; Matthew R. Keller, Clinton Central; Erica L. Knox, Rossville; Ryan Kohlhagen, Rensselaer; Brian E. Lasher, McKenzie Career Center; Susi Leckrone, North Manchester; Michael L. Leising, Rushville; Laura L. Longyear, East Noble; Kyle Lumpkin, Hagerstown; Kellie Maxwell, Southmont; Kyle D. McCain, Delphi; Aaron J. Metzger, Rossville; Eric L. Miller, Carroll; Brent Pogue, Western; Brian R. Pogue, Western; Elisha L. Priebe, Southmont; Carol R. Puckett, Rossville; Tracey R. Ramsey, Clinton Prairie; Anna Maria Rekeweg, Woodlan; Blain A. Richardson, North Miami; Michelle A. Schenk, North Posey; Aaron W. Schroer, Seymour; Phillip C. Schuman, South Adams; Ann M. Shultheis, Rossville; Steven A. Souder, Rushville; Deanna S. Stamper, Hagerstown; Jill M. Summerlot, Martinsville; Theresa Tempel, Heritage Hills; Tad T. Thompson, Clinton Prairie; Clinton L. Wagoner, Rossville; Kyle A. Wallace, Rossville; James R. Wildermuth, North Miami; Darrel D. Williamson, North Harrison

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McBride, Weston; Lane B. Simmons, Mt. Hermon

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McKamey, Cascade; Shannon W. Myers, Miles City; Jason K. Noyes, Park; Melissa Peterson, Shields Valley; Jaime R. Robinson, Shields Valley; Brenda Snapp, Fergus of Lewistown
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Dennis Melkonian and Matt Cholakian of Fowler, Calif., ate breakfast with their advisor Mark Phipps on Saturday morning before receiving their American FFA Degrees.

Grove; Randy Timmerman, Halfway; Charley E. Tinsley, Charleston; Brian K. Travis, Princeton; Lee Trimmer, Mound City; Bennie G. Turner, Smithville; Michael Turner, Ste. Genevieve; Charles E. Tuttle, Tipton; James D. Walkup, East Buchanan; Mark D. Ware, Lathrop; Jamie Washington, East Newton; Jodi L. Watts, Eldorado Springs; Jeffery D. Webb, Braymer; James C. Weldon, Gallatin; Donna M. Whitehead, Wellsville-Middletown; Mark A. Wilburn, Van-Far; Jeremy J. Williams, Saint James; Amie M. Winchester, Jasper; Matt L. Winder, Carl Junction; Chad Wooderson, North Central Area Vo Tech; Stephanie J. Yates, Monroe City
MONTANA: Markus Braaten, Flathead; A. Joseph J. Dooling, Beaverhead; Lyndsey Fosbery, Flathead; Mardi L. Linhart, Hobson; Chad W. Massar, Ruby Valley; Mitchell S.

G. Heinrich, Blue Hill; Ryan Hesman, Blue Hill; Steven J. Hiebner, Henderson; Ryan Hilligas, Hampton; Renee Hipke, West Holt; Kelli Hoblyn, Ansley; Michael J. Hodges, Nebraska City; Benjamin L. Hoegh, Hampton; Laurie Jacobs, Central; Bryan Jelken, Franklin; Nicole Jerger, Scottsbluff; Matt Johnson, Scribner-Snyder; Cynthia A. Juricek, Crete; Karen Kottman, Scribner-Snyder; Brent Kramer, Sutton; Patrick Kriete, Logan View; Lance Lectenber, Butte; Doyle L. Leefers, Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca; Matt Leining, Sutton; Tom A. Liewer, Butte; Brian M. Litchfield, Hampton; Scott Lyon, Newman Grove; David G. May, Hampton; Tim Mencke, Logan View; Patrick Minary, Republican Valley; Sonya D. Mitchell, West Holt; Sara S. Nelson, West Holt; Scott D. Nelson, Newman Grove;

(Continued on page 24)

American FFA Degrees *(Continued from page 23)*

Corrie B. Newton, Ravenna; Christopher R. Nohrenberg, Blair; Amy Novak, Blue Hill; Matthew J. Nunnenkamp, Henderson; Justin L. Ott, Henderson; Sandy Paasch, Scribner-Snyder; Kevin G. Patzel, Newman Grove; Shawn L. Peters, Henderson; Jolene J. Quaring, Ravenna; Jason Ray, Superior; Jamie Reiman, Sutton; Stacie M. Renner, North Bend; Scott E. Rieker, Wilcox; Chad Setje, Leigh; Marion P. Talcott, Norris; Dan G. Theilen, Lakeview; Jeremy L. Tipton, Superior; Chad Villwok, Logan View; Rebecca M. Von Seggern, Scribner-Snyder; Doug Wadas, Ord; Desirae Walters, Alliance; Sydnie M. Weaver, Franklin; James H. Wedemeyer, Ravenna; Angela Wimer, Scribner-Snyder; Chris Wollberg, Scribner-Snyder

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NEW HAMPSHIRE: Brett J. Mongeon, Coe-Brown Northwood

NEW JERSEY: James R. Kruize, Hunterdon Hills

NEW MEXICO: Wesley E. Bales, Portales; Avery Culbertson, Las Cruces; Kristina Jonas, Las Cruces; Kevin Klein, Artesia; John H. Koenig, Las Cruces; JoKae Simons, Ramah; Shannon Williams, Clayton

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NORTH CAROLINA: Russell B. Brock Jr., North Duplin; Chris T. Burgess, Alexander Central; Jason D. Byrd, Bartlett Yancey; James C. Duckworth, South Iredell; Matthew R. Harris, Chase; Gradie G. Hartley, Princeton; Adam Lane, Bartlett Yancey; Leslie D. Mise, Bartlett Yancey; Darrell E. Mitchell, Alexander Central; Robert Price, Bartlett Yancey; Amy Richardson, Riverside; Michael D. Stanfield, Bartlett Yancey; Jason Starnes, West Rowan; Karen E. Thompson, Bartlett Yancey; Beth West, Eastern Randolph; Quent White, Eastern Randolph

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OHIO: Carrie E. Armstrong, Versailles; Bradley E. Arn, Lincolnview; Tyson Baer, Delaware JVS; Timothy R. Baker, Wellington; Leslie A. Bales,

Margaretta; Katherine E. Bartter, Hillsdale; Aaron Bates, Pymatuning Valley; Lewis Baughman, Kenton; Troy Baxter, Willard; Kyle Beamer, Upper Sandusky; Ben Beery, Lancaster; Randy Bensman, Fairlawn; Holly L. Bentley, East Clinton; Nathan L. Biggs, Mt. Vernon; Michelle Boehm, Hardin Northern; Theresa M. Boes, Riverdale; Dustin T. Bohl, Mowrystown; Jillian L. Boyer, Ashland; Korre Boyer, Plymouth; Micah Boysel, Benjamin Logan; Craig A. Bratton, Mowrystown; Jonas Buehl, Madison Plains; Joshua S. Burns, Fairbanks; Jeremy Burnside, Benjamin Logan; Dennis R. Claggett, East Knox; Holly J. Cole, Colonel Crawford; Eric A. Conklin, Marysville; Jeff A. Conley, Carey; David Covert, Madison Plains; W. Aaron Creswell, Northmor; Steven D. Cronkleton, Benjamin Logan; Keith B. Cummins, North Central; Brian Daiber, Wynford; Brian DeAtley, Ohio Valley Vocational; Aaron Eades, Madison Plains; Daniel L. Eichorn, Northmor; Lora Erdy, Benjamin Logan; Todd Etgen, Buckeye Valley; Larry A. Ethel Jr., Plymouth; Jeff Fastinger, Oak Harbor; Mark J. Faust, Lynchburg-Clay; Michael L. Finnegan, Firelands; David L. Frazier, Fredericktown; Mark A. Garland, Miami Trace; Ben Gaston, Madison Plains; Shane Gibson, Wilmington; Brian W. Goettemoeller, Versailles; Brad Goodwin, Wilmington; Michael L. Gower, Mississinawa Valley; Steven A. Gower, Mississinawa Valley; Chad P. Grieshop, Versailles; Josh Gruber, Elgin; Doug Hall, West Liberty-Salem; Jeffrey M. Hans, National Trail; Aaron Hanselman, Marysville; Bryan R. Hays, United; Jason Herrmann, Talawanda; Clayton L. Hilton, Highland; Dan Hinline, Oak Harbor; Frank Homan, New Bremen; D. J. Hughes, Madison Plains; Ron Jenkins, Harrison; Joey Johnson, East Clinton; Mike Johnson, Northwestern Wayne; Jeremy Kanagy, Cardington; Jessica D. King, Hillsdale; Bob Knapke, Ft. Recovery; Curtis Knueven, Leipsic; Tom Koch, Lynchburg-Clay; Nancy L. Kolb, Preble Shawnee; Matt Krieg, New Bremen; Jason A. Lamb, Buckeye; Blair Lammers, New Bremen; Heather Lawyer, Cardington; Nikki Linkous, Tecumseh; Max W. Martin, Tecumseh; Josh Mayer, Wilmington; Brad McElroy, Fairbanks; Nichole McGuire, Benjamin Logan; Todd Meesenger, Madison Plains; Tiffany S. Meyer, Hillsdale; Deanna Miley, Marysville; Amanda M. Miller, River View; Carl Miller, Edison; Leah R. Miller, Bloom Carroll; S. Travis Miller, Liberty Union; Seth Miller, Liberty Union; Cheryl E. Morrison, Northmor; Travis L. Mullett, River View; Mary Ann Needs, Liberty Union; Josh Nester, Edon; Mary A. Newman, Hillsdale; Kimberly A. Nichols, Morgan; Sarah Niefer, Oak Harbor;

Ryan Noggle, Wayne Trace; Bo O'Brien, Benjamin Logan; Greg Owens, Convoy Crestview; Randy J. Pohlman, Delphos; Rebekah M. Powers, Fairbanks; Jerry Putnam, Fairlawn; Greg K. Rafeld, Hillsdale; Josh Reynolds, Elmwood; Scott Rice, Madison Plains; Eric A. Richer, Wauseon; Stace Robinson, Alexander; Tim Roell, Preble Shawnee; Luke N. Rohrs, Tinora; Mark Ryan, Anthony Wayne; Stephanie M. Sayre, Racine-Southern; Ron Schilling, Marysville; Julie Schudel, Evergreen; Scott Seaburn, Madison Plains; Frederick N. Searson II, Kenton; Scott Sextro, New Bremen; Ruth L. Shahan, Fairfield Union; Brad Shane, Upper Sandusky; Crystal Sharrock, Ada; John Shertzer, Bowling Green; Brad J. Smith, Keystone; Jason L. Smith, Teays Valley; Steven R. Smith, Hillsdale; Matthew Snider, Sheridan North; Michelle Snyder, Northwestern Clark; Nathan Staib, Mohawk; Stephanie Steele, North Union; Aaron Stonerock, Marysville; Kristy Stoodt, Plymouth; Brian J. Sturgill, Miami East; Kimberly Tessanne, Carrollton; Brandi Thomas, New Bremen; Shannon Utter, Georgetown; Thomas H. Wallace, Miami East; Dawn Walton, Upper Sandusky; Chad Warner, Franklin Monroe; Brian Watts, West Holmes; Steven Wentworth, Shenandoah; Marsha A. Werner, Wilmington; Shannon E. Wilcox, Upper Scioto Valley; Stephen Wilhelm, Miami East; Melissa R. Wright, Liberty Union; Joseph D. Wurzelbacher, Ross; Josh Yoder, West Liberty-Salem; Russell Zeedyk, Fairview

OKLAHOMA: Andrea M. Acre, Canton; Daniel Adams, Butler; Ryan Agan, Thomas-Fay-Custer; Misty J. Ambrose, Lone Wolf; Tobias J. Anders, Clinton; Brandon Arnold, Adair; Brendon Atkinson, Sweetwater; Misty Baker, Adair; Tenae Baker, Guymon; Shawn Bloodworth, Moore; Brett Brame, Antlers; Christopher C. Brinkley, Butler; Janet G. Brooks, Byng; Kyndell Buck, Eufaula; Dee Carothers, Snyder; Becky Childers, Skiatook; Jeb B. Crabb, Mangum; James R. Craiger, Harrah; Lycrecia Cunningham, Locust Grove; Kimberly Denton, Kingfisher; Ben Drew, Harrah; Lorie Farmer, Indianola; Sara Fast, Guymon; Russell Fent, Wyandotte; Tia N. Finnell, Sentinel; Justin Foust, Thomas-Fay-Custer; Colby N. Fuser, Afton; Chase B. Garrett, Roland; Dustin W. Gist, Spiro; Kyle Glazier, Lomega; Melissa D. Glenn, Wilburton; Derick Graves, Alva; Jason Griffin, Antlers; Nathan Haikey, Cushing; Pamela Hale, Sapulpa; Jason Hall, Fort Gibson; Jason Hawkins, Empire; Dale Heisler, Pawnee; Kelli Jo Heisler, Pawnee; John C. Hendrickson, Adair; John R. Henry, Kingston; Jennifer D. Hill, Kingfisher; Chad M. Hinds, Elk City; Kevin Hoffman, Panama; William B. Holland, Whitesboro; Brian Holsted, Carnegie;



Jeremy Burns (right) of the Anthony Wayne FFA Chapter in Ohio came to the national FFA convention to receive his American FFA Degree. His advisors, a father-daughter team, Dawn Miller and Bob Miller, are proud of his accomplishment.

Kevin D. House, Cameron; Jarrett Hughes, Rock Creek; Chance L. Husted, Laverne; Brian S. Johnson, Clinton; Duane M. Keeler, Ponca City; Ronnie Kemp, Adair; Rex Latta, Fargo; Jason Lawless, Antlers; Chad E. Lee, Thomas; Frank B. Luke, Calera; Heath Maddox, Thomas; Mike Mayfield, Wyandotte; Louis A. Morton, Temple; Cory M. Newcomb, Afton; Chad Otto, Ponca City; Jami M. Parker, Spiro; Lenny Pecha, Timberlake; Casey Pilgreen, Waurika; Jayme K. Porter, Agra; Jamie Ramsey, Adair; Amy Redgate, Waynoka; Tim Rich, Prague; Mahala Robbins, Tahlequah; Clayton Robison, Cushing; Chadwick B. Ross, Ponca City; Jeff Rowland, Antlers; Matthew Ryel, Aline-Cleo; Carolyn D. Sanders, Wister; Jennifer D. Sconyers, Bristow; John L. Sharber, Sapulpa; Eric W. Shelton, Butler; Dustin C. Shenold, Yale; Justin B. Shenold, Yale; Alicia Snodgrass, Cimarron; Laura K. Sorrels, Kiowa; Heath Stehr, Mangum; Toby Stenger, Carnegie; Carl J. Storm, Kingfisher; Juston Tech, Union City; Rodney Thomas, Fort Supply; Brian Thomason, Perry; Greg Thralls, Billings; Justin W. Toews, Chisholm; Brian Tucker, Antlers; Shanon A. Vache, Big Pasture; Sloan D. Varner, Bristow; Jackson T. Walker, Newcastle; Troy L. Walker II, Panola; Tammy T. Ward, Indianola; Heath Webb, Adair; Tiffany White, Mooreland; Amberly Williams, Cushing; Jimbo Wilson, Chandler

OREGON: Nathaniel B. Allen, Ontario; Joseph P. Alvernaz III, Glide; Patricia L. Anderson, Glencoe; Jennifer J. Breyer, Sutherlin; Jason Burley, Knappa; Theri Cleaver, Adrian; Gabriel A. Crane, Sutherlin; Scott Cruikshank, Crook County; Kimberly L. Durrer, Tillamook; Kris L. Fine, Glide; Jessica L. Fisher, Union; Troy Hadley, Silverton; Heather Herrera, North Clackamas; Amy K. LeFore, McLoughlin; Neely D. McKay, Condon; Kurt J. Melville, Enterprise; Megan L. Price, Adrian; Daniel W. Reid, Willamina; Charles Robison, Dallas; Jason Scharf, Amity; Henry D. Sharp Jr., Crook

Northern Lebanon; Jay L. Hess, Manor; Heather Lehman, Cumberland Valley; Galen L. McDonald II, Chestnut Ridge; Tony R. Miller, Pequea Valley; Jeremy W. Moyer, Selinsgrove; Donald L. Peterson Jr., Tyrone Area; Martin R. Stutzman, Meyersdale Area; Joshua Troxell, Grassland; Matthew T. Welk, Solanco; Susan M. Willey, Central Cove; Richard E. Zeigler, Middleburg

PUERTO RICO: Efrain Perez Rodriguez, Manuel Mendez Liciaga; Ivan Rivera Sanchez, Manuel Mendez Liciaga; Hector J. Sanchez Alvarez, Eugenio Maria de Hostos

RHODE ISLAND: Stephanie Calise, Ponaganset; Sandie L. Mumford, Chariho

SOUTH CAROLINA: Roy Estridge, Crescent; Scott K. Gantt, Pelion; Frankie H. Holmes II, Loris; Joseph P. Payton, Aiken

SOUTH DAKOTA: Kathryn R. Blaha, Bon Homme; Jared Bush, Menno; Eric Ewalt, Groton; Jason M. Gant, Geddes; Neil A. Groom, Arlington; Lee Guthmiller, Menno; Rhonda Hillestad, Sioux Valley; Nathan R. Jensen, Beresford; Jeanne M. Johnke, Centerville; Heidi Jo Larson, Clark; Michael E. Larson, Lemmon; Suzie Lutter, Wessington Springs; Laura F. Mehlhaf, Menno; Dustin P. Oedekoven, Sturgis; Brannon Peterson, Lemmon; Brent Rames, Menno; Joshua M. Riedy, Lemmon; Steve Rumpza, Waubay; Steve Saylor, Menno; Neil Smeenk, Harrisburg; Susan A. Stoterau, Harrisburg; Jason Streyle, Menno; Ryan R. Stroschein, Clear Lake; Gaylon J. Townsend, Groton; Jeffrey Vander Wal, Sioux Valley; Craig Winquist, Alcester-Hudson; Chad Wosje, Sioux Valley

TENNESSEE: John W. Allensworth, Northeast; Bruce Ballenger, Northeast; Brian M. Bechtel, Bradley Central; Mary A. Donner, Dyersburg; Brad Erwin, Spring Hill; Paul Evans Jr., Northeast; Brian Flowers, Richland; David Ford, Halls; Seth Fortune, Johnson County; Steven C. Gammon, East Robertson; Jason T. Gillespie, Forrest; Jason Hall, East Robertson; Bill

County; Raymon J. Smith, Bonanza; Nicole Sturm, Union; Jessica D. Sullivan, North Clackamas; Justin L. Taylor, Henley; Benjamin J. Walchli, Hermiston; Brian D. Wickert, Ontario

PENNSYLVANIA: Tonya R. Anthony, Marion Center; Sheri L. Bollinger, Solanco; Tracy Lynn Bollinger, Manheim Central; Keith E. Brofee, Greenwood; Scott C. Byers, Greenwood; Edward E. Dice, Northern Lebanon; Dan Dygert, Linesville; Steven Frantz, Selinsgrove; Liza R. Haas, West Perry; Jill K. Harnish, Solanco; Darla L. Herr,

Henderson, Crockett; Kurt H. Holbert, Riverside; Clint Hopper, Riverside; Bubba Humphreys, Halls; Angela G. Johnson, White House; John Marshall, Riverdale; Kerry S. Mayes, Warren County; David E. McCarty, Anderson County; Ricky J. McWilliams, Halls; Tanya J. Meachen, Polk County; Ryan K. Moore, Warren County; Katherine E. Page, Dyer County; Robin S. Parker, Campbell County; Kevin Patterson, Dyersburg; Damon H. Pierce, Northside; Edward A. Porter, Halls; David Prentice, Columbia; Heath Pritchett, Dyersburg; Jonathan W. Proctor, McEwen; Jason A. Roberts, White County; Blake A. Rymer, Polk County; Butch J. Shrader, Jefferson County; Chad Smith, Dyersburg; Douglas Snapp, Volunteer; Dan J. Strasser, Forrest; Benjamin Taylor, Warren County; Matt Thomas, Northeast; Joseph P. Warner, Forrest; Kurt R. Watson, DeKalb County; Scott Watson, Northside

TEXAS: Kelly M. Adams, Mayde Creek; Julie Albert, Pleasanton; Amber Boucher, Pleasanton; Casey Briscoe, Cotulla; Denise L. Brown, Tilden County; Kevin J. Burns, Mabank; Charles C. Campbell, Goldthwaite; Jason M. Casada, Farmersville; David Chumbley, Howe; Natalie W. Cobb, Frisco; Stephen Custy, Pilot Point; Dustin T. Dean, Jacksboro; Jeff Edwards, Amherst; Brian Emmel, Weimar; Kristi L. Falco, Navasota; Benjamin Finke, Round Top Carmine; Sam Foster, Tilden; Courtney Fuchs, Brenham; Dustin Gaskins, Sands; Alice Gonzalez, East Central; Bruce A. Graham, Krum; Hunter Graham, Howe; Michael Gregory, New Waverly; Brandon S. Gregson, Conroe; Gregg Groves, Hale Center; Jason L. Hammons, Mayde Creek; Justin Hodge, Salado; Shelley M. Howard, Miami; Holly J. Howell, Kilgore; Clint J. Joines, Wharton; Melissa Jung, Pleasanton; Kevin J. Kahlden, Weimar; Kevin M. Karlicek, Covington; Brandon Kinnard, Glen Rose; Ryan Kirkpatrick, McGregor; Nathan Krueger, Karnes City; David R. Latham, Booker; Craig Leatherwood, Snyder; Joshua E. Limmer, Round Top Carmine; Amy Lux, Katy; Mandy M. Mabry, Clarksville; Erica J. Martinez, Cotulla; Gene Martinez, Pleasanton; Brian Mauney, Mayde Creek; Brian Meadors, Rockdale; Trishelle D. Miller, Miami; Scott W. Moffett, D'Hanis; Jennifer Morris, Colorado City; Deborah Mueller, Jourdanton; Cody R. Murray, Perrin; Tommy Neyland, Centerville; Thesia L. Oberhoff, Brenham; Cody Oden, Cotton Center; Colin Ohnheiser, Weimar; Stacy Peikert, Sealy; Jennifer L. Perkins, Hallsville; Jason R. Peter, Wharton; Jeremy Peters, Cotulla; LaNei Phillips, Buffalo; Traci Rao, Katy; Ann E. Rasor, Frisco; Rae L. Reding, Madisonville; Corey Rosenbusch, Glen Rose; Mark Rosenbusch, Florence; Jeff D. Schertz, Calallen; Vickie Schneider, Comfort; Tina M. Schorsch, Jourdanton; Charles Seidensticker, Comfort; Cassandra L. Slayton, Bellevue; Clint Slott, New

(Continued on page 26)

American FFA Degrees *(Continued from page 25)*

Waverly; Doug Smith, Katy; Kelly Smith, Tomball; Mark Smith, Kirbyville; Billy L. Snook, Livingston; Donna Strittmatter, Pilot Point; Tashia Taylor, Bryan; Mark Tesch, Sealy; Dannel Thomas, Cypress Creek; Justin Tomascik, Buckholts; Elizabeth M. Tymrak, Banquete; Heather Underwood, Magnolia; Mardra VanAshby, Henderson; Lance Wilson, Lubbock Coronado; Amanda Woodrum, Fruitvale; James E. Woods, New Waverly; Heather Wooster, Perryton; Charisse York, Mt. Pleasant; Patrick Zapalac, Schulenburg; Tanya Zavisch, Tilden County

UTAH: Nicole Chlarson, Box Elder; Chad Fitzgerald, Wasatch; Jeremy Harris, South Summit; Ben Isaac, Payson; Mistie Johansen, Emery; Bonnie Lee Johnson, North Sevier; Kami Lyn King, Payson; Lonny L. Kirkman, Clearfield; Ryan Mortensen, Union; Shawn Pallesen, Manila; Alanna Patterson, Clearfield; Marc W. Pratt, Bear River; Bobbie Jo Probst, Wasatch; Pepper Scott, Payson; Jennifer Silcox, Payson; Scott Slagowski, Manila; Bronson S. Smart, Pleasant Grove; Josh Wright, Payson

VERMONT: Mark R. Foster, Middlebury
VIRGINIA: William R. Balderson, Essex; Bucky Beauchamp, Northumberland; Mendy D. Beckman, Turner Ashby; Bobby D. Burgess, Pulaski County; Hunter Chapman, Central; Robert W. Davis, Bland; Jason W. Dawson, Northumberland; Michael J. Downing, Northumberland; Monica L. Driver, Turner Ashby; Dana A. Fisher, Central; John F. Haile, Essex; James C. Hall Jr., Northumberland; Billy Haynie, Northumberland; Monte L. Heatwole, Spotswood; Deric A. Hedge, Pulaski County; Karol B. Hill II, Turner Ashby; Christinia M. Hyre, James Wood; Bryan Jenkins, Northumberland; Ronnie E. Lane, Christiansburg; Ted R. Lewis Jr., Northumberland; Robert M. Mitchell, Essex; Marc C. Moran, Atlee; Colleen O'Neal, James Wood; Devon F. Pence, Central; Melissa Purtlebaugh, James Wood; James S. Reiter, Dinwiddie County; Benjamin L. Rexrode, Turner Ashby; Jeremy M. Ryan, Stonewall Jackson; H. Douglas Smith III, Fauquier; Joel M. Stanley, Patrick Henry; Stacy Strawderman, Stonewall Jackson; Cara E. Talbert, Pulaski County; Stephen A. Welsh, Spotswood; Walter A. Worrell, Carroll County

WASHINGTON: Aaron E. Bagwell, Snohomish; Wade Baker, Chelan; Robert C. Bromiley, Eastmont; Dustin A. DeVries, Burlington-Edison; Jerry T. Finch, Garfield-Palouse; Russell T. Finch, Garfield-Palouse; Jesika J. Frederick, Eastmont; Ronald E. Hinnenkamp, Colfax; Dana Jenkins, Quincy; Michelle R. Jones, Arlington; Corina L. Kluser, Zillah; Hollie L. Matthews, Winlock; Jennie M. Mock, Ritzville; Erika A.

Naccarato, Kettle Falls; Jason W. Newman, Garfield-Palouse; Pat Pierson, Chelan; Justin C. Pittmann, Rosalia; J. B. Ramerman, Lynden; Maren K. Robinson, Monroe; Jesse Sanders, Burlington-Edison; Monty Schilter, W. F. West-Chehalis; Rick Seitters, Colville; Bonnie J. Shindler, Rosalia; Jennifer M. Simonson, Ritzville; Alisha Walli, Ritzville; Alison Y. Wedin, Ellensburg; Erik E. Wilkerson, Kamiakin; Brad Wyman Jr.,

Burlington-Edison; Justin Yancey, Othello
WEST VIRGINIA: Jeremy Clay, Ripley; John D. Heavner II, Franklin; Jason Knopp, Ripley; Lesley Larew, Preston County; David Lewis, Barbour County; Nathanael L. Mason, Ritchie County; Harry E. Matheny, Wirt County; Jared Nestor, Barbour County; Kevin Okes, Shady Spring; Matthew G. Painter, Roane County; James Price, Ripley; Daniel O. Shockey, Ravenswood; Kevin D. Yost, Berkeley Springs
WISCONSIN: Becky L. Abendroth, Jefferson; Jamie Back, Independence; Dan Bark, River Ridge; Christopher Baskin, Durand; Lori Bates, Barron; Kelly L. Bienfang, Jefferson; Erica Boh, Neillsville; Amy L. Bollinger, Cochrane-Fountain City; Curt Bradley, Denmark; Matthew Brandel, Fort Atkinson; Kevin Breneman, Randolph; Anthony W. Brossard, Beaver Dam; Julie A. Case, Brookwood; Gary Chada, Denmark; Jason T. Chapman, Montello; Brad A. Crist, Darlington; Mark H. Cross, Randolph; Jason Danhof, Marshfield; Jay W. Faschingbauer, Bloomer; Kelli J. Fetting, Cochrane-Fountain City; Brett Gill, Darlington; Richard Grabarski, Adams Friendship; Bradley W. Grossen, Juda; Ryan Haack, Marshall; Kirk Hahn, Randolph; Mark Handrich, Weyauwega-Fremont; Kristin M. Hanson, Barron; Skye M. Havens, Darlington; Mark D. Heller, Randolph; William C. Hemling, Beaver Dam; Denny Jakobi, Granton; Rebecca J. James, Mineral Point; Janelle L. Johnson, Bloomer; Shannon R. Johnson, Hillsboro; Alicia M. Kasper, Turtle Lake; Jason Kittell, Denmark; Nathan S. Kling, Blair-Taylor; Charles P. Knigge, Omro; John J. Koenig, Clear Lake; Jason L. Koerth, Brillion; Jeffrey K. Kohn, Oconto Falls; Kori Koser, Memorial; Sheryl Kramer, Stratford; Derek Krentz, Montello; Matthew D. Krenz, Fall Creek; Marie B. Krueger, Hillsboro; Dawn G. Kyle, Whitewater; Bobbie Jo Loehrke,



Mike Schneider of the Caliche, Colo., FFA Chapter posed with his grandparents, Gwen and Herman Sommerfeld, who were proud to watch their grandson receive his American FFA Degree.

Weyauwega-Fremont; Andrew D. Lucht, Antigo; Joe L. Luchterhand, Loyal; Julie A. Lulich, Ashland; Maria L. Lulich, Ashland; Jared P. McDonald, Black Hawk-South Wayne; Dean Meinholz, DeForest; Ann V. Miller, Mauston; Thomas Milz, Loyal; Jeff Mleziva, Denmark; Todd Monson, Darlington; Jody Myhre, Osseo-Fairchild; John Nesson, Sun Prairie; Jill O'Leary, Milton; Eric J. Onan, Amherst; Jason L. Opie, Black Hawk-South Wayne; Terry J. Opie, Black Hawk-South Wayne; Brenda Pietz, Wittenberg-Birmamwood; Mike Pollesch, Randolph; Dale Quam, Stoughton; Grant Radtke, Weyauwega-Fremont; Jon E. Rasmussen, Brillion; Amanda Reed, Milton; Amy L. Reichling, Darlington; Christi Reilly, Stoughton; Aaron R. Ruland, Tomah; Aaron J. Salesman, Monroe; Danial R. Schwandt, Beaver Dam; Traci J. Seefeldt, Gillett; Lori Seehafer, Marshfield; Joe Speich, Reedsburg; Patrick Sternitzky, Granton; Lori J. Stewart, Elk Mound; Ben Stichert, Marshfield; Matt Stivarius, Fennimore; Todd Strauch, Augusta; Travis Suring, Suring; Michael R. Tauscher, Pulaski; Brad Teter, Granton; Todd Thieding, Reedsburg; Matthew A. Timm, Argyle; Jennifer M. Tourdot, Reedsburg; Diane M. Trevorrow, Reedsburg; Mary Beth Ubersox, Darlington; Shelley B. Warmka, Waupun; Michele E. Weiss, Beaver Dam; Luke Wiedenfeld, Lake Mills; Daniel L. Wussow, Bonduel; Timothy J. Yelk, DeForest; Kathleen M. Zickert, Marshall

WYOMING: Lin Bishop, Gillette; Kerin M. Castle, Snowy Range; Kristi L. Cater, Gillette; Teresa H. Cole, Cheyenne East; Alisha M. Collins, Lander; Lindsey K. Detimore, Lander; John C. Hicks, Cody; Lesley M. Jeffres, Lander; Anita Jones, Moorcroft; Joshua J. Odean, Pine Bluffs; Richard Russell, Riverside; Shain Shimic, Southeast; Jason D. Weichmann, Chief Washakie; Glen T. Weiss, Riverton



National FFA Talent

Sponsored by Ford Division—Ford Motor Company

ALABAMA: Kim Bickley, Eufaula; Josh Bradshaw, Eufaula; Kevin Jernigan, Eufaula; Allen Kirkland, Eufaula; Sid Lane, Eufaula; Brad Mitchell, Eufaula; Garrett Nixon, Eufaula; JanReqa Pugh, Eufaula; Kella Stephenson, Eufaula; David Warren, Eufaula; Michael Lee Thomas, Marbury

ARKANSAS: Sarah Waits, Green Co. Tech II; Dustin Shelton, Stuttgart

CONNECTICUT: Kimberly Compton, Woodbury

ILLINOIS: Annette Miller, Nokomis

INDIANA: Marcus Bowman, Rossville; Julie Grieves, Rossville; Dustin Hopkins, Rossville; Angela Little, Rossville; Loren Miller, Rossville; Rodney Miller, Rossville; Ryan Miller, Rossville; Twyla Miller, Rossville; Stephanie Noether, Rossville; Summer Noether, Rossville; Caren Puckett, Rossville; Kim Rothenberger, Rossville; Lindsey Slipher, Rossville; Kurtis Wagoner, Rossville; Jeremy Wolf, Rossville; Luke Wolf, Rossville

IOWA: Matthew Thie, Mediapolis

KANSAS: Rachael Jeschke, Highland

MARYLAND: Tracy Clagett, South Carroll

MINNESOTA: Angela Roiko, Frazee

MISSOURI: Laura Skipper, Chillicothe; Korissa Cox, North Harrison; Brandon McLagan, Pleasant Hill; Lori Reid, Sweet Springs; Travis Tucker, Thayer; Tara Winder, Woodland

MONTANA: Dana Jo Forseth, Fairfield

NEBRASKA: Emily Mitchell, Norris; Ashley Aulick, Scottsbluff

OHIO: Jennifer DePalma, Firelands; Abby Henry, Versailles

OKLAHOMA: Kiley Rieger, Burlington; Jennifer Orender, Claremore; Leslea Jo Davis, Hobart; Josh Haas, Indianola; Kristin Johnson, Mountain View - Gotebo; Autumn McEntire, Owasso - Canadian; Buddy Owens, Owasso - Canadian; Jarod Tyler, Owasso - Canadian; Eric Roberts, Waurika

OREGON: Tobbie Huston, Pine Eagle; Willie Huston, Pine Eagle

PENNSYLVANIA: Dayna Weinhold, Hans Herr; Josh Copp, Tulpehocken

NEW YORK: Nicole Moretta, Buffalo

UTAH: Toni Davis, Richfield

WASHINGTON: Nicole Berg, Warden

WEST VIRGINIA: Marika Ware, Jefferson

WISCONSIN: Sarah Quade, Milton

George Strait, Whitney Houston and Gloria Estefan could all be heard at the 69th National FFA Convention. Even Patsy Cline and Bill Haley made an appearance.

The legacies of these legendary performers resounded throughout Kansas City, as members of the National FFA Talent Program strummed, crooned, twisted and shouted to some of their favorite songs. Some of these FFA members even performed original material, but whatever the source of the music, the effect was always the same: thundering applause and cheers of approval.

Kansas City is well-known as a place where talented singers, dancers and musicians are on display practically everywhere. For the week of the convention, the performers in the talent program were a part of this local "culture," leading their fellow members in a celebration of their unique skills.

Hailing from 37 FFA chapters in 21 states, members were featured in over 400 performances throughout the Kansas City area, from the American Royal and the Hyatt Westin Crown Center, to numerous acts for local civic and service groups. But it was their entertainment for convention participants at the Municipal Auditorium, the Finals Hall and the Bartle Hall areas that drew rave reviews, culminating in a Talent Revue Thursday evening that brought the house down.

Members of the talent program were selected from several audition tapes submitted earlier in the year. The auditions were reviewed by the talent program director, Gary Maricle, principal of Excelsior Springs High School in Missouri. Maricle and associate directors Robert Enbody of Toledo, Wash., and Scott Stewart of Warrensburg, Mo., selected the 64 individuals who entertained the crowds at this year's convention.



Toni Davis, an FFA member from Richfield, Utah, had the arena crowd swinging to the sounds of "Orange Blossom Special" Thursday night during the National FFA Talent Revue.

National FFA Band



Thomas Whittenburg of the Lonoke, Ark., FFA Chapter played a solo in "Hero" during the Reflections sessions Wednesday evening. Throughout the week the talents of several National FFA Band members were highlighted with solo performances.

Sponsored by Ford Division—Ford Motor Company and the National FFA Foundation General Fund

Music is always in the air at the national FFA convention. Members of the National FFA Band help make that possible.

Traveling from 29 states and Puerto Rico, the 110 band members performed a variety of music to fit every occasion during the convention. This year, for the first time, the National FFA Band also performed at the American Royal.

With over 40 pieces of music ready to perform, the band was prepared to put on quite a show for the convention crowd. They performed at the opening of the Career Show and on stage at many of the sessions. FFA members enjoyed the band's music and often clapped to the beat and sang along to familiar tunes.

Gene Englerth of Webberville, Mich., was back for his sixth year conducting the band and his 12th year working with the National FFA Band.

ARIZONA: Christopher Mortensen, Duncan

ARKANSAS: Laurie Kinder, Salem; Thomas Whittenburg, Lonoke

CALIFORNIA: Richard Irwin, Westminster; Boorus Yim, Canoga Park

COLORADO: Roy Gillham, Peetz; Teresa Walker, Woodlin

CONNECTICUT: Kristen McAree, Woodbury; Jason Vegas, Lyman Hall

DELAWARE: Bill Schwartz, Polytech

IDAHO: Jordan Knarr, Vallivue

ILLINOIS: Kim Carton, Geneseo; Celestina Smith, Chicago Ag Sciences; Heather Yokley, Williamsville

INDIANA: Jared Benavides, Lowell

IOWA: Kristie Davis, Southeast Warren; Lucas Johnson, Bison; Brian Ohorilko, Southeast Polk; Alexander Olson, Lake Mills; Brian Seda, Gladbrook-Reinbeck; David Wilson, Laporte-Dysart

KANSAS: Sheryl Cleavinger, Tonganoxie; Derek Klingenberg, Peabody-Burns; Amanda McCay, Williamsburg; Mike Stamm, Washington

KENTUCKY: John Cole, Fulton County; Christi Stafford, Jessamine County

MICHIGAN: Kathryn Coffey, Vicksburg; Emily Green, Ovid-Elsie; Jeffrey Kenyon, Hillman; Jennifer Leininger, Waldron; Sarah Martz, Marshall; Tara Mattson, Alden; Shirley Pavlin, Montague

MINNESOTA: Erin Goodin, Alden-Conger; Sarah Hayes, Watertown-Mayer; Rachel Neset, Ada-Borup; Steven Swartzler, Watertown-Mayer

MISSOURI: Barbara Gose, Fayette; Amber Harrell, Clinton; Jake Hill, Sweet Springs; David Hoette, Montgomery County; Amanda McBroom, Greenfield; Phillip Ray, Trenton; Jonathan St.Clair, Clark County; Jarod Womack, Clark County

MONTANA: Bobbie Bradley, Colstrip

NEBRASKA: Matthew Cox, Norfolk; Sara Emanuel, Aurora; Brady Fritz, Wilber-Clatonia; Katherine Kastanek, Wilber-Clatonia; Phillip Menke, Superior; Samuel Mortensen, Medicine Valley; Crystal Nelson, Ansley; Seth Spicer, Imperial; Toby Spiehs, Aurora

NEVADA: Thomas Gunter, Ruby Mountain
NEW YORK: Matthew Baideme, Westfield; Brian Zielenieski, Pioneer

OHIO: Danny Finfrock, Tecumseh; Matthew Raymond, Edison

OKLAHOMA: Curtis Conner, Newkirk; April Cox, Watonga; Amber Graham, Fairview; Bryan Reinschmiedt, Hennessey; Amanda Seidl, Garber

PENNSYLVANIA: Jessica Merkle, State College Area

PUERTO RICO: Leslie A. Romero, Timoteo Delgado

SOUTH CAROLINA: Ashlee Hall, Abbeville

TENNESSEE: Andrew Ball, Dyersburg

TEXAS: Erik Griffith, Dayton; Kristi Mahaffey, Pasadena; Trent McKnight, Throckmorton; Jennifer Nobles, Rockdale; Rian Patek, Katy; John Shaffer, Huffman; Susanna Wimberly, McGregor; Lora Yowell, Wilson

UTAH: Weldon Thorpe, Spanish Fork

WASHINGTON: Christina Boersma, Lynden; Lisa Dickinson, Stanwood; Karen Faulkner, Rogers/Puyallup; Loretta Sharbono, Onalaska; Paula Tegger, Wilson

WISCONSIN: Jeremy Burke, Westby; Michelle Ensch, Shullsburg; Dana Fischl, Seymour; Julie Hill, Johnson Creek; Cathy Hudachek, Amery; Katharine Karow, Augusta; Margaret Majerus, Lomira; Saprina Matheny, Cameron; William Meister, River Ridge; Helen Olson, Prairie Farm; Stacy Serwe, Lomira

WYOMING: Dayle Butler, Pine Bluffs; Chancy Leath, Meeteetse





National FFA Chorus

Sponsored by Ford Division—Ford Motor Company

The voices of the National FFA Chorus set the tone for the convention hall. The 106 chorus members sang their hearts out while the crowd listened—and some even hummed along.

The National FFA Chorus' music provided a melody for all occasions. Their repertoire contained a total of 15 pieces, nine of which were performed on the main convention stage. The group also performed at six other locations including a first-ever performance at the American Royal to sing the national anthem.

The chorus members arrived Saturday night before the convention and rehearsed for 16 hours before their first performance.

For his fourth year, Roger Kelley of Washington State University in Pullman, Wash., directed the chorus. He was assisted by Amy Boyce of Chappell, Neb.

ALABAMA: Joseph B. Green, Billingsley; Brian J. Parsons, Louisville

CALIFORNIA: Karyn R. Perry, Kingsburg

CONNECTICUT: Herbert W. Holden Jr., Rockville

IOWA: Jeffery K. Anderson, Ft. Madison; Dallas L. Bergstrom, Ft. Madison; Elizabeth A. Book, Walnut; Brian L. Borcharding, Hampton Tall Corn; Ryan D. Buse, Southern Cal; Ella M. Carlson, Harlan; Erik D. Goodale, St. Ansgar; Mary A. Hardy, Southern Cal; Jennifer E. Kunde, Maquoketa Valley; Paula M. Lichtenstein, West Branch; Hillary D. Ryan, Southeast Polk; Jared J. Willis, Ackley-Geneva

ILLINOIS: Julie E. Callahan, Staunton; Grant Cole, Vayson; Bryan J. Egolf, Cisna Park; Robin A. Niehaus, Hillsboro; Megan L. Walters, Gibson City/Melvin-Sibley

KANSAS: Amanda A. Doud, Mankato; Robert E. Gossen, Neodesha; Kerry L. Priest, Sabetha; Steven M. Skeet, Tonganoxie

MARYLAND: Shaun C. Cooney, North Harford; Toby L. Hoffman, Clear Spring

MICHIGAN: Jacob E. Washburn, Marshall

MINNESOTA: Justin R. Dessonville, Dawson-Boyd; Derek T. Peterson, Buffalo Lake/Hector

MISSOURI: Matthew R. Baker, Worth County; Eric D. Barb, Green Ridge; Allison L. Cadle, Worth County R-III; Tracy A. Carmichael, North Nodaway; Christy L. Cunningham, Westran; Tony A. Ferguson, Trenton; Merle L. Harmon II, Pleasant Hope

MISSISSIPPI: Courtney A. Scoggin, Newton Mun.

MONTANA: Chris R. Bengochea, Culbertson; Aaron J. Hodder, Big Timber; Roger A. Ludwick, Carter County; Chris J. Offerdahl, Conrad; Brent T. Volf, Judith Gap; Amber N. Williams, Joliet

NORTH DAKOTA: Jennifer R. Hystad, Velva; Christopher B. Rogers, Botno

NEBRASKA: Allison S. Block, Gothenburg; Julie L. Duis, Diller; Anne M. Evans, Loup City; Casey E. Miller, Bayard; Scott C. Moritz, Sutton; James R. Oltman, Wilber-Clatonia; Laura R. Pecka, Wilber-Clatonia; Sara A. Rasmussen, Logan View; Laina M. Zarek, Gothenburg

NEW MEXICO: Angela M. Usherwood, Artesia

OHIO: Kimberly M. Deal, Upper Valley; Jaime L. Hathaway, Greenville; John J. Vanderpool, South Central

OKLAHOMA: Aden J. Butler, Reydon; Casey M. Clinton, Lone Grove; Christy L. Foust, Thomas; Terina A. Gibbs, Central High; Dennis D. Gothard, Lone Grove; Kerri D. Lytle, Atoka; Nicholas E. Mueller, Guymon; Kristin M. Owens, Ft. Supply

OREGON: Clorinda C. Baird, North Clackamas; Simon G. E. Hare, Illinois Valley; Leah J. Moon, McLoughlin

TENNESSEE: Amanda Y. Austin, White County; Frankie L. Stiles, Cookeville

TEXAS: Dustin Dean, Jacksboro; Janet M. Fajkus, Smithville; Sara J. Griffis, Childress; Jana Howe, Clyde; Jeremy R. Jones, Calallen; Sarah M. Pierce, Snyder; Jerrod Rinehart, Snyder; Clint Wiley, Stockdale

VIRGINIA: Stacy R. Weekley, Turner Ashby

WASHINGTON: Sarah E. Ayling, Granger; Jessica A. Beall, Eastmont; Marc A. Johnson, Cathlamet; Misty M. Smith, White Salmon

WISCONSIN: Jason A. Drabek, Edgar; Jeremiah J. Frederickson, Amery; Kristi M. Koenig, Athens; Christy M. Leatherberr, La Farge; Sara S. Mueller, Marshfield; Eric M. Peterson, Amery; Holly A. Schwedler, Waterford

WEST VIRGINIA: Angelina D. Jeffrey, Ravenswood



Members of the National FFA Chorus sang their hearts out during their performances. The chorus appeared numerous times for various audiences during the convention. They also were featured singing the national anthem at the American Royal.





National Chapter Award

Sponsored by Cargill and the National FFA Foundation General Fund

1996 marked a new and different way of recognizing the overall excellence of FFA chapters across the country. The National Chapter Award was re-vamped to include community service and safety areas; 1995 was the last year for National Chapter Safety and Building Our American Communities awards.

More innovations included naming winning chapters in each of three categories: student development, chapter development and community development. These chapters were chosen from the highest-rated group; those earning a Three Star ranking.



THREE STAR CHAPTERS:

ILLINOIS: Amboy; Cissna Park; Seneca

IOWA: Creston; Harlan

KANSAS: Clay Center; Marysville

KENTUCKY: Spencer County

NEBRASKA: Lakeview; Ravenna; Tri-County

OKLAHOMA: Altus; Laverne

SOUTH DAKOTA: West Central

TENNESSEE: Bradley Central

TEXAS: Mission

VIRGINIA: Central; Park View Senior

WASHINGTON: Elma; Ritzville; Yelm

WISCONSIN: Spencer; Weyauwega Fremont



Mike Helsley, a Laverne, Okla., FFA member, accepted the Chapter Development award from Clara-Leigh Horn, national FFA vice president, on behalf of his chapter during the National Chapter Awards presentation Thursday afternoon.

NATIONAL WINNER— STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Tri-County FFA Chapter, Dewitt, Neb.

The Tri-County FFA Chapter helped members build self-esteem and interpersonal skills by funding members' participation in leadership workshops at state and national FFA events. It also offered scholarships to seventh- and eighth-grade nonmembers to promote their future FFA membership.

Tri-County also provided access to and training in computers, financial software and the Internet. Guest speakers and videos addressed careers related to agriculture. Chapter members' academic excellence was recognized with 14 types of scholarships, degrees and achievement awards. To encourage agricultural career choices, the chapter sponsored visits to career fairs, hosted career-related speakers and persuaded the FFA Alumni to sponsor a college scholarship.

NATIONAL WINNER— COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Creston FFA Chapter, Creston, Iowa

The Creston FFA Chapter's "Project Downtown" promoted and beautified the downtown business district through a holiday decorating contest. A clean-up day, spring flower plantings and landscaping of a small park also made the district more attractive to shoppers and others. In cooperation with several community, business and school groups, the chapter also obtained over \$35,000 in grants for its "Branching Out" beautification projects at local schools and public areas.

Safety was another part of the chapter's community development, with "Project SAFE" (Stop Accidents For Ever) activities. Highlights included a toxic clean-up day and a bicycle safety rodeo that included distribution of 52 free safety helmets.

NATIONAL WINNER— CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT

Laverne FFA Chapter, Laverne, Okla.

The Laverne FFA Chapter is busy all year with a multitude of activities. The chapter combined fund raising with career exploration through its annual labor auction. The advisor and 39 members volunteered eight hours of labor in return for contributions to the chapter. Local businesses' winning bids totaled \$3,700, and members had the opportunity to explore jobs in areas such as banking, retail, cooperatives, agricultural production and registered cattle sales.

To increase agricultural awareness among elementary students, the chapter brought all third, fourth and fifth grade students to the agriculture facility for an open house and tour. Elementary students rotated through a variety of stations where chapter members explained different aspects of agriculture, agricultural education and the FFA.

TWO STAR CHAPTERS:

ALABAMA: Bryant AVC Blue; Enterprise
ARIZONA: Chino Valley; Peoria
CALIFORNIA: Coalinga; Norco
COLORADO: McClave; Yuma
FLORIDA: Hamilton County; Lafayette; New Smyrna Beach; Okeechobee Brahman; Pierson Taylor; Ponce De Leon; West Orange
GEORGIA: Morgan County
IDAHO: Kuna
ILLINOIS: Franklin Center; Indian Creek; Leroy; Mount Vernon; Paxton Buckley Loda; Somonauk Leland; Valmeyer
INDIANA: Carroll; Clinton Central; Randolph Southern; Shenandoah; South Adams
IOWA: Manson Northwest Webster
KANSAS: Atwood; Chapman; Hill City
KENTUCKY: Oldham County; Scott County
LOUISIANA: Elton; Hathaway; Lacassine
MAINE: Presque Isle
MICHIGAN: Allegan County Area Tech & Ed Ctr; Byron; Corunna; Marshall; Montague
MINNESOTA: United South Central; Willmar
MISSOURI: Albany; Aurora; Carhage; Chillicothe; Clopton; Eldon; El Dorado Springs; Marionville; Northwest Technical School; Salisbury; Union
MONTANA: Flathead
NEBRASKA: Blue Hill; Cedar Rapids; Franklin; Imperial; Leigh; Norris; Northwest; Superior; Syracuse Dunbar Avoca
NEW JERSEY: Warren Hills
NEW MEXICO: Artesia
NORTH CAROLINA: South Rowan; Sun Valley
NORTH DAKOTA: Finley Sharon; Rugby
OHIO: Bowling Green; Elmwood; Hardin Northern; Indian Valley; Miami Trace; National Trail; Preble Shawnee; Talawanda; Versailles
OKLAHOMA: Copan; Stillwater
OREGON: Central; Dayton
PENNSYLVANIA: West Snyder
SOUTH CAROLINA: McBee; Ridge Spring Monetta
SOUTH DAKOTA: Garretson
TENNESSEE: Cherokee; Lexington; McMinn Co; Polk County; Powell Valley; Riverside; White House
TEXAS: Calallen; Royal; Weimar
UTAH: Emery; Tooele
VIRGINIA: Laurel Park; Northumberland Senior; Park View Middle; Signal Knob Middle; Stonewall Jackson
WASHINGTON: Cathlamet; Eastmont; Liberty; Mabton; Stanwood; Wenatchee; Winlock
WEST VIRGINIA: Ripley
WISCONSIN: Big Foot; Cochrane Fountain City; Denmark; Granton; Loyal; Mishicot; Monroe; New Auburn; Waupaca

ONE STAR CHAPTERS:

ALABAMA: George W. Long
ARIZONA: Antelope; Yuma
ARKANSAS: Paris; Prairie Grove; Valley Springs
CALIFORNIA: La Puente Valley ROP
COLORADO: Eaton; Flagler; Fruita Monument; Hoehne; Platte Valley; Valley
CONNECTICUT: Housatonic Valley
DELAWARE: Smyrna; Sussex Central
FLORIDA: Columbia; Indian River Senior; Moore Haven; New Smyrna Beach Middle; North Marion Senior; Sebring Senior; South Lake Sr.
GEORGIA: Colquitt County; Perry
IDAHO: American Falls; Meridian
ILLINOIS: Armstrong; Ashton; Barry; Bushnell Prairie City; Cambridge; Eastland; Eldorado; Georgetown Ridge Farm; Liberty; Manteno; Midland; Midwest Central; Newark; Normal; Roanoke Benson; Taylorville; Warsaw
INDIANA: Benton Central; Carroll @ Flora; Delphi; Eastbrook; Heritage; Mount Vernon; North Posey; Owen Valley; Prairie Heights; Reitz; Rossville; Southern Wells; Southmont; Western Boone
IOWA: Algona; Bison; Charles City; Edgewood; Estherville; Humboldt; Linn Mar; Louisa Muscatine; Marengo; Mid Prairie; Prairie Valley; Sibley Ocheyedon; St. Ansgar; Vinton; West Marshall
KANSAS: Arkansas City; Highland; Holton; Inman; Neodesha; North Central; Norton
KENTUCKY: Apollo; Barren County; Breckinridge County; Butler County; Central Hardin; Fulton County; Jessamine County; McLean County; Rockcastle County
LOUISIANA: Bell City; Midland; North Central; Oak Grove; Pecan Island
MARYLAND: Frederick; Frederick Co. Career Tech Center; Walkersville
MICHIGAN: Perry; Unionville-Sebewaing
MINNESOTA: Benson; Blue Earth; Fulda; Kimball; Lake Benton; Watertown Mayer
MISSISSIPPI: Carhage; Neshoba Central; Seminary; Weir
MISSOURI: Brunswick; Cameron; Columbia; Gallatin; Glasgow; Kansas City East; McDonald County; Memphis; Monroe City; Mount Vernon; Neosho; Princeton; Troy; Wellsville Middletown
MONTANA: Cascade
NEBRASKA: Albion
NEVADA: Ruby Mountain; Silver Sage
NEW JERSEY: Allentown; Piscataway
NEW MEXICO: Alamogordo; Animas; Aztec; Goddard

NEW YORK: Hamilton Central; Medina
NORTH CAROLINA: Forest Hills
NORTH DAKOTA: Lisbon
OHIO: Amanda-Clearcreek; Anna; Ansonia; Blanchester; Canal Winchester; East Clinton; Eastwood; Fairbanks; Greenville; Johnstown; Lynchburg-Clay; Madison Plains; Margaretta; Marysville; Miami Valley CTC; Oak Harbor; Otsego; Riverdale; Sentinel Tiffin; Warren; Wauseon; West Holmes; West Muskingum
OKLAHOMA: Canton; Cashion; Checotah; Glencoe; Grandfield; Guthrie; Harrah; Hooker; Idabel; Mooreland; Roland; Timberlake; Weleetka; Yukon
OREGON: Crook County; Perrydale
PENNSYLVANIA: Berlin Brothersvalley; Cedar Crest; Conococheague; Greenwood; Lenape AVTS; Manheim; Manor; Spud Growers
SOUTH CAROLINA: Belton Honea Path; Central; Furman Manchester; Loris
SOUTH DAKOTA: Bridgewater; Elkton
TENNESSEE: Dyersburg; East Robertson; Gordonsville; North Knox; Portland
TEXAS: Booker; Brownsboro; Central; Clear Lake; Cleburne; Columbus; Dayton; Del Valle; Denton; East Chambers; Fairfield; Gilmer; Hooks; Jacksboro; Klein Forest; Mansfield; McCullough; McGregor; Nacogdoches; Navasota; Northwest; Orange Grove; Pleasanton; Raymondville; Ross S. Sterling; Sealy; Sidney Lanier; Snyder; Tilden County; Tom Bean; Tuloso Midway; Waelder
UTAH: Bear River; Davis; Pleasant Grove
VIRGINIA: Arcadia; Fort Defiance; Holston Horticulture; James Wood; John C. Myers; Patrick Henry; Sherando; Turner Ashby; Walter S. Newman
WASHINGTON: Chelan; Ferndale; Mary M. Knight; Pasco; Snohomish; Walla Walla
WEST VIRGINIA: Barbour County; Hampshire; Pine Grove; Roane County; St. Marys
WISCONSIN: Barron; Beaver Dam; Black Hawk South Wayne; Bloomer; Fort Atkinson; Freedom; Kiel; Madison; Menomonie; Montello; New Holstein; Pulaski; Slinger; Stratford
WYOMING: Buffalo; Riverside; Torrington



These FFA members were proud to represent their chapter on the convention stage for the National Chapter Awards presentation.



Retiring Addresses



In the Light

*Seth Derner
National FFA President
Bartlett, Nebraska*

"In the light." From the moment we are born, instinctively, we are drawn to light. For instance, when I was three years old I remember going to the funeral of my grandpa. I didn't understand what all was going on, but I knew that grandpa wasn't around to play with. I could no longer sit on his lap and listen to his stories about ranching in the old days. Mom tried to explain that he had gone to a better place and that he couldn't come back, but a funeral is a hard place for a three-year-old to understand life and death. Sad and confused, I sat quietly in the second pew holding her hand and leaning on dad's shoulder.

When we stood to sing a hymn, I looked around and realized just how many people were packed in that tiny church—the whole county must have been there. Maybe it was the mood of the day, or the black suits and dresses, or the deep colored walls of the church, but the sanctuary seemed dark, like we were in a cave below the ground. The sole source of brightness came from light through a stained glass window at the front of the church. The rays from the sun passed through the glass and created fascinating colors that danced across the air.

Those colors fell upon the faces of people who sat just a few feet away. This amazing sunbeam had to be sent from where grandpa now lived. I yearned to sit where those lucky people had. I wanted to be in the light that seemed to come straight from Heaven itself. I just knew that if I sat there then everything would be okay, and I would forget about the fear, the uncertainty and the sorrow. The light through that window was a symbol of hope, a beacon of love and understanding—that's where I wanted to be.

It seems like I've spent a lot of my life seeking the light. I think we all do. Fear of rejection, failure, despair—we've all experienced this kind of darkness in our lives. At times, I felt like I was the only person who didn't fit in, I wondered why I was such a failure, and I questioned who I was and what I stood for. You probably understand what those feelings are like.

We spend a lot of time trying to leave those feelings of darkness behind. We hang out with the "right" crowd. We compromise what we stand for so others think we're cool. We don't try to make a difference because we would be singled out and humiliated. We pretend to be happy, yet, when we look in the mirror we see a mask that hides the sadness inside. You know what, though? I believe that we truly want to be happy, and each of us wants to believe in

ourselves. We want to laugh without fear of being laughed at, and we want to chase our dreams and realize our special talents. I believe we all want to love life. But how do you do that? Where do you start? How do you leave the darkness behind and step into the light of joy and happiness? I don't know the full answer, but I think I've figured out where it starts. It all starts here in the heart. It starts with hope.

One of my favorite stories is a parable from the Bible about a mustard seed. The mustard seed, you see, is one of the tiniest seeds sown, yet the mustard plant is a huge, full, vigorous plant. The parable explains that a person who lives without hope will be like a field without plants—barren and empty. However, if a person has hope, even hope as tiny as a mustard seed, it will grow and your life will be enormously full of love, understanding and strength.

I witnessed the greatest example of this three years ago as part of the national FFA leadership exchange program that traveled to Russia. We spent three weeks with Russian youth in a small town north of Moscow. Russia was suffering from a severely depressed economy, a government that few citizens trusted, and widespread crime. One day, I asked one of my new-found Russian friends how long he thought it would take the country of Russia to rebuild. He told me that was a very hard question to answer. "You see," he said, "some have begun to rebuild, while others have not. For those people who still feel sorry for themselves, blame others for their problems, or are afraid of what tomorrow may bring, it will take a very long time to rebuild. Those who believe in themselves and our country, and who have hope for tomorrow—they are already building."

Hope for the future is at the foundation of world empires and, yet, that same hope is the foundation for our personal happiness and success. When we begin to live each day with hope it changes everything. We set goals and believe they will come true. We enjoy, not dread, the new and exciting challenges of each day.

Nearly six years ago, I got a first-hand lesson of hope that changed my life. On a bitter cold December night, my high school basketball team had lost yet another game. Mom and Dad were in Las Vegas for the National Rodeo Finals, so I rode home on the bus. The bus let us off, and as I walked to my pickup, two of the county's fire trucks turned onto the highway that led to the valley where I lived. There was snow on the ground, so it couldn't have been a prairie grass fire. I assumed that a pile of silage or bale of hay had caught fire. Nevertheless, I caught up with the firetrucks figuring I could help a neighbor if I needed to. I followed the trucks for seven miles, right to our driveway. And as they turned down the two-mile path through our ranch, my heart dropped.

I pulled in right behind the firetrucks to see smoke billowing out of every window of our home. I didn't know what to do. No one was in the house, thankfully, but what about all my stuff? What about all of our pictures and scrapbooks and records of the ranch? I'd lived almost my

whole life in that house and now it was a shell consumed by smoke and fire caused by a malfunctioning furnace. For two hours I sat dumbfounded as firefighters worked, wishing that Mom and Dad or one of my brothers were there. Finally, at three in the morning, amid the darkness and sub-zero temperatures, I was exhausted. I went to stay with my aunt and uncle only a few miles away. I fell asleep wondering what I was going to do and praying I would wake up and it would all be a dream.

But it wasn't a dream. I awoke the next morning smelling of smoke and feeling sore from the basketball game. I climbed in my pickup and drove to our house. Mom and Dad were there. They had somehow gotten in early that morning. I hugged them for a long time and I recalled all I could remember about the previous night. I figured they would be angry about everything we lost with the house or upset about how it happened. If they were I couldn't tell. They were just relieved I was not in the house when it happened and that I was okay.

At that moment, I realized that the most important things in my life were not my awards on the wall or the clothes in my closet. These things could be replaced. I still had many things that were much more important, things that couldn't be replaced—my well-being, my friends and family, and the next chance to make a new friend, travel the world, take on a new challenge or make a difference. I still had hope, and that's all I needed.

I've seen that same spirit of hope in many of you this year. It was in letters like the ones I received from Dawn in New Jersey who shared her dreams and goals. It was in the excitement of the crowd at state conventions, like the one in Oregon that delayed the start of every session with their cheering. It was in the dedication and service to others by chapter and state officers across the country symbolized by the students of the tiny town of Broadway, Va., who came together to honor a friend and fellow FFA member who left this world unexpectedly. This organization is overflowing with people who believe in the power of dreams, of people who have hope—people like you.

Thank you for sharing your hope with me this year. You've continually renewed my belief in human potential. I have been blessed with a number of other people who have given me hope. To my family, thank you for always being there no matter how far away I travel. To everyone who believed in me through FFA, you showed me that FFA is more than events and awards—it's people who care. And, of course, to my team—Joe, Clara-Leigh, Cody, Andy and Bill—whether we were talking to students in Japan, planning leadership conferences in Florida, or discussing decisions that will impact the future of FFA, your hope has served as an example for me and thousands of others.

Robert Fulghum once asked Professor Alexander Papaderos "What is the meaning of life?" The aged Cretan teacher responded with this story: "When I was a small child, during World War II, we were very poor and we lived

in a remote village. One day I found the broken pieces of a mirror. A German motorcycle had been wrecked in that place. I tried to find all the pieces and put them together, but it was not possible, so I kept the largest piece. This one. And by scratching it on a stone I made it round. I began to play with it as a toy and became fascinated by the fact that I could shine light in the dark places where the sun would never shine—in deep holes and crevices and dark closets. It became a game for me to get light in the most inaccessible places I could find. I kept the little mirror, and as I went about growing up, I would take it out in idle moments and continue the challenge of the game. As I became a man, I grew to understand that this was not just a child's game but a metaphor for what I might do with my life. I came to understand that I am not the light nor the source of the light, but light—truth, understanding, knowledge—is there, and it will only shine in dark places if I reflect it. I am a fragment of a mirror whose design and shape I do not know. Nevertheless, with what I have, I can reflect light into dark places of this world—into the dark places in the hearts of men—and change some things in some people. I can give them hope. Perhaps others may see and do likewise. This is what I am about. This is the meaning of my life."

"Choose to believe in the power of dreams, and to make a difference for others. Choose to live in the light."

—Seth Derner

FFA members, I've seen your goals and dreams. I've watched your successes and your defeats. I may not know all your names and faces, but I do know this: with hope you can never fail—only learn to try again. With hope you can never discourage others—only inspire them to follow your example. With hope you can never let fear control your life—only let your dreams lead the way.

With each new day, each new challenge and each new opportunity, choose to have hope. Choose to believe in the power of dreams, and to make a difference for others. Choose to live in the light.

May each of you enjoy the rewards of success, the lessons of failure, the riches of friendship and the fulfillment of service.

May you never live in the darkness of fear, but rather, may you always live with hope—may you always live in the light.

Thank you. Good bye. God bless.



(Retiring Addresses continued on page 34)



If the Shoe Fits

Cody L. Wagner
National FFA Secretary
Banner, Wyoming

Where did I put those shoes? I don't know why I always do this. Hey, look at these old football shoes. I remember when I wanted to be the star quarterback of the football team—I just wasn't good enough. I didn't even remember these! Halloween, when I was in...third grade. I was the newest astronaut! My greatest dream was to fill Neil Armstrong's shoes. I guess that will never happen. Oh, the old boots that Dad gave me. They always seemed just a little too big to wear! They've disappeared! I don't know where they went.

It's amazing how often we do this in life. We spend days, months, and years searching through piles of shoes that belong to others. I would have given anything to fill the shoes of the great athletes, to walk on the moon or to live up to accomplishments of those around me. How many times do you hear a person say, "Well, John, Brian sure left a big set of shoes for you to fill?" Or, how about, "Jennifer, you have a tough act to follow?"

Throughout my life I've seen countless people attempting to follow someone who came before them or to fill the set of shoes the person left behind. Every time we do this, we fall into the rut of trying to imitate or perform to the standards set by others. Instead of filling the shoes of others, we should first grow into our own shoes. We must attempt to live up to our own potential and talents.

Why do dreams remain unfulfilled, goals unachieved, and potential unrealized? I believe one of the most important factors is fear. I'm not speaking about fear of authority, fear of injury, or fear of others. The greatest fear that limits our potential is the fear of failure. Each of us has felt the fear of failure. When we choose not to run for an office, enter a competition, or introduce ourselves to others, we are experiencing a fear of failure. I have felt this fear many times in life and in FFA. During my first year in FFA, I was finally convinced by others to enter the FFA Creed speaking contest. After a few months of commitment and hard work, I had learned the creed and successfully competed in several contests. In those few months, I developed from a freshman with no desire to present anything resembling a speech, into a relatively confident speaker. As a result, my sophomore year brought an opportunity to write a speech for the prepared public speaking contest. As the deadline ap-

proached, I became more apprehensive about the speech. I thought of so many excuses: I didn't have time, there wasn't an interesting topic, I was tired of speeches. I gave every excuse except for the most significant. I was afraid to fail. I was afraid that I wouldn't win, that I wouldn't live up to expectations. Fear of failure removed any opportunities for success—I chose to never enter another speaking event in FFA.

Constantly in life we let opportunities slip away because we are afraid of failing. In almost every aspect of life, we are pressured by society to succeed in anything we attempt. We are conditioned to utilize only our most apparent talents and to endeavor only into what is deemed possible. By following this pattern, we are limiting ourselves and limiting our potential to make a difference in life. Each of you must be willing to overcome the fear. Consider the worst possible outcome in each situation. Looking back at the speech contest, I may have lost, or struggled with my presentation. Maybe a few would have laughed, but these are only minor setbacks. Every time we attempt something different or something new, we risk similar outcomes. Yet, we also have the opportunity to succeed. Think of the times that you chose not to accept those risks. You limited the risk

of failure, but you also removed the possibility of success. When faced with a challenge, the best thing to do is to attempt and succeed; the next best is to attempt and be unsuccessful; and the worst is not to attempt at all. The easiest road to failure is giving in to fear. Never let a fear of failing stand in the way of your dreams and your success.

When you overcome your fear, you are ready to begin your journey down the path to success. As you look forward to your journey, you have several expectations, much like any journey on a mountain trail or through the woods. Your road may

appear straight and level, a relatively easy journey. You might choose shoes such as these. Your road may instead appear to be rocky and treacherous, a more difficult course, requiring a different set of shoes. In most instances, regardless of initial impressions, there will be obstacles along the way.

Our family experienced these obstacles during April of this year. I was in Florida with my officer team preparing for state conventions and planning a leadership conference. I finished my work on Friday evening by checking my telephone messages, not expecting any important calls. The last message from my mother caught me off guard. I listened again to be sure. She told me that my father was bleeding in his head and that they were flying him to the hospital for treatment. He had lost all movement in his left side. A few moments went by before I understood the impact of those words. One of the most difficult times of our

"When faced with a challenge, the best thing to do is to attempt and succeed; the next best is to attempt and be unsuccessful; and the worst is not to attempt at all."

—Cody L. Wagner

lives had just begun.

Dad entered the hospital and endured a lengthy stay in the intensive care unit and the critical care unit. Throughout that time, he had moved only one finger and his thumb. The doctor finally told my mother that he would most likely not regain any more movement in his left arm and leg. They placed him in the physical rehabilitation program so that he could learn to function with only one side of his body. But he chose not to limit his expectations. After three weeks of intense physical therapy, pain, and frustration, he did what the doctors never predicted or expected, he took his first step. This one step, something so simple, was monumental in his recovery. He has made extraordinary improvements since April. Today, he walked into this auditorium and is a part of this audience. He is here today because he chose to face adversity and take that first step. He never let expectations and predictions stand in the way of his recovery.

Fortunately, most of us don't face challenges as great as these. We often face adversity, however, as we strive to discover our potential. Although the situations we face will vary, there is one element that is necessary in reaching our potential—taking the first step. My father took one difficult step that led to his recovery. That first step is equally important to us as we face adversity.

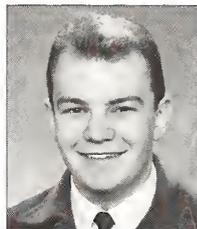
Think about the experience you have as you try on a brand new pair of shoes. They feel somewhat awkward and uncomfortable. Some children even stumble about, shaking their feet as they try to adjust to the feel of the shoes. Purchasing new shoes usually brings two feelings to a person. There is excitement and anticipation of having the great new look, buying the newest style. There is also a feeling of anxiety and the difficulty of having to choose from so many colors, styles and brands. We like to walk out of the store with the best deal on the best shoes, but first we need to overcome the uneasiness and discomfort of the ordeal.

Regardless of what organization or activity we become a part of, the career we choose, or obstacle we attempt to overcome, our first step may be difficult, uncomfortable, or seemingly impossible. At this convention, we will meet many of the individuals who make a difference, who have an impact on our organization. Each person has overcome that initial adversity on his or her journey toward success. In order to be successful in FFA, you must be willing to overcome adversity on your journey. When you choose to enter a speaking competition, begin an agriscience program, or apply for an office, your first few steps will be difficult. Each time you begin, keep in mind what the outcome will be when you overcome those obstacles. If you exert the effort, you can be competitive in career development events, you may be elected to an office, and you could achieve your highest goals.

I have many amazing experiences to look back upon after my year as a national officer, but the experiences that I enjoyed more than any others were spent with FFA members from across the nation. There is not a group of people

in the nation with more enthusiasm, optimism and potential than our members. I will be forever grateful for the motivation and inspiration that you have given me. A special thank you goes to Wyoming FFA as well as to Seth, Clara-Leigh, Bill, Andy and Joe. Thank you for sharing your lives and a great year with me.

FFA members, you have an amazing future ahead. As this convention and this year continues, I challenge you to search through your pile of shoes, the opportunities that are available. Find the shoe that fits and choose the opportunity that is right for you and your future. Then, make a commitment and exert your best effort to achieve your dreams. As you begin, don't let a fear of failure stand in your way. You must be willing to take a risk and overcome the fear. Take the steps to overcome adversity and you will be on the road to success. I wish you the best of luck on your journey!



Average Joe

*D. Joe Caffee
National FFA Vice President—Central Region
Geneva, Indiana*

Wow, it sure feels good to be home again! I love traveling and meeting FFA members from around the country, but there is always something special about coming home. I sure need some time to relax and there is no better way than to wet a line! Here I am surrounded by the beauty of nature. Frogs croaking, crickets chirping, a gentle breeze. I love it out here. Everything is so unique and precious in its own way. What about me? Was I forgotten? I mean, c'mon, could I really be any more average? If they knew how normal I am would they still applaud when I finished speaking? If they understood how middle of the road I really am would they have written me a letter? There is no way I'll ever get a good job, I'm just run-of-the-mill. If she knew I was average would she still go out with me? If they find out that I am really just an average Joe they might make me resign!

AVERAGE. What a powerful word! As a youngster I used to hate that word! Average—that meant I got a "C". Heaven forbid! My first football coach told me I had some good moves but only average speed. That meant Steve got to play running back instead of me. After one of my first speech contests the judge complimented me on my content then proceeded to tell me that my dynamics were, "just average."

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Average Joe (Continued from page 35)

When I was fifteen, I had a steer I was especially proud of, but the judge said he was "just average" and placed us fourth. I was trained to hate average! As a result I spent a great deal of time and energy trying to rise above average. But there are some things that just cannot be changed. I mean, look at me. I have brown hair and brown eyes. Both are very average. I'm not too tall, but I'm not short. I'm not extremely overweight, yet I'm not skinny. I have a slightly receding hairline, but I'm not bald...yet! I am 100 percent bona fide average! And there is nothing I can do about it!

Most of us have been programmed to think just like I did. The last thing we want is someone thinking we are average. As I've grown and matured I have come to realize that average is not always bad. Average is a beginning.

What is average? Use of the word "average" immediately triggers the question: "What is the norm?" "How many are above the norm?" "How many are below?" We hear so much about the "average citizen," which perhaps means the middle class, although it may not, and, of course, average rainfalls, snowfalls, and the like are helpful statistics, but somehow none of us ever wants to be labeled as average in life. You can say it many ways: normal, run of the mill, middle of the road, regular, best of the worst, or worst of the best, the list goes on and on. Simply put, average is the fine art of always being right in the middle of things. When you're average you aren't the best and you're not the worst. You are right in the middle.

When I played football in high school I was in the middle of every single play. I wasn't right there because I was fast, big or strong, I was in the middle because I played center. I was a very average football player, but I loved playing where I did. Every play depended on me. If I didn't deliver the ball to the quarterback the play would not begin.

Starting average does not mean we are limited to ordinary! Each of us have some amazing talents and abilities! I know this is true because I have met FFA members this year who have incredible abilities. Shaye Ensign wanted to add some spice to a very normal FFA activity, the memorization of the creed. So, Shaye found a sign language book and taught herself to sign the creed! Shaye took an activity which every FFA member does and rose above average. How many of us have jobs that we consider to be average or run-of-the-mill? While other teenagers are carrying out groceries, baling hay, or flipping burgers, Brad Smith is earning money by working in the circus. Brad is a district FFA officer who walks the tightrope in his spare time! I'm sure if you asked Brad or Shaye each of them would consider themselves average.

Growing up in Indiana I learned very early in life that

there are several things that every Hoosier must pay homage to. The Indianapolis 500, basketball, home cookin', and a guy named Larry Bird. Larry Bird grew up in a quiet little town called French Lick in southern Indiana. Larry Bird grew up in an environment that most would even consider below average. He was an awkward kid who was tall and uncoordinated. Larry took advantage of his stature and developed his basketball skills. After amazing high school and college careers he played for the powerful Boston Celtics where he won world championships, the NBA Most Valuable Player Award and an Olympic gold medal. After retiring from professional basketball, Larry returned to French Lick, because in his own words he would always be "the hick from French Lick." Here is a man who took very average talents and took advantage of every opportunity to rise above, to be recognized as one of the greatest athletes of all time. Larry Bird still considers himself average. Most people who are labeled "great" by the world are really just average folks who have had some amazing opportunities.

So who is this "average Joe?" To understand what makes me average you have to understand where I come from. I grew up in a rural community outside of a one-stoplight town called Berne, Ind.

"As I've grown and matured I have come to realize that average is not always bad. Average is a beginning."

—D. Joe Caffee

As any member of the South Adams FFA Chapter will tell you, Berne is a very average place. It is a remarkably clean little town with more churches per capita than any place in the United States. During my senior year, McDonald's moved into Berne. That was big news! We were finally on the map. The South Adams school system in Berne is a place where lots of average students are

presented with above average opportunities. It is the place where I fell in love with FFA, football, education and our county fair.

Growing up, my favorite time of year was always county fair week. Our Adams County Fair was held in July every year up at the fairgrounds. To some, our fair is average. We don't have any rides or food vendors at our fair. Everything is done by people in our county. FFA, 4-H, the Pork Producers and the Extension Homemakers all work hand-in-hand to make sure the fair is a success. Many of my fondest memories of growing up are of the times I shared with my fair friends in the cattle barn.

Being an average Joe hasn't always been fun or easy. When I was in the first grade, a boy named Scott called me "Elephant Ears" in reference to my famous Caffee ears. I know some of you are thinking, "his ears aren't that big." Folks, these ears were the exact same size in the first grade as they are now. I was ashamed of the way I looked. Now I'm proud of who I am and especially these big, floppy ears.

When I was in high school and would see a national

officer at state or national convention, I would always wonder how they had gotten to be so talented and gifted. Last November after I was elected I kept wondering when the magical national officer fairy would come and turn me into a national officer. You know what? I'm still waiting for that magical fairy.

I don't feel any different than the day I was elected. Sure, I've done some really cool things this past year like white water rafting with the Wyoming state officers, becoming an honorary member of the Rhode Island state officer team and visiting the Rocky Mountains with Mr. Geu and the Peetz FFA Chapter. I've met some incredible people along the way too, but none have been more incredible than the five people who were elected to serve you with me. Team, you all have been part of the foundation of my life for the past year. I love you all. Despite all that has happened to me, I am still the same guy from Berne, Ind., who is proud to be an FFA member. I still sing along with the songs I know when I drive my truck back home. When I go home I still haul manure and drive the tractor. I still play ball with my brothers and go fishing with my buddy Max when I get the chance! I am the same average Joe that I always was and always will be. Sure, I've had some fantastic experiences that have made me grow and evolve, but at my core there is still an average little boy who loves to show cattle, play ball and go fishing.

Do you consider yourself average? If you do, CONGRATULATIONS! Average is the starting point at which every person begins. Will you rise above? Will you be the one who goes beyond normal, mediocre and average? FFA members, average people, all of us, have above average dreams and goals.



For Just One Moment

Bill Catania
National FFA Vice President—Eastern Region
Westfield, New York

A child is born, and before you know it, she's off to the first day of school. A young man is a freshman in high school and soon is receiving his high school diploma. A young lady graduates from college, and is off into the job force. It has always amazed me to reflect and think about how lives change. Just what is it that transforms the newborn baby into the high school graduate, men and women into productive workers, or you and I into what we have become? Two things come to mind. The first and often most obvious is time; but even more important are life changing events. Our lives are transformed when we experience defining moments, moments which change our

lives forever. They can be as simple as a compliment from a friend, teacher or coach, or as complex as playing in the NFL or serving as President of the United States. The feeling I always have after experiencing one of these defining moments is a feeling of peace, serenity, joy and happiness. It's a feeling so rich with energy and excitement that nobody can ruin it. I believe that all of us are seeking this moment—a moment where we find peace of mind, in which we can see clearly the vision which we need to create. None of this is possible without an understanding of what is important to us: our moral compass called values.

One of the great defining moments of my life was when I attended the 65th National FFA Convention in 1992. I had such a great time traveling across the country, meeting people and learning more about the FFA, that I made it my goal to go back in 1993 for the 66th National FFA Convention. I saved every nickel I had, hoped, dreamed and wished that I would have the opportunity to go. However, due to circumstances out of my control, I was unable to go that year.

My advisor was very thoughtful though, as advisors usually are. He knew that I was upset because I couldn't make the big trip to Kansas City, but he did his best to bring the convention to me. He taped the entire national convention which was broadcast over satellite that year. On the Monday following convention, there was no school, so my good friend Bob, who went with me on every FFA trip, joined me in the ag room and we spent the entire day watching the convention tapes. Bob and I were so awestruck that first time in Kansas City that we even went the extra mile to create that same convention feeling in the ag room. Our way of creating the convention feeling was by shutting off all of the lights and closing the blinds. The only thing we were missing was 27,000 people. First we watched the delegate business sessions. We watched a cool, calm and collected Travis Park preside as national president, and from his leadership even learned a little bit about parliamentary procedure. We were impressed with the national proficiency award winners, the Star Farmer and Star in Agribusiness, and national career development event winners. Just when I thought we had watched all of the main highlights, there was one session remaining. It was the election of national FFA officers. The chair of the nominating committee came forward to present the new national officers for 1993-94, and the craziest thing happened. Some guy named Liam Brody from New York was elected.

I ran as fast as I could into Mr. Baideme's office to tell him the good news about this guy from New York. "MR BAIDEME! MR BAIDEME! Some Liam guy from New York just became a national officer. An excited Mr. Baideme responded by saying that Liam was the first national officer from New York since 1972. With that history lesson from my advisor, I was amazed. I then made it my goal to meet my new role model.

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Guy Rice Doud, 1986 national teacher of the year and motivational speaker, addressed Saturday morning's audience with a message about the importance of looking beyond appearances.

Sharing ★ the Vision



Rick Rigsby encouraged FFA members not just to make an impression, but impact the world around them. Rigsby had an impact on FFA members attending Thursday's session, and many stopped to talk with the motivational speaker after his speech.

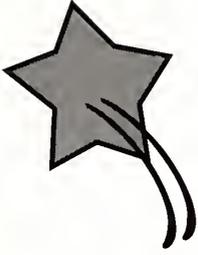
*"You are born
with a legacy of
determination,
don't lose it."*

Dr. Debbye Turner



Terry Bradshaw, FOX sportscaster and Super Bowl champion, delivered an inspired, enthusiastic message about football and life during Wednesday's Reflections sessions.

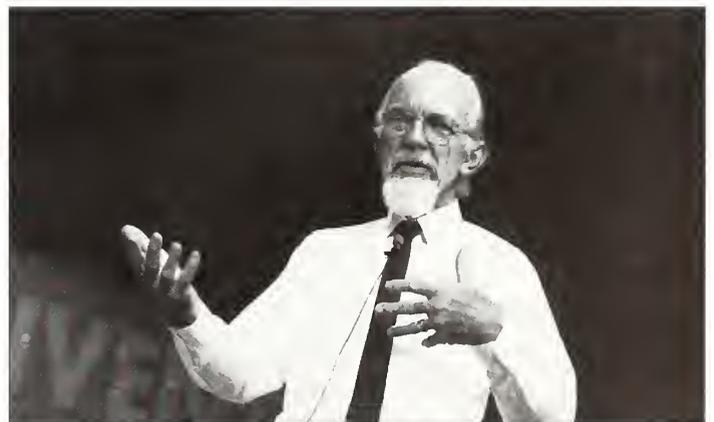
Veterinarian Dr. Debbye Turner, a former Miss America and a television host, kicked off the convention not once but twice during Thursday morning's sessions. Her visit was sponsored by the American Veterinary Medical Association.



National FFA convention speakers had the best view in the house, that of thousands of inspired, enthusiastic FFA members eager to hear their messages.

Ty England, National FFA Alumni Association spokesperson and RCA recording artist, entertained the crowds and had them screaming for more. He performed for two sessions on Thursday and was available to sign autographs and meet FFA members at the National FFA Alumni Association booth for several hours Thursday and Friday. He says he is proud to be the spokesperson for such a family-oriented organization.

Gordon MacKenzie's closing message, "Plan as if you're going to live forever, live as if you're going to die tomorrow," left a lasting impression on FFA members Friday afternoon. MacKenzie, former creative director for Hallmark Cards, gave an animated, visually appealing presentation that sparked members' imaginations.



For Just One Moment *(Continued from page 37)*

For Liam, that was a defining moment. He had beaten the odds and done something a New Yorker had not done in 21 years. As Liam stood on the stage and looked out into an audience of 9,000 FFA members, he felt the serenity, joy and happiness that we all are seeking. Most importantly, Liam had turned his vision into reality—something all of us dream about, and hope to do.

Later that year, one of my visions turned into reality when I was elected to serve as New York state FFA president. As soon as I was elected, I was rushed onto the stage, just like Liam, and was seated in a chair next to five other chairs which were for the other newly elected state officers. I was sitting there alone and as I awaited the election of the rest of the team, Liam Brody came over and sat next to me, and that is when I experienced a defining moment. I was so in shock that I was talking to Liam Brody that all I could think of to say was, "I saw you fall on stage when you were elected." Liam just smiled and pulled a pocket watch out of his pocket.

Liam said that when he rushed up on stage, he tripped and fell. When he fell, his watch had stopped at the exact time he was elected. He said that every time he looked at the watch it reminded him of how he felt when he achieved his goal. Liam told me that there would be times as a state officer and throughout life that the going would get rough. My goals would seem unreachable. I would be tired of trying. I might be discouraged or just plain tired. That is when it is time, Liam said, to think about how you feel right now. He told me to look out into the audience and feel the excitement; to make it a point never to lose my conviction for FFA, and the feeling of making a difference in other peoples' lives.

One of the greatest parts about being a state or national officer is the mail you get from all of the people you meet. Every time I come home from a long FFA adventure, I am greeted with a stack of mail sitting on my computer desk. The mail I have received has given purpose to my year of service, and has shown me that I have more friends and fewer acquaintances. After reading your letters, I can't help but feel refreshed, rejuvenated and ready to live.

I know that there are many people who are "living," but I am afraid that many others take living for granted. When you cease to dream, you cease to live. We are not living when we lose our vision for a better tomorrow, and we are not living if we deny hope from others. You should feel fortunate to be gathered here today for the largest annual student convention in the world. You are an important part of an organization which helps students like you and I live, and to experience those defining moments which we need to create. Because as we sit here, there are people who are your age and mine who are not living. Some are killing them-

selves with drugs or violence. Some are stealing and violating the rights of others by breaking laws. But here you sit in Kansas City, Mo., in a sea of blue and gold. White, Black, Asian, Hispanic and Native American. You come in all shapes and sizes, I am living proof of that. Regardless of our similarities and differences, we have gathered here to celebrate being Leaders with a Vision. And it is our vision which will allow us to experience defining moments and, most importantly, help others experience theirs.

We help others live their moment by breathing wind into their sails when they need it most. Bob Black and Ben Smith, who introduced me earlier, are two of my best friends. They have been there for me in times of good and bad. I can

remember sitting right up there in that seat next to Bob over four years ago when we attended our first FFA convention. The record attendance was 27,000 that year. I remember looking onto the stage and wondering who those little people with no lettering on their jackets were. I had no idea why national officers had no lettering, but that was one of the many eye-opening experiences I had during my first convention. I remember like it was yesterday, Bob telling me that in a few years I would be on this stage someday. Well Bob, you were wrong, because now we

both have had the opportunity to stand on this stage. And I use your example of keeping my fire burning, with the hope and support you have given me through the years, as an example for all. You are the role model of a friend.

Ben Smith is someone whom I met prior to being elected to serve as state officers in New York. I knew when we were elected to serve together we were going to be the best of friends. We supported each other through the challenges and enjoyed the opportunities of being state officers together. Ben Smith has provided me with a work ethic and an understanding of values. There is nobody who knows me better than Ben—he understands where I have been, where I am, and where I am going. Ben is another example of a role model friend. It's amazing how friends can help you find purpose in what you do by encouraging, listening and hoping. Ben has made an impact on me with his famous quote. It is a simple quote, but one that makes great sense. Ben says, "Say what you mean, and mean what you say."

Put in even more simple terms, we need to do what is important to us, and we need to understand our values. If we don't, how can these moments we seek truly be ours? There is a certain satisfaction we feel when we do what is right or what is important to us. Tammy Wells said, "If you compromise yourself, you have lost yourself." We need to seek what is important to us. Once we understand what our values are, they shall act as our own personal government to keep us on the straight and narrow. I have found an easy way of identifying values. I place myself ahead in time and

"Our lives are transformed when we experience defining moments, moments which change our lives forever."

—Bill Catania

ask myself the question, "Will I remember this in 20 years? Will I be happy with my actions when I wake up in the morning? Did I do the best I could today? Am I giving it 100 percent?"

I began playing baseball at age eight. My favorite time of year was always when the first day of baseball season began. I played T-ball, little league, senior league and finally high school ball. For nine years I was one of those guys about whom people always said, "If that Bill ever gets ahold of that ball, boy, that thing will sail to the moon." Well, nine years went by and I was still waiting to get ahold of that ball. I was never an all-star, but always a solid player. The day finally came when I had to make a decision. You see, those of you who know me know what my absolute favorite sport is—auto racing. With my dad being a race car driver, and growing up around racing, I made it my goal to race when I was 17 years old.

The day finally came, and I was forced to make a decision...baseball or racing. Racing is not a sport that only occurs on race day, you have to build and maintain your car. Sometimes that means working on it for hours every night. After nine years of baseball, I gave up the sport which meant so much to me for a higher cause. It was time for me to think about what was important to me. This was my chance to make a dream come true, not by magic, but simply by following my hopes and values. Racing was my decision. John Goddard once said, "If you really know what things you want out of life, it's amazing how opportunities will come to enable you to carry them out." With a strong set of governing values, your moral compass will lead you directly to the top of the highest mountain, and allow you to have the peace of mind in decisions you make as you navigate the road of life.

Liam Brody had no idea that a young man 1,000 miles away was watching him get elected to the office of national eastern region vice president. And he certainly didn't have any idea that he made an impact on him. Not only because he was from New York, but also because of his words of inspiration and hope that he has provided me as well as hundreds of thousands of people across the country.

When Liam was about to retire from his national office, several other chapter members and I gave him a card that read, "You've climbed the highest mountain, now enjoy the view." FFA members, that is the feeling I am talking about. It's when you are standing on top of the world that your vision becomes so much clearer. Your purpose so much stronger. Your self esteem is that much higher. And the more people you can take to the highest point of the mountain to share in that feeling, the greater you will feel about yourself and the job you have done. FFA members, I challenge you to first understand what is truly important to you. Life's decisions are built on a strong foundation called governing values, and with these values it is difficult to get lost in the complex road structure life provides. I ask that you will seek friends, such as Ben and Bob in my life, not acquaintances, who will help you through life's challenges and opportunities. I ask you the question, "Are you sitting

next to one of these people right now?" And most importantly, be that type of friend in return. By understanding what is truly important to you and surrounding yourself with good people, people who share common visions and values, you will experience and revisit defining moments.

I am experiencing one of those defining moments right now, and I want you to know that you have helped me find greater purpose in my life. You have made my vision clearer, and if my self esteem gets any higher, I will explode with the joy and happiness you have given me this year. Thank you for giving me the chance to serve.



More Than Stars

*Clara-Leigh Horn
National FFA Vice President—Southern Region
Ashville, Alabama*

*Star light, star bright,
First star I see tonight;
I wish I may, I wish I might
Have this wish I wish tonight.*

I wish for a horse, an A on the history test, a new friend, Mr. Right to find me, to go to college, to get a job, to have a family and a farm of my own. I wish all of these on this star tonight. Isn't this how so many of our dreams are born?

Stars mean so many different things to people. To many of us, they represent wishes. To a captain of a ship, the North Star is used for navigation, and in the Bible, a star guided Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem for a miracle. But the reason that wishes come true is not the stars, but how we use them. Although the captain of the ship knows the right direction because of the stars, he cannot successfully reach the destination without powering the ship to get there. What if Mary and Joseph had just stopped to admire the star and never followed it? So what happens when we wish on a star but don't do our part to make the wish come true? Nothing.

Two years ago I spent a week here in Kansas City doing my best to become a national officer. But you know what? I wasn't elected. I wished. I prayed. I dreamed. It didn't happen. I thought that I did everything I could to be a national officer. I bought the new clothes, I studied, and I even bought a special outfit to wear on the plane to Kansas City, just in case a nominating committee member saw me. I polished my shoes until they were blinding. I lay awake at night trying to visualize myself doing all of the things national officers do—traveling to Japan, visiting with

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members, speaking and conducting a national convention. I even read about past officers and compared my life with theirs to see if I fit the mold. So what was missing and why didn't I get chosen? This is when I realized that it takes more than stars. I had wished on every star in the sky so I could have my dream come true, but it didn't come true until I put out the heart and the energy. This is when I learned that it takes more than stars.

When you wish for something so much, its star becomes burned into your heart so deeply that you live to work for it. You give all of yourself—then the wish will come true, and you will reach your goal. When I think about how it takes more than stars, the name Scott O'Grady comes to mind. Scott was a captain in the Air Force when he found himself behind enemy lines in Bosnia. Can you imagine that feeling, knowing you are in the enemy's territory with little hope of survival, let alone rescue? During his six days staying under cover and eating the very things that threatened his body, his every breath and thought worked towards mere survival and communication. But do you think that for one moment he wanted anything more? You bet he did, because he had dreams of returning to his family and country and dedicating even more of himself to service for others. But it was his focus and desire that led him through the crucial hours and eventually brought him home to his dreams.

It is easy to say to ourselves, "If I can just have this one wish come true, then I'll be happy forever." But every step taken and every wish that comes true creates and changes an ever so amazing being—YOU. Each one builds on another, and you become who you are with the morals, strengths and character that make you unique. If your wishes are positive, then so will you be. If they are ambitious, you will be, too. And if they are to the benefit of others, then you will help people. Eventually, you are the person you dreamed of becoming, with the world around you improving because of your existence. You are now a star.

Did she just say that you could be a star? Yes, she did. Stars are now in your heart, and some of those stars are the people who have helped you along the way. People have been many of the stars for me—from my Creator's blessings, to a hello from an old friend, to fishing trips with Dad and long jogs with Mom. And I don't know what life would be like without the five brightest stars for me this week: Seth, Joe, Cody, Bill and Andy.

Maybe someone has done something as big as saving your life or something as simple as introducing you to a new friend. Each of these people put another star in your heart, and it has an effect. The brightest stars are the ones that change our lives for the better. I challenge you to be

stars and see what it is that you have to offer others. You can make a huge difference.

Two third grade girls were walking home from school one afternoon but were very late getting to their homes. When little Jacqueline got home, her mother hugged her and asked her why she was so late. "Why Mom, Emily dropped her doll on the way home." And her mother said, "So you helped her pick it up and therefore you are this late?" Jacqueline replied, "It was a china doll from her grandmother, and it shattered into a million pieces." And her mother said, "So you helped her pick it up, then?" And Jacqueline said, "No, Mom, I sat on the curb and cried with her." The smallest things can sometimes make the biggest difference. Choose to be a star.

What is it that you see when you look up into a clear night's sky to see the stars? You see the brilliance, the light and the perfection, and that makes the star all the more magical. You are a star to someone, and it is your character and your actions that they notice. Just like you don't see the flaws and the heat of the stars, people may just see parts of you. Don't you want it to be the best of you that they see? If the stars of your dreams and the stars of others are burned in your heart, then the stars you need are the stars that make up the codes, beliefs and standards by which you choose to live. Some call it character, others call it morals, but I call it another star. Each wish you make, each person in your life, and each decision you make all add to your heart as well as

someone else's. So many people need a bright star to look to for guidance, and by sticking to your beliefs, you can be the brightest star in the night. It is a state of mind, an attitude, a way of life. One of my favorite verses is Philippians 4:8 which says, "Finally brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is

anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." What inspiring words! Be strong and let your stars shine brightly in your heart for all of the world to see.

Have you ever thought that some of the stars you see at night may not really be there, but may have burned out thousands of years ago? We still see their light even when they are gone. But do we know if the star upon which we wish is really there or we are just seeing its light? We have no idea. Do your dreams ever seem like they burn away, and that you are the only one who still sees them? That you are the only one who thinks that they are important? That you are the only one standing up for your beliefs? So what? As long as you see them, then that's all that matters. My mom would always soothe my hurt feelings when someone didn't agree with my goals or dreams with those two simple

"Stars are now in your heart, and some of those stars are the people who have helped you along the way."

—Clara-Leigh Horn

words, "SO WHAT!" The stars belong to you now, and we can see that it takes more than stars. It takes your dreams, the people in your life and all of your heart to make your life all it can be.

What if captains never followed the North Star? What if Mary and Joseph never believed in the Star of Bethlehem? What if you don't follow the stars in the sky and even more importantly, the stars in your heart? The more you believe in the stars in the sky and the stars in your heart, the brighter the sky becomes, and the brighter you will shine from within. It takes more than stars—it takes every bit of YOU.

*Star light, star bright
First star I see tonight
I wish I may, I wish I might
Wish on you but see that I have more than stars tonight.*



Outside the Fire

*Andy McCall
National FFA Vice President—Western Region
Houston, Texas*

*We call them fools
Who have to dance within the flame,
Who chance the sorrow and the shame
That always comes with getting burned.*

*But you got to be tough when consumed by desire,
'Cause it's not enough just to stand outside the fire.*

*Standing outside the fire,
Standing outside the fire,
Life is not tried, it is merely survived,
If you're standing outside the fire.*

"But you got to be tough when consumed by desire, 'Cause it's not enough just to stand outside the fire." In this song, Garth Brooks makes a point that we cannot afford to stand outside of the fire—we must jump in there and try things, take risks and explore all possibilities in order to live life to its fullest. How many of you in here agree with Garth Brooks? Let me hear it!

I think I disagree.

Don't get me wrong—I think that there is definitely a time when we need to jump in the fire and take risks, but I

also know that there is a time when we must stand outside of that fire. This evening we will explore the idea that there is a different kind of fire than the one Garth Brooks talks about, the fire of peer pressure, laziness and selfishness. There is a time when we need to stand outside of the fire and stay focused on what is truly important—on our dreams and goals, on making a difference for others, and on living a life of character by doing what is right.

How many of you actually know what it is like to stand outside of the fire? It was November 4, 1995, at 9 p.m.—the night before I was to leave for national convention to run for national office. I was in my dorm room at Lubbock Christian University awaiting my 8:15 a.m. flight to Kansas City. I was a little nervous about what was to come the next week—a week that I had been waiting for over the last five years—so I decided to go over to a friend's house to relax and hang out with the guys.

I left my dorm room with everything in it thinking that I could pack my clothes when I returned. I thought wrong. One of my friends burst in the door and told us that the dorm was on fire, so I rushed over to see what was happening.

Sure enough, the fire was raging—directly on top of my room. I stood outside of the fire and watched everything that I owned, everything that I had ever worked for, everything that I needed for national convention, everything going up in flames.

I was petrified! I remember standing in the middle of campus thinking about everything I had lost: my guitar, my picture albums, my CDs, my hats, even my books. I wasn't sure what to do, so I just stood there and screamed out at the top of my lungs, "aaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!"

At that point, my sister Lisa grabbed my arm and asked me what we needed to do to get ready for my flight. With that, we began running all over town gathering up new clothes, luggage, official dress and yes, even...socks. As we drove around, my mind kept wandering back to everything I had in my room. It was hard for me to forget about the material possessions and focus on my goal, to get on that airplane and become a national FFA officer.

Every day we face challenges similar to this. There is always something—some obstacle—that keeps us from working towards our goals and makes us lose focus. It is usually not an actual fire that causes this, but more like hanging out with friends, watching TV after school or taking a nap.

By falling into these traps, we become like many other people who don't achieve what they desire; therefore, we are standing right in the middle of the fire. We must stay focused on our dreams and our goals, do the work necessary to achieve them, and stand outside of the fire.

(Continued on page 44)

Thinking back to that night, there is no doubt in my mind that I would not be here today if I had not focused on my goals. It is not easy to do, but we must certainly continue to try. One good thing is that there will always be other people to support us and help us out—people who will make a difference for us.

There is no way that I could have made it through that infamous night without the help of many very special people. Lisa, Brent, Rich, Matt, Mr. Jack, Mr. Page, Mr. Kelley—the list goes on. Jacob Crawford, thanks for loaning me your FFA jacket at national convention last year. I had fun being you for a day. These people took time out to help me, and I want to say thank you for your support. It is always important to take time out to tell people who have helped us how much we appreciate it. I want to encourage all of you to do this tonight. Tell them face to face or send a letter—it will mean a lot. Mom and Dad, Scott and Ginger, Corey and Corey, Jonathan, FFA members—thank you for making me the person who I am today.

There are so many people who help us out everyday and make a difference in our lives. We must turn around and do the same for others. It is so easy to stand inside the fire of selfishness and only worry about our time and our feelings, but we must stand outside of the fire and focus on making a difference for others. Even in times of struggle, staying focused on others will help us make it through.

On that night, after we had gathered everything up and I was ready to leave, I did something else that caused me to lose focus. A friend and I went out into a field and lit up a couple of cigars, yes cigars. I don't know why we did it—I guess because we felt that we deserved it—but we knew that it was not right and did it anyway. We lost focus.

In high school, there were many times that I made poor decisions and did things that weren't right. I took the easy road—the road that so many other people were going down. I gave in to the peer pressure that we are all familiar with. It starts with a little bit of alcohol, just one beer, but it rarely stops there. People think they will never get deep into it all, but it usually develops into something worse. It can happen to anyone who chooses to try. One beer often leads to getting drunk, but alcohol is not the only thing. There is also the abuse of tobacco products by dipping, chewing and smoking; pre-marital sex; and drugs. Although these things may seem fun, they aren't. There is nothing fun about getting pregnant in high school, developing cancer or AIDS, waking up with a hang over, killing someone else while

drunk driving or frying your brain on drugs. We cannot deny that these things happen, and we cannot deny that they aren't the best decisions for our future. They simply are not right, so we must decide not to take part in them.

I made many poor decisions in high school, and doing them was not fun, it was not cool, and even more it certainly was not right. Many times we might argue that it is right for some people, but I think we all know differently deep down inside. I don't mind standing up here and telling you that I've made many mistakes and poor decisions. I hope that you can learn from them. These things are not right and they are not the best use of our time.

"There is a time when we need to stand outside of the fire and stay focused on what is truly important—on our dreams and goals, on making a difference for others, and on living a life of character by doing what is right."

—Andy McCall

If you have never been involved with these things, please don't try them. If you are already involved with them, I know it is hard to stop. The great news is that it is possible—all you have to do is make a conscious decision to quit. I was able to re-focus my life by making good decisions for my future, and you can, too. You can overcome these challenges—you can do what is right.

In order to live a life of character, we must do what is right, not what is popular. Yes, that may mean being different from many other people, but it is the only way to truly be happy. I challenge all of you to do what is

right, live a life of character and stand outside of the fire.

Fires are hot, filled with smoke that chokes us and blinds us and can be very dangerous to our health. Whether it is a dorm room fire or the fire of taking the easy road, we must stand outside of the fire. We must stand outside of the fire and stay focused on our goals. We must stand outside of the fire and make a difference for other people. We must stand outside of the fire and do what is right.

Finally, we live in a time when it seems like it is becoming less popular to take part in many activities that are beneficial to our futures—take reading for example. I think I don't read enough, and I know this book certainly sits on the shelf way too often.

This is the best selling book of all time—the Bible. This is a book that can change lives! Unfortunately, our society has fallen away from embracing many of the ideas and intentions of our founding fathers, many of which are found in these pages. We must stand outside of that fire first and foremost.

The very last thing I did the night of that fire was pray to God to give me strength and focus and to help me through this challenge. There is no doubt in my mind that the only reason why I stand before you today is because God gave

me the strength to succeed.

Matthew 6:33 says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given unto you." In other words, according to the Bible, the most important thing that my family can do, the most important thing that I can do is continue to build a relationship with God. God is the fireman, and He can put out all other fires if one will only allow Him into his or her life.

As I take off this jacket for the last time, I will dedicate my life to serving God and building my relationship with Him, because I believe He can give eternal success and happiness.

FFA members, I challenge you to stand outside the fire and stay focused on your goals. Stand outside the fire and help other people. Stand outside the fire and make positive decisions. Join me—and let's stand outside the fire.

*There's this love that is burning
Deep in my soul.
Constantly yearning to get out of control,
Wanting to fly higher and higher.
I can abide standing outside the fire.*

*Standing outside the fire,
Standing outside the fire,
Life is not tried, it is merely survived,
If you're standing outside the fire.*

*Standing outside the fire,
Standing outside the fire,
Life is not tried, it is merely survived,
If you're standing outside the fire.*

*Standing outside the fire,
Standing outside the fire,
Life is not tried, it is merely survived,
If you're standing outside the fire.*

God bless you all.



Meeting FFA members from across the country and congratulating them on their accomplishments is one of the national FFA officers' favorite parts of their year. Andy McCall, western region vice president, presented an award to a proud chapter during the convention.



National FFA Alumni

The National FFA Alumni Association celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1996. To commemorate their years of support of the FFA and demonstrate their commitment to a new direction for the association, the alumni adopted a decidedly newer, bigger look and feel for this year's convention.

Under the leadership of Alumni Council President Dr. Ray V. Herren and Executive Director Ricardo Valencia, the convention featured several firsts. The convention was held Friday and Saturday in conjunction with the national FFA convention, in hopes of attracting more visitors with the weekend format. Another new addition was that of RCA recording artist Ty England, the first official FFA Alumni spokesman. England represents the FFA Alumni in public promotions and other appearances.

"I am so proud to be the spokesperson for such a family-oriented organization and all the people it represents," England said of his new role. "I only hope that my music and I will make the FFA Alumni half as proud of me as I am of them."

The opening session on Friday presented the convention theme, "Securing the Promise." According to Valencia, the theme represents the association's mission of striving to be, "an educated grass roots network across this country to support the greatest student organization in the world."

Following the introduction of the 11-member Alumni Council and recognition of past National FFA Alumni presidents, the highlight of Friday's session was keynote speaker Rudy Ruettiger, whose life was the inspiration for the motion picture "Rudy." Ruettiger's struggle to play football for Notre Dame University exemplifies his message of striving to achieve dreams.

"Everything good is hard. Everything hard is good. My father taught me that," Ruettiger said. "To achieve your dreams, you will have to struggle. You must have the courage to move through it and not listen to anyone who tries to take away your dream."



AWARDS

The convention celebrated the association's best year ever in terms of membership, reaching an all-time high of 43,500 members. Individuals, chapters and states were recognized for their contributions to this success.

The Leroy, Ill., FFA Alumni affiliate was named the 1996 Outstanding Alumni Affiliate. The Milton, Wis., affiliate, last year's outstanding affiliate, was runner-up. Several other chapters were recognized for their supportive efforts. Ranked gold, silver or bronze, these groups were honored in the order below:

GOLD

- ILLINOIS: Leroy
- KANSAS: Hill City, Washington
- WISCONSIN: Clinton, Denmark, Granton, Mauston, Milton

SILVER

- FLORIDA: Suwanee
- GEORGIA: Gilmer County
- KANSAS: Clay Center, Plainville
- KENTUCKY: Apollo
- MICHIGAN: Hopkins
- MONTANA: Shields Valley
- NEBRASKA: Norfolk
- NORTH CAROLINA: Orange, South Rowan
- OHIO: Lynchburg, Tri-Valley
- TENNESSEE: White House
- VIRGINIA: Northumberland
- WISCONSIN: Black Hawk

BRONZE

- MISSISSIPPI: Sturgis
- NORTH DAKOTA: Garrison
- WYOMING: Douglas



Keynote speaker Rudy Ruettiger, whose life inspired the movie "Rudy," signed autographs at the National FFA Alumni Association convention.



In recognition of their years of dedication to the FFA and alumni, Josiah Phelps (left), Donald Noack and June "Grandma" Dean received the National FFA Alumni Association's Outstanding Achievement Awards.

For the second consecutive year, the Wisconsin FFA Alumni Association had the most life members and life member affiliates. Wisconsin also had the largest membership increase, with 828 new members. In addition, the affiliate in Denmark, Wis., had the most life members in an affiliate, repeating its feat from last year.

Two states were recognized for having the highest growth percentage: Arizona (109%) and Indiana (49%). Wisconsin, Montana, Oklahoma and Connecticut were rewarded for having the largest percentage of FFA Alumni membership in relation to FFA membership, and the Turner Ashby, Va., affiliate was named the largest affiliate.

States that increased membership by at least 100 members received the prestigious Blue Blazer awards. This year those states were Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Oregon, and Wisconsin.

Three alumni members received the Outstanding Achievement Award, the organization's highest honor, for their ongoing commitment to FFA. Josiah Phelps, of Fort Valley, Ga., began his

career as an advisor in the New Farmers of America (NFA), and served as president of both the Georgia FFA Alumni and National FFA Alumni Associations. Donald Noack, of Denmark, Wis., is a retired cheesemaker who has served as a sectional representative on the Wisconsin FFA Alumni Council and is actively involved in high school agricultural education. June "Grandma" Dean, of Owasso, Okla., is currently serving her 15th term as Oklahoma FFA Alumni Secretary, and spent eight years on the National FFA Alumni Council.

BUSINESS

Members discussed a variety of issues during the business session Friday, but the one topic that caused heated debate involved raising life membership dues to \$500 as a means of increasing revenue that would sustain the life member program. Representatives from states with smaller membership numbers protested that the increase in dues would mean a decline in new life memberships, while others agreed with one delegate who felt it was "unfair that the organization we're supposed to

support (FFA) has been subsidizing us." In the end, the measure failed.

Delegates elected a new member-at-large, Nebraska's Barry Anderson. The current president of the Nebraska FFA Alumni, Anderson is a crop science specialist working for Farmland Industries. He joined newly-elected president Shirley Carte, of Live Oak, Fla., and vice president Linda Story, of Owensboro, Ky., on the 1997 Alumni Council.

AUCTION

Another new addition to the alumni convention was the silent auction held in conjunction with the traditional live auction, giving bidders more opportunities to support the FFA while purchasing some valuable items.

The silent auction featured vacation getaways, including a trip to Puerto Rico valued at \$1,000, motivational presentations valued at thousands of dollars, and dozens of priceless items signed by country music stars, including a guitar autographed by Garth Brooks. In all, the silent auction raised \$9,392.

Bidders helped the alumni raise \$51,494 to support FFA programs, purchasing such items as limited-edition shotguns, rifles and revolvers; a \$700 tool chest and cabinet donated by Carquest; and even a greenhouse, donated by Hummert International, valued at \$11,375. The evening's big winner was National FFA Foundation Senior Regional Director Kent Scheske, who submitted the winning bid of \$20,700 for a customized 1997 Chevy Silverado 4x4. All of the items sold at both auctions were donated by various businesses, individuals and FFA alumni.





Honorary American FFA Degrees

Millions of hours each year are donated by community, business and government leaders, teachers and parents who go the extra mile to support FFA and young people. The National FFA Organization annually recognizes a select group of these special people to receive the Honorary American FFA Degree in appreciation of their tireless efforts. Each recipient was congratulated and thanked on stage Friday morning, and received an honorary key and certificate.

FFA SUPPORTERS

ALABAMA: Willie Cheatham, Normal
ARKANSAS: Robert Moore, Fayetteville
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RHODE ISLAND: Arthur Arzamarski, Charlestown

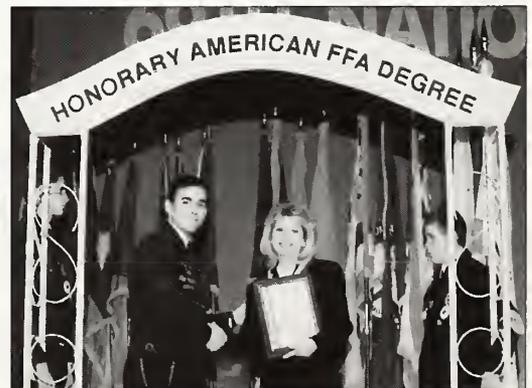
TENNESSEE: Trevor C. Hoskins, Nashville; Herman Kosten, Memphis; Joe Scarlett, Nashville; Cheryl Summers, Greenville
TEXAS: Jerry Mikeska, Columbus; Howard C. Weatherby, Shamrock
UTAH: Stephen E. Poe, Logan
VIRGINIA: Mary Barton, Bealeton; Ruth Duncan, Alexandria; Mary S. Foster, Alexandria; Hilma Q. Moon, Alexandria; Henry A. Morris, Cumberland; Norman C. Olgers Jr., Dinwiddle; Jacque Park-Cook, Alexandria; Scott A. Stump, Alexandria; Beverly A. Wilson, Alexandria
WASHINGTON: Marv Kleene, Pullman
WEST VIRGINIA: Jeffrey G. Skousen, Morgantown; Ed B. Smolder, Cottageville
WISCONSIN: Ben Brancel, Madison; Alanna Clare, Madison; Donna J. Squires, Madison; Mark Zidon, Platteville; Roger Zuehl, Racine

KENTUCKY: Stanley E. Jackson, Caldwell County
MICHIGAN: Roger D. Merillat, Sand Creek
MINNESOTA: Charles L. Erickson, Benson; Ken Hammer, Frazee-Vergas; Jack LaValla, St. Charles
MISSOURI: Jim Grozinger, Grand River; Richard Purdom, El Dorado Springs
NEBRASKA: Rick Crosier, Norfolk; Dave Rucker, Franklin
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UTAH: Kirk J. Wood, Uintah Basin ATC
VIRGINIA: George E. Anderson, Halifax County
WASHINGTON: Michael P. Schrag, Ritzville
WISCONSIN: Claude Klimpke, Oconto Falls; Diane Runde, Milton
WYOMING: Gerry J. Miller, Buffalo

AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

ALABAMA: Ted Hoffren, Fairhope
CALIFORNIA: Roy Beck, Bret Harte; Ray Bryden, La Puente Valley; Christine Dickson, Bakersfield-North; Michael Higham, Hanford Joint Union; Dennis F. Mann, Hanford Joint Union; Kristann S. Mattes, Central; Sheila B. McCabe, Fullerton
GEORGIA: Elzie A. Claxton, Perry
ILLINOIS: Howard Heavner, Valmeyer; Jeff Maierhofer, Seneca; Kent Weber, Seneca
INDIANA: Dean M. Warren, Columbia City
IOWA: Steven E. Kehoe, Prairie Valley; Norvin D. Spencer, Villisca Community; Rick L. Twedt, Decorah

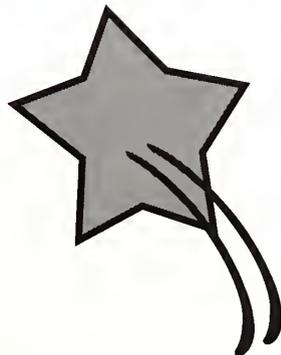
Mary Barton, principal of Cedar Lee Middle School in Bealeton, Va., and former Virginia Middle School Association president, receives her Honorary American FFA Degree from Andy McCall, national vice president.



Honorary American FFA Degrees are awarded to the following groups of people because of the special nature of their contributions to FFA. Retiring members of the National FFA Board of Directors, Trustees and Consultants; the parents of the Star Farmer and Star in Agribusiness finalists and winners; and the parents of the national FFA officers have all played important supporting roles that deserve distinguished recognition.



Helen Stanley of Brighton, Colo., received the Honorary American FFA Degree during the ceremony Friday morning.



RETIRING NATIONAL FFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, TRUSTEES AND CONSULTANTS

ARIZONA: David E. Cox, Tucson

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Dennis R. Derner, Bartlett

NEW YORK: Toni Catania, Westfield; William

Catania, Westfield

TEXAS: Karen McCall, Houston; Mike McCall, Houston

WYOMING: Sally C. Wagner, Banner; James S. Wagner, Banner

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INDIANA: Jeanne Day, Middletown; Larry Day, Middletown

MICHIGAN: Ronald Bischoff, Marshall; Gale Meade, Marshall

MINNESOTA: Nelma Korthals, Pipestone; Darrell Korthals, Pipestone

OHIO: Gladys Donson, Bryan

OKLAHOMA: Melody Varner, Bristow; Sam Varner, Bristow

TENNESSEE: Rebecca McWilliams, Halls; Larry McWilliams, Halls

WYOMING: Cheryl Russell, Basin; Donald Russell, Basin



National FFA Foundation Sponsors

For the 30th consecutive year, the National FFA Foundation, Inc. set a record level of support for FFA and agricultural education programs. At Thursday night's session, Allan R. Johnson, 1996 FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board chairman, announced that the Foundation raised a total of \$6,707,000 in 1996 to support projects and programs for FFA and agricultural education, an all-time record.

Johnson, president of Farm Progress Companies, Inc., introduced next year's Foundation Sponsors' Board Chairman-elect Wayne L. Beck. Beck is vice president—supply management for Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. As the incoming president, Beck announced that the 1997 Foundation theme would keep in tune with the organization's theme, "FFA—Leaders with a Vision," and pledged to set new records for 1997.

Since 1944, the National FFA Foundation has provided more than \$70 million to FFA members for awards, scholarships and achievement programs.



Wayne L. Beck assumed the role of Foundation Sponsors' Board chairman for 1997. Beck is vice president—supply management for Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.

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The following Kansas City businesses and associations provided undesigned support for the 1996 National FFA Convention, and FFA expresses its thanks: UMB, n.a.; City of Kansas City; Hallmark Corporate Foundation; American Royal Association, Inc.; Boatmen's First National Bank of Kansas City; Farmland Industries, Inc.; The H&R Block Foundation; Kansas City Power & Light Company; Kansas City Southern Industries, Inc.; Marion Merrell Dow, Inc.; Sutherland Lumber Co.; Yellow Freight System, Inc.; Sprint Foundation; John & Judy Wempe; Humana Health Care Plans; The Kansas City Star Company; North American Salt Company; and Payless Cashways, Inc.

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Arnold W. Donald, President, Crop Protection, Monsanto Company

C. T. Fredrickson, Chief Executive Officer, AgriBank, FCB

Kenneth A. Gregersen, Senior Vice President, Advertising, Promotions and Public Relations (retired), Kent Feeds Inc. (liaison, the National Council for Agricultural Education)

Donald W. Hecht, Director, Sales and Marketing, Elanco Animal Health

Gregory A. Heckman, President, ConAgra Commodity Services

Gene Hemphill, Manager, Industry Affairs, New Holland North America, Inc.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CITATIONS

Many programs and awards listed in the *Proceedings* would not be possible without the generous, long-term support of the agribusiness industry. The Distinguished Service Citation is awarded annually to those companies which have made significant contributions of funds, time and energy to FFA and agricultural education. FFA thanked representatives from the following distinguished companies during Thursday afternoon's convention session.

- **Moorman Manufacturing Company** of Quincy, Ill., has provided 38 years of support to agricultural education and the FFA. In addition to their financial support, they have provided resource personnel for the chapter, state and national officer training. Many members have toured their facilities en route to the national FFA convention.
- **Sandoz Agro, Inc.** of Des Plaines, Ill., has supported the national organization financially and provided leadership for the National FFA Foundation for 31 years. Many FFA programs have been made possible because of their support.
- **Kellogg Company** of Battle Creek, Mich., has a 38-year history of support of agricultural education and the FFA. During this time, their contributions to the National FFA Foundation have helped create awareness of food industry opportunities for FFA members.



Representatives from three companies were honored with Distinguished Service Citations Thursday. Pictured left to right: Timothy Knowlton, director, corporate affairs, Kellogg Company; Judy Hays, Moorman Manufacturing Company/Quincy Soybean Company; and Dawn Forsythe, manager, government affairs, Sandoz Agro, Inc.

E. C. Henderson Jr., Senior Vice President and General Manager (Retired), Wayne Feed Division/Continental Grain Company

James L. Irwin, Vice President, North American Agricultural Equipment Sales, Case Corporation

David Johnson, President, Cenex/Land O'Lakes Agronomy Company

Harlan Kent, Vice President, Sales and Marketing, Winchester Division/Olin Corporation

Thomas S. Lytle, Vice President, North America, Mallinckrodt Veterinary, Inc.

John May, President, Kent Feeds, Inc.

Howard Minigh, President, North America Agricultural Products Division, American Cyanamid Company

Robert Moraczewski, Vice President, Intertec Publishing Corporation

Gerry Newkirk, President and Chief Operating Officer, Tractor Supply Company

R. W. "Bud" Porter, Senior Vice President, N.A. Agricultural Marketing, Deere & Company

Donald H. Pratt, President, Butler Manufacturing Company

Ted Priebe, President, Meyocks & Priebe Advertising, Inc.

Keelan Pulliam, Business Director, Zeneca Professional Products, ZENECA, Inc.

Richard Ryan, President and Chief Operating Officer, DEKALB Genetics Corporation

Yale L. Schalk, U.S. Marketing Manager, DuPont Agricultural Products

Fred Schrodt, Vice President, Transportation, Farmland Industries, Inc.

Guy Shoemaker, Division Vice President, Dry Milling Division, General Manager, U. S. Flour Milling, Cargill

Ed Shonsey, President and Chief Executive Officer, Northrup King Co.

James D. Speir, Retired President and Chief Operating Officer, IMC Global Inc.

Richard Urbanowski, President and Chief Operating Officer, ISK Biosciences Corporation

Herman Wilson Jr., President, Pioneer Equipment Co.



VIP Awards



The recipients of this year's VIP awards were recognized Thursday. Back row (left to right): A.B. Cochrane, John Davis, Charles Keels, Marion Kimmons, John Murray. Front Row (left to right): Jack Pritchard, Robert Seefeldt, Glen Shinn, Robert Terry.

VIP awards are FFA's way of thanking those individuals who have dedicated their careers to serving young people. More than 200 years of effort are reflected in the resumés of the following recipients, and their contributions have been invaluable in making FFA the dynamic, growing organization it is today.

A. B. Cochrane of Waukesha, Wis., represented Briggs & Stratton and provided advice and assistance to the FFA agricultural mechanics programs for over 20 years.

John H. Davis of Scio, Ohio, served as a leader in agricultural education for over 30 years. Now retired, he was director of the Ohio FFA Camp and helped start the successful Ohio State FFA Foundation.

George L. Eib of Kansas City, Mo., retired as superintendent of the Kansas City Forestry, Landscaping, Parks and Recreation department. His major contributions of time and support have aided FFA in expanding competitions in those same areas.

Dr. Alan A. Kahler of Ames, Iowa, served as superintendent of the National FFA Floriculture Contest from 1979-94 and served as a major contributor to horticultural activities at the national level of FFA. He is on staff at Iowa State University.

Charles L. Keels of Raleigh, N. C., retired from a 40-year career in agricultural education including a long term as state FFA advisor. He also served many years as the National FFA Treasurer and on the National FFA Board of Directors.

Dr. Marion Kimmons of West Plains, Mo., has made major contributions to improve agricultural mechanics activities at the national level. He is retired from West Virginia University.

John Murray of Rochester, Minn., was president of the NVATA and helped infuse farm business management awareness at the national level of FFA. He is on the State Board of Technical Colleges in his state and works in farm business management.

Dr. Jack Pritchard of Stillwater, Okla., coordinated student teaching for agricultural education at Oklahoma State University for 27 years and founded an agricultural education scholarship program there.

Robert A. Seefeldt of Woodbridge, Va., dedicated 26 years as a national FFA staff member as a major advocate for strong SAE programs. He spearheaded innovations in the agricultural proficiency and FFA degree advancement programs.

Dr. Glenn C. Shinn of College Station, Texas, has made lasting contributions in the national FFA agricultural mechanics programs and is head of the agricultural education department at Texas A&M University.

Dr. Robert Terry of Stillwater, Okla., is director of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership program after nearly 20 years as head of the agricultural education department at Oklahoma State University.





FFA Achievers

Every three years, FFA honors some of its most distinguished alumni. FFA Achievers are chosen as role models for FFA members in five categories: agribusiness, agricultural education, agricultural production, leadership and at large.

Dr. Jerry D. Caulder, CEO for Mycogen Corporation, was chosen for his work in agribusiness. He was a member of the Gideon, Mo., FFA Chapter, and earned his State FFA Degree. Caulder began his career at Monsanto Agricultural Company and was involved in the development and marketing of products such as Round-Up. He joined Mycogen in 1984 and has guided the firm to becoming one of the largest corn hybrid seed companies in the nation.

Charles L. Keels, retired state supervisor in North Carolina, has given a lifetime of support to agricultural education, and has earned FFA Achiever status in that category. He was an FFA member in the Union County, N.C., FFA Chapter, and was elected state FFA secretary. He taught agriculture at Seagrove High School before serving first as state FFA executive secretary and then state advisor. He was named national FFA treasurer in 1990, and held that post until 1995. Keels retired in 1996.

John R. McClendon is an active leader in the American soybean industry and was selected as an FFA Achiever for agricultural production. He was an FFA member in the Marianna, Ark., chapter, and won the state's Star Farmer award. As a spokesperson for the soybean industry,



The former FFA members honored as FFA Achievers were recognized on Thursday. Pictured left to right are Carroll Campbell, John McClendon, Charles Keels and Donald Staheli.

McClendon has traveled to 40 countries to promote soybeans. At home, he operates a 4,200-acre farm, 3,000 of which is planted in soybeans. McClendon also works for his fellow producers on current policy and governmental affairs.

Carroll A. Campbell Jr. was governor of South Carolina from 1987 to 1995, and is recognized in the leadership category. He is president and CEO of the American Council of Life Insurance. He excelled at public speaking and parliamentary procedure as a Greenville, S.C., FFA Chapter member. Prior to his terms as governor, he served in the South Carolina House of Representatives, the State Senate, and was a

member of Congress from the Fourth Congressional District.

Donald Staheli is chairman and CEO of Continental Grain Company. He was an FFA member in Utah and was elected to national FFA office in 1951-52. He began his career with Swift and Company and in 1969 was named director of sales for Allied Mills, Inc., a Chicago-based feed and food subsidiary of Continental Grain. He served as president of that firm until Allied Mills was fully merged with Continental Grain in 1981. Staheli, the FFA Achiever at large, is also past chairman of the American Feed Industry Association.



H.O. Sargent Award

The National FFA Organization re-established the H.O. Sargent Award in 1995 to remember the New Farmers of America (NFA) and to recognize their place in the history of the FFA. The H.O. Sargent Award recognizes success in achieving and promoting diversity in agricultural education and the FFA. This award is a modification of the H.O. Sargent Award that existed in the NFA prior to the incorporation of the NFA into the FFA and is sponsored by Merck AgVet Division.

Walter Jones of Pinetops, N. C., is a local agricultural education instructor at Southwest Edgecombe High School.

Dr. Ferman Moody of Harrisburg, Pa., is state director of vocational-technical education and a former member of the New Farmers of America.

William Sam Combs of Bristow, Okla., founded an organization called REAP—Retired Educators For Agricultural Programs—to increase participation of African-American youth in agricultural education and FFA.



The new H.O. Sargent Award recognizes individuals who have helped FFA membership become more diverse. Pictured from left to right are Janice Keene, manager of public information for Merck AgVet Division, the award sponsor; award recipients William Sam Combs from Bristow, Okla.; Walter Jones from Pinetops, N.C.; and Meecee Baker, accepting the award for Dr. Ferman Moody of Harrisburg, Pa.



FFA National Agricultural Career Show®

It was once again bigger and better than ever. The FFA National Agricultural Career Show in Bartle Hall offered convention goers a chance to explore opportunities for education and careers, taste everything from apples to chocolate chip cookies, participate in strenuous exercises or just take time to stop and talk with representatives at the 313 exhibits.

Seventy new exhibitors participated in the Career Show, creating quite a large selection for those attending, ranging from 36 Hall of States exhibits to over 75 universities and learning institutions. Other exhibitors included agribusinesses, agriculture and breed associations, U.S. military departments, agriscience exhibits and fundraising companies.

Many exhibits provided access to the Internet. Students and advisors alike lined up to check out National FFA Online and get "connected."

In the Career Show's 31st year, National Grain and Feed Association was recognized for 30 years of exhibiting at the convention. Several other exhibitors were recognized for 20 and 10 years in the Career Show.

HALL OF STATES EXHIBITORS

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Alaska Association | New Hampshire Association |
| Arizona Association | New Jersey Association |
| Arkansas Association | New York Association |
| Connecticut Association | North Carolina Association |
| Delaware Association | Ohio Association |
| Hawaii Association | Oklahoma Association |
| Idaho Association | Oregon Association |
| Illinois Association | Pennsylvania Association |
| Indiana Association | Puerto Rico Association |
| Iowa Association | South Carolina Association |
| Kentucky Association | South Dakota Association |
| Louisiana Association | Tennessee Association |
| Maryland Association | Texas Association |
| Michigan Association | Utah Association |
| Mississippi Association | Virginia Association |
| Missouri Association | Washington Association |
| Montana Association | Wisconsin Association |
| Nebraska Association | Wyoming Association |



Buttons, buttons, everywhere! Members who attended the Career Show were laden with buttons, stickers, brochures, key chains and magnets to remind them of what they learned from the 313 exhibitors. Visitors filled their minds with information and their bags with free goodies as they walked up and down the long aisles in Bartle Hall.



Career Show Exhibitors

- Acro Printing and Publishing
Ag Decisions, Inc.
Ag Leader Technology
AGCO
AgEd Network
Agri-Education, Inc.
Agri-Entrepreneurship Finalists
Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow
Agricultural Resources & Communications
Agricultural Safety Education
Agrotours Inc.
Alexandria Technical College
Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Angus Association
American Blonde d'Aquitaine Association
American Cowboy Magazine
American Cyanamid Company
American Farm Bureau Federation, Young Farmer & Rancher Activities
American Fisheries Society—Missouri Chapter
American Forestry Technology, Inc.
American Gelbvieh Association
American Hereford Association
American International Charolais Association
American Maine-Anjou Association
American Morgan Horse Institute, Inc.
American Murray Grey Association
American National Cattlewomen, Inc.
American Paint Horse Association
The American Phytopathological Society
American Pinzgauer Association
American Quarter Horse Association
American Salers Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Shorthorn Association
American Simmental Association
American Tarentaise
American Veterinary Medical Association
Amoco Petroleum Products
Animal Industry Foundation
Applied Technologies
AquaCenter, Inc.
Aquatic Eco Systems
Archer Daniels Midland Co.
Asgrow Seed Co.
Auburn University
Babson Bros. Co./SURGE
Bayer Corporation, Agricultural Division
Bel-Rea Institute
BIOMAT Inc.
Birchwood Genetics, Inc.
Breaking New Ground Resource Center
Briggs & Stratton Corp.
Buck Knives, Inc.
Bureau of the Census
California Polytechnic State University
Visual Education Production
California State University—Chico
Callery-Judge Grove
Carolina Biological Supply Company
CARQUEST Corporation
Case IH
CENEX/Land O'Lakes
Cherrydale Farms
CHEVROLET TRUCKS
Chicago Board of Trade
Chicago Mercantile Exchange
Christian Kropf Gift Fruits
Clemson University
Community Blood Center of Greater Kansas City
Community Calendars
Computer Fun
Conklin
Cornell University
Crop Growers Software, Inc.
Crosby Donkey Ball, Inc., Buckeye Donkey Ball Inc.
Crosman Airguns
Dart International
Delaware State University
Delaware Valley College
Delmar Publishers, Inc.
DeWALT High Performance Industrial Tools
Dodge Trucks—Chrysler Corporation
DowElanco
DTN (Data Transmission Network)
Educational Travel Consultants
Equipment Manufacturers Institute
The Ertl Co., Inc.
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
Excel Telecommunications
Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE)
Farm Works Software
FarmHouse Fraternity
Farmland Industries
Fastline Publications
Fellowship of Christian Farmers International
FFA—Agriscience Student Award Program Displays
FFA Diversity Exhibit
FFA H. O. Sargent Award
Firestone Agricultural Tire Division
Flat River Trading Company
Florida Department of Citrus
Ford Division—Ford Motor Company
Fund Factory
Genesis School
Georgia Boot/Durango Boot
The Globe Program
Hawkeye Community College
Hobar Publications/Finney Company
Homestead Rodeo School
Household Bank
Human-i-Tees
The Humane Society of the United States
Hummert International
Hydroponic Society of America
Institute of Food Technologists
Instructional Materials Lab—University of Missouri
Instructional Materials Service—Texas A&M University
International Agriculture Exchange Association
International Arabian Horse Association
Interstate Publishers, Inc.
Iowa FFA Foundation, Inc.
Iowa State University
Iowa State University—Horticulture Dept.
Iowa Western Livestock Judging Contest
J. R. Simplot Company
Jeffers Vet Supply
John Deere
John Deere Credit
John Deere Publishing
Johnson & Wales University
Justin Boot Company
Kansas State University
Kirkwood Community College
L. C. Produce Fund Raising, Inc.
Langdon Barber Groves, Inc.
Lincoln Candy Co.
The Lincoln Electric Company
Livestock Conservation Institute
Longwood Gardens
Louisiana State University
Lubbock Christian University
Mallinckrodt Veterinary Inc.
Michigan State University
Mid-America Dairymen, Inc.
MidAmerica Nazarene College
Middle Tennessee State University
Midwest Trophy Co., Inc.
Miller Meester Advertising
Mississippi State University
Missouri Department of Conservation
Missouri Valley College
Modesto Junior College
Monsanto Crop Protection
MoorMan's Inc./Quincy Soybean Co./QDM
Murray State University
NAPA Auto Parts
Nashville Auto-Diesel College
National Agri-Marketing Association
National Agricultural Aviation Association
National Association of Clovia
National Corn Growers Association
National Council for Agricultural Education
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National FFA Alumni Association
National FFA Online
National FFA Programs and Activities
National Futures Association
National Grain and Feed Association
National High School Rodeo Association
National Little Britches Rodeo Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization
National Rifle Association of America
National Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Association, Inc. (NVATA)
National Young Farmer Educational Association
National Youth Cutting Horse Association
Nature's Technology, Inc.
New Mexico State University
North American Corriente Association
North American Elk Breeders Association
North American Limousin Foundation
North American Salt Co.
North Carolina State University
North Central Kansas Technical College
Northwest Missouri State University
Northwestern College
Northwestern Ohio Tractor Pullers
Ohio Agricultural Education Curriculum Materials Service
The Ohio State University
Oklahoma Curriculum & Instructional Materials Center
Oklahoma State University
Oregon State University
Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.
Peace Corps
Pennsylvania State University
Pennzoil Products, Co.
Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
Purdue University
Purina Mills, Inc.
Remington Arms Company, Inc.
Rhône-Poulenc Ag Company
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Schrade Cutlery
Seald-Sweet Growers, Inc.
Servi-Tech, Inc.
Seward County Community College
Silver State International Rodeo, Inc.
Society for Range Management
Society of American Florists
Society of American Foresters
South Putnam, Indiana, FFA Aquaculture
Southeast Community College—Beatrice
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Spec Cast
Stone Manufacturing & Supply Company
Stretch A Seal
Stuppy Greenhouse Manufacturing Company
Sunkist Growers, Inc.
Superior Growers Supply
Swine Genetics International, Ltd.
Teaching Agricultural Safety to Kids
Terra Industries
Texas A&M University (Ag Consortium of Texas)
Thompson's Pet Pasta Products, Inc.
Titan Wheel International, Inc.
Tractors for Our Daily Bread
Tulsa Welding School
U.S. Air Force Recruiting Service
U.S. Air Force Reserve
U.S. Army Recruiting Command
U.S. Custom Harvesters, Inc.
U.S. Department of Labor
U.S. DOE Biomass Power
U.S. EPA, Region VII, Ag Sector
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge
U.S. Marine Corps
U.S. Navy Recruiting Command
United States Championship Sweepstakes
Universal Technical Institute
The University of Arizona
University of California—Davis
University of Florida
The University of Georgia
University of Idaho
University of Illinois
University of Kentucky
University of Maryland, Institute of Applied Agriculture
University of Minnesota—St. Paul
University of Missouri—Columbia
University of Nebraska—Lincoln
University of Puerto Rico—Mayaguez Campus
University of Wisconsin—Madison
University of Wisconsin—Platteville
University of Wisconsin—River Falls
University of Wyoming
USDA ARS—Center for Agricultural Utilization Research
USDA ARS Grain Marketing and Production Research Center
USDA ARS—Southern Regional Center
USDA Cooperative Services
USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service
USDA Economic Research Service
USDA Farm Service Agency
USDA Foreign Agriculture Service
USDA National Agricultural Library
USDA National Animal Disease Center
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA Office of Inspector General
Utah State University
Virginia Tech, College of Agriculture & Agricultural Education
Vocational Marketing Services
William Jewell College
Winchester Ammunition-Olin Corporation
WIX Filters, Division of Dana Corporation
Woman's Christian Temperance Union
Wood-Mizer Products, Inc.
World Food Prize Foundation
Wyoming Technical Institute





Courtesy Corps

One special group of FFA members was content to stay out of the limelight, but their work made the convention brighter for everyone. They were members of the Courtesy Corps; chapters that volunteer time each year to help with the many tasks necessary to pull off the largest annual youth convention in the world. They sealed, they stamped, they directed, they carried, they moved...in short, they did anything they could to make the convention even better, and we salute their efforts.

Alabama: Billingsley, Marbury, Stanhope Elmore, Wetumpka

Arizona: Deer Valley, Highland, Kola

Arkansas: Berryville

Colorado: Valley

Delaware: Middletown

Florida: Dunnellon, Durant, Hawthorne, Kathleen, Lake Butler, North Marion, Paxton, Ponce de Leon, Sarasota, Sebastian River, Taylor, Vero Beach

Illinois: Chicago Ag Science, LeRoy, Liberty,

Indiana: Indian Creek, Jac-Cen-Del, North Harrison, North Newton,

Prairie Heights, South Adams, Star Academy

Iowa: Centerville, Gilbert Community, MOC/ Floyd Valley, Olin Community School, St. Ansgar, Westwood, Iowa State University, Rockwell City-Lytton, West Lyon

Kansas: Arkansas City, Atchison County, Concordia

Kentucky: Apollo, Barren County, Fulton County, Heath, Hickman County, Jessamine County, Owensboro, Scott County, Spencer County

Louisiana: Bogalusa, Mt. Hermon, Pearl River High

Maine: Presque Isle Reg. Voc. Center

Maryland: Linganore, North Harferd

Michigan: Maple Valley, Montague

Minnesota: Blue Earth, New Ulm, Stillwater

Missouri: Buffalo, Couch, Galena, Greenfield, Mount Vernon, Northwestern, Savannah, Trenton, Union

Montana: Cascade, Deer Lodge

Nebraska: Battle Creek, Holdrege, Kimball, Leigh, Loup City, Newman Grove, Scribner-Snyder, Sioux Center Community, Sutton, Valentine, Waverly

Nevada: Diamond Mountain

North Carolina: Clinton

North Dakota: Beulah, Killdeer, Turtle Lake-Mercer

Ohio: Amanda-Clearcreek, Laurel Oaks, Benjamin-Logan

Oklahoma: Altus, Alva, Broken Arrow, Calvin, Chisholm, Choctaw, Durant, Elk City, Fort Gibson, Guthrie, Jenks, Medford, Pawnee, Sapulpa, Snyder, Tecumseh, Tuttle, Weleetka

Oregon: Dayton, Hermiston, Perrydale

Pennsylvania: Northern York

South Dakota: Alcester-Hudson, Bowdle, Groton, Harrisburg, Lemmon, McCook Central,

Newell, West Central

Tennessee: Spring Hill

Texas: Academy, Aledo, Athens, Banquete, Bastrop, Bowie, Bremond, Bryan, Canutillo, Cayuga, Channelview, Clarendon, Clear Lake, Comfort, Conroe, Crowley, Dayton, Deweyville, Falls City, Farmersville, Florence, Glen Rose, Goldthwaite, Groesbeck, Happy, High Island, Hutto, Idalou, Iowa Park, Kerens, Killeen/Ellison, Kirbyville, Klein, Klein Oaks, Laurel Oaks, Leander, Madisonville, Martin's Mill, McKinney, Mexia, Mineral Wells, Morton,

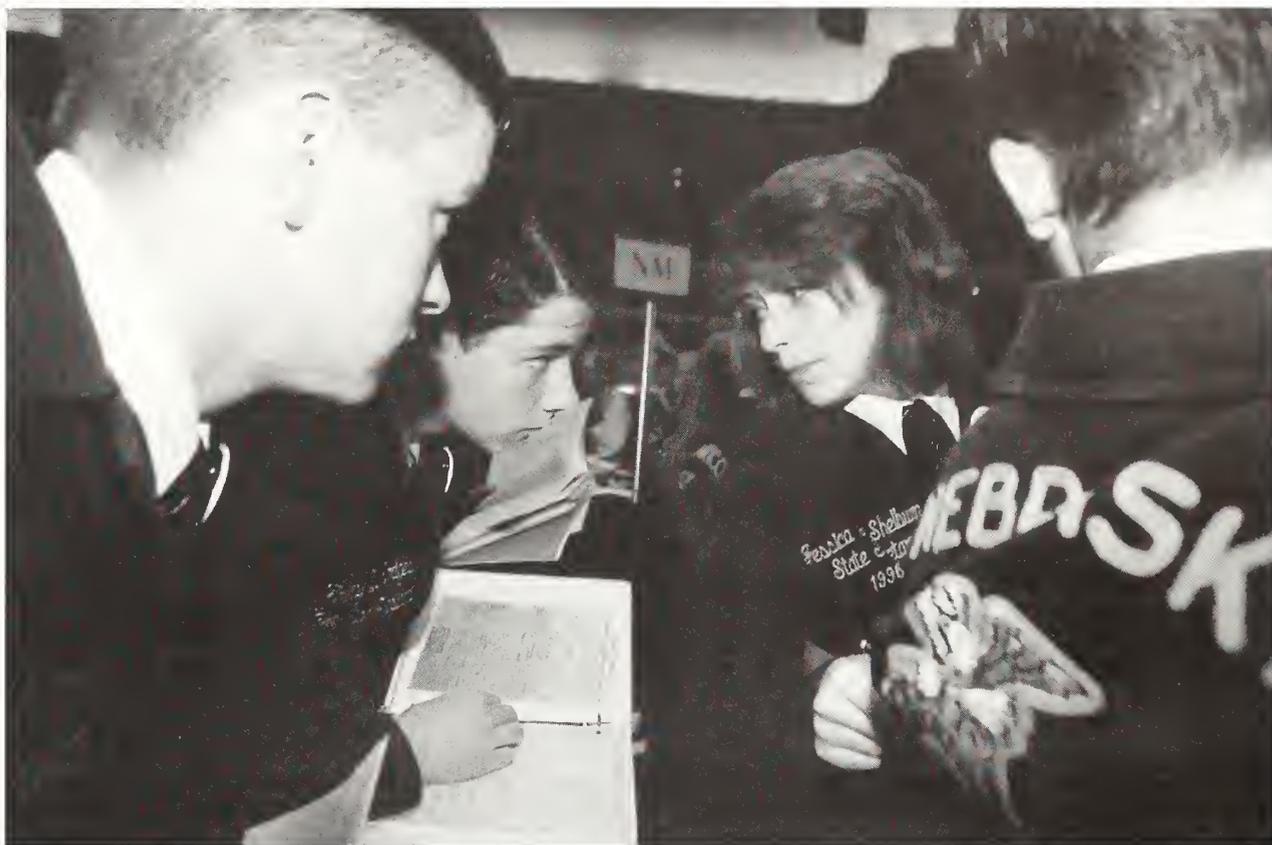
Normangee, Orange Grove, Pecos, Plano East, Quannah, Quinlan, Raymondville, Rio Hondo, Roosevelt, Salado, Santa Maria, Sealy, Smithville, Snyder, Throckmorton, Tom Bean, Tulooso Midway, Weimar, West Brook, Westwood, Woden, Woodson, Ysleta
Virginia: Amelia, Dinwiddie, Fauquier, Park View Senior

Washington: Washington State FFA Officers

Wisconsin: Alma Center Lincoln, Argyle, Auburndale, Gillett, Green Bay Preble, Gresham, Johnson Creek, Mondovi, Pulaski, Slinger, Stoughton, Sun Prairie, Tri County, Waupaca, Weyauwega-Fremont



At the 69th National FFA Convention, many chapters volunteered hours of their time to help make the convention run smoothly by serving on the Courtesy Corps. Those on duty were identified by their bright gold arm bands, and they were always ready to serve.



National FFA convention delegates acted as leaders with a vision during the week, representing their fellow members as they made recommendations to the National FFA and voted on key issues that will guide the organization into the future.

For many, sitting close to the stage and serving as a national FFA convention delegate is only a dream. Four-hundred and sixty-three FFA members filled this especially important role at the national convention. By acting as delegates, they served on one of nine national committees and made recommendations for the National FFA Board of Directors to consider.

After two days of working in their committees, the delegates' first business session began Wednesday morning with the roll call. Next, the delegates approved the 68th National FFA Convention minutes and the treasurer's report.

The business moved into committee reports beginning with the Agricultural Education Trends Committee. One of the committee's main recommendations was to establish a proficiency award area in agricultural education.

The Chapter Activities Committee report caused some discussion. The

committee recommended adding a section to the American FFA Degree application for members to list their community service involvement. They also recommended developing new Made For Excellence conference curriculum focusing on more hands-on activities. After an amendment to strike this section failed, the Chapter Activities Committee report passed.

Making publications, videos and FFA homepage material available in Spanish and other languages if requested was a consistent theme mentioned by several committees. During the business session, a delegate from Puerto Rico thanked the other delegates for considering members who speak languages other than English.

Recommendations involving the Internet also appeared in several committee reports. The Communications and Public Relations Committee suggested encouraging members to interact with other members on the

Internet and e-mail by establishing a "live" chat line. The Marketing and Merchandising Committee recommended that FFA members be able to place FFA Ventures orders directly by e-mail.

One of the most controversial topics was the possible relocation of the State Presidents' Conference to an area near the future National FFA Center in Indianapolis, recommended by the Leadership and Personal Development Committee. During the business session an amendment was made to strike this recommendation from the committee's report. After discussion about the tradition and history in Washington, D.C., and the importance of having national staff members at the conference, the amendment passed and this section was deleted.

The delegates' work was considered a success, and the business session came to a close with the acceptance of the Auditing and National Convention committee reports.





Official Delegates



The convention wasn't all work for the delegates. Jose Santiago, a delegate from Puerto Rico, tested his limbo abilities during one of several dances held in the evenings after convention sessions. Limbo, rock and country music resounded as the members burned some excess energy that's always present during convention.

ALABAMA: Tracey Alexander, J.U. Blacksher; Beau Ashley, Gaston; Chad Chaney, Sylvania; Dexter Curry, Fairhope; Karissa Everett, Douglas; Jennifer Griffin, Eufaula; Casey Hatcher, Hartford; Rachel Hawes, Woodland; Josh Henderson, Samson; Shay Jones, Billingsley; Scott Knowles, W. S. Neal; Michael Manning, Billingsley; Laina McWhorter, West End; Amber Miller, Louisville; Nick Mitchell, Douglas; Holli Myers, McAdory; Mindy Resser, Calera; Bryce Ulrich, Jacksonville; Whitney Wood, Wetumpka; Andy Woodard, Corner

ALASKA: Harmony Choat, Kenai; Lem Wheelles, Dimond

ARIZONA: Rebecca Bailey, Deer Valley; Clay Cooke, Willcox; Darcy Johnson, Payson; Michelle Lindé, Deer Valley; Andrea Sokol, Peoria

ARKANSAS: B. J. Bailey, Magnolia; Annie Clifton, Farmington; Jenni Cook, Taylor; Barry Denton, Hatfield; Chris Flynt, Decatur; Justin Goforth, Mountain Home; Gabe Heatherely, Berryville; Cindy Morris, Mountainburg; Tabitha Roberts, Humphrey; Amanda Sands, Riverside; Lisa Tucker, Camden-Fairview; Emily Waymack, Cabot

CALIFORNIA: Jim Alves, Galt; Ryan Bertao, Tulare Western; Lynelle Bosworth, Cottonwood-West Valley; Emily Brinegar, Merced Golden Valley; Will Bunt, Red Bluff; Amber Butler, Biggs; Kelli Christian, Santa Ynez; Cara Crye, Morro Bay; James Dalske, Red Bluff; Kris Diaz, Fresno Central; Dominic Diaz, White; Lesa Eidman, Grass Valley-Nevada Union; Nick Garcia, Galt; Socorro Garcia, Hemet; Melissa Gomes, Merced-Golden Valley; Nate Green, Arbuckle-Pierce; Ryan Grenier, Sonoma Valley; Nancy Gutierrez, Kingsburg; Kristina Kreutzer, Elk Grove; Travis Lee, Chino; Tamara Lowrey, Woodland; Jennifer Luiz, Elk Grove; Chad Murdoch, Chowchilla; John Paasch, Grass Valley-Bear River; Jake Parnell, Grass Valley-Bear River; Melissa Ramsey, Hemet; Amanda Sayers, Kelseyville; Ryan Schohr, Gridley; Steven Schohr, Gridley; Traci Soares, Tulare; Scott Stoller, Altaville-Bret Harte; Sharlene Swaim, Norco; Bryan Tassej, Atwater; Sarah Thompson, Biggs; Kelly Van Foeken, Hilmar; Jennifer Van Train, Riverside-Rubidoux;

Heather Warren, Visalia-Golden West; Charla Welch, Modesto-Grace M. Davis; Lindsay Wilmeth, Kingsburg

COLORADO: Kristen Hoozee, New Rayer; Kari Mergelman, Cedaridge; Teresa Robertson, Yuma; Richard Rumsey, Valley; Tara Sackett, Arickeree

CONNECTICUT: Jamie-Lee Chandler, Lebanon Regional; Larysa Czerepacha, Lyman Hall; Cindy Teixeira, Suffield

DELAWARE: Keith Johnson, Indian River; Brandy Marsich, Glasgow & University of Delaware Collegiate; Robert Proud, Smyrna

FLORIDA: Ben Butler, Okeechobee Sr.; Robbie Cason, Lake Butler; Traci Dickinson, Bupnell Sr.; Heather Driggers, Dixie Sr.; Jolie Gillis, Ponce de Leon Sr.; Dusty Holley, Auburndale; Kyle Hudson, Ponce de Leon; Amy Perry, Belleview Sr.; Mike Reynolds, Kathleen; Abby Sameck, Interlachen Sr.; Jeff Satin, Gaither; James Smith, Moore Haven; Chris Vitelli, Plant City Sr.

GEORGIA: Jeff Andrews, Fort Oglethorpe; Hilary Barrett, Franklin County; Jacob Clayton, Pepperell; Amanda Floyd, Worth County; Brent Gilstrap, North Hall; Tabitha McKelvey, Lowndes County; Brandy Morris, Statesboro; Phillip Price, Evans High; Amanda Ransom, Morgan County; Hillary Smith, Perry; Jerry Stone, Colquitt County; Jennifer Thompson, Tift County High

HAWAII: Lehua Hauanio, Paho; Shelbie Sanoria, Paho

IDAHO: Casey Beck, Burley; Bryan Brandel, Meridian; Melanie Burrie, Malad; Bridget Stinemates, Camas; Charlie Vogel, Kuna

ILLINOIS: Dan Byers, Roseville; Lester Coghill, Colchester; Beth Coldwell, Pleasant Hill; Katie Dallam, Franklin Center; Stacey Dallam, Franklin Center; Kevin Guebert, Waterloo; Jason Hill, Minooka; Hunt Lacey, Nokomis; Tim Nelson, Manteno; Brea Nelson, Manteno; Lindi Stremsterfer, A-C Central; Matt Wells, Cisne; Angi Wendell, Blue Ridge

INDIANA: Brian Buchanan, Evansville Reitz; Samantha Cain, Tri-County; Abby Dougherty, Whiteland; Trent Fredenburg, Shenandoah; Natalie Gray, Switzerland County; Lori Kohlhagen, Rensselaer; Eric Steiner, South Adams; Denise Swim, Northview; Alyssa Webb, Tri High

IOWA: Lisa Ahrens, Osage; Grant Belden, Iowa; Jennifer Curl, Mid-Prairie; Jeremy Davis, Olin; Thomas Goodhue, Indianola; Brice Leonard, Colfax-Mingo; Ann Moberg, Creston; Amy Mounce, Iowa; Anna Riesselman, Carroll Area; Renae Rubsam, Sibley-Ocheyedan; Grant Woodley, Clarion-Goldfield



"Look, we have the same last name," exclaim Josh Sears from Ohio and Andrew Sears from New York, who were both national FFA convention delegates. They ran into each other just before a convention session.

KANSAS: Andy Armbruster, South Barber; Bill Harlan, Hanover; Michael Springer, Neodesha; Jami Stump, Valley Heights; Abra Ungeheuer, Jayhawk-Linn; Jake Worcester, Hill City

KENTUCKY: Jamey Burton, Casey County; Matt Chaliff, Rockcastle County; Mary Jane Cooper, Fleming County; Will Davis, East Carter; Amber Fogle, Pendleton County; Todd Holbrook, Wolfe County; Matthew Ingram, Bath County; Matthew London, Barren County; Misty Miller, Garrard County; Lisa Powell, Henderson County; Amanda Ramer, Central Hardin; Steven Rudy, Ballard Memorial; John Starnes, Edmonson County

LOUISIANA: Nathan Akin, Saline; Chase Bartlett, Calvin; Nicole Bourgeois, Lacassine; Ashley LeBouef, Kaplan; Erika Thompson, Vidrine; Tara Tyson, Oak Grove; George Vamado, Mt. Hermon; Ashly Van Earl, Elizabeth; Shaun Viator, Midland; Jonathan Wallace, Ringgold; Chuck Weeks, Calvin

MAINE: Erin DeLong, Presque Isle; Nick McCrum, Aroostock Central

MARYLAND: Jonathan Farmer, Oakland; Denny Ogg, Frederick; Missy Willard, Catocin

MASSACHUSETTS: Leslie Brown, Bristol County; Amy Fritch, Essex; Timothy Waple, Essex

MICHIGAN: Kerry Ackerman, North Adams; Gabe Camp, Homer; Kevin Nugent, Lowell; Kristin Prelesnik, Mason; Jack Schut, Hopkins; Teresa Swamba, Capac

MINNESOTA: Cory Buysse, Tracy; Tyson Hill, Willmar; Laura Ann Klein, Kimball; Darin Madson, Glenville/Emmons; Cindy Mulert, Owatonna; Patricia Norman, New Ulm; Bob Parke, Forest Lake; Leah Schliep, Zumbrota/Mazeppa; Aaron Stegeman, HLOL

MISSISSIPPI: Christy Berry, Vicksburg Warren; Colette Dally, Grenada; Michael Downs, South Panola; Jon Morris, Neshoba Central; Allison Ormon, Hickory Flat; Angela Ormon, Hickory Flat; Merrell Porter, Bassfield

MISSOURI: Daniel Arnsperger, Salisbury; Jennie Bedsworth, New Bloomfield; Dustin Braschler, Doniphan; Joy Hedeman, Lockwood; Justin Jones, Oran; Kyle Malter, Malta Bend; Daniel McLanahan, Archie; Nikki Melton, Dadeville; Jamie Moffett, Marionville; Andrew Popplewell, Maysville; Steven Rogers, Princeton; Alex Stemme, Hermann; Michael Stephenson, East Buchanan; Jessica Lynn Travis, Princeton; Mark Wilburn, Van-Far R-I; Nathan Winklepleck, Couch

MONTANA: Rachael Armstrong, Billings Career Center; Tamara Beardsley, Custer County; Rachel Gilman, Missoula; Ben Larson, Columbus

NEBRASKA: Ryan Buschkamp, Bloomfield; Tony Collins, Gothenburg; Philip Erdman, Bayard; Timothy Hodges, Nebraska City; Jennifer Jarecke, Fullerton; Jessica Shelburn, Nelson; Jacob Slagle, Sargent

NEVADA: Troy Jordan, Diamond Mt.; Melissa Phillips, Silver Sage; Erica Smith, Ruby Mountain

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Jason DeCota, Coe-Brown; Jonathan Marcotte, Alvirne; Narci Seifert, Winnisquam

NEW JERSEY: Michelle Holmes, Allentown; Bernard Kelly, Phillipsburg; Christine Patten, Woodstown; Jonathan Pechow, E. Brunswick

NEW MEXICO: Jason Ballard, Carlsbad; Debbie Bond, Carrizozo; Misty Carter, Melrose; Janae Deason, Clayton; Eva Madrid, Hatch; Joe Warren, Los Lunas

NEW YORK: Christy Bensen, Greenville; Kate Costa, Carthage; Eric Goldstein, Tri-Valley; Dale Jennings, Hamilton; Andrew Sears, Falconer

NORTH CAROLINA: Kevin Bradley, Chase; Eric Deal, South Rowan; Kristen Effle, Riverside; Michael Hall, Lakewood; Sterlina Henson, Chatham Central; Heath Jones, Ledford; Sara McCann, North Iredell; Robbie Minnich, Chase; Lyndsie Muirhead, Union; Layla Stout, South Rowan; Tyler Vandemark, Southern Nash; Julie Walls, Rosewood

NORTH DAKOTA: Jessica Anderson, Rugby; Craig Danielson, Rolette; David Gardner, New England; Rhonda Graff, Berthold; Erika Kenner, Leeds; Beth Leier, Napoleon

OHIO: Mark Baldwin, Greenfield McClain; Kristi Carey, East Clinton; Kelly Coffman, Fort Frye; Keith Diedrick, Keystone; Abby Henry, Versailles; Jason Marteney,

Carrollton; Katie Newlon, New Lexington; Marie Rhoades, Versailles; Josh Sears, Centerburg; Sara Sherman, Liberty Center; Joe Shultz, Indian Lake; Tony Stoller, Norwayne; Jennifer Vollmer, Talawanda; Shannon Wilcox, Upper Scioto Valley

OKLAHOMA: B. J. Belletini, Coalgate; Brad Casey, Kiowa; Kristin Eden, Copan; Chris Ferrell, Amber-Po; Joy Fulton, Taloga; Kaleb Hennigh, Laverne; Amanda Hill, Wilburton; Jake Holloway, Chattanooga; Michael Jackson, Burlington; David Jeter, Copan; Chance Kornegay, Owasso; Ben Lastly, Freedom; T. J. Martin, Idabel; Megan McElroy, Snyder; Mindy Moore, Taloga; Selenia Ramm, Claremore; Jerome Sterling, Tecumseh; Dustin Tackett, Binger-Oney; Austin Thomas, Ripley; Skye Varner, Bristow; Brandon Vogt, Byng

OREGON: Janae Burley, Knappa; Katie Dunlap, Crater; Mark Gardner, Culver; Trina Lee, Sutherlin; Nick Nelson, Oakland; Charlie Vandehey, Forest Grove

PENNSYLVANIA: Michael Clark, West Perry; John Ewing, West Snyder; Daniel Geissinger, Juniata; Elizabeth Hollenbach, West Snyder; Heather Lehman, Cumberland Valley; Bobbi Jo Robbins, Central Columbia; Kristina Watson, West Perry; Joy Young, Solanco; Andy Young, Solanco

PUERTO RICO: Sheila Bello, Palmarejo; Jose Manuel Santiago Gonzalez, Piedra Gorda, Camuy; Jose Carlos Santiago Gonzalez, S.U. Francisco Jordan; Hugo Varona, Pablo Colon

RHODE ISLAND: Stephanie Calise, Ponaganset; Erin Fountain, Chariho

(Continued on page 60)

Official Delegates *(Continued from page 59)*

SOUTH CAROLINA: Corey Alexander, McBee; Seneca Baines, Latta; Jennifer Koch, Hillcrest-Simpsonville; Robert McManus, Lexington; Jason Prince, Loris; Frederick Young, Holly Hill-Roberts

SOUTH DAKOTA: Ryan Cammack, Sturgis; Sheri Moeller, Brookings; Kelly Rasmussen, Rapid City; Travis Schuring, Groton; Misty Williams, Wall

TENNESSEE: Bree Bichon, Beech; Meredith Crosby, Riverside; Jill Hazlewood, South Fulton; Paul Kelly, Riverdale; John Marshall, Riverdale; Melissa McGuire, Dyersburg; Joe McKee, Lebanon; Robert Meadows, Hermitage Springs; Chaney Mosley, Eagleville; Katherine Page, Dyer County; Brad Parton, Heritage; Cindy Paul, McMinn County; Mitzi Ricketts, Mt. Juliet

TEXAS: Dayna Ahrens, Gregory Portland; J. J. Akin, Henderson; Ginger Andrew, Valley View; Courtney Barnes, Rider; Cheryl Beck, Lamesa; Cindy Birdwell, Coahoma; McKenzie Brown, Salado; Nathan Bullard, Edgewood; Craig Caddell, Canyon; Bryan Cole, Arlington Martin; Jennifer Daniels, Van; Lange Debault, Rockdale; Jeremy Derington, Plainview; Nick Dornak, Goliad; Teresa Durst, Fredericksburg; Jamie Ellis, Colorado City; Jared Harrell, Livingston; Cody Hassell, Stockdale; Shannon Hoffman, Van; Sam Hosch, Coleman; Scott Kenley, Sulphur Springs; Will Kiker, Anson; Kellie Krebs, Calallen; Cara Langley, Centerville; Cori Lowe, Gruver; Amanda Mercer, Hamilton; Clint Morgan, Kirbyville; Ryan Mott, Quanah; Tiffany Munson, Midlothian; Cody Nash, Tolar; Andrea Peek, Bellevue; Carrie Perkins, Colorado City; Brant Poe, Nacogdoches; Burt Powers, Klein Oak; Brandy Price, Valley; Brett Richards, Cayuga; Jason Robertson, Woden; Tanessa Saathoff, Devine; Jonathan Sandel, Cypress Creek; Jeff Schroeder, Pleasanton; Brandon Shepard, Denton; Bubba Shipley, Fairfield; Cassie Smith, Leander; Scott Stedje, Gruver; Jarret Weinheimer, Panhandle; Cayce Weston, Azle; Joanna White, Bland; Amanda Wiederhold, Troy; Justin Williams, Alvin; Rachel Williams, Boling; John Wyatt, Tilden; Cole Young, Katy

UTAH: Tara Excell, Panquitch; Kristin Mikesell, Pleasant Grove; Jeremy Nielsen, Bear River; Toni Staples, Richfield; Walter Wootton, Roosevelt

VERMONT: Marcellus Cubit, Lake Region; Chantal Fortin, Missisquoi

VIRGIN ISLANDS: Keith Garcia, V.I. Association; Gary Greer, V.I. Association

VIRGINIA: Mendy Beckman, Turner Ashby; Sami Dail Brown, Randolph Henry; Ann Cooley, Sherando; Gayle Cox, William Monroe; James Dustin, Essex; Sonja Houff, Spotswood; Michael Kibler, Central; Willie Morris, Fort Defiance; Chris Sumner, Pulaski County; Michael Swisher, Clarke County; Brian Tusing, Broadway

WASHINGTON: Levi Brown, Nooksack Valley; Cory Crouthamel, Elma; Hillary Fulk, Sumner; Erika Gonzalez, Pasco; B. J. Hill, Garfield-Palouse; Rhonda Newbury, Sumner; Kenneth Ostby, Zillah; Jodi Shea, Lynden; Brian Valentine, Royal

WEST VIRGINIA: Cindi Clay, Greenbrier West; Kathy Duffield, Clay; Justin Godfrey, Ripley; Aaron Nichols, Clay; Adam Dobbins, Marion County

WISCONSIN: Nelda Behnke, Lena; Amy Bollinger, Cochrane-Fountain City; Bradley Chandler, Rice Lake; Rebecca Gruenwald, Montello; Regina Hitchcock, Cambridge; Kori Koser, Eau Claire Memorial; Marshah Lepianka, Green Bay East; Susan Long, Oconto Falls; Debbie Meyer, Colby; Angela Mueller, New Holstein; Ann Schmitz, Montello; Tracy Smithback, Cambridge; Michael Tauscher, Pulaski; Betsy Wagner, Lomira

WYOMING: Zac Fross, Shoshoni; Lindsay Hill, Powell; Colin Lynn, Gillette; Libby Petsch, Southeast



Bradley Chandler, delegate from Wisconsin, made a point during a Communications and Public Relations Committee meeting. Delegates began committee meetings on Monday and presented their reports to the delegate body during the business session Wednesday morning.

Agricultural Education Trends

We recommend:

Trends in Agricultural Education

1. A proficiency award in the area of agricultural education be established.
2. National FFA provide agricultural education workshop materials for use at state conferences.
3. Expand agricultural education information and statistics available on the Internet.
4. Recognize NVATA outstanding state teachers at the national FFA convention.
5. Establish an agricultural education Career Development Event.
6. Produce a response card in *FFA New Horizons* concerning agricultural education.

Ethics of the Blue and Gold

1. Enhance the Code of Ethics' visibility in the *Official FFA Manual*.
2. Have the Board of Directors implement a policy for enforcing the Code of Ethics at Career Development Events.
3. Provide quality skirts and slacks in FFA Ventures.
4. Provide photos and facts regarding official dress on the Internet.
5. Precisely explain official dress expectations in the *Official FFA Manual*.
6. Implement a campaign using posters and videos to promote the proper use of the FFA jacket.

Increasing Involvement of FFA Members

1. Develop an orientation process for new chapters that would include leadership and motivation information.
2. Implement cross-chapter exchange programs.
3. Ensure student representation on all committees and task forces appointed by the Board of Directors.
4. Increase awareness of opportunities and expectations of various conferences.
5. Explore ways to increase corporate sponsorship for members attending conferences.

Positive Image for FFA Membership

1. The National FFA Foundation develop a public awareness program through national media and seek sponsors to continue the public awareness at the state level.
2. The National FFA Board of Directors develop budget plan for public awareness of FFA.
3. The National FFA Foundation seek sponsors who are willing to incorporate FFA into their television commercials.

4. The New Millennium task force meet with the sole purpose of developing a long-term 100 percent membership program for teachers and students. The chair of this sub-committee will attend the meeting.
5. Use the Internet, *FFA New Horizons*, *FFA Advisors Making a Difference*, *New Millennium*, and state and chapter officer training materials to promote grade school awareness programs, eighth grade recruitment, increased membership strategies, 100 percent membership programs and public awareness programs.

Respectfully submitted:

Brad Casey, OK (Chair)
 Frederick Young, SC (Vice Chair)
 Andy Armbruster, KS (Secretary)
 Karissa Everett, AL
 Holli Myers, AL
 Chris Flynt, AR
 Lynelle Bosworth, CA
 Socorro Garcia, CA
 Chad Murdoch, CA
 Bryan Tasse, CA
 Teresa Robertson, CO
 Cindy Teixeira, CT
 Abby Sameck, FL
 Phillip Price, GA
 Dan Byers, IL
 Angi Wendell, IL
 Jeremy Davis, IA
 Abra Ungeheuer, KS
 Amanda Ramer, KY
 Shaun Viator, LA
 Leslie Brown, MA
 Darin Madson, MN
 Jennie Bedsworth, MO

Alex Stemme, MO
 Jennifer Jarecke, NE
 Misty Carter, NM
 Eric Goldstein, NY
 Colin Lynn, WY
 Kori Koser, WI
 Cindi Clay, WV
 Chris Sumner, VA
 Marcellus Cubit, VT
 Tara Excell, UT
 Cassie Smith, TX
 Robbie Minnich, NC
 Layla Stout, NC
 Kelly Coffman, OH
 Shannon Wilcox, OH
 Chance Kornegay, OK
 Jenae Burley, OR
 Joy Young, PA
 Meredith Crosby, TN
 Dayna Ahrens, TX
 Jennifer Daniels, TX
 Scott Kenley, TX
 Andrea Peek, TX

Auditing

The Auditing Committee met to review the 1996 report presented by the auditing firm of Stoy, Malone and Company. Through careful evaluation, the committee accepted the report based on the explanations of national staff and board members.

We recommend:

1. Accept the 1995-96 National FFA Audit as printed.
2. Maintain national FFA dues at \$5 for the 1997-98 membership year.

Respectfully submitted:

Philip Erdman, NE (Chair)
 Laura Klein, MN (Secretary)
 Ben Lastly, OK
 Kate Costa, NY
 Tanessa Saathoff, TX
 Christy R. Berry, MS
 Narci Seifert, NH



Convention attendees welcomed the opportunity to engage in discussion with members from across the country.



Communications & Public Relations

We recommend:

Image Subcommittee

1. The FFA mission statement be more prominent in all FFA materials.
2. National staff set up news reporting workshops for state officers, who will be responsible for passing the information to chapter reporters.
3. National staff develop workshops and materials to assist associations in reporting activities highlighting regional and ethnic diversity.
4. National staff promote the "Why Not" campaign and continue to develop new campaigns targeted towards recruitment.
5. National staff involved with "Local Program Success" develop activities promoting a positive image of chapters.
6. Encourage state officers to invite their respective policy makers to important state FFA activities.
7. National staff will assist chapters and state associations to encourage school administrator attendance at the national FFA convention.
8. The Communications and Public Relations Team will organize a student group to review all drafts of videos prior to release to ensure student perspective of the FFA.
9. The FFA Board should consider that the new National FFA Center in Indianapolis reflects a modern industry while holding onto the traditional values and grassroots of the organization.

Supporters Subcommittee

1. Upgrade subject matter of the *FFA New Horizons* magazines to appeal to supporters.
2. Increase publicity of and relations with partner groups of the FFA.
3. Invite school administrators to receive awards with award winners at the national FFA convention.
4. Create a supporters section on the FFA homepage.
5. Develop and distribute materials to chapters that informs students and FFA members about the alumni.
6. Create national incentives for sales of alumni memberships.
7. Incorporate sessions on "building support" into existing state and national workshops.
8. Create a national commercial about the National FFA Organization highlighting what FFA has to offer students and communities.
9. Create a "supporters" insert for *FFA New Horizons* illustrating how supporters help with the FFA.

Public Awareness Subcommittee

1. Develop a "how to" packet for state officers regarding media relations.
2. Establish an instructional packet that will aid chapters in developing effective public awareness campaigns.
3. Send an "opportunity packet" including scholarship applications and FFA information to principals and counselors of all schools.
4. Establish links between the FFA homepage, our sponsors and other homepages.
5. Explore the possibility of advertising the National FFA Organization on the Internet.

Some FFA members at the convention have the opportunity to tell the world about agriculture and the FFA. Television and radio stations as well as print journalists come to the convention to interview students and better understand the huge gathering of blue and gold in Kansas City.

Organizational Awareness Subcommittee

1. Encourage state organizations to put inserts in *FFA New Horizons*.
2. Introduce MFE and other public relations to Alaska and Hawaii.
3. Promote Internet programs to schools by providing training to students and advisors.
4. Encourage members to interact with other members on the Internet by establishing a live chat line.
5. The National FFA should work with computer companies and Internet providers to offer discounted packages for schools interested in Internet access.
6. Add information in the *Leadership Connection* regarding Internet access.
7. Stress the importance of state officer chapter visits at NLC SO.
8. Develop publications and videos in English and Spanish, and other languages by request.
9. Build and make accessible a DTN page that would supply information to alumni and FFA members.
10. Produce videos and information on developing agricultural education programs and FFA chapters.
11. Develop videos and information to encourage urban students to join the FFA.
12. Enhance the national FFA membership card so that it includes nationwide discounts and promotions.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael Tauscher, WI (Chair)
 Nanci Seifert, NH (Vice Chair)
 Beau Ashley, AL
 Liana McWhorter, AL
 B.J. Bailey, AR
 Emily Waymack, AR
 Dominic Diaz, CA
 Kristina Kreutzer, CA
 Traci Soares, CA
 Kari Mergelman, CO
 Kyle Hudson, FL
 Amanda Floyd, GA
 Casey Beck, ID
 Brea Nelson, IL
 Trent Fredenburg, IN
 Alyssa Webb, IN
 Bill Harlan, KS
 Matthew London, KY
 Tara Tyson, LA
 Nick McCrum, ME
 Jack Schut, MI
 Jamie Moffett, MO
 Jon Morris, MS

Angela Ormon, MS
 Ryan Buschkamp, NE
 Heath Jones, NC
 Beth Leier, ND
 Debbie Bond, NM
 Joe Shultz, OH
 Jake Holloway, OK
 Austin Thomas, OK
 Heather Lehman, PA
 Stephanie Calise, RI
 Sheri Moeller, SD
 Melissa McGuire, TN
 Cindy Paul, TN
 Nathan Bullard, TX
 Cody Hassell, TX
 Clint Morgan, TX
 Jeff Schroeder, TX
 Justin Williams, TX
 James Dustin, VA
 Keith Garcia, VI
 Erika Gonzalez, WA
 Bradley Chandler, WI
 Tracy Smithback, WI



Career Success Activities

We recommend:

Proficiency Awards & American FFA Degrees

1. Elimination of the "Fruit and Vegetable" proficiency area to create a "Fruit" proficiency award and a "Vegetable" proficiency award.
2. The word "Satisfactory" be clearly defined as it pertains to the American FFA Degree, Article 6, Section E of the National FFA Constitution.
3. That more emphasis be placed on the interview process of the proficiency finalists.
4. An increase in communications and awareness of proficiencies and the American FFA Degree by developing an application timeline for the FFA homepage.
5. Development of an interactive CD-ROM that corresponds with the official Proficiency and American FFA Degree handbook.

Future Opportunities

1. That *FFA New Horizons* promote available internships.
2. Develop a competition and recognition for PALS and Food For America.
3. That National FFA promote the development of both state and national Star Greenhand awards.
4. Provide uniformity for National Career Development Events (CDE) in the areas of judging and evaluation by using National Industry Standards for criteria.
5. Promotion of job interview skills through a new CDE.

Promote FFA Opportunity Awareness

1. Increased and more effective use of the Internet to promote FFA opportunity awareness in the following links to career success activities.
 - a. Explanations of all CDEs
 - b. Rules and guidelines of all CDEs
 - c. Actual applications for all CDE areas
 - d. Examples, pictures and descriptions of national winners and/or finalists
 - e. Describing awards at national and state levels
 - f. Extended publicity of articles recognizing local achievement
2. *FFA New Horizons* magazine promotes FFA opportunity awareness with the following additions:
 - a. Biographies relating to career success activities including specific examples of how FFA activities/interests have led to career success.



The competition is stiff at the national level in Career Development Events. These members were concentrating during the Nursery and Landscape Career Development Event held at the convention.

- b. A section highlighting a career success activity in each issue that concentrates on activities with low participation or new activities.
3. Materials sent to state officers promote FFA opportunity awareness through the following methods:
 - a. Develop and distribute workshop ideas promoting career success opportunities.
 - b. Develop a printed forum through which state associations can communicate promotion of FFA career opportunity awareness with other state associations.
4. Bilingual {English/Spanish} adjustments be made in order to promote FFA opportunity awareness:
 - a. All FFA materials should be translated into Spanish gradually.
 - b. Ethnic and lingual diversity should be shown on all promotional materials.
 - c. All new materials/information added to the FFA homepage should also be added in Spanish, with a link provided to the Spanish section on the main homepage.

Career Development Events

1. Clarification of the official dress worn to National Career Development Events be made.
 - a. Suggestions
 - i. Proper official dress for awards ceremonies as stated in the *Official FFA Manual*.
 - ii. In all Career Development Events, if official dress is worn, it MUST be complete official dress.
 - b. Changes in manual
 - i. Insert words "knee length" when referring to the length of skirts to be worn.
 - ii. Add statement: "Pants are acceptable for outdoor activities, such as judging contests, camping and travel." in reference to official dress for males and females.
2. An Agricultural Communications Career Development Event be developed which may include the following practices:
 - a. Public Relations—to help recruit young people
 - b. Agricultural Issues Debate—to debate current agricultural issues
 - c. Computer Technology—to expand knowledge about technology in agriculture
3. The introduction of an International and Domestic Agriculture Knowledge Career Development Event which may include:
 - a. A test on foreign issues, global markets and U.S. policies
4. The introduction of a National Land Judging Career Development Event.
5. The introduction of a National Range and Pasture Career Development Event.

Respectfully submitted:

Lindsay Hill, WY (Chair)
 Robert McManus, SC (Vice Chair)
 Michael Stephenson, MO (Second Vice Chair)
 Dexter Curry, AL
 Nick Mitchell, AL
 Barry Denton, AR
 Ryan Bertao, CA
 Lesa Eidman, CA
 Jennifer Luiz, CA
 Sharlene Swaim, CA
 Lindsay Wilmeth, CA
 Larisa Czerepacha, CT
 Mike Reynolds, FL
 Brandy Morris, GA
 Jennifer Thompson, GA
 Charlie Vogel, ID
 Jennifer Curl, IA
 Matt Wells, IL
 Amy Mounce, IA
 Jami Stump, KS
 Lisa Powell, KY
 Ashly Van Earl, LA
 Missy Willard, MD
 Tyson Hill, MN

Merrill Porter, MS
 Steven Rogers, MO
 Timothy Hodges, NE
 Christine Patten, NJ
 Joe Warren, NM
 Lyndsie Muirhead, NC
 Kristi Carey, OH
 Marie Rhoades, OH
 Jennifer Vollmer, OH
 David Jeter, OK
 Brandon Vogt, OK
 Kristina Watson, PA
 Jose Carlos Santiago, PR
 Misty Williams, SD
 Paul Kelley, TN
 Sam Hosch, TX
 Tiffany Munson, TX
 Bubba Shipley, TX
 Cole Young, TX
 Walt Wootton, UT
 Michael Kibler, VA
 Rhonda Newbury, WA
 Regina Hitchcock, WI
 Zac Fross, WY



Chapter Activities

We recommend:

Community Involvement

1. Develop a list of top community service activities from chapters and publish in *FFA New Horizons* and on the Internet homepage.
2. Incorporate a community service section in the American FFA Degree application.
3. Create a National Achievement Award Program in Community Service.
4. Publicize material to inform FFA members of existing programs.
5. That National FFA Alumni sponsor "Make-a-Difference Day" during National FFA Week.
6. Develop a standard news release to inform the public of FFA activities.
7. Develop a survey asking community members how to broaden the "farmer" stereotype.
8. Create a National Hall of Fame to recognize individuals or chapters that have excelled in community service.

Leadership Development

1. Improve Made For Excellence (MFE) and other existing leadership programs by developing a new curriculum and including more hands-on activities.
2. Develop more national scholarships for MFE and other leadership conferences.
3. Promote leadership programs at the state and national levels through newsletters, videos at conventions, *FFA New Horizons* and the FFA homepage.
4. National FFA produce a video with highlights from all national leadership conferences.
5. Encourage a chapter officer focus in *FFA New Horizons* and on the FFA homepage.
6. Encourage chapters to create a "Junior Officer Mentor" program.
7. National FFA create a video and workshop outline for chapter officers to use to promote participation and opportunities.
8. Create activities to encourage members to assume leadership roles in their chapters and communities.
9. Develop a national leadership proficiency award area for chapter members and officers only.

Member Involvement

1. Provide a handbook for chapter officers with ideas to help stimulate member involvement, leadership and chapter projects.
2. Offer a chapter point system to reward member involvement.
3. Offer an interstate exchange program for chapter members, similar to the International Exchange Program.
4. Offer beginner Career Development Events to develop experience.
5. Survey members to find out what they want in FFA programming.
6. Provide news broadcasts to keep members well-informed.
7. Have celebrities pose for promotional posters to increase member involvement.

Agricultural Awareness

1. National FFA constantly update the Food For America and PALS programs to keep up with the changing needs of the members.
2. The Agricultural Issues Forum and middle school development activity be expanded to include presenters' guides.
3. That the national organization offer a state essay contest for all levels of members that involves agricultural issues important to all FFA members.
4. That the national organization work with Channel One to program more agricultural issues and FFA commercials.
5. That the national organization send FFA videos for general audiences to schools to be shown after Channel One.
6. That *FFA New Horizons* feature different chapters proficient in particular programs each issue.

7. That *FFA New Horizons* be sent to school media centers.
8. That *Leadership Connection* provide a workshop on agricultural issues.
9. That the homepage have a chapter chat room for chapters to discuss issues and programs.
10. That the national organization develop different forms of homepage links.
11. That the national organization update its video library to inform people of the diverse types of agriculture.
12. That the national organization classify all videos or materials into specific age and interest groups.
13. That the national organization have a question-and-answer page on the Internet.
14. That the national organization produce an interactive, video-like CD-ROM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Valentine, WA (Chair)
 Dan Arnsperger, MO (Vice Chair)
 Chad Chaney, AL
 Amber Miller, AL
 Jeni Cook, AR
 Jim Alves, CA
 Kris Diaz, CA
 Tamara Lowrey, CA
 Scott Stoller, CA
 Richard Rumsey, CO
 Amy Perry, FL
 Brent Gilstrap, GA
 Tabitha McKelvey, GA
 Lisa Ahrens, IA
 Grant Belden, IA
 Melanie Burrie, ID
 Tim Nelson, IL
 Michael Springer, KS
 Misty Miller, KY
 George Varnado, LA
 Jonathan Farmer, MD
 Cory Buysse, MN
 Allison Ormon, MS

Andrew Popplewell, MO
 Tony Collins, NE
 Sara McCann, NC
 Michelle Holmes, NJ
 Janae Deason, NM
 Mark Baldwin, OH
 Tony Stoller, OH
 Michael Jackson, OK
 Skye Varner, OK
 Bobbi Jo Robbins, PA
 Sandie Mumford, RI
 Travis Schuring, SD
 Mitzi Ricketts, TN
 Craig Caddell, TX
 Shannon Hoffman, TX
 Ryan Mott, TX
 Brandon Shepard, TX
 John Wyatt, TX
 Jeremy Nielsen, UT
 Sonja Houff, VA
 B.J. Hill, WA
 Rebecca Gruenwald, WI
 Betsy Wagner, WI



Parliamentary procedure skills are an essential part of strong chapter operations. The Carthage, Mo., parliamentary procedure team celebrated after winning first place at the convention.



Leadership & Personal Development

We recommend:

Evaluation and Improvement of Current Programs

1. Provide information to national convention delegates about delegate activities including delegate addresses, background on past committee accomplishments, and follow-up on the Internet.
2. Generate more awareness of scholarships through mailings and brochures.
3. Have a volunteer committee develop a video for Washington Leadership Conference (WLC).
4. Divide the Made For Excellence conferences into two groups; one focusing on goals and leadership for Greenhands, the other focusing on careers for older members as needed from state to state.
5. Provide three national officers for larger National Leadership Conferences for State Officers (NLCsOs).
6. Have more hands-on experience with public relations and communications at NLCsOs.
7. During national convention, offer career and leadership workshops on Wednesday in addition to Thursday and Friday.
8. Consolidate all national activity information sent to advisors into one binder mailed at the beginning of the year.

International Programs

1. Expand current international program opportunities to emphasize areas other than production agriculture; for example, form partnerships with international, goodwill, non-profit organizations so that non-production agriculture FFA members can benefit.
2. Create a state-to-state exchange program to encourage younger members to begin to travel.
3. Continue to strengthen the WLC embassy program to include a centralized seminar with international students.
4. Create a marketing strategy for international programs including updated publications with new graphics, brighter colors and more pictures; and emphasize host programs.
5. Develop a national network of trained advisors and alumni representatives to increase international program participation.
6. Create a detailed fund-raising kit for members with sample letters, testimonials and videos on how to approach businesses.

New Program Development

1. Develop a program for junior high students to increase awareness of FFA activities and opportunities.
2. Develop a start-up kit for junior high FFA chapters.
3. Create suggestions for collegiate FFA, including topics such as their responsibilities, goals and activities.
4. Create a program for collegiate FFA focusing on agricultural



FFA members lucky enough to grab a seat in the convention sessions were swept away on a tidal wave of enthusiasm as they were encouraged to reach for their goals.

career skills and opportunities.

5. In addition to WLC, create a hands-on program at the regional level to promote leadership, teamwork and patriotism.
6. Establish a national awards program for collegiate FFA chapters.

Awareness and Promotion

1. Print user-friendly instructions and a list of the national and state FFA home pages in *FFA New Horizons*.
2. Include current agricultural issues and a question and answer hotline on the Internet. Use more pictures or diagrams to catch the users' attention.
3. Send updated handouts about international opportunities to state officers. Include a letter that each state can send to chapter presidents, school administrators and others about the in-

(Continued on page 66)



Committee Reports

(Leadership & Personal Development continued from page 65)

- ternational opportunities, referring them to the Internet for more information.
4. Include promotional articles about international opportunities in *FFA New Horizons* at the beginning of each school year.
 5. Leadership videos should emphasize interactive and hands-on activities that will better motivate the members. The *Leadership Connection* can be used as a source to disperse motivational materials for state officers instead of the videos.
 6. The National FFA Organization capitalize on local television coverage, Channel 1 and DTN with support from major sponsors to promote hands-on functions and community awareness.

Respectfully Submitted:

Andrew L. Young, PA (Chair)
Tanessa Saathoff, TX (Vice Chair)
Scott Knowles, AL
Harmony Choat, AK
Clay Cooke, AZ
Andrea Sokol, AZ
Amanda Sands, AR
Cara Crye, CA
Ryan Grenier, CA
Steven Schohr, CA
Charla Welch, CA
Brandy Marsich, DE
Jolie Gillis, FL
Hilary Barrett, GA
Christine Danneth, GU
Kevin Guebert, IL
Llndi Stremsterfer, IL
Eric Steiner, IN

Renae Rubsam, IA
Amber Fogle, KY
Nicole Bourgeois, LA
Jonathan Wallace, LA
Gabe Camp, MI
Aaron Stegemann, MN
Colette Dally, MS
Daniel McLanahan, MO
Tamara Beardsley, MT
Erica Smith, NV
Jonathan Pechow, NJ
Michael Hall, NC
Rhonda Graff, ND
Josh Sears, OH
Kaleb Hennigh, OK
Jerome Sterling, OK
Judy Mayfield, OR
Daniel Geissinger, PA
Jennifer Koch, SC
Katherine Page, TN
Cindy Birdwell, TX
Jamie Ellis, TX
Mark McClure, TX
Jason Robertson, TX
Amanda Wiederhold, TX
Sami Dail Brown, VA
Nelda Behnke, WI
Angela Mueller, WI



Jon Morris of Mississippi amended a motion during the first delegate business session on Wednesday morning. The 463 official delegates discussed issues and voted on committee reports.



Marketing & Merchandising

We recommend the following:

Customer Service:

1. FFA Ventures consider developing services that will allow orders to be placed directly by e-mail.
2. To assure correct merchandise is delivered, place an additional staff member at the final check point of out-going merchandise.
3. Install a 1-800 number at the new National FFA Center for the convenience of our customers.
4. Extended the telephone answering hours to make ordering more convenient for members in all time zones.

Quality Control:

1. The emblem needs a consistent appearance, specifically the direction of the plow lines and the color of the owl.
2. Use scantrons to get more correct jacket and award lettering. Include an additional bubble for "enter manually, only if name does not fit."
3. Add loops to the inside of all FFA jackets for State and American FFA Degree chains.
4. Sell only the degree chains with the different size links and discontinue the chain with the same size links.
5. Add a clasp or a strong loop to attach the State and American FFA Degree charms to the chain.
6. Offer a screw-on backing with teeth for officer and award pins. Offer this in conjunction with the current pin-on style.
7. Tack or screw-on name plates to plaques and trophies.
8. Return a copy of the purchaser's order form to the purchaser with their order.
9. All t-shirts must be made of 100% pre-shrunk cotton.

Merchandise Development:

1. Develop motivational material such as posters and flip calendars.
2. Create a wall calendar with a picture of the national officers.
3. Investigate forming a partnership with a clothing line distributor to provide black skirts and slacks for FFA members to be offered through the catalog.
4. Create blazer and/or sports jacket that has options of lettering and monogramming, for collegiate FFA members, advisors, etc., but not to be used as a substitute for official dress.
5. Offer the traditional wooden officer emblems.
6. Create a team shirt, offering the FFA emblem with options of national, state, district or chapter embroidery on them.
7. Provide material to build a promotional FFA booth.
8. Create a clip-art disc or CD-ROM for computers.
9. Create a dress shirt with an optional emblem.
10. Create formal official zipper tie for males.
11. Offer more silver jewelry.

Marketing Strategies:

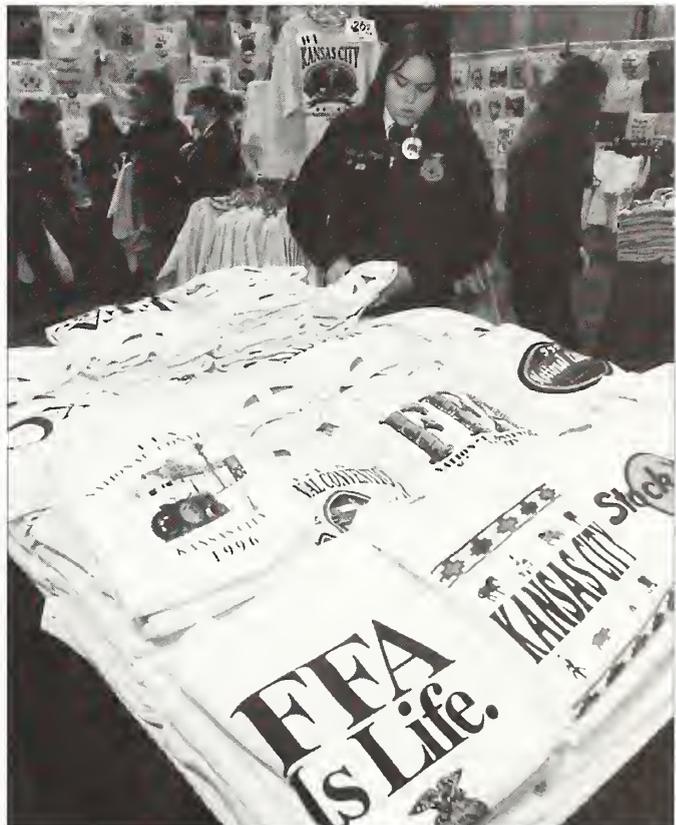
1. Insert a one-page ad in *FFA New Horizons*, displaying the newest items, modeled by national officers, a variety of state officers and/or celebrities with a universal appeal.
2. Send a poster to each chapter, displaying the hottest and newest items modeled by the national officers and state officers from each association. The shots for this poster may be taken at NLCSOs.
3. Update the catalog cover and layouts to a modern look.
4. The catalog models should consist of at least two recognizable members from each state association.
5. Consult with major company sponsors of FFA to negotiate a deal that would provide gift certificates to members, parents and alumni for Ventures merchandise upon a purchase from that company.
6. Present a discount card to state officers at NLCSO that will allow the purchase of some items at discount rates from the *FFA Catalog*.
7. Keep in constant contact with state advisors to promote the sale of merchandise at state events.
8. Develop more merchandise based on name-brand attire.
9. Include XXXL and XXXXL sizes in clothing.
10. Research middle school merchandising opportunities.

11. Post advertisements for the Shopping Mall in the hotels and convention hall at national convention.
12. Be sure all tours through the National FFA Center are given an opportunity to shop at the store.
13. Include an order form with all instructions and information translated into Spanish with the FFA Ventures catalog.

Respectfully submitted,

Bree Bichon, TN (Chair)
 Laura Klein, MN (Vice-Chair)
 Josh Henderson, AL
 Rebecca Bailey, AZ
 Darcy Johnson, AZ
 Tabitha Roberts, AR
 Kelli Christian, CA
 Nate Green, CA
 Amanda Sayers, CA
 Heather Warren, CA
 Keith Johnson, DE
 Heather Driggers, FL
 Jeff Andrews, GA
 Katie Dallam, IL
 Hunt Lacey, IL
 Lori Kohlhausen, IN
 Anna Riesselman, IA
 Will Davis, KY
 Chase Bartlett, LA
 Erika Thompson, LA
 Kerry Ackerman, MI
 Leah Schlippe, MN
 Kyle Malter, MO

Rachael Armstrong, MT
 Troy Jordan, NV
 Bernard Kelly, NJ
 Eric Deal, NC
 Kristen Eifle, NC
 David Gardner, ND
 Katie Newlon, OH
 Joy Fulton, OK
 Selena Ramm, OK
 Michael Clark, PA
 John Ewing, PA
 Seneca Baines, SC
 Chaney Mosley, TN
 Cheryl Beck, TX
 Teresa Durst, TX
 Cori Lowe, TX
 Brandy Price, TX
 Joanna White, TX
 Mendy Beckman, VA
 Cory Crouthamel, WA
 Hillary Fulk, WA
 Josette Smith, WV
 Debbie Meyer, WI



Beth Roniger was one of many FFA members who took time to look at a large selection of FFA items offered in the Shopping Mall in Bartle Hall.



Membership Recruitment & Participation

We recommend:

Participation and Retention

1. Send an informative letter describing the National FFA Alumni Association to all graduating seniors and the parents of all new members in order to increase awareness and involvement in the alumni.
2. Create and distribute a step-by-step guide on how to start a local FFA alumni affiliate. Also, create an informative pamphlet for chapters to use in recruiting community members for local FFA alumni affiliates.
3. Develop guidelines on how to develop and encourage "junior" FFA members, meaning those members who join prior to their freshman year.
4. Provide information for those colleges/universities interested in starting a collegiate FFA program. Develop activities to increase participation and interest in the collegiate FFA program.
5. Continue to promote a positive image for FFA and the alumni through the use of national spokespersons in publications, conventions and other events.
6. In order to increase active FFA members' awareness of the alumni, encourage the use of official dress by the members of the National FFA Alumni Association.

Empowerment for Officers

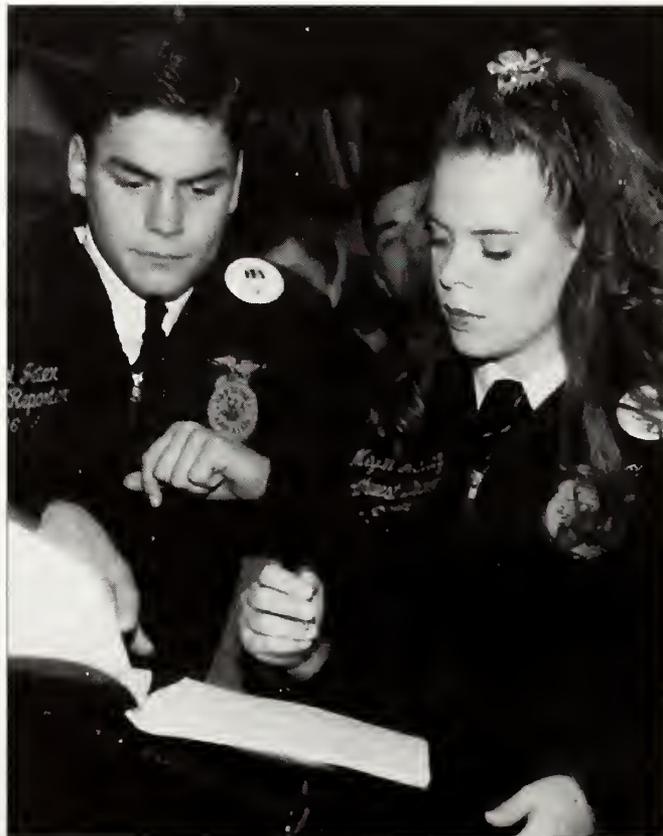
1. National FFA recognize the top recruitment chapters at the national FFA convention. The awards could be based on percentage of membership increase and innovative recruitment activities.
2. Recruitment training occur at conferences such as MFE, WLC, NLCSO and SPC.
3. Include recruitment ideas and activities in existing publications and services.
4. The National FFA develop a directory of chapter and district officers to directly send recruiting information.
5. The National FFA develop a recruitment manual with ideas and activities for state and chapter officers, particularly dealing with such issues as targeting minority groups, administration, counselors, parents and community leaders.
6. The National FFA provide resources for states to set up their own recruitment videos. These suggestions may come in the form of a video presented at NLCSO.
7. A recruitment card be developed for all officers to hand out to potential members. This card may be an extension of the "Why Not?" campaign, and include the Internet address and a contact name.
8. A recruiting kit be developed for all officers to be purchased through the *FFA Chapter Catalog*. Materials such as a video, worksheets, posters and a display should be included.

Advisor Encouragement

1. Create a 1-800 information hot line for advisors to request publications.
2. Give advisors a choice of how much information they receive from the National FFA.
3. Form a task force to update and consolidate mailings from the National FFA.
4. The National FFA receive more input from advisors, leaders, and members from each state through leadership camps and state conventions.
5. Create a photo contest open to all chapters for advisor recruitment posters to dispel misconceptions about the FFA and to broaden its appeal to potential members.

Membership Recruitment

1. Send information to counselors to help educate them and their students about FFA and its opportunities.
2. Develop scholarships to help students attend WLC.
3. Promote the use of promotional videos tailored to specific age groups. Everyone in seventh through 10th grades should be targeted, but in 11th and 12th grade, the focus should be on agricultural education students.
4. Incorporate more multi-media into the FFA homepage.
5. Advertise FFA activities through TV, newspapers, radio and Channel One.
6. Have the national organization develop a presentation outline that state associations can use to present at school faculty conferences.
7. Print recruitment/educational materials in other languages.
8. Create a national task force that would be available to give presentations to school counselors.
9. Increase scholarship awareness among members.
10. Work with the National Dairy Council, and have national officers do a "Got Milk?" campaign.



David Jeter and Megan McElroy of Oklahoma served as official delegates at the convention. Delegates work in committees to make recommendations. Here, the delegates were reviewing a committee's report before voting to accept the report.



Respectfully Submitted:

Willie Morris, VA (Chair)
Kate Costa, NY (Vice Chair)
Rachel Hawes, AL
Andy Woodard, AL
Lem Wheelles, AK
Cindy Morris, AR
Amber Butler, CA
Travis Lee, CA
Melissa Ramsey, CA
Jennifer Van Train, CA
Traci Dickinson, FL
Chris Vitelli, FL
Jerry Stone, GA
Bridget Stinemates, ID
Stacey Dallam, IL
Natalie Gray, IN
Ann Moberg, IA
Mary Jane Cooper, KY
Todd Hunter Holbrook, KY
Nathan Akin, LA
Timothy Waple, MA
Teresa Swamba, MI
Bob Parke, MN
Justin Jones, MO

Nathan Winklepleck, MO
Jessica Shelburn, NE
Jonathan Marcotte, NH
Kevin Bradley, NC
Craig Danielson, ND
Jason Marteney, OH
Chris Ferrell, OK
Mindy Moore, OK
Trina Lee, OR
Charlie Vandehey, OR
Corey Alexander, SC
John Marshall, TN
Robert Meadows, TN
Courtney Barnes, TX
Nick Dornak, TX
Cara Langley, TX
Burt Powers, TX
Casey Weston, TX
Gary Greer, VI
Levi Brown, WA
Adam Dobbins, WV
Susan Long, WI



The national FFA convention gave members lots to smile about. A record attendance of 41,275 members and guests, enthusiastic speakers and energetic sessions led to an entertaining and informative week for all.



National FFA Convention



Convention general sessions, presented in Municipal Auditorium, gave members the opportunity to hear motivational speakers, cheer their fellow members on their accomplishments and enjoy spectacular sound and light shows.

We recommend:

A Place to Grow Subcommittee (KC to Louisville)

1. Maintain a livestock component at the national convention, similar to opportunities offered in conjunction with the American Royal.
2. Consider a rodeo in conjunction with North American Livestock show, and include student participants in a rodeo.
3. Develop featured entertainment/concerts with big name performers.
4. Coordinate a "PALS Day" at the amusement park in Louisville.
5. Initiate a canned food drive contest between states.
6. Reinstate the FFA parade at convention.
7. Expand the career show, and include a job fair which includes colleges, internships and job opportunities as well as information on résumé writing or interview skills.
8. In the available outdoor area at the Kentucky Fair & Exposition-Center:
 - a. Construct state or joint state displays featuring regional industries or commodities.
 - b. Conduct a national tractor driving/safety contest, farm safety shows.
 - c. Conduct a livestock exhibition and ethics workshops with live animals.
9. The National FFA Board of Directors research the need for a short tribute in honor of United States veterans.

Public Awareness

1. National FFA to mail media contact/public relations suggestions sheets to each executive secretary and state officer team.
2. Broadcast the national FFA convention highlights on public access channels.
3. Increase interaction between the National Association of Farm Broadcasters convention and FFA participants.
4. National FFA mail posters promoting national FFA convention to all chapters two months prior to convention.
5. National FFA provide a booth at which FFA chapters can make PSA videos for local release.
6. Contact hotels in the Kansas City area to provide FFA facts, convention highlights and schedule on hotel channels where available.
7. *The FFA Times* to be reinstated and distributed at local hotels, potential and current sponsors and career show exhibitors.
8. Develop pocket-sized schedule of events separate from the full convention guidebook.
9. Have fast facts about national convention printed in *FFA New Horizons*.
10. Provide a media folder on the FFA homepage to be downloaded for articles.
11. Utilize the Associated Press more.
12. Increase accessibility of touch-screen surveys throughout facility.
13. Have a press conference with delegates, staff and farm broadcasters on the opening day of convention.

14. Provide change of address/update cards in *FFA New Horizons*.
15. Mail a national FFA convention promotional video to each chapter prior to convention.
16. Increase alumni advertising in *FFA New Horizons* for postsecondary members.
17. Distribute bilingual materials for all FFA public awareness purposes.

Opportunity Awareness

1. Encourage prior advertisement of opportunities, including workshops, tours and motivational speakers in *FFA New Horizons*, on the Internet, and in the *Advisor's Planning Guide*.
2. Increase agriculture-based, FFA-based, and interactive booths at the career show.
3. Provide better directions throughout the career show by hanging topic area signs.
4. Encourage the use of more stereo speakers throughout the dance, and maximize space by moving tables from food court in Bartle.
5. Encourage more reasonable prices at the food court and include commodity food groups.
6. Establish career development event workshops and booths, create CDE panels using national contestants, and include video clips of CDEs during sessions to encourage involvement.
7. Encourage more professionalism at CDEs by implementing a strict dress code.
8. Improve logistics of CDEs:
 - a. Create breaks and meals during lengthy CDEs.
 - b. When livestock judging CDE is at the American Royal, move sheep division to area of less traffic.
9. Encourage administrator participation by providing awards for top administrators and by providing a workshop for administrators to earn inservice hours.
10. Encourage creation of internship booths at the career show to provide information about agriculture-based internships.
11. Encourage more diversity among workshops by providing more on production agriculture and the future of FFA, diversity sensitivity, as well as workshops for administrators, advisors, teachers, parents and younger children.

Main Impact

1. Courtesy Corps:
 - a. Be recognized at a higher level.
 - b. Be properly trained to maximize their authority.
2. Screens and TV monitors should be used to advertise upcoming workshops and events.
3. Develop a location for states to meet outside of arena.
4. Make Municipal Auditorium more accessible by unlocking all front doors.
5. Include more varied entertainment to build enthusiasm.
6. Use keynote speakers more efficiently.
7. Make seating in Municipal Auditorium more efficient.

Respectfully Submitted, Mark Gardner, OR (Chair)

Philip Erdman, NE (Vice Chair)	Patricia Norman, MN	Marshah Lepianka, WI
Casey Hatcher, AL	Joy Hedeman, MO	Justin Godfrey, WV
Bryce Ulrich, AL	Mark Wilburn, MO	
Whitney Wood, AL	Christy Bensen, NY	
Gabe Heatherly, AR	Andrew Sears, NY	
Will Bunt, CA	Julie Walls, NC	
Kelly Van Foeken, CA	Abby Henry, OH	
Melissa Gomes, CA	Kristin Eden, OK	
Jake Parnell, CA	Megan McElroy, OK	
Jamie-Lee Chandler, CT	Nick Nelson, OR	
Ben Butler, FL	Hugo Varona, PR	
James Smith, FL	Kelly Rasmussen, SD	
Hillary Smith, GA	Ginger Andrew, TX	
Bryan Brandel, ID	Jeremy Derington, TX	
Samantha Cain, IN	Kellie Krebs, TX	
Beth Coldwell, IL	Joe McKee, TN	
Brice Leonard, IA	Brant Poe, TX	
Matt Chaliff, KY	Jarret Weinheimer, TX	
John Starnes, KY	Toni Staples, UT	
Denny Ogg, MD	Ann Cooley, VA	
Kevin Nugent, MI	Brian Tusing, VA	



Nominating

We, the Nominating Committee, have given careful and deliberate consideration to all applicants running for national office. The committee nominates the following slate of candidates to the delegates at the 69th National FFA Convention to serve as national officers for the year 1996-97.

National Treasurer: K. Eugene Eulinger, Missouri
 National Executive Secretary: C. Coleman Harris, Washington, D.C.
 National Advisor: Larry D. Case, Washington, D.C.
 Vice-President Central Region: Brad Montgomery, Kansas
 Vice-President Eastern Region: Ray Starling, North Carolina
 Vice-President Southern Region: Charlie Jones, Alabama
 Vice-President Western Region: Rachel Fehringer, Colorado
 National Secretary: Holly Bentley, Ohio
 National President: Corey Rosenbusch, Texas

Respectfully submitted,

Lance Wright, AR
 James Garner, CA
 Dave Haversat, CT
 Maggie Goodin, FL
 Kristie Broadbent, KY
 Christi Davenport, MT
 Emily Buxton, OH
 Angel Walter, WI
 Kevin Okes, WV



Everyone wants to take memories home from the national FFA convention—even the president! Seth Derner, national FFA president, took a photograph of the cheering crowd from the podium during a convention session.



Partner Development

We recommend:

Resource Awareness

1. Produce a video and brochures featuring members' success stories.
2. Incorporate the FFA emblem into business commercials and the Internet home pages of FFA supporters (i.e. "We are proud sponsors of the FFA").
3. Compile and publicize dates of state school board conventions and encourage state officer attendance.
4. Develop a promotional video featuring famous past FFA members.
5. Allow a free trial period for resources ordered.
6. Advertise in magazines that reach potential partners.
7. Send brochures featuring partner benefits along with the "partnership challenge" sheet to chapter presidents.

Opportunity Exploration

1. Develop a nationally structured program to incorporate collegiate FFA chapters as partners.
2. Provide business reply cards in *FFA New Horizons* to distribute information about partner development, scholarships, careers, career development events (CDEs) and conferences.
3. Explore opportunities to provide a business reply card in other national publications providing information about FFA and agricultural education programs.
4. Use partners to advertise through a variety of national media during National FFA Week.

Inter-FFA Relations

1. Encourage Agricultural Education Related Organizations (AEROs) to be involved in state and national conventions and provide information and reports from their organizations.
2. Promote FFA member availability to participate in partner functions.
3. Recommend the formation of a joint committee consisting of one representative from each AERO group and the FFA, to encourage interaction among organizations.

4. Distribute FFA publications to AERO groups with the possibility of a partner recognition section; encourage AERO group publications to be sent to National FFA.
5. Establish links between FFA and AERO groups' homepages.
6. Encourage developmental projects and activities between FFA and AERO groups.

Partnership Enhancement

1. Send *FFA New Horizons* and *FFA Advisors Making a Difference* to administrators and school boards.
2. Provide a news brief for chapter reporters to release to their communities.
3. Send the partner development flyers to advisors, and use as an insert for *FFA New Horizons* and *The Student Catalog*.
4. Create a "Star Partner" award on the local, state and national levels.
5. Seek national media coverage for national convention and other FFA related events.
6. Promote the job skill benefits of CDEs in publications and on the Internet.
7. Maintain partnerships with the National Association of Farm Broadcasters, even when convention moves to Kentucky.
8. Develop a Vocational Student Organization homepage.

Respectfully submitted:

Jake Worcester, KS (Chair)
Ben Lastly, OK (Vice Chair)
Shay Jones, AL
Tara Sackett, CO
Shelbie Sanoria, HA
Amy Fritch, MA
Ben Larson, MT
Eva Madrid, NM
Ryan Cammack, SD
Chantal Fortin, VT



FFA members took time from convention sessions to enjoy making crafts with their PALs. Many members enjoy the opportunity to become a mentor to a child and help them learn about agriculture through Partners in Active Learning Support (PALs).



FFA Publications

We recommend:

FFA Resource Publication

Internet Access

1. Improve FFA Internet access for the distribution of information to students, advisors and other professionals.
2. Continue developing state homepages to include a state listing of events.
3. Put *Proceedings* on the Internet.
4. Highlight a different state or region each week.
5. Frequently post upcoming activities.
6. Distribute all applications on the Internet.
7. Create lists of eye-openers, fund-raisers, quotes of the day or FFA tips of the day.
8. Create a visually appealing, exploratory area for Greenhands.
9. Improve hot topic listings and resources.
10. Continually update listing of FFA opportunities.
11. All publications should be available in Spanish upon request.
12. Explore possibilities of translation of publications in other languages.
13. Develop a point and click translation service on the Internet, and resources and information for non-English speaking students.
14. Include a survey in *FFA Advisors Making A Difference* to determine agriculture teachers' wants and needs.
15. Include eye-catching graphic features and increase use of borders and color.
16. Highlight tips from teachers in each region.
17. Advertise revisions to the magazine with a special cover.
18. Create a newsletter similar to *Leadership Connection* for chapter presidents to be included in *FFA Advisors Making A Difference*.

The Official FFA Manual

1. Put learning objectives at the beginning of each section to clarify contents.
2. Add study questions to the end of sections.
3. Add an index to the back of the manual.
4. Organize the information in a more logical way.
5. Expand the parliamentary procedure section.
6. Incorporate updated design features similar to revisions made in the *FFA Student Handbook*.
7. List the National FFA Center phone number and contacts for each initiative available.
8. Develop a survey on reorganizing the manual and publish in *FFA New Horizons* and *FFA Advisors Making a Difference*.
9. Label each page in the outer top corner with the appropriate sub-heading of the contents.

Agricultural Issues

FFA New Horizons

1. Highlight the following agricultural issues: trade, international agriculture, agricultural careers and new technology.
2. Present agricultural issues that affect members in an un-biased way.
3. Keep issues clear and concise.
4. Include pictures and quotes from experts and FFA members in each article.
5. Provide addresses after each article for further information.
6. Develop the following new sections: agricultural issues forum, a how-to section, question & answer, letter to the editor, new products and agricultural facts.
7. Keep focus on current issues, and include topics concerning agricultural careers.
8. Include more articles in which state officers relate personal experiences.
9. Place peer quotes with pictures.
10. Include workshop outlines that deal with agricultural issues.
11. Incorporate agricultural issues into the curriculum.
12. Crosslink content of issues with the current *FFA New Horizons* and *Leadership Connection*.
13. Include feature articles on innovative activities concerning agricultural education and industry.
14. Include links on the homepage for every agricultural group.
15. Develop a publication for first-year FFA members

Career Opportunities

1. Develop a publication that highlights diversified career opportu-

nities in agriculture and related fields. This publication would be distributed to members' parents, guidance counselors and administrators.

2. Enhance the "What is FFA" brochure with statistics of career success and distribute to counselors/administrators, business, members, special interest groups, elementary schools, and over the Internet.
3. Develop a video and corresponding curriculum focusing on alternative agriculture careers such as aquaculture, horticulture, etc., to be distributed to high school and middle school teachers and counselors.
4. Create an interchangeable bulletin board kit geared toward the general school population highlighting agricultural careers.
5. Develop a software package which provides career biographies and lesson plans for overall classroom incorporation of FFA and SAE.
6. Distribute a national thank-you letter to all FFA supporters highlighting how their individual support has promoted the FFA.
7. Create a state-based brochure highlighting specific agriculture careers using the same guidelines as the state inserts in *FFA New Horizons*, and distribute to core group.

FFA New Horizons

1. Design a cover in which the letters FFA are more visible to the readers.
2. Develop a cover with more than one picture to depict the magazine's contents.
3. Remove the address from the cover.
4. Diversify ads to appeal to the wide range of membership.
5. Include ads from colleges and universities.
6. Solicit new advertising.
7. Include a column in *FFA New Horizons* that highlights national staff members.
8. Feature an article about internship opportunities and how to obtain them.
9. Provide more information about the scholarship program.
10. Include articles that address urban agricultural issues.
11. Include articles that focus on chapter motivation and development.
12. Include a business reply card on which members can request information on areas of interest.
13. Include articles featuring National FFA Board issues so members are aware of the decisions that are being made, such as the relocation of the convention and the national center. Members' opinions can easily be obtained through magazine questionnaires.
14. Develop ways to create equal opportunities for all members by printing versions of *FFA New Horizons* in other languages such as Spanish.

Respectfully submitted:

Cody Nash, TX (Chair)
 Robbie Cason, FL (Vice Chair)
 Tracey Alexander, AL
 Michael Manning, AL
 Annie Clifton, AR
 Michelle Linde, AR
 Lisa Tucker, AR
 James Dalske, CA
 Nancy Gutierrez, CA
 Ryan Schohr, CA
 Kristin Hoozee, CO
 Dusty Holley, FL
 Jacob Clayton, GA
 Lehua Hauanio, HI
 Jason Hill, IL
 Abby Dougherty, IN
 Denise Swim, IN
 Grant Woodley, IA
 Matthew Ingram, KY
 Ashley LeBouf, LA
 Erin E. Long, ME
 Christy Berry, MI
 Kristin Prelesnik, MI
 Nikki Melton, MO
 Michael Downs, MS

Rachel Gilman, MT
 Sterlina Henson, NC
 Jessica Anderson, ND
 Erika Kenner, ND
 Jason DeCota, NH
 Sara Sherman, OH
 Amanda Hill, OK
 Dustin Tackett, OK
 Elizabeth Hollenbach, PA
 Jose Manuel Santiago Gonzalez, PR
 Jason Prince, SC
 Brad Parton, TN
 McKenzie Brown, TX
 Jared Harrell, TX
 Amanda Mercer, TX
 Jonathan Sandel, TX
 Rachel Williams, TX
 Gayle Cox, VA
 Jodi Shea, WA
 Ammy Bollinger, WI
 Ann Schmitz, WI
 Aaron Nichols, WV



Program of Activities

We Recommend:

1. That all committee and subcommittee chairs receive a copy of the suggested delegate agenda, instructions on preparation, an example format of recommendations, and a list of all committee members' addresses one month prior to convention.
2. That a room be designated as delegate headquarters which would include: a copy machine, two or three computers (possibly with Internet links), various office supplies, and refreshments, all for the use of delegates, chairs and vice-chairs.
3. That all materials from national FFA staff made available to the chairs and vice-chairs at SPC also be made available to the full committee.
4. That the national staff be encouraged to attend all committee meetings at the national convention if their schedules allow, especially the Monday evening meetings.
5. That all delegates be made aware that all proposals are recommendations, not actions.
6. That the meetings of the POA and Auditing committees be held directly after all committee reports have been turned in Tuesday evening.
7. That chairs and vice-chairs be informed of their responsibilities as members of the POA and Auditing committees through proposed agendas and copies of the previous year's committee reports.
8. That prior to the delegate dinner the chairs and vice-chairs meet with the national staff for approximately 30 minutes and meet with their respective subcommittee chairs for approximately 30 minutes to prepare for committee meetings.
9. That all immediate past committee chairs be given the opportunity to serve as assistant coordinators at the next national convention.

Respectfully submitted,
Cody Nash, TX (Co-chair)
Bree Bichon, TN (Co-chair)
Jake Worcester, KS
Brad Case, OK
Mark Gardner, OR
Andy Young, PA
Willy Morris, VA
Brian Valentine, WA
Michael Tauscher, WI
Lindsay Hill, WY



Sheryl Stanley concentrated during a convention session.





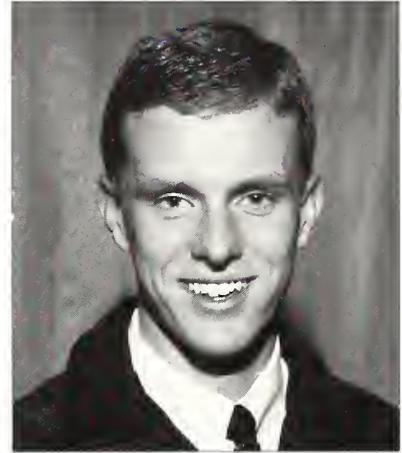
1996-97 National FFA Officer Team



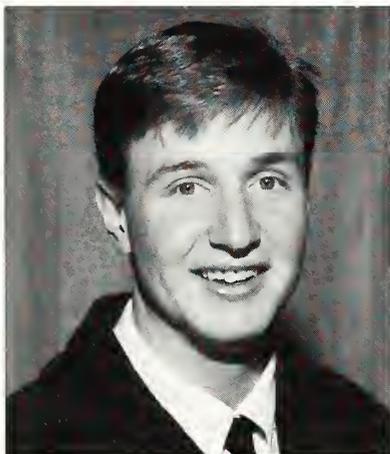
Corey Rosenbusch
President
Glen Rose, Texas
Age: 19
Chapter: Glen Rose FFA Chapter
Enterprise: swine
FFA State Office: Texas Association President
FFA Awards: second in state prepared and extemporaneous speaking contests
College/Major: Texas A&M University, freshman, agricultural development
Career Goal: agriculture instructor, politics



Holly Bentley
Secretary
Sabina, Ohio
Age: 19
Chapter: East Clinton FFA Chapter
Enterprise: swine, corn, soybeans, fruit and vegetable production
FFA State Office: Ohio Association President
FFA Awards: state prepared and extemporaneous speaking contests, job interview contest
College/Major: The Ohio State University, sophomore, agricultural education
Career Goal: agriculture instructor



Brad Montgomery
Central Region Vice President
McDonald, Kan.
Age: 19
Chapter: Cheylin FFA Chapter
Enterprise: sheep production, registered seed wheat production and agribusiness placement
FFA State Office: Kansas Association Secretary
FFA Awards: public speaking, livestock judging
College/Major: Kansas State University, sophomore, agricultural economics
Career Goal: marketing position in agribusiness



Ray Starling
Eastern Region Vice President
Autryville, N.C.
Age: 20
Chapter: Midway FFA Chapter
Enterprise: nursery crops, placement in production
FFA State Office: North Carolina Association Vice President
FFA Awards: national public speaking and parliamentary procedure
College/Major: North Carolina State University, junior, agricultural education
Career Goal: agriculture instructor



Charlie Jones
Southern Region Vice President
Billingsley, Ala.
Age: 20
Chapter: Billingsley FFA Chapter
Enterprise: horse production and forage crops
FFA State Office: Alabama Association Treasurer
FFA Awards: state dairy judging, public speaking
College/Major: Auburn University, junior, agricultural economics
Career Goal: agricultural law



Rachel Fehringer
Western Region Vice President
Peetz, Colo.
Age: 20
Chapter: Peetz FFA Chapter
Enterprise: horse production and agricultural placement
FFA State Office: Colorado Association President
FFA Awards: state public speaking and SERVISTAR vocational student of the year
College/Major: Colorado State University, junior, agricultural economics
Career Goal: agricultural law

The FFA Mission

*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.*

The 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 resource systems.

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