

OCTOBER 2006

ffa *new horizons*



THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

Countdown to Indy!

15 tips for a fabulous national convention

Fields of Gold

FFA members join governor at corn/ethanol bill signing

The Dirt on Floriculture

Do you have a future in flowers?



A close-up portrait of a woman with wavy brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a light-colored straw cowboy hat with a silver concho. She is wearing a brown leather jacket over a blue denim shirt and an orange t-shirt. The background is a solid bright yellow.

Cracked

three ribs

breaking the wildest horse on the ranch.

Took it like a man.

Better, actually.



A stiffer frame equals a
smoother ride. Weird, huh?

Let's have a moment of silence for
"rides like a truck!"

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BOLD MOVES



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Entrepreneurs Cheraton Dykes, left, and Mary Anna Pritchett use life skills they gained as FFA members to operate their successful flower shop in Dyersburg, Tenn. **Photo by Greg Emens**

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Blue & Gold News

Letter from the editor

In This Issue ...

Just as the national FFA convention has a new location this year, *FFA New Horizons* also has a new home.

Franklin, Tenn.-based Journal Communications Inc. is proud to be the new publisher of *FFA New Horizons* magazine, and our award-winning staff looks forward to getting to know you and learning about your FFA experiences.

You may see some minor changes in the next few issues, but get ready for a dramatic new look and exciting new direction for *FFA New Horizons* in 2007. Our team of designers, photographers and editors is working hard to make this magazine even more engaging and relevant to you.

So help us out. Feel free to send any suggestions, comments or opinions you have about *FFA New Horizons*. On this month's What's Hot page, you'll find a survey about *FFA New Horizons*. Take a few minutes to evaluate the magazine and give us your input by answering those questions. And come by our career show booth during this month's national convention and share your thoughts about *FFA New Horizons*.

In the meantime, check out this issue's convention insider, in which you'll find the latest information about the 79th National FFA Convention and what new activities are in store for you in Indianapolis. Be sure to

read the profiles of the musical guests who'll be appearing in concert at the convention and their ties to FFA. In the National Officer Q&A, Eastern Region Vice President Ryan Peterson shares his insider secrets for the convention and reflects on what this year's convention theme, "Blue Jackets, Gold Standards," means to him.

Our career guide introduces you to two former members who are making good in the floriculture industry, and the Your Money experts will show you the ins and outs of budgeting.

We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to hearing from you.

— Kim Newsom, associate editor



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National Officer Q&A

Meet National FFA Eastern Region Vice President Ryan Peterson



Ryan's secrets of success

1. Find mentors or heroes in your life who hold passions and values similar to yours. Let their examples and morals give guidance and direction to your life.
2. Practice humility, and accept that there is always someone out there more qualified or experienced than you. Let that motivate you to do your personal best and continuously raise the bar.
3. Don't strive to be the "best of the best." Simply strive for personal excellence, and your best will be seen and recognized.
4. Discover your big goals in life. To realize those goals, make smart choices that go hand in hand with your aspirations.
5. Above all things in life, respect your fellow man in a way you would appreciate being treated yourself.

A native of Niles, Mich., Ryan is a member of the Cassopolis FFA chapter and a sophomore at Michigan State University.

Who's your role model?

I have had a lot of role models throughout my life. My parents and

grandparents have had the strongest influences on who I am today, and my older brother and cousins paved the way for me to follow in my FFA career. Someone who has also helped me grow immensely as a person is Corey Flournoy, from Chicago, Ill., who served as 1994-95 National FFA President.

If you won a free trip to anywhere in the world, where would you go?

That's a tough choice. If I had a jeep full of camping gear, I could probably get "lost" in the outback of Australia for weeks and not even care. I think Australia has a culture and environment so unique from America, or any other part of the world, that it would be a lot of fun to experience.

What kinds of projects did you make as part of your agricultural mechanics supervised agricultural experience program?

I really enjoyed welding projects on the farm, especially those where there was an obvious difference in how the

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piece of machinery worked before and after repair. One reason I enjoyed the on-farm projects was because it gave my dad and me a good opportunity to spend time together and brainstorm ideas. Whether we were working on gravity wagons, front-end loaders or anything else, I took pride in fixing what was broken and bringing value to our farm equipment.

Do you have an embarrassing moment from this year you'd be willing to share?

I had an unfortunate experience with a rental car company once this year. Late one night, I picked up the keys for my rental car, and proceeded to the parking lot. But I couldn't find the car anywhere. I tried the keyless entry and panic buttons on the remote, but nothing. I finally went back into the airport terminal about 1 a.m., made some phone calls, and convinced the rental car attendant (who had already left for the evening) to return to the airport. He drove all the way back from

home to the airport, took my keys, and walked right up to the "missing" car. Without a word, he started the engine and got right back in his car and drove away. I was mortified.

What does this year's national convention theme, "Blue Jackets, Gold Standards" mean to you?

To me, this year's theme captures the essence of what and who we are – the largest student youth organization in the country. I believe people will leave this convention confident in the abilities of agricultural youth and our desire to take good care of our land and food, even amidst all the issues in today's society. They'll know that those in the blue jackets have what it takes to lead our industry because of the high standards the FFA organization holds for its members.

Can you give us any "insider secrets" about national convention?

It's going to be awesome! Conseco Fieldhouse will blow you away, and

FFA timeline

- 13 • joined Cassopolis FFA Chapter
- 15 • won FFA state Greenhand conduct of meetings contest
- 16 • named FFA Chapter Star farmer
- won state agriculture issues CDE
- 17 • elected FFA chapter president
- elected FFA regional president
- won FFA state parliamentary procedure CDE
- 18 • received State FFA degree
- lost FFA state job interview CDE
- elected FFA state president
- 19 • earned American FFA degree
- lost national FFA officer election
- 20 • elected national FFA eastern region vice president

the downtown Indianapolis area is going to be a blast. Of course with a new city we'll start some new traditions and do some things a little differently from before, so keep your eyes and ears open to the sights and sounds of a new convention town. You won't want to miss a second of it.

Check out Ryan's (and the other national officers') blog at ffa.org. ●



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FFA Faces

Members making a difference

Win a Chevrolet backpack!

Chevrolet, the sponsor of FFA Faces, will award FFA members featured here a heavy-duty backpack. Nominate yourself or a fellow FFA member by sending us a letter with the following details about the nominee: name, grade, address, phone number, e-mail address, FFA and academic achievements and extracurricular activities. To be considered, submissions must include a high-quality color photo.

Send to:
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Or e-mail to
newhorizons@ffa.org.

Nebraska



MITCH RENIEKE

As a University of Nebraska freshman majoring in agriculture, Mitch is relying on the skills he gained through his FFA involvement. This active Ord FFA member competed at the national level in range judging and participated in the livestock evaluation, land judging and envirothon career development events. Mitch also helps with community service projects and works for a local recycling center.

Wisconsin



WHITNEY RATHKE

This Random Lake FFA member is part of a state-winning livestock evaluation team and will be competing for top honors during the national convention. Whitney, who serves as chapter president, has organized an FFA volleyball tournament and Food For America program and was a delegate for the state convention last year. She was also named the Random Lake FFA Star Greenhand and Star Chapter Farmer.

Tennessee



TIFFANY GREENE

Named the 2006 Outstanding Student for her greenhouse management class at West Greene High School, Tiffany has received all A's in her agriculture courses and maintains a 3.0 grade-point average. She is currently the West Greene FFA student advisor and a two-year member of the FFA soils judging team. Active in her community, Tiffany is part of Tennessee Tomorrow and volunteered 68 service hours last year.

Colorado



SYDNIE DILLON-RASK

This Fort Lupton FFA junior has been a "star" of her chapter - quite literally. She was named the Star Greenhand, Star Chapter Farmer and last year the Outstanding Officer. She currently serves as chapter president and participates in parliamentary procedure, prepared public speaking and livestock evaluation. Sydnie plans to attend Colorado State University to major in animal science and agricultural education.

Puerto Rico



ALBERT TROCHE

This state reporter is a member of the Aurea E. Quiles FFA Chapter in Guanica, where his diverse supervised agricultural experience includes chicken eggs, art of bonsai and typical candies of Puerto Rico. Albert made history at last year's national convention as the first Puerto Rican in the national chorus. A high school senior, he plans to study chorus education at Inter American University in San German, Puerto Rico, next year.

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FFA Talk

What's on your mind?

The **BIG** question:

Here is your chance to respond to an FFA-related question. Here are your responses to our current question:

What's the most rewarding part of being an FFA member?

I enjoy being a member because I know FFA is part of everything. If I keep up with what's important in agriculture, I can make a REAL difference in my and other people's futures.

Brandi Harris, Bunnell, Fla.

The most rewarding part of being an FFA member is learning life lessons that I know I will use down the road. As an FFA member, I can change my life and others' lives, too. I can't express my feelings or the respect I have for this organization. That's why when I'm in my FFA jacket, I put a smile on my face, and say to myself, "This is great!"

Jake Garrett, Ashland, Mo.

The most rewarding part of being an FFA member is being able to learn more about agriculture and being a leader. There is always more you can learn about agriculture, and being in a leadership position gives you an opportunity to pass on what you have learned about agriculture and leadership to your fellow classmates to help them grow in their FFA careers.

Sara Biri, Farmington, Mo.

I think the most rewarding part is knowing that FFA has changed my life. I appreciate people a lot more now, and I can truly say how much I enjoy the friendships I've made through this organization.

Victoria Register, Seville, Fla.

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Show us your sign!



The Triton High School FFA Chapter in Dodge Center, Minn., hosts a summer garden program each year. We sell shares to the garden, and the purchasers receive the fruits, vegetables and other plants that are planted, cared for and harvested by our FFA chapter members.

Submitted by Nate Vrieze,
Triton FFA advisor



Our sign is made of Kansas limestone that was once used by early pioneers for fence posts and was a memorial gift from a longtime FFA supporter. The sign, which sits by the school greenhouse, is often used as a backdrop for pictures of successful career development event teams.

Submitted by Leslie Kile,
Superior FFA Chapter, Nebraska

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The National FFA Band, made up of musically talented FFA members from across the nation, keeps the convention lively.

15 ways to have a fun (and unforgettable) national FFA convention experience

By Kim Newsom

In less than a month, more than 50,000 members and guests will attend the national FFA convention in its new Indianapolis home. Some of you (like us) are probably making your convention plans already, deciding which events to attend, what attractions to see, where to eat, and so on. Here's a sneak peak at our convention "to-do" list. Feel free to add your own.

1 Connect with the past

Be a part of history in the making at the national convention, as the 1945-46 national officer team returns for its 60-year reunion. They'll take part in the third-session official ceremonies and be recognized for their longtime contributions to FFA and agriculture. Also enjoy motivational retiring addresses by the 2005-06 national officers as they end their year of service.

2 Explore Indy attractions

If you like fast cars and racing, consider visiting the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, home to the Brickyard 400, the legendary Indianapolis 500 and the Hall of Fame museum. Or check out the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Hall of Champions museum, where sports memorabilia spanning eight decades and a special NCAA 100th anniversary exhibit are displayed.

3 Help the community

A new event at this year's convention is the National FFA Day of Service, where some 1,000 members will spread community goodwill to five selected areas in Indianapolis. The volunteer activities include assembling food boxes, creating an outdoor classroom and living laboratory, landscaping a local park and constructing homes. Interested? Talk to your FFA advisor about signing up.

4 Catch some rodeo action

Hold on to your hats, the Dodge Xtreme Bulls Ride Hard Tour is making a stop at the national FFA convention. The rodeo circuit's best cowboys, including 2005 World Champion Bullrider Matt Austin, will compete for top honors against some of the country's toughest bulls. The two performances will be recorded by ESPN and aired in November. Don't wait – get your convention rodeo tickets now.

5 Make your TV debut

Ever wished your family and friends could see what the convention is like? Just tell them to tune in to RFD-TV, where all nine general sessions will air live. And for members not attending this year's event, check out convention highlights and behind-the-scenes looks at the largest annual youth convention held in the United States. For broadcast schedules, go to ffa.org.

Stroll downtown

Since the convention is right in the middle of downtown Indianapolis, there's plenty to do between sessions. The Indianapolis Zoo and White River Garden features the world's first fully submerged underwater Dolphin Adventure, where you can get a 360-degree view of the dolphins. Also nearby are an IMAX theater, the Circle Centre Mall, Union Station and restaurants galore.

Shop for new gear

The always-popular shopping mall is back, featuring convention souvenirs, FFA fashions, jewelry, gift items and chapter supplies. Visit the FFA Mega Store for the newest FFA T-shirts and other apparel, plus official dress, chapter supplies, certificates and much more. Vendors will also offer other merchandise like John Deere, Wrangler, Timberland and Carhartt.



Top: Current National FFA Officers Travis Jett, president; Jessie Geib, secretary; Ryan Peterson, vice president; Anita Estes, vice president; Stuart Joy, vice president; and Erica Der, vice president, will end their year of service during the national FFA convention. Center: The 1945-46 National FFA Officer team will be at the convention, celebrating their 60th anniversary. Below: During the convention's inaugural year in Indianapolis, members can enjoy Indy's downtown attractions.



Workshops held during the convention offer interactive lessons in leadership, community involvement and personal well-being. Right: Career development events (CDEs) like livestock judging will be held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds. Convention attendees can ride shuttle buses to tour the CDE competitions.



8 Attend a workshop

There's something for everyone among the 17 convention workshops, led by former FFA officers and industry professionals. Topics include developing leadership habits, learning new icebreakers for chapter meetings, becoming an agriculture advocate and embracing diversity, just to name a few. And of course they'll all be interactive, exciting and educational. For the complete workshop schedule, visit ffa.org.

9 Support your state

Learn more about career development events and cheer on your state by watching national CDE activities hosted at the convention. Walking tours of some events – including livestock evaluation, food science and technology, agricultural mechanics and nursery/landscape – will be offered, and the National Finals Hall is the place to go for the speaking and parliamentary procedure CDEs.

10 Meet other members

If you've ever wanted to meet a member from Alaska or Oregon or Delaware, here's your chance. Before one of the general sessions, head down to the delegate floor and introduce yourself to members from other associations. Every state is different, so find out what FFA and agriculture are like where they come from. Who knows? You might just make a lifelong friend or two.

Congratulations to the 2006 Cargill Community Scholarship Recipients

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 Jason Maple, Kokomo, IN
 Laura Maricle, Albany, NE
 Bethann Marker, Liberty, IN
 Melody Markum, Waco, TX
 Kayla Masek, Valparaiso, NE
 Stephanie Matescak, Homer Glen, IL
 Miranda Matousek, Glencoe, MN
 Derek Matthies, Parker, SD
 Mark McClure, Assaria, KS
 Tara McFarland, Bridgewater, VA
 Steven McGhee, Guthrie, KY
 Lacey McGinnis, Gilmer, TX
 Kelsey McMullen, Greendale, IN
 Marshall Merritt, Lorida, FL
 Kalie Metzger, Williamsport, OH
 Nicole Meyer, Clarinda, IA
 Caitlin Miller, Knoxville, IA
 Brent Miller, Rockwell City, IA
 Jakki Mize, Earlsboro, OK
 Jared Montgomery, Boise City, OK
 Kody Moody, Minneapolis, KS
 Amanda Mordhorst, Ute, IA
 Lindsey Morrical, Beverly, KS
 Megan Moss, Baylis, IL
 Natalie Nacke, Arcola, IL
 Abby Navinsky, Atchison, KS
 Michael Neal, Shreve, OH
 Amelia Neil, Randolph, MN
 Audra Nelsen, Wichita, KS
 Amanda Nelson, West Winfield, NY
 Holly Newcomer, Darlington, MO
 Lynae Nielsen, West Jordan, UT

Jared Niewohner, Lyons, NE
 Jennifer Nolte, Wayne, NE
 McKenzie Nygren, Johnstown, CO
 Kevin Obrecht, Loudonville, OH
 Emmylou O'Brien, Ord, NE
 Lisa Ortnier, Danbury, IA
 Tonya Parsons, South Coffeyville, OK
 Erik Pedersen, Underwood, IA
 Nicholas Pederson, Horton, KS
 Monica Pell, Rockford, IL
 Alyssa Penner, Wichita, KS
 Drew Perez, Nara Visa, NM
 Max Petersen, Muscatine, IA
 Taryn Pfeiffer, Ashton, IL
 Don Pham, Sioux City, IA
 Max Pippin, Aubrey, TX
 Bailey Ponton, Delphos, KS
 Lacey Pool, Lucas, KS
 Whitney Poole, Martell, NE
 Ann Poppen, DeSmet, SD
 Amelia Porter, New Madrid, MO
 Crystal Prater, Pleasant Hill, IL
 Joseph Raguse, Kansasville, WI
 Christopher Rapp, Rockville, MO
 Stacey Rathert, Lancaster, KS
 Tyler Rayl, Hutchinson, KS
 Mandi Rebrman, Beardstown, IL
 Jared Rees, Beverly, KS
 Lauren Reid, Fresno, CA
 Samantha Renalds, Bridgewater, VA
 Brittany Replogle, Prairie Grove, AR
 Krista Rice, Horton, KS
 Lori Richardson, Texico, NM
 Jared Richmond, Freedom, OK
 Amy Riexinger, Basom, NY
 Dean Ritter, Owensville, IN
 Michael Rogers, Horton, KS
 Whitney Rohan, Austin, TX
 Jonathan Rosario, Pembroke Pines, FL
 Nicole Rosencutter, Topeka, KS
 Julie Rudolph, Batavia, NY
 Anna Russell, Hickman, NE
 Rebecca Rust, China Township, MI
 Ashley Saegert, Siloam Springs, AR
 Christopher Sayers, Clarkson, NE
 Kimberly Saylor, Wakemans, OH
 Eric Scheller, Evansville, IN
 Chelsea Schenherr, Newton, KS
 Brandon Scherer, Grand Island, NE
 DeAnna Schertz, Delavan, IL
 Ann Scheuffler, Sterling, KS
 Jessica Schiller, Shaker Heights, OH
 Ryan Schirmer, Berryton, KS
 Emily Schneider, Smolan, KS
 Rebecca Schneider, Linn, MO
 Margaret Scholbrock, Des Moines, IA
 Melissa Schoon, Hebron, IN
 Nichole Schroder, Palmyra, NE
 Amber Schultz, Schoarie, NY
 Carl Schwarzer, Muscotah, KS
 Tara Scieszinski, Albia, IA
 Mary Seehafer, Hunter, KS
 Kristen Seifert, Oskaloosa, KS
 Keri Seitz, Mound City, MO
 Macy Sexson, Weskan, MO
 Jennifer Shelton, New Knoxville, OH
 Ashley Shenefelt, Auburn, NE
 Levi Short, Hamilton, KS
 Clark Siebert, Pretty Prairie, KS
 Staci Simpson, Downs, IL
 Samantha Sisk, Pembroke, KY
 Margaret Skoglund, Long Lake, MN
 Angela Slater, Bridgewater, VA

Eron Smith, Ozark, AR
 Charles Smith, Cary, NC
 Corey Smith, Bertrand, NE
 Sarah Smith, Martinsburg, PA
 Kaitlin Soehner, Idalia, CO
 Eva Spare, Assaria, KS
 Dorothy Spencer, Yale, IL
 Jessica Spiehs, Cairo, NE
 Dustin Spillman, Clinton, KY
 Amanda Stade, Jackson, MN
 Kimberly Stassen, Kerkhoven, MN
 Jonathan Stech, Osmond, NE
 Amy Steger, New Vienna, IA
 Lorne Stitt, Helmville, MT
 Josiah Stoller, Paulding, OH
 Jany Strnad, Munden, KS
 Alyssa Strong, Wilcox, NE
 Robert Stuard, Trenton, KY
 Douglas Sullivan, Prairie Grove, AR
 MacKenzie Sullivan, Carthage, NY
 Jessica Suman, Wilshire, OH
 Andrew Swank, Crawfordville, IN
 Kevin Swanson, Thurston, NE
 Tanner Synhorst, Knoxville, IA
 Si Li Tang, Spearman, TX
 Catherine Terando, Granville, IL
 Courtney Thompson, Baton Rouge, LA
 Andrew Tjaden, Eldora, IA
 Erin Toby, Seneca, KS
 Brittany Turner, Hartford, KY
 Brice Turner, Harrod, OH
 Andrew Uerling, McCook, NE
 Peter Ulrich, Lasalle, CO
 Jessica Ulrich, Luray, KS
 Katelin Unruh, Durham, KS
 Miranda Uriell, Lakota, ND
 Laura Valdmanis, Prior Lake, MN
 Ashley Vann, Topeka, KS
 James Vaughan, Fairfield, IL
 Renee M. Vavroch, Cedar Rapids, IA
 Julie Vitt, St. Paul, KS
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 Bradley Walker, Blanco, TX
 Rachel Wall, Iowa City, IA
 Russell Ward, Frederick, IL
 Christopher Ward, Mankato, MN
 Branan Weave, Washington C.H., OH
 Christine Weaver, Sebring, FL
 Christopher Weller, Gypsum, KS
 Wendi Wendt, Nicollet, MN
 Scott Williams, Franklin, IN
 Dwane A. Wills III, Marshall, MO
 Nathan Wilson, Blanco, TX
 Stephen Winner, Yorkshire, OH
 Dirk Wiseman, Ord, NE
 Matthew Wittig, Astoria, IL
 Aaron Wolf, Dixon, IL
 Zachary Woodward, Minden, NE
 Cassidy Yato, Oconto Falls, WI
 Clardon Yosten, Clarkson, NE
 Cami Zahn, Buhler, KS



For more information go to
www.cargill.com or
www.ffa.org.



11 Get hypnotized

You might find yourself “getting very sleepy” if you volunteer for one of the convention hypnotist shows, sponsored by the National FFA Alumni Association. Drs. Jim Wand and Al Snyder will keep you on the edge of your seat as they influence participants through hypnotism.

12 Capture the memories

An amazing, life-changing event like the national FFA convention is an experience you’ll want to remember. Stop by the FFA Shopping Mall to order your copy of *Proceedings*, which features convention photography, award listings and the national officers’ retiring addresses. And don’t forget to also order a copy of the convention video – new this year. It’ll include session highlights and candid clips from convention activities. To order, visit ffa.org.



The beautifully landscaped National FFA Center sits on the northwest side of Indianapolis and will be open for tours during the convention.

13 Plan for your future

Discover potential careers and explore job-training options in the huge FFA Agricultural Career Show. With some 1,300 booths representing colleges, agriculture-related companies, U.S. Armed Services, auto and truck manufacturers, and state FFA associations, the show offers a unique career-searching experience. Be sure to spend some time talking to business representatives, who’ll be on hand to answer your questions.

14 Visit FFA headquarters

While in Indianapolis, take some time to tour the National FFA Center on the northwest side of the city. Opened in 1998, the center is home to all things FFA, including a history exhibit, portraits of every national officer team, the distribution center for FFA merchandise and beautiful outdoor gardens. Tours will be open Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

15 Share your experiences

After returning home from the 79th National FFA Convention, be sure to tell other chapter members about the highlights of the convention. You could document your convention memories in a journal and maybe publish excerpts in a future chapter newsletter. Or put together a photo display in your agriculture classroom. The national FFA convention experience is too great to keep to yourself – pass it on. ●



For the first time in convention history, attendees can order videos that will feature session highlights and behind-the-scenes looks. The video can be used for recruitment, FFA promotion or just to remember the convention experience.

Proud of your community service?



Attention FFA members! Tell your advisor that your chapter wants to be a part of the challenge.

Visit the 1MHC web page and download a worksheet that will help compile hours for your advisor.

CHAPTER ADVISORS -- Here's how you log the hours:

1. Visit ffa.org and click 1MHC logo
 2. Log into MyFFA
 3. Click Manage My Profile
 4. Scroll down to FFA Chapter Project Submissions
 5. Click Add New Project
- Service projects from Nov. 1, 2005 through Oct. 1, 2006 can be logged as a part of the 1MHC.

*For more information, contact:
Joe Martinez, 317-802-4316.*



Win \$1,000 and a spot on TV!

Those who log their service hours have a chance to win in one of the categories below. All winners will be recognized on FFA.org and a future episode of FFA Today! on RFD-TV.

- **Most service hours by a state**
 - **Most unique service project by a chapter**
 - **Most service hours by a chapter**
- The winning chapter will receive a \$1,000 Living to Serve Award to be put towards a new service project or expand on an existing service project!



LOG YOUR SERVICE HOURS

Business Is Blooming



Former FFA members find successful careers in flowers

By Kim Newsom

Photos by Greg Emens

Little did Mary Anna Pritchett and Cheraton Dykes know at the time, but their high school FFA experiences would lead them to entrepreneurial careers as florists.

While members of the Dyersburg FFA chapter in Tennessee, the sisters participated in the floriculture career development event (CDE), and Dykes' supervised agricultural experience program (SAE) included placement at a local floral shop.

"I knew that I really liked working with flowers, but I didn't expect that I would make a career of it," Dykes says. "After high school, I got a college degree in agribusiness, but I kept coming back to this type of job."

Continuing to help during summers and weekends at the Dyersburg shop where she had first learned her craft, Dykes realized that floriculture was a growing field, and she was well-prepared to enter it.

Nine years ago, Dykes and Pritchett decided to start their own floral shop and named it Blossoms. The Dyersburg, Tenn.-based store offers floral design services, delivery, and an in-store gift shop. The sisters and their staff arrange flowers for holidays, special events, and for customers who order flowers "just because." They admit that it takes an eye for design and a creative flair to keep up with current floral trends.

"The two most important skills you need to have in this business are creativity and good people skills," Dykes says. "Our regular customers expect us to have unique, innovative



Blossoms owners Mary Anna Pritchett, left, and Cheraton Dykes agree that good floral design requires creativity and patience.



designs that they can't find anywhere else but more importantly provide them with top-notch service."

Their approach to customer relations is working well, since their business grows steadily each year. Last year, Blossoms preordered 2,500 roses for Valentine's Day and ended up ordering 500 more because of customer demand.

Pritchett says she credits much of the shop's success to her experiences as an FFA member.

"Just being active in the chapter and our community service projects gave me a lot of contacts for our business," Pritchett says. "And I learned how to communicate well with others, cater to their needs, and efficiently run a business."

Realizing the career skills they gained through FFA, Dykes and Pritchett now help to "give back" to the local chapters. Blossoms is a loyal sponsor for chapter banquets and special events. They also host FFA members for tours and teach students how to make corsages and bud vases.

Many colleges, like The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, and Joliet Junior College in Joliet, Ill., offer two-year programs in floral design and marketing. Typical courses include principles of floral design, holiday and sympathy arrangements, flower identification and proper storage.

But floral design isn't the only career you can have working with plants and flowers. For example, you can pursue a career in greenhouse management, flower grading, cell biology, or even writing for a gardening or flower magazine. The opportunities are endless.

If you have an interest in floriculture, talk to your advisor today about participating in the floriculture CDE. For more information about careers in this field or colleges that offer floriculture or similar majors, contact your guidance counselor. ●



To complement its fresh-flower arrangements, Blossoms also sells gift items and home decor. Pritchett says the additional items help draw more customers into the store.



Bright Prospects

Rabobank is proud to support FFA

Rabobank is committed to financing the success of America's farmers and ranchers. We are proud to co-sponsor the National FFA Organization's New Century Farmer program together with Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. and to invest our financial resources and agricultural expertise in the future of U.S. farming.

We congratulate the 40 students selected as "New Century Farmers" for the 2006 program:

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Todd Rovey

California

Scott Rominger

Colorado

Jason Vermillion

Idaho

Reid Bowen

Illinois

J. Ryan Norton
Justin Rahn
Brett Swanson

Indiana

John Burcham
Evan Hall
Adam Hurm

Iowa

Javan Kruse
Brad Peters
Jared Preston
Ryan Vavroch

Kansas

Dan Atkisson
Shawn Taddiken

Kentucky

J. Drew White

Michigan

Nathan Baker

Minnesota

Anthony Kasper
Scott Runck
Rachel Wulf

Missouri

Alesa Raasch
Megan Schmidt
Eric Schoff
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Nebraska

Tyler Most

New Jersey

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New York

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Jason Roise

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Nicholas Miller

Oklahoma

Chance Simpson

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Chevrolet Presents



On Stage



Chevrolet is proud to once again sponsor the FFA Convention Concert Series, and this year's lineup can be described in one word: **HOT!**

The combination of award-winning country music artists, an FFA Mega Concert and acoustic performances will be sure to keep you entertained and singing along to some of country's hottest tunes.

Carrie Underwood, named the 2006 Academy of Country Music New Female Vocalist of the Year, headlines the FFA Mega Concert on Wednesday, Oct. 25, and she's joined by Keith Anderson and Jason Aldean, the 2006 ACM New Male Vocalist of the Year. The Mega Concert, expected to be the biggest

FFA musical event ever, will be held in the RCA Dome and attended by more than 25,000 FFA members and guests.

Thursday night also features star power, with headliner Blake Shelton and opening artists Jamie O'Neal and Trent Willmon, who, by the way, is a former FFA member and chapter officer from Afton, Texas.

The Chevy booth in the FFA Career Show will also host several up-and-coming musicians, including Jake Owen and Jason Meadows.

Inside this special music section, you can read more about convention performers and their journeys to country music success. See you at the concerts!



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CHEVY We love that you love country music. That's why we proudly present the National Convention Concert Series. 



On Stage

Main Stage Artists



Carrie Underwood

By Jenni Betts

Down-Home Idol

Carrie Underwood was settled on becoming a behind-the-scenes broadcast journalist at a local Oklahoma news station until one event changed her plan – she won the biggest talent show in America.

It seems the “American Idol” winner was meant to work in front of the camera rather than behind it.

“I never thought that any of this would actually happen to me,” Underwood says. “These kinds of things only happen to imaginary characters on television or in the movies – not real people.”

As a child, Underwood competed in local talent shows but rarely came out the winner. Casting her musical tendencies aside, Underwood headed into a more practical business world, receiving a degree in journalism from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla.

With some push from her friends and family, she decided to audition in St. Louis for the 2005 “American Idol.”

The rest, as they say, is history.

Arista Records soon signed her after her big win, and in 2006, Underwood released her debut album, “Some Hearts.”

With three powerful singles out already, “Jesus, Take the Wheel,” “Some Hearts” and “Don’t Forget to Remember Me,” Underwood is wasting no time in making a name for herself.

Underwood says through this journey, she continues to learn a lot about herself and doesn’t plan on forgetting how she got here.

“I guess things like this do happen to normal people,” she says. “I don’t know how or why I am this lucky, but I hope I continue to be for many years to come — and I hope I never forget where I came from.”

Check out Carrie Underwood’s CD, “Some Hearts.” For more information visit carrieunderwoodofficial.com.

Brave New Album

Jamie O’Neal can attribute her love of music and entertaining to her parents, who met while her mother was performing on “Australian Bandstand.” After O’Neal and her sister were old enough to sing, their parents added the girls to the act and traveled the United States on performances.

Now that she’s all grown up, O’Neal is making hit singles of her own and expanding her songwriting further than ever in her latest album, “Brave.”

“The goal in making this album was to allow the audience to know me better,” she says. “You only have 11 songs to show what you’re all about, and I feel like the first album was just the tip of the iceberg. So I wanted to dig a little deeper.”

With two Grammy-nominated, No. 1 singles, “There Is No Arizona” and “When I Think About Angels,” under her belt, O’Neal seems to be digging

in all the right places.

Even before her stand-alone success, O’Neal was landing on albums for country stars LeAnn Rimes and Chely Wright and on soundtracks for *Bridget Jones’s Diary* and *We Were Soldiers*.

O’Neal also received the Top New Female Vocalist award from the Academy of Country Music in 2001.

To top things off, O’Neal added motherhood to her list of achievements. Her first child was born in 2003 and marked a new step not only in her life, but also in her songwriting.

“Nearly everything changed once I became a mother – the way I felt about life and the way I looked at different things,” she says. “My writing has definitely changed, so a lot of my songs are geared toward the emotions of being a parent and raising a family and just looking at the world through a parent’s eyes.”

Check out Jamie O’Neal’s CD “Brave.” For more information visit jamieoneal.com.



Jamie O’Neal



Trent Willmon

FFA Prepares a Best Seller

Singer/songwriter Trent Willmon proves that FFA prepares you for more than life in agriculture. It prepares you for life in general.

Growing up in Texas, Willmon was president of his FFA chapter and won numerous blue ribbons for livestock judging and public speaking. He even earned an agricultural scholarship to South Plains College in Levelland, Texas.

Perhaps it was the skills learned through FFA, coupled with his fondness for country music, that prepared Willmon for a successful songwriting career.

"Ever since I can remember, I've been a country music fan. The other kids were listening to rock 'n' roll," he

says. "But country's always been my favorite kind of music."

In 1998, Trent signed his first songwriting contract. He was writing music for country stars like Julie Roberts, McHayes, Montgomery Gentry and Darryl Worley.

But Willmon knew he was more than just a songwriter. He was a performer.

After a disastrous performance in front of a talent scout, though, Willmon thought his days in the entertainment business were numbered. Yet, after a second performance at a small venue in Nashville, four record labels approached him.

In 2004, he burst onto the country music scene with his self-titled debut album, "Trent Willmon," and hasn't stopped since.

Willmon recently released his sophomore album, "A Little More Livin'," in June 2006.

The album, featuring the single "On Again Tonight," became the best-selling new country album the first week of its release, with nearly 16,000 copies sold.

"I'm really excited and happy that the album did so well its first week out. It's true to our live show and to who I am," he says. "It so means a lot to me that the fans have reacted to it the way they have."

Check out Trent Willmon's CD "A Little More Livin'." For more information visit trentwillmon.com.

Chevrolet Career Show Stage schedule

Wednesday, Oct. 25

1:30 p.m.	Jason Aldean (signing only)
3:00 p.m.	Keith Anderson (signing only)
4:30 p.m.	Carrie Underwood (signing only)

Thursday, Oct. 26

10:30 a.m.	Jason Meadows
Noon	Jake Owen
1:30 p.m.	Trent Willmon (signing only)
3:00 p.m.	Jamie O'Neal (signing only)

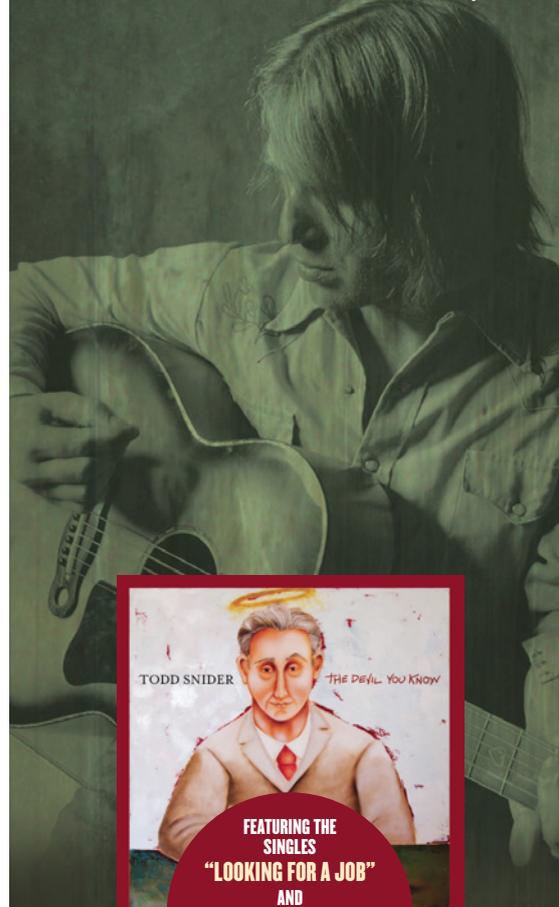
Friday, Oct 27

10:30 a.m.	Gary Nichols
Noon	Luke Bryan
1:30 p.m.	Taylor Swift
3:00 p.m.	Elizabeth Cook

*Schedule subject to change

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On Stage

Main Stage Artists

Moving Beyond 'Austin'

Although Blake Shelton has been in the country music spotlight since 2001, his music and his approach to it show no signs of dimming.

"I'm starting to become an artist instead of the guy who can sing all kinds of songs," Shelton says. "I don't

know – ultimately – what kind of artist I'll be, but at least I'm starting to see the road that I'm headed down."

Blake moved from Oklahoma to Tennessee at age 17 and in July 2001 released his debut self-titled album, "Blake Shelton." He immediately scored a No. 1 hit with the single "Austin" and was named Breakthrough Artist of the

Year by *Radio & Records* magazine.

Since then, Shelton's music magic hasn't disappeared.

In 2005, Shelton released the album "Barn & Grill," which was widely acclaimed. Among his achievements, Shelton scored a Radio Music Award Song of the Year nomination for his single "Some Beach." The song also landed on a CBS movie.

And that's not the only song singling this star out. He recently made a run on Great American Country's "Top 20 Countdown" with the video for "Nobody But Me," and also began a tour with Rascal Flatts in 2006. But Shelton isn't letting all this success overflow his cowboy hat.

"Somebody can always find something about me to really like or hate, but let's keep all that stuff aside and make it about country music because that's all it's about to me," he says.

"Barn & Grill" was certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America after selling 500,000 copies.

Check out Blake Shelton's CD "Barn & Grill." For more information visit blakeshelton.com.

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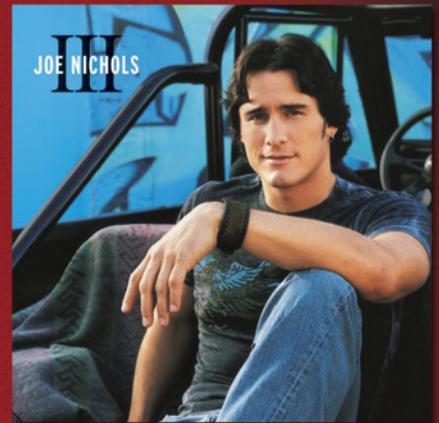


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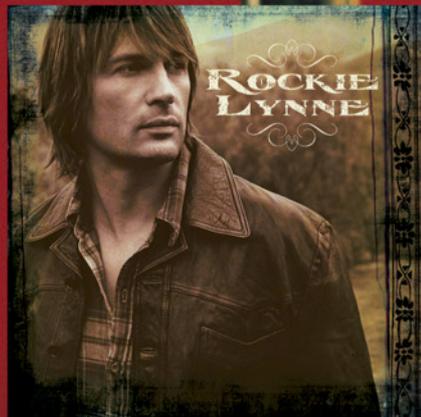
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On Stage

Main Stage Artists



Keith Anderson

Brains and Braun

Keith Anderson first discovered his love of country music while watching his brother, Brian, sing in a high school talent show.

“All these girls were going nuts, and he wasn’t the athlete. That’s when I got my first taste of how cool music was,” he says.

At the time, Anderson’s musical tastes were rooted in the likes of Kenny Rogers, James Taylor, Boston and Willie Nelson. After realizing his newfound love for music, Anderson got his first gig as a backup drummer for his brother at their local church. Anderson went on to graduate first in his class from Oklahoma State University with a degree in engineering, but he never forgot his first love – country music. In 1998 Anderson decided to uproot and try his luck in Nashville.

After many long nights as a waiter, Anderson had a small breakthrough in 2002 when his band won a local talent competition. He opened for Montgomery Gentry and gained some invaluable endorsements.

With his energetic performances and boyish good looks, Anderson was soon drawing crowds – and a record label – of his own. These days, the artist’s cup overfloweth, and so does his fan appreciation.

“The fans are great, and I try to treat them right. That’s my family. Those are the people I come from. I am one of them,” he says.

Check out Keith Anderson’s CD “Three Chord Country and American Rock & Roll.” For more information visit keithanderson.com.

Fifth Year’s a Charm

After five years of unsuccessful attempts to make it in Nashville, Jason Aldean nearly walked away from his dream of country music stardom.

Lucky for country music he didn’t.

Just weeks after the artist hit rock bottom, a talent scout happened to hear Aldean perform at a Nashville venue.

“I got off stage and this guy walked up to me. He said, ‘I like what you’re doing, and I’d like to talk to you. What are your plans?’” Aldean says.

Just five weeks later, he was signed to Broken Bow records, and in 2005, he released his debut album, “Hicktown.”

Although Aldean didn’t know how rough the ride would be, he always knew he wanted to be a country music singer.

“One day I was sitting at home watching the country-music awards on TV. ... Then I suddenly got up and told my mom, ‘I think I’m ready to get on stage and just see what happens, see how it goes,’” he says.

Aldean followed his dream by moving to Nashville from Macon, Ga., at 21 years old. Almost immediately after he moved, Aldean received a songwriting contract and then a recording deal.

“I thought it was so easy when I got here. I was here a month, and I got offered a deal. I thought, ‘This is great. I should have moved up here five years ago.’ And then I got a reality check. Guess what: It’s not that easy.”

Aldean’s second label dropped him in 2000. And it was several years before much of anything career-wise happened for Aldean.

But when it did happen in 2005, it was music to Aldean’s ears.

“I have waited a long time to make a record like this, and all I can say is, this album is real, it’s true and it’s me.”

Check out Jason Aldean’s CD “Hicktown.” For more information visit jasonaldean.com.



Jason Aldean

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On Stage Acoustic Stage Artists



Jason Meadows

The Oklahoma native and former Calera FFA member first wowed fans in the USA Network’s series “Nashville Star,” and with his first single, “Big Shot.” A traditionalist, Meadows is influenced by musicians like Merle Haggard, George Strait and Hank Williams Jr. and is also quick to recognize his FFA advisor, Gerald Parks, for teaching him “the rights and wrongs in life.” Meadows’ sophomore album, “100% Cowboy,” will be released this fall.



Jake Owen

He’s leapt into the country music scene with his hit single “Yee Haw,” but Owen didn’t always plan on becoming a musician. In fact, the talented golfer aspired to play professionally alongside Tiger Woods and other golf greats. Yet when a water-skiing injury ended his golf career, Owen picked up a guitar and learned to play and sing his favorite classic country songs. With his debut album, “Startin’ With Me,” Owen is now performing his own.

ffa/new horizons

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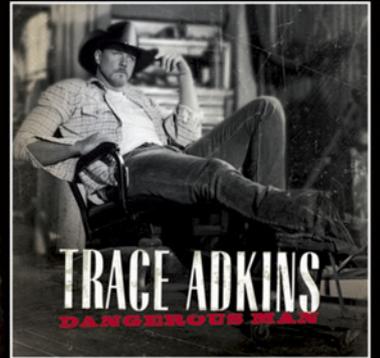


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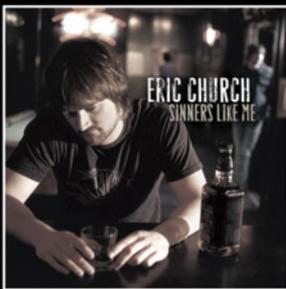
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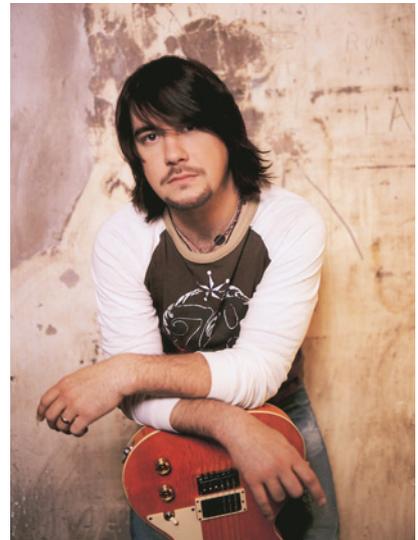
On Stage

Acoustic Stage Artists

Gary Nichols

With musical influences ranging from Merle Haggard to Led Zeppelin, this Alabama-born artist mixes country, soul and Southern rock into his songs. And it's given Nichols a sound that's all his own. The

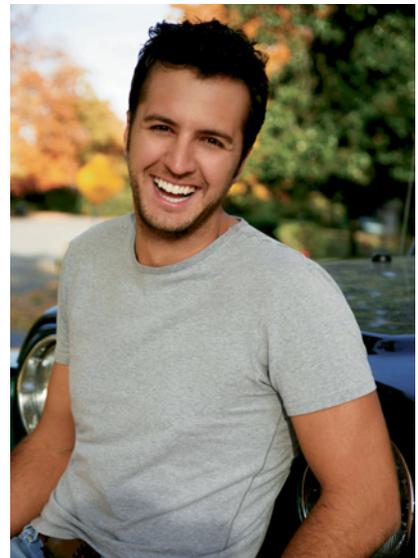
talented singer/songwriter/instrumentalist began entering competitions at age 4 and joined his first country band just two years later. Nichols' practice and childhood ambitions are paying off, as he's now living out his musical dream with his first mainstream single, "Unbroken Ground."



Gary Nichols

Luke Bryan

This Georgia native grew up listening to traditional country music while working on his family's peanut, corn and cotton farm in rural Leesburg. Bryan says the support of hometown fans helped him develop his musical talents. Today he relies on those rural experiences and the unique culture of the South for musical inspiration, and many of his songs on his debut album reflect the region he's proud to call his home.



Luke Bryan

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Taylor Swift

With maturity and grace well beyond her 16 years, this straight-A high school student balances normal teenage experiences with life as a full-fledged recording artist. Swift admits that she is fascinated with love and writes many of her songs based on adolescent admiration and young romance. Her debut single, "Tim McGraw," describes how music can evoke the sweetest of memories. However, Swift doesn't shy away from more serious issues, and several of her songs address self-esteem, confidence and image.



Elizabeth Cook

A regular at the Grand Ole Opry, Cook performs country music with a contemporary feel. This former Florida FFA member and chapter parliamentarian says her musical parents, who both played in Florida country bands, fueled her interest in singing. Her latest album, "This Side of the Moon," showcases her rich voice and tenured songwriting abilities, and you may have seen her latest video, "Before You Go That Far," on the Great American Country network. ●

ffa/new horizons

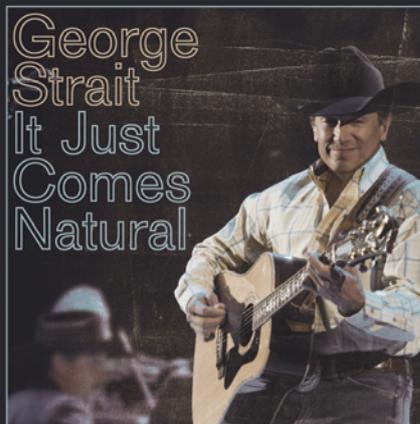
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Budgeting 101

To become a smart spender, record your daily expenses and set limits

By Chris Hayhurst

If you're like most teens, spending money is not a problem. There are, after all, plenty of ways to empty your wallet. No, the hard part is not the spending itself; it's doing so wisely. So how do wise spenders make the most of their hard-earned cash? The answer is simple: First, they create a budget. Then, no matter what, they stick to that budget like glue.

Starting out

If you think creating a budget sounds painful, you're right – in a way. It does require some belt-tightening. And you might dislike the limits you're forced to set. But over time you'll see that budgeting makes sense. A good budget not only helps your money last longer, it also leaves more to spend for the things you need most. If you budget your money well, you won't run out before that next paycheck comes in.

To begin, of course, you need a

source of income. You could earn cash through a part-time job, or maybe you have an allowance. Whatever the case, the money must come from somewhere. The solution, for most, is fairly straightforward: work.

Write it down

With money coming in, the next step is to crunch the numbers. Grab a pencil and a calculator, and find your bottom line. After taxes, how much do you make each month? (For example let's say, \$250.) From that, subtract whatever you need to save each month for big future expenses like college tuition or your first car (say, \$50). Also subtract the money you'll need for any predictable recurring costs (like club dues, loan repayments, etc.), if any. The resulting number is the figure you have to work with (in this case, \$200). If the number is negative, you have two choices: Reduce your expenses or find a better job.

Next, divide by four ($\$200/4 = \50). This is your weekly budget. So what can you spend it on? That's up to you, but here's a word of advice: prioritize. Budget first for the things you really need, and then for those things you really want. If, for example, you like to go to the movies, set aside the \$7.50 it costs for one ticket per week. Ice cream: another \$3. Music downloads ... You get the picture. Write everything down in a journal, and keep it in a safe place. With your budget in ink, it's a lot harder to ignore.

Track your spending

As each week progresses, keep track of your spending. Record each item you bought and how much it cost. If you need to, make adjustments to your figures as you near the end of the week. If Saturday comes around and you've already spent every last dime you allotted yourself, you'd better think twice about your plans. Whatever you do, don't exceed your weekly or monthly limits.

After your first full month of expense recording, add everything up and see where you stand. If there's money left over, you can treat yourself to something special. Or better yet, you can add it to your savings.

Sticking it out

Ultimately, good budgeters follow several rules: First, they're realistic about their means. They know what they have to spend, and they stay within their bounds. Second, they're meticulous record keepers. Everything, no matter how cheap or expensive it is, is committed to paper. Finally, and perhaps most important, they're good decision makers. They understand the value of financial responsibility, and they're never afraid to admit that, quite often anyway, the best things in life are free. ●



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Stephen Cherry

Kayla Garrison of Missouri's Carthage FFA Chapter receives a signed copy of the new ethanol bill from Gov. Matt Blunt. Right: The Missouri Department of Agriculture estimates that the ethanol bill will raise the state's corn value by \$41 million.

Fields of Gold

Missouri FFA members join governor at agriculture-friendly ethanol bill signing

By Jenni Betts

Missouri's corn growth is anything but stunted, thanks to the new Missouri Renewable Fuel Standard Act.

The law, signed in July by Gov. Matt Blunt, requires that all gasoline sold in Missouri be blended with 10 percent ethanol by 2008. As explained in the law, the ethanol must be agriculturally derived – mostly from corn.

“It means Missouri cornfields will be the oil fields of the 21st century,” says Blunt. “This renewable fuel standard benefits consumers, our economy, the environment and Missouri farmers.”

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, corn-based ethanol produces fuel that runs cleaner and often costs less at the pump than traditional fuels. Not to mention that it will increase marketability of Missouri-grown corn.

A University of Missouri study estimated the fuel standard act would raise the value of the state's corn crop by \$41 million at the farm level annually. It also means farmers can expect a 5-to-15 cent increase in price per bushel, as the new ethanol standard is enacted. And with a projected 55 million bushels of corn demanded each year by the ethanol plants, Missouri corn growers can expect to stay busy.

In July, Blunt signed the bill at eight Missouri locations and at several of his stops invited local FFA members to participate in the events. The governor presented each FFA

representative with a signed copy of the bill, and some members were even invited to travel with him.

“It was very important to [the governor] to involve these young people,” says Dan Engemann, assistant to the director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture. “FFA represents the future of our state's agriculture and leadership, and ethanol represents the future of fuel in this country.”

During Gov. Blunt's stop in Carthage, Kayla Garrison, Carthage FFA president and area nine regional vice president, participated in the signing of the ag-friendly bill.

“I felt privileged to be included in something that was so important,” she says.

After the bill signing, Gov. Blunt spoke briefly with Garrison and the four other FFA members in attendance about the positive effects of the bill.

Garrison says she and her fellow FFA members are excited about the new law.

“A lot of people grow corn in this area, and it could increase their profits and help them out a little bit,” Garrison says. “It is also good for the environment.”

As Garrison and the other FFA members learned during Gov. Blunt's visits, the 10 percent ethanol blend should reduce harmful tailpipe carbon monoxide emissions by 30 percent, making it a win-win situation for Missouri farmers and consumers alike. ●

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urbanization
global warming
food safety
pollution
disease

TOP 5 INFLUENTIAL WOMEN

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harriet tubman
hillary clinton
susan b. anthony
eleanor roosevelt

TOP 5 INFLUENTIAL MEN

martin luther king jr.
george washington
franklin delano roosevelt
benjamin franklin
john f. kennedy

TOP 5 TRAVEL SPOTS

australia
ireland
england
italy
france

TOP 5 CAREERS

veterinarian
teacher
marine biologist
law enforcement
nurse

TOP 5 FFA FUNDRAISERS

donkey basketball
bulb sale
fruit sale
dog show
plant sale

TOP 5 MOVIES

harry potter and the goblet of fire
walk the line
the longest yard
the emperor's new groove
the dukes of hazzard

TOP 5 REASONS TO BE IN FFA

activities
community involvement
meeting new people
convention
working with animals

TOP 5 VEHICLES

ford mustang
ford f-150
chevy silverado
honda civic
dodge ram

TOP 5 MUSIC STYLES

rock
country
alternative
hip-hop
rap

TOP 5 PIZZA TOPPINGS

pepperoni
cheese
bacon
pineapple
sausage

All of the surveys sent to FFA New Horizons are used in tabulating the above results. Here are the FFA chapters (in alphabetical order) that sent in the most surveys.

Nelson County FFA
Kentucky

Nonnewaug FFA
Connecticut

Oak Harbor FFA
Ohio

Seacoast FFA
New Hampshire

Tulare FFA
California

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This month, we'd like to know what's hot about *FFA New Horizons*. This magazine is for YOU, so give us your opinions and ideas.

What kinds of stories do you like to read in *FFA New Horizons*?

What's your favorite department (regular feature) in the magazine?

What kinds of non-FFA information would you like to read in *FFA New Horizons*? _____

What suggestions do you have for improving the magazine?

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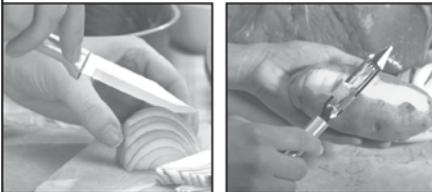
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LAST LAFF

Q: How do you catch a unique rabbit?

A: Unique up on it.

Jessica Davis
Berea, Ky.

Q: What do you call a smart genie?

A: A "genie"-us

Lorena Downey
Gainesville, Texas

Q: What kind of milk comes from a forgetful cow?

A: Milk of amnesia

Koltan Schaaf
Uniontown, Kan.

Q: Why don't little fish sleep at night?

A: They are afraid of the shark.

Victoria Register
Seville, Fla.

Q: What do you call a pig that knows karate?

A: A pork chop

Katey Melland
Live Oak, Fla.

Q: What kind of construction do canines do?

A: Woof work

Alex Ellison
Eolia, Mo.

Q: How can you tell the ocean is friendly?

A: It waves.

Myriah Morris
Silverhill, Ala.

Q: What magazine does a cow subscribe to?

A: *Cowsmopolitan*

Sara Moran
Bell, Fla.

Q: Why did the cat join the Red Cross?

A: Because she wanted to be a first-aid kit.

Ben Walbert
Walkerton, Ind.

Q: What do you pick and throw the outside away, then eat the outside and throw away the inside?

A: An ear of corn

Rogina Evers
Forest Grove, Ore.

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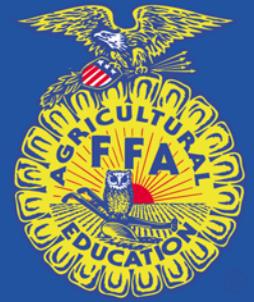
Alan Kight Jr.
FFA-Talihina, OK

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First Person

The FFA experience, as told by FFA members in their own words

Lessons for Life

A Pennsylvania chapter officer appreciates her FFA experiences

By Christine Oellig,
a member of Pennsylvania's
Northern Lebanon FFA Chapter

FFA and 4-H have helped me make the most of high school and probably the rest of my life. They have

taught me responsibility, teamwork, leadership and self-confidence through participating in career development events, serving as a chapter officer and showing livestock.

I love to show livestock. Sometimes things on the farm get busy and caring for the animals seems to be an endless process, but it's worth it. Having these animals to care for has taught me responsibility like no other experience.

I am also proud to be a member of our chapter's competition teams. Our pork bowl team and livestock team placed second at various events this year, and our plant and soil science class won the "Education in Bloom" category at the 2006 Garden Expo.

If you don't have leadership skills before becoming an FFA member, you will after. As sentinel, I feel privileged to help our chapter run smoothly. Through FFA, I've learned that leaders may come in many sizes, but we are always in demand.

Thanks to organizations like FFA, young people like me have a chance to gain valuable lessons that a life without agriculture could never provide. I'm thankful for that. ●



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FFA Across the USA

Dispatches from FFA chapters across the nation

Kentucky

Tropical Farewell

Nelson County FFA held a luau-themed senior send-off party to recognize the chapter's graduating members and wish them well. Each senior was awarded a certificate, and four were presented scholarships by the local alumni chapter. In keeping with the island theme, members and parents enjoyed tropical music, food and fellowship. Many of the guests came in Hawaiian attire, including Chapter Advisor Stacy Vincent.

*Reporting by Diane Adams,
Nelson County FFA Alumni member*



Virginia

The Clean Team

In May, Spotsylvania FFA members picked up trash along a two-mile stretch of road in front of the high school as part of their community development program. Chapter members decided this project would help make the high school look great for the upcoming commencement ceremonies and show respect and appreciation for the graduating seniors.

*Reporting by Chelsea Clements,
Spotsylvania FFA Chapter secretary*



Iowa



Good Judgment

The Southeast Polk FFA Chapter from Runnells was named the Reserve Champion Team at the state horse judging career development event, charting the highest scores in the written exam and problem-solving portions of the event. The team also fared well in the halter and performance judging classes, and two members were named to the top 10 individuals. Team members were Maggie Paris, Angela Balduchi, Kari Shadley and Amber McConnell.

*Reporting by Matthew Eddy,
Southeast Polk FFA Chapter advisor*

What's happening in your FFA chapter?
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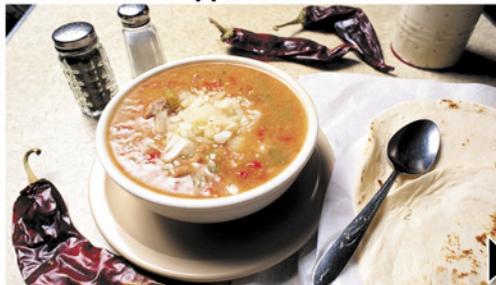
Dining

Eat like a pig at Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q, sample sauerkraut pizza during the Christmas holidays, and sink your teeth into a delicious plate of muskrat.

Oddities

"Tour the jail where John Dillinger escaped in 1934, listen to a church organ with more than 14,000 pipes, and find out why the folks in Pueblo, Colo., love green chili sloppers."

Green Chili Slopers



There's a traditional dish found in the old, family-run taverns of Pueblo, Colo., called the "Green Chili Slopper." It was developed as yet another excuse for Puebloans to consume green chili peppers. To build your basic slopper, you place half a hamburger bun in the bottom of a bowl, add a cooked hamburger, pour on some steamin' hot green chili, sprinkle on shredded cheese, and toss in as many jalapenos and onions as you dare.

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Goose on the Loose
Geese have it rough in Horsham, Pa., when the goose-chasing collies from Geese Management are around.

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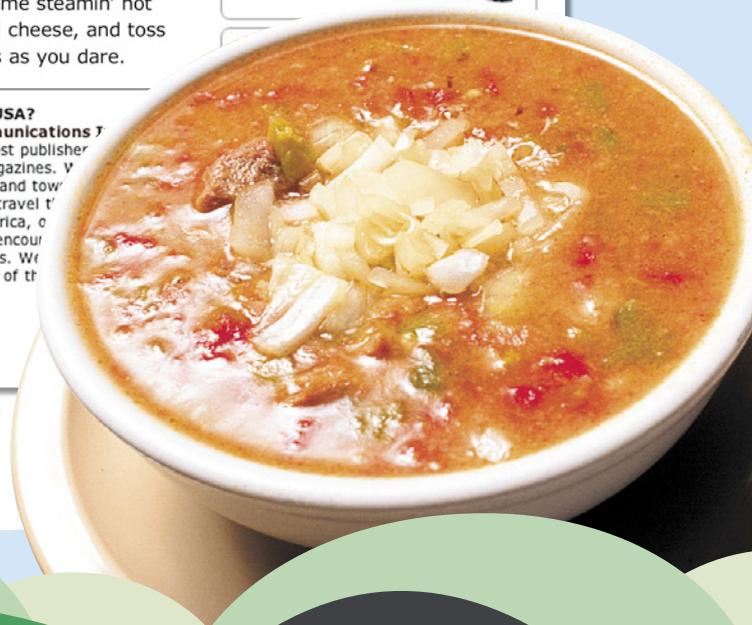
An Unsolved Mystery
There's a ruckus being raised in Hohenwald, Tenn., over the cause of death of the famed Meriwether Lewis.

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Barq's Bite
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