

FFA

JUNE-JULY, 1991

New Horizons

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

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Businesses**

**Desert Storm
Calls on FFA
Advisors**



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FFA New Horizons

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

June-July, 1991

Volume 39 Number 5



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Sandy's Plants, Family Business

On the cover, Mitzie McDougle of Mechanicsville, Virginia, is helping the family nursery business grow. Her brother, Ryan, is the eastern region Agricultural Sales and Service Proficiency winner.

Photo by Andrew Markwart.



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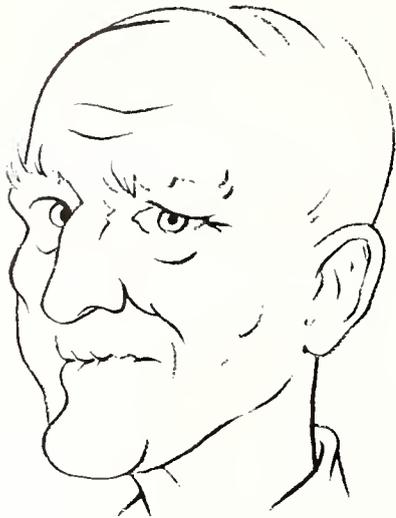
When FFA advisors left for Operation Desert Storm, chapter officers and others filled the leadership void.

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T H E B O T T O M L I N E

This is a happy time of year for most students. School will soon be out for the year and the new class of graduating seniors are making plans as they prepare to go out into the world. Some will choose college, others will find jobs, some aren't quite sure what they will do. But there is one thing for sure. To be a success today you are going to need a good education. Traditionally, this has meant going to a 4-year or 2-year college, or a vocational/technical school after you graduate from high school.

- FFA has long encouraged its members to do well in school. In recent years, the organization has put meaning into this emphasis on the importance of education with the National FFA Scholarship Program. Letters have just gone out to the 1991 scholarship winners and a look at the program provides some interesting information.

- In all, 113 sponsors provided 583 scholarships for FFA members worth \$715,600. These contributions were made through the National FFA Foundation.

- A total of 4,615 students applied with each being considered for as many as 50 scholarships through the submission of the National FFA Scholarship form. One out of every eight students who applied received a scholarship.

- Scholarships range in size from \$500 to \$10,000 and are awarded to students pursuing 4-year, 2-year and vocational/technical school degrees.

- The average grade point of all scholarship winners was 3.76 and 265 of the applicants had a 4.0 grade point average. Some 367 ranked first in their graduating class.

The National FFA Scholarship program has grown from 16 scholarships in 1983 to the 583 scholarships in 1991. Over this eight-year period, \$1.9 million has been awarded in scholarship funds through the National FFA Foundation.

While a student's scholastic record is important, it is not always the determining factor. Each applicant receives a score for supervised agricultural experiences, leadership activities and academic record with each of these criteria receiving equal value in the rating process. Financial need is considered on selected scholarships as required by the sponsor. Most of the scholarships are for high school graduating seniors but a few are designated for students already enrolled in post high school programs.

Perhaps the best news yet is that the scholarship program is expected to continue to grow and you can be a part of the action. The 1992 scholarship application will be mailed to agriculture instructors/FFA advisors and head high school counselors by December 1, 1991. The 1992 scholarship applications must be mailed to the National FFA Center and postmarked on or before March 1, 1992. If you will be a senior next year, and you plan to continue your education, mark this date on your calendar so you can apply for one of these scholarships.

Whether you want to develop skills that will help you get a job or whether you want to broaden your knowledge and understanding of the world about you, continuing your education after high school makes sense. The FFA Scholarship program may help you pay for part of the cost.

Wilson Carnes

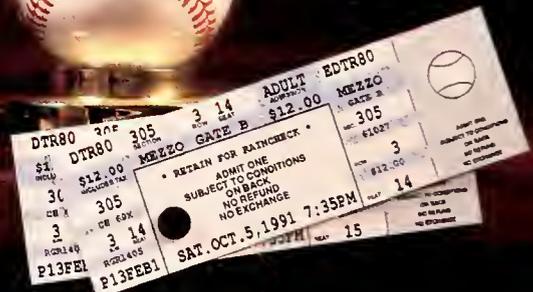
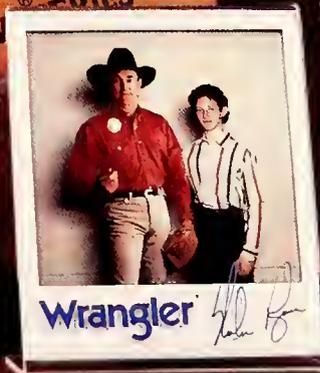
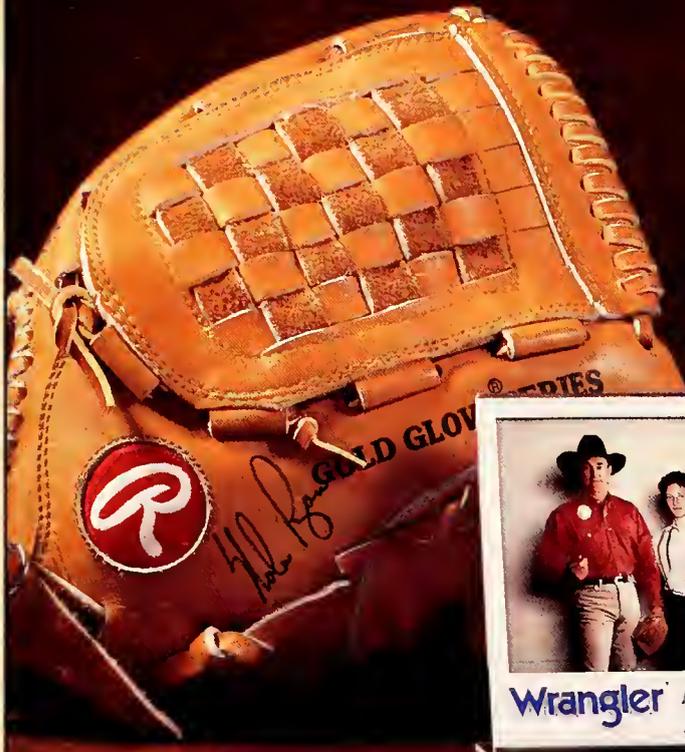
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Alumni Supporter

As an FFA Alumni life member I look forward to receiving my copy of *FFA New Horizons*. December-January's issue was extra special as it brought home the FFA and America while I was deployed to Turkey in support of Operation Desert Storm.

One of my first leadership opportunities was as president of Armijo-Fairfield, California, FFA Chapter. Those leadership skills have been more than helpful in this present endeavor.

I was once asked my opinion of the changes taking place in the FFA. Originally, I was skeptical, but now think the changes better prepare the FFA for entry into the 21st Century. I believe world agriculture, expanding US markets abroad and international agriculture ideas are the way of the future — a way that the FFA is now headed.

Good luck and keep up the good work.

*John S. Williamson
 Major, USAF
 Bitburg AB, Germany*

Praise For VFD

I recently read "Dream Machine" (April-May, 1991, page 30). I want to commend Delaplaine, Arkansas, for helping their volunteer fire department.

My father is a volunteer fireman and I know he puts a lot of time in on his "job". I also know how much public support and a helping hand means to him. My father and many other men and women work hard for the farmers and rural community and it's time that we started giving them something back.

I hope every chapter will consider Delaplaine's example and work to recognize and help their volunteer fire departments.

*Karen Spencer
 Seymour, Indiana*

Careers

I would like to tell the writers of *FFA New Horizons* that they are doing a great job.

I enjoy reading the magazine each issue and especially enjoy the articles on education and careers after high school in the field of agriculture.

*Brian Sensenich
 Lancaster, Pennsylvania*

FFA Nut!

When I first joined FFA I had planned to only take it one year, but I started liking it. It was fun competing in different contests and state convention.

I like FFA so much that I am taking a full schedule with no study halls except during band next year in high school.

I guess I have almost turned into an FFA nut!

*Rhonda Woehl
 Menno, South Dakota*

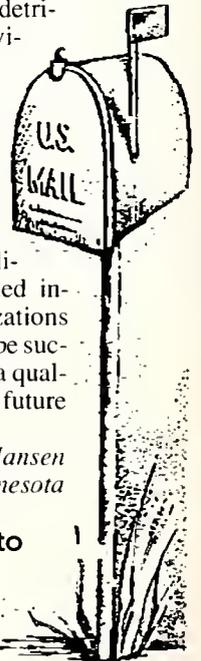
Environmental Issues

I was elated to learn of the environmental orientation of the Building Our American Communities chapter award winners detailed in the December-January, 90-91 issue. The BOAC program was originated during my term as president of the South Dakota Association (1970-71). I fondly remember having the opportunity to introduce the program to the Honorable U.S. Senator George McGovern in his Washington office.

My job responsibilities in credit policy administration for a major national agricultural lender have made me keenly aware of the detrimental impact of environmental hazards on agricultural and agribusiness properties.

Only through cooperation among concerned agricultural producers, suppliers, processors, related industries and organizations such as FFA, will we be successful in preserving a quality environment for future generations.

*Gary Hansen
 Eagan, Minnesota*



Have you written to us lately? We're hoping to hear from you!

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to MAILBAG, FFA New Horizons, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

Project Pals

FFA members to be teamed with elementary students

Project Pals is the new program that will match FFA members with elementary students in grades 2, 3 and 4 to help them get excited about school, explore their interests in plants and animals, and develop personal skills.

This mentoring program was launched through a grant of over \$1 million from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The foundation picked FFA for this project because of its reputation for community involvement.

Michigan and Arkansas have been chosen to test the new program. By September 1, 10 communities in both states will be picked as test sites. In each community, a team of teachers, counselors, school administrators and other citizens will manage the program.

By October 1, FFA members who will be "mentoring" or working with the elementary students, will be chosen. By December, the FFA members will have gone through a special Made For Excellence leadership training seminar. They will get further training from the teams managing the program in their hometown.

Next year, two more states will begin Project Pals and 20 more sites will be added in Michigan and Arkansas.

According to Project Pals' director, Josie F. Garza, this kind of program, which is common in cities, but rare in rural areas, can be as exciting for the high school students as the elementary students.

"The FFA members may gain the most because they get a sense of responsibility out of the process. Helping others makes you feel important."

Garza says that the idea of the program is to develop high self-esteem and a sense of responsibility for the children, many of whom will be "at-risk" kids. This may prevent them from dropping out of school in later years. A starting point in the mentoring process is to match the interests of the older and younger students and turn them loose on a project. "If a child has an interest in plants and an FFA member is interested in horticulture, the two of them could do experiments with seeds. Hopefully, through the process, they will build a bond and a sense of belonging."

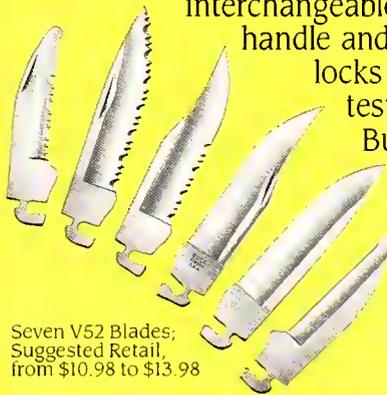
After three years, the program will be turned over to each community to be managed without outside aid. "By then, we hope the process will take on a life of its own," says Garza. ...



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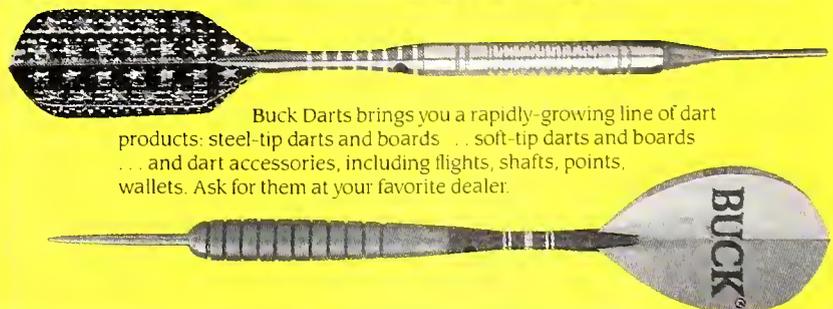


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Four-Member Contest Teams

In order to involve more FFA members in national contests, three contests, Farm Business Management, Forestry and Poultry will be allowing 3- or 4-member teams this year. In a four-person team, all four members will participate in the contest and be eligible for individual awards, but the top three scores will be combined to create the team score.

The size of facilities in Kansas City determine if a contest can be expanded at national convention. As contest areas are expanded to the four-member team system, state FFA associations will be notified of the change at least two months before national convention.

Same Theme Next Year

Public response has been so positive to this year's FFA theme, "Leadership for a Growing Planet," it will be continued for another year. The theme and accompanying logo depict leadership, international scope and concern for the environment. According to Bill Stagg, FFA director of information, the theme is an important public relations tool and by continuing it for another year, the public's awareness and support of FFA will build.

Cutting Convention Costs

A team of national FFA staff members traveled to Kansas City recently to negotiate lower rates for hotel rooms used by people attending the national FFA convention.

Their efforts resulted in a 14.8 percent drop in the cost of hotel/motel rooms in 44 of the 58 hotels and motels used during convention. Each state FFA association has a listing of each hotel being used this year and the room cost agreed on by the FFA bargaining team.

The team also dropped five hotels used last year because of their poor condition. Four new hotels were added to the housing line-up. The FFA negotiating team will return to Kansas City to negotiate for future conventions.



Forestry will be one of three contests to allow 4-member teams to compete this fall.

The IRS is Watching

The need for accurate records of supervised agricultural experience programs was highlighted recently when the parents of FFA member Mark Denune, Dinuba, California, were accused by the Internal Revenue Service of income shifting or hiding farm income in their son's bank account. The family appealed the case to a higher level of the IRS. After closer inspection, the IRS reversed its decision and closed the case.

The crucial evidence in the family's favor was the clear and documented financial arrangements between Mark's FFA program and his parents' operation. All agreements were in writing. As a member of two agricultural cooperatives, Sun Maid and Blue Anchor, Mark also had written membership agreements. His bank accounts were also kept separately from his parents'. Without this kind of clear documentation, FFA members and their families may pay heavily at tax time.

Official Dress Enforced

Attention to FFA members headed for the 64th National FFA Convention — look sharp or stay home.

The national officers, supported by the board of directors, have asked the national convention Courtesy Corps to check all members for official dress who are entering the convention auditorium and Career Show this November. Advisors will be helping FFA members working in the Courtesy Corps. Chapters should plan ahead. Develop an official dress check list to use when packing. See page 11 in the FFA Manual.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Is it Really Recycled?

American consumers are calling for more and more products made from recycled paper, but do they really know what they're getting? Much of recycled material is actually paper industry waste that has always been used in paper making, not old newspapers and office waste.

Trimmings from large paper rolls, scraps from the production of envelopes and other manufacturing leftovers are all considered "pre-consumer waste" in the industry. That means so-called recycled paper products — particularly high-quality printing and writing paper — may actually contain little or no material that's ever been used by a consumer.

Some of the challenges with consumer waste paper include separating the different grades of paper and de-inking it. The systems for handling this process are just now sprouting across the country.

Since the issue is really over the definition of "recycled" there is growing acceptance for the idea of printing on the product the percentage of paper that has been in the hands of consumers and how much has just been through the mill.



Recycled paper can now be found in a variety of products, but it may not be "recycled" in the sense many consumers think it is.

Shrinking Lettuce Heads

Miniature iceberg lettuce may appear in trendy restaurants and supermarket produce sections by 1993. The lettuce is only the size of a tennis ball. It was developed by scientists at the Agricultural Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It was developed for people who can't seem to use up a whole head of lettuce while it's still fresh. Cut into wedges, the mini-lettuce makes a single serving salad.

Relief Spelled I-N-S-E-C-T-S

K...eed relief may soon be spelled I-N-S-E-C-T-S at least for citizens of the Soviet Union. Last August, U.S. beetles and moths that devour American ragweed leaves were sent to Leningrad along

with pollen-eating beetles and fruit flies that dine on ragweed flowers. A Soviet entomologist netted the bugs during his eight-state exploration last summer, aided by the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and university scientists. In North America, ragweed's native home, natural enemies help hold the pest down. But the plant has pestered Soviet crops and sinuses since it invaded the USSR in the early 1900's, escaping from its natural enemies. Now, in weed-infested fields and pastures, Soviet scientists will release promising bugs collected in the United States. The 1990 trip was the first to this country by a Soviet scientist under a 1989 ARS-Soviet pact to expand joint studies and explorations for organisms to control pesky weeds, insects and plant diseases.

Drugs Aren't Fair

Cheaters never win. An illegal veterinary drug, clenbuterol, which is used to increase muscle mass in show animals such as cattle, pigs and sheep, has been showing up in meat carcasses around the world. Residues of this drug can be harmful to people eating meat from the treated animals.

The Food and Drug Administration and USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service are making it clear that the drug can be detected in the urine of treated animals and that people involved in the use or distribution of the drug will be prosecuted. State health officials may be testing show animals at fairs this summer.

He's My Brother

Summer is a busy time for people working on farms and other businesses. It is also a time that can be dangerous for brothers, sisters and other young children. Here are a few tips from the National Safety Council you can use to keep them safe:

Don't allow unsupervised children around farm equipment, large animals, chemicals, bins, ponds and other potential dangers. Don't let them ride along on equipment.

Never leave a small child unsupervised in or near water. This includes bathtubs, ponds, swimming pools or watering tanks.

Think about a child's ability, both physical and mental, to handle tasks you ask them to do. Don't assign an adult's job to a child. Teach them how to do a job safely and well. Provide needed protective equipment.

Here by the Ear...

The ear of corn is the symbol of the FFA secretary, but did you know this trivia: more than 1.1 billion bushels of corn were used in food and industrial purposes last year, up slightly over 1989. The largest use of corn, totaling 4.8 billion bushels in 1990, is animal feed. Other large uses include ethanol for blended fuels, 367 million bushels; sweetener in beverages, slightly more than 330 million bushels and industrial starches, such as used in papers and biodegradable plastics, more than 139.5 million bushels.

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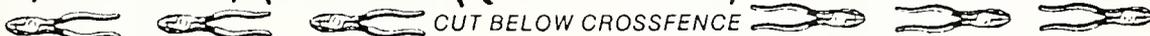
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Stars Over Troubled Waters

FFA Stars travel Europe, see other side of trade issue



Jody Germann, left, and Chad Luthro at a Paris market.

Moorland, Iowa; Jody Germann, Bowling Green, Ohio; Morgan Ott, Bealeton, Virginia and Weylin Eldred, Bellingham, Washington, the chance to see international agriculture up close. "Coming from the middle of our country, it's easy for me to make judgements about what other peoples' values, tastes and beliefs should be," said Iowa native Chad Luthro. "But by being immersed in a foreign culture, I've learned to grow in a new direction. Now I realize that we are only a part of a global culture."

Although they are scholars of American agriculture, the Stars learned of the tremendous impact of European Agriculture on American Agriculture. It didn't take long for them to learn that the agricultural marketplace goes beyond U. S. borders, spilling over into international waters, which are rough at the moment.

Germany, Belgium, and France are all members of the 12 country European Community (EC). The EC is the world's largest agricultural trading group of countries. It is also the world's largest importer of agricultural products — \$64.6 billion worth in 1988, almost \$9 billion of which came from the U.S.

Because of changes in the way the U.S. and EC governments support their farmers, agricultural trade relations between them have worsened in past years. During that time, the U.S. has lost large markets in the EC. As a result, agriculture has been in the spotlight during recent talks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This agreement sets the rules for international trade in all areas. Once the GATT is agreed upon, not even the U.S. Congress can make changes to it. They can only adopt or reject it.

On The Road

The Stars did more than talk in Europe: they were on the road almost every day. In Germany, they toured farms and agricultural cooperatives and met with local young farmers. They also met with the German Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Counselor to the U.S. Embassy in Bonn.

In Brussels, Belgium, the Stars met with U.S. and EC officials to discuss the importance of agricultural trade for both trading partners. In France, they visited with students and faculty of the Institute National de Agriculture, an agricultural college outside of Paris. They also toured the largest agricultural exhibition in Europe, the Salon International de L'Agriculture. Other stops in France included the Palace of Versailles, Notre Dame, The Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe, and the famous Eiffel Tower.

The Stars International Experience Program is sponsored through the National FFA Foundation by the Chrysler Fund, DowElanco and the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. ●●●



The stars travelled to Frankfurt by train.

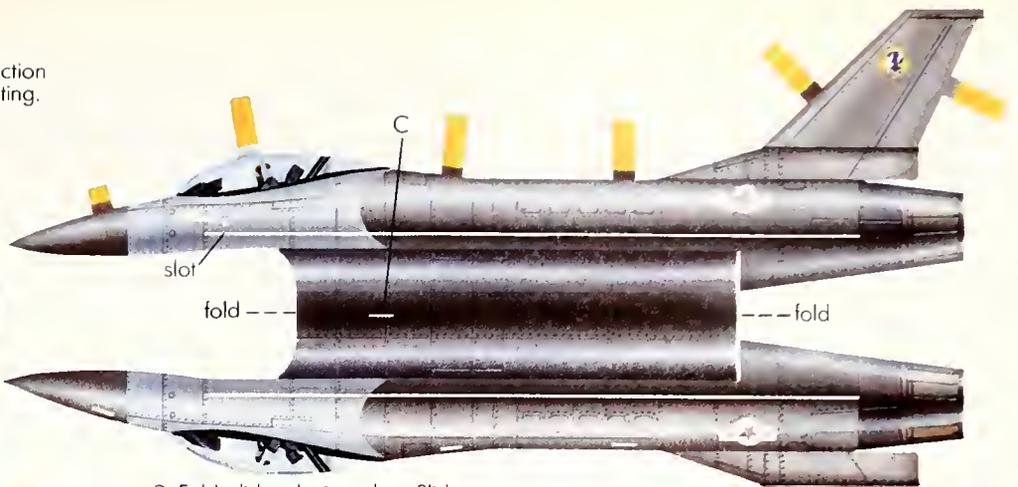
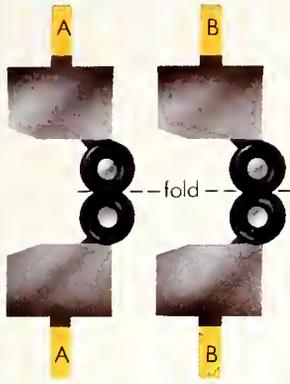
By John Pope

It was on everybody's mind. Whether it was talking shop to farmers in Germany, meeting with high-level European Community officials in Belgium or casually chatting with visitors at the Paris Agriculture show, the issue of international trade kept cropping up in nearly every conversation between regional Star winners and Agribusinessmen and their European hosts.

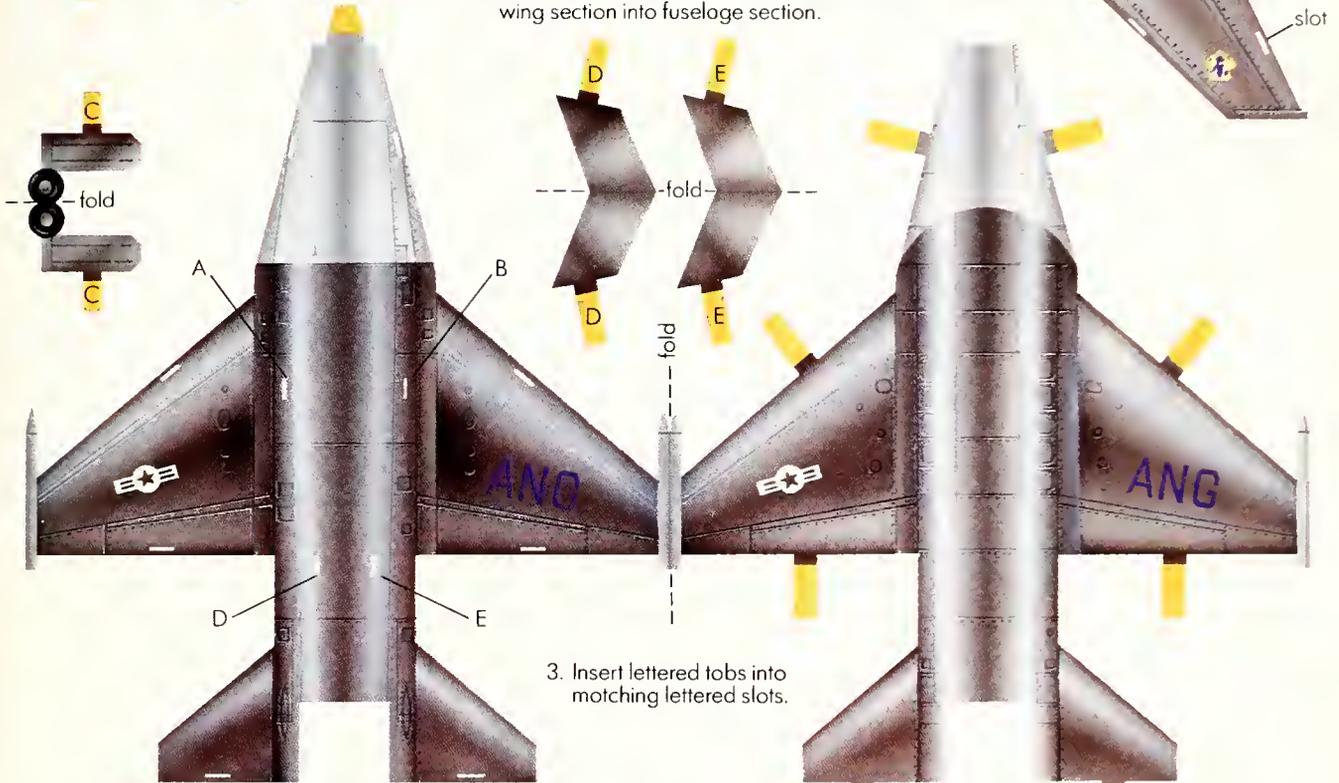
The Stars traveled to Germany, Belgium, and France March 1-10. The trip is part of the awards package that FFA members receive for the named regional winners in the Stars program.

The trip goes to: Jody Germann, Monroe, Indiana; Chad Luthro,

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Americans At Their Best.



Power Plants

Regional floriculture winner Mary Kate Parks grows her own palms and ferns for her landscaping business.

Two FFA members blossom in the floriculture business

By Lynn Hamilton

One is male, the other, female. They live in opposite corners of the country—she in Florida, he in Washington State. He's a senior in high school, she's a junior in college. But for all of their differences, these two FFA members have something in common—successful floriculture businesses they started from scratch in their backyards.

The businesses themselves are as different as crab apples and crabgrass. Dan Pearson, 18, of the Elma, Washington FFA Chapter, grows dahlias and sells them as bouquets and bulbs, while Mary Kate Parks, 17, of the Sebring, Florida FFA Chapter, grows her home-grown palms and ferns as the centerpiece for her landscape design business. However, these two members have reached financial success in a similar fashion.

You're never too young to start your own business

Both Mary Kate and Dan learned that you have to get an early start to keep ahead of the game. Dan started memorizing the names of his father's dahlia's at the age of nine, while Mary Kate began mowing lawns in a nearby trailer court when she was 12. "It was definitely a way to get your feet wet in business," Mary Kate says. Both profited from their unique positions as young entrepreneurs in their communities. At age 11, Dan peddled his own blooms at the Olympia Farmers Market, where he still sells flowers today. "People remember me. They come up and ask, 'Weren't you that little boy?'"

While many of their friends spent time watching television, these two young people were digging into their busi-

nesses—literally. Mary Kate says, "A lot of my best experiences came from doing dirty work—it's hard to manage your own business if you haven't been at the bottom of the totem pole."

As she grew older and more experienced in lawn care and landscaping, she realized she could earn and learn more if she bred and grew her own plants—a process called propagating. With that, she started to grow her own plants and grew a more efficient business.

In the cooler climate of Washington, Dan has also had his share of sweat. His dahlia business spans the calendar, with one crop grown outside in the summer, and two crops in the greenhouse during the winter. After picking all the flowers, the "tubers" or bulbs, must be dug up, washed and sorted into varieties, and stored to be either sold or replanted. And of

course, each week after the flowers bloom, they must be cut and hauled to the Olympia farmer's market to fill his Dan's Dahlia's stand.

Be good to the customer, and they'll be good to you.

Dan guarantees every "tuber" he sells will grow—if it doesn't, he sends the customer a free tuber the next season. At the farmer's market, people who browse through the Dan's Dahlias stand don't find pre-arranged bouquets. Instead, they can pick and choose among the buckets of flowers, brimming with blooms anywhere from two inches to a foot in size, and in every color of the rainbow except blue, green and brown. He has approximately 160 different varieties of dahlias to please his wide range of customers.

Mary Kate cites her high quality plants and personal attention to her customers as factors in her success. "It costs you very little to be nice to people and add that personal touch to things," she says. She also was able to give fresh, new ideas to projects, such as designing a nature trail. She knew the basics, and without any formal training in landscape design, worked with the natural surroundings to produce a creative, attractive area for people to enjoy.

Marketing—The key to bigger business

Neither of these young entrepreneurs has been successful by keeping quiet about their business. Dan and Mary Kate have used various methods of getting the word out about their flowers and ferns, from traditional newspaper advertising, to special promotions. Mary Kate found that her "Seed Promotion" worked quite well. At the end of a landscape job, she gave away extra plants to interested neighbors or onlookers, attracting some valuable customers.

Mary Kate decided early to keep her market area close to home, targeting her plants and skills in south central Florida. That way, she minimized her transportation costs, and was able to concentrate on the quality, instead of the quantity of her plants.

Dan planned a national marketing strategy, by advertising for mail order tubers in a national floral magazine. His dahlias are grown all over the U.S. He also cultivates local customers by providing complimentary flower arrangements to businesses and for special community events.



Pearson trucks his dahlias to the Olympia Farmers Market from his home in Elma.

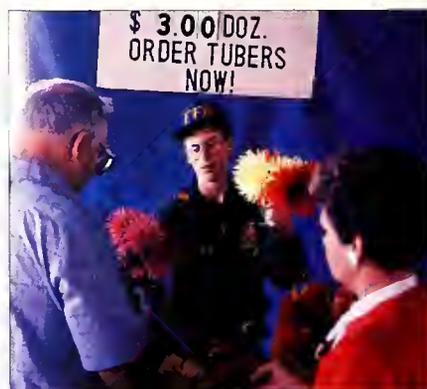
Raising prize-winning plants has been the best marketing tool for both of them. Dan and Mary Kate have won top honors in various shows in their states, and the publicity generated from these honors gave a boost to their businesses.

Get started in your own business

Both Mary Kate and Dan are examples of how far you can take your Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program. "The quickest road to get somewhere is to get involved doing an SAE," Mary Kate says. "Members should start doing a project before they have a chance to second-guess themselves." When choosing that SAE, Dan says, "It's important to find your own interest." He was raised on a dairy farm, and did his share of the work, but his real love was dahlias—and that's what he decided to pursue.

Mary Kate says, "Devote your time, energy and money to improve the SAE you've started." Pay attention to your agricultural classwork, too, she says. "Anyone will be a success if they have the basic knowledge and know how to apply it." •••

Don Pearson is the national winner of the FFA Floriculture Proficiency Award, and Mary Kate Parks is the southern region winner. The award is sponsored by The Lurio Corporation, American Floral Endowment, the Paul Ecke Poinsettia Ranch and the Professional Plant Growers Association as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.



Dan Pearson started selling flowers at age 11. Now people ask, "Weren't you that little boy?"



By Shirley Sokolosky

Think back. Remember your first day of class and FFA. Most likely your stomach was upside down as you explored a new school building and searched for your classrooms. No doubt you worried that you'd be late and everybody would think you were a geek for walking in after the bell. Maybe breakfast lay in your stomach like a giant lump as your teacher asked your name and you couldn't remember. Perhaps everything was a blur as you panicked and wondered how you would ever remember it all. And maybe, just maybe, you knew deep down that you were on to something big—an adventure so different from your childhood that you couldn't wait to get on with it.

As the first days of the school year ticked by, things started getting easier. Your locker opened when it was supposed to. Your volleyball serve actually went over the net. Pizza started tasting normal

again. That incredible-looking person looked at you with interest. It was going okay. And then your advisor explained one little challenge: THE CREED.

Why me, you groaned. This was going so well. I'll never memorize that. And if I could, I could absolutely never stand up in front of anybody (including that incredible-looking person) and say it all the way through. It's a whole page long. I am going to pass out, I know it. Please get me out of this.

Then the incredible happened. Not only did you learn it. Not only did you get up in front of everybody. You did it. You only stumbled a little bit, once. And when you were done, they clapped. They liked you. It was the most incredible thing. You were somebody. Oh, what a feeling.

Growing up was going to be okay after all. Autumn turned into winter, and you heard your teacher talking contests: speaking and judging and parliamentary procedure. Standing up in front of everybody wasn't easy, but it wasn't horrible either. And nobody had told you FFA was going to be such fun—the long rides to contests and conventions filled with laughing and teasing, sharing

Coming Out of Your Shell

places and experiences together as you made new friends. You had found a niche for yourself, and nothing would ever be the same again.

There are countless people who give FFA full credit for their accomplishments. Farmers, politicians, teachers, lawyers and people from every imaginable walk of life look back and say, "It made me what I am today. It brought me out of my shell. It taught me to get up before a group and say what I thought. FFA was the best influence I ever had."

But what does this all mean? How does FFA draw people out? What makes a reluctant teenager decide to compete in a speech contest? How does a person ever get the courage to stand up and speak in an FFA meeting?

Consider Flossie Hwang of Lowville, N.Y. She describes herself as "really shy" before joining FFA and she remembers well: "I was never the mingling type. The biggest challenge for me was talking to other students."

"Group things were hard," admits Hwang. "I had things to say, but I was intimidated." Since FFA requires participation, though, Hwang found herself taking part and recalls making a motion during her eighth grade class meeting. There weren't many in the class, she says, and she had no choice about joining in.

That motion was just the start for Hwang. Horse judging, leadership trips and other activities gave way to chapter offices, and eventually to the office of state sentinel. And in the fall of 1990, Hwang was asked by the principal of Lowville Academy, her school, to give a presentation at the school's leadership workshop for 100 students. "It was a honor, because I was the the first student ever asked to do a workshop." Not bad for a

person whose biggest challenge was "talking to other students."

The ages of 13, 14 and 15 can have their rough spots. Dating and school and acne and getting along with parents are major issues. There's pressure to conform to your peers when conforming is the worst possible idea. But let's not forget that it can be a glorious time, too. These years are when many of us find out our real talents and interests, and we first jump out of the nest to see if we can fly.

FFA is all about building self confidence at a time when a person may not be feeling too confident, says Advisor Jon

Fabricius, from Genesee, Idaho. "We're providing an opportunity for them to build self confidence and it's a time in their life when they're ripe for it."

Fabricius says that success is a confidence builder, and that many of his students are in-

spired by their first activity, judging livestock. "Even those who don't know about livestock can have success," and they are ready for the next group of challenges: learning the creed, FFA knowledge and parliamentary procedure.

In a school the size of Genesee's (90 students in grades 9 through 12) students can be recognized in the community, and without FFA that might not have happened. "We have a student, Eric Bennett, who won the district Extemporaneous Public Speaking Contest, was top parliamentary procedure chairman in the district and was elected district reporter. He'll have his name in the paper three times and has come into his own."

Hitting one's stride doesn't happen overnight. Some blossom as soon as they complete the phrase, "...that inspiring task." Others aren't wowed until they see a state convention or feel the warm wood of a plaque in their hands. Jon Fabricius



says that no matter when it happens, FFA helps almost everyone who goes through the program, and his wife Teresa, who teaches speech and English in the same school has proof of FFA as a springboard for young people.

"I had a group of freshmen in my second semester speech class, and I could tell which ones were in FFA," says Fabricius. She notes that the FFA students had already been speaking, going to fairs and taking part in activities. "FFA may not be the only way to get that kind of experience, but it's one of the few ways and one of the best ways."

Think back. Remember how you felt as you were handed your high school diploma. You probably looked the presenter straight in the eye as you gave a firm handshake. While other people sniffled about high school being over, perhaps you could hardly contain your excitement at what was ahead.

By now, you knew the truth. That little push you gave yourself as you rose from the chair to recite the FFA creed was only the first of many nudges you would give yourself. That FFA wasn't just a game plan for high school; it was a blueprint for life. That the first time you stuck your neck out and took in the world, it was just your first look at a most beautiful view.

FFA is all about building self confidence at a time when a person may not be feeling too confident.

Agriculture's New Professionals

Corporate Executive



Photo by Author

Former FFA member Gary Costley, Ph.D., is executive vice president of the Kellogg Company and president of the U.S. Food Products Division.

By Andrew Markwart

Gary Costley climbed on the train bound for Kansas City. He was headed for the national FFA convention. It would be the first time he would see what was on the other side of the Rocky Mountains.

On the same train was the public speaking finalist from Oregon. "I sat in the corner and watched him practice all the way to Kansas City," says Costley. "I saw more skilled people at that convention than I had ever seen in my life. That was an eye-opening experience for a young farm kid from eastern Oregon. It was like opening up a huge world."

Now Gary Costley, Ph.D., plays a big part in feeding that huge world every morning. He is executive vice president of the Kellogg Company and president of its largest unit, the U.S. Foods Division. If you've eaten Pop-Tarts, Corn Flakes or any of Kellogg's ready-to-eat breakfast cereals in your life, Gary Costley has helped bring it to your table.

After graduating from high school, he earned his Bachelors of Science, Masters of Science and Ph.D. in nutrition/biochemistry at Oregon State University. And although he has worked at Kellogg since leaving college 21 years ago, he hasn't stayed in the same job. In that time, he has worked in or managed the areas of nutrition research, product development, engineering, computer services, public rela-

tions, acquisitions and mergers, the legal department, manufacturing and marketing, governmental affairs and currently, management.

How does a scientist wind up working in all these areas and eventually as a top manager? It's the result of Costley's philosophy that, "people have to be willing to leave an area where they are comfortable and go to an area where they don't have expertise. You have to be willing to risk learning some new things."

He believes that a person's education is just the starting point for learning. "You have to be a constant student. I learn something about this business every day," says the president.

Costley's division generates \$3 billion in sales each year. About 8,000 people work for him. As president, he has to know the business inside and out. "I'm an expert of the cereal business. We understand what it takes to make corn flakes and what it takes to sell them and how advertising works and what doesn't work. We know the details. When you're walking around talking to people, you had better know what you're talking about."

With that kind of knowledge, much of his time is spent planning where the company needs to go and then communicating that vision to the people who work with him. "I spend a great deal of time talking to people, deciding who to put where,

sharing the long range and short range plans with as many as people as possible.

Like any successful company, Costley says that the success of Kellogg hinges on the quality of the people that work there. "You have to select, train and retain the right people. That is an absolutely crucial issue," he explains.

He says that being a manager of people is a rewarding and often delicate job. "In management, we have awesome power over people's lives. It is both challenging and frightening. When you have that kind of power, if you misuse it or make mistakes, you can negatively affect people's lives for a long time. The most satisfying thing in my job is to watch and help people grow. I'm continually amazed at the potential of the human mind. People are able to do things that they never imagined they'd be able to do."

What kind of people is Costley looking for when he hires? "People have to do the job first," he says. "Then we place a very high priority on interpersonal and communication skills. People who can't communicate either don't get hired or don't do very well at Kellogg. We look for people who want to work hard. There's a very high work ethic around here. They have to be nice people. We expect our people to treat each other and our customers with respect. And we want people who believe in ready-to-eat cereals. Mr. Kellogg said that nobody can market a product they don't believe in and we subscribe to that."

The former chapter FFA president says that his experiences in high school agriculture and FFA were an important launching point for his career. "I don't believe that I would be setting in this office today had I not taken vocational agriculture in high school," says Costley. "I wasn't a particularly good student. FFA taught me to be a good public speaker. I did it pretty well and it gave me the confidence to do something academically well."

He says that kind of self-esteem boost helped him build confidence. "Vocational agriculture gave me an opportunity to prove to myself that I wasn't dumb and that I wasn't a bad student. I owe the FFA a lot. I don't believe that I would have ever gotten a Ph.D. if it had not been for the vocational agriculture training I got in high school." ●●

WHAT'S NEW

Here's a sneak preview of exciting new FFA fashions for '92 featuring the "FFA-Maximum Impact" logo. To order any of the items on this page turn to the coupon on page 35 — and don't forget to check out the 1991-92 Supply Service catalog this August to see all the new items available. Ask your advisor!

in 92



Flannel Plaids - Hot new look! Plaid boxers and pants with FFA letters imprinted in white puff. Boxer shorts have elastic waist and come in sizes: s, m, l and xl. Pants have drawstring waist and come one size fits all. #PLD-BSH, (Boxers) \$11.95 and #PLD-PTS, (Pants) \$19.95

Heavyweight Zipper Sweatshirt - A BEST-SELLER at national convention, this Iced Ash sweat with FFA emblem is imprinted in metallic silver and navy blue with navy trim on the cuffs and waistband, drawstring collar, 65/35% poly/cotton, sizes: s, m, l, xl. #SWS-ZIP, \$34.95



Flag T-Shirt - White 50/50% flag t-shirt with red/white/blue imprint featuring FFA emblem symbols, sizes: s, m, l, xl and xxl for an additional \$2.00. #305-FLAG, \$6.95, (XXL-\$8.95)

Bald Eagle T-Shirt - Be the first with the new FFA Maximum Impact logo! Black 50/50% t-shirt with bald eagle "Maximum Impact" imprint, sizes: s, m, l, xl, and xxl for an additional \$2.00. #305-EAG, \$7.95, (XXL-\$9.95)



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Roll-Up Sleeve T-Shirt - Ash 50/50% t-shirt with contrasting roll-up sleeves and neck in royal blue. Collegiate imprint in red and royal, sizes: s, m, l, xl. #305-ROLL, \$10.75

It all began when Ryan and Mitzie McDougle's grandparents moved next door. Their grandparents liked the plants from their previous house so much that they dug all the plants up and moved them with the rest of the family possessions. As Ryan, Mitzie, mom, dad, grandma and grandpa were planting the flowers in front of the new house, a man stopped his car and asked if he could buy some of the good-looking plants.

The McDougles were happy to sell a few. Word spread that the McDougles had some nice creeping flox and candy tuft plants at a good price, and they were just around the corner. More people inquired. More plants were sold.

Before long the McDougles were loading the family pick-up and delivering the plants to regular



Photos by Author

Ryan and Mitzie are learning the business, literally, from the ground up.

Sandy's Plants, Family Business

From the beginning, the nursery plant business has been a family affair for the McDougles

By Andrew Markwart

customers. Ryan remembers "getting up at 5:30 in the morning before school, digging plants to ship for the day, and then finding an uncle or cousin to drive for us."

That was 1979. Since then, the operation has grown into Sandy's Plants, a wholesale plant business that sold more than a half-million plants last year. The business employs four full-time staff and eight part-time workers. They've gone from just a few varieties of perennial plants to more than 100. They dabble in annual plants, selling about 15,000 last year. There is even a Sandy's Plants catalog that was started three years ago in order to keep the business moving during off-season.

Ryan, now 19, says that the growth of Sandy's Plants has been more of a re-

sponse to the high demand for the plants than an aggressive business plan. The family is also very particular about the quality of the plants they sell.

Located in Mechanicsville, Virginia, just outside the state capital of Richmond, the business now sells mostly to retail nurserymen and garden centers. They deliver truckloads of plants to the Washington, D.C., area, about 100 miles away. Virginia Beach, a tourist area, is another major market. Commercial landscapers also buy a large number of plants each year.

It is a family business, owned by mom. (Her name is Sandy. That's why it's called Sandy's Plants.) Their father, Wayne,

works for the Department of Agriculture. Ryan goes to college. Mitzie is a senior in high school. Everyone is busy, but everyone gets involved in the business.

Get Your Hands Dirty

Ryan has spent much of his time in the business with his hands dirty, filling the thousands of plant containers with soil. In fact, he and his father developed a way to mix the soil, fertilizer and lime and then fill the containers using a silage mixer. This time-saving trick allows them to fill 6,000 pots in three hours. "What used to take us a week now can easily be done in an afternoon," says Ryan.

When he turned 16, Ryan started making deliveries and found he liked talking with the customers and that he had a knack for sales. "Making deliveries is the best contact you can have with your customers," says Ryan. "They talk about what their customers are asking for and I can show them a plant they may not have seen that might sell well for them."

He says that many times the plants sell themselves. His normal delivery route takes him to a string of retail stores who purchase between 500-1,000 plants each. He can load up to 2,500 plants into one of the company's box vans, so naturally, buyers see what the guys down the street have ordered. "They'll look up and see what everybody else is getting and say, 'Wow, that looks really nice, I'd like to have some of that.'" Ryan has sometimes even included some new varieties that weren't being delivered to anyone.

Ryan's involvement in the business earned him the eastern region Agricultural Sales and Service Proficiency award last November. Because he enjoys working with people so much, he wants to pursue a career in politics while working in the nursery business. He just finished his first year at Virginia Tech, majoring in history and political science, and plans to go to law school.

Working Smarter, Not Harder

The McDouglés are using new technology to make their business more efficient. On Monday mornings, they fax lists of what plants are available to their top customers. Orders are faxed back quickly and the plants are shipped later that day.

Since last year, a computer has taken over most of the dreaded paperwork, thanks to Mitzie, 17, who is also president of the Lee-Davis FFA Chapter. The computer keeps track of plants at the nursery, and with so many plants being continually grown and sold, it's a big job. The computer is programmed so that when a sales receipt is generated, it automatically subtracts the number of plants sold from the total inventory.

They also use the computer to keep lists of customers for catalog mailing labels and to keep track of who owes money. They can watch buying trends from year to year in order to plan better. Mitzie has also programmed the computer to print out special stakes that are stuck in the plant containers to identify plants for the customer. These stakes used to be done by hand, another boring, time-consuming task.

Along with being the computer expert in the family, Mitzie is also the scientist. She plans to major in biotechnology in

college and is interested in how it could benefit the business. She's not sure if she will return to the business, but if she does, she plans to build a tissue culture lab to develop new varieties of plants and patent them.

Like her brother, Mitzie has been recognized for her contributions to the business. She was named the state Nursery Operations Proficiency award winner last year.

Know Thy Customer

Over the years, the McDouglés have learned a lot about their customers and why people buy certain plants. The more they know about their customers, the better job they do delivering what the customers want.

According to Ryan, when the economy is sluggish, most people cut back on professional landscaping, which cuts into the plant business. At the same time, those same people will drive down to the local garden center and buy their own plants. The result for Sandy's Plants is that there is just a shift in market location. Also, since money is tight, fewer people are taking vacations and are spending more

time around home fixing things up — another plus for plant sales.

He says that today's busy consumer wants a low-maintenance garden, so perennials are perfect for the job. In the long run, he says, people save money with perennials because they don't have to replant every year.

The family always keeps their eyes open for clues of what customers might be wanting in the future. Trips to a friend's house or days at the amusement park always include a quick inspection of what people are growing. They subscribe to seven magazines to see what is pictured. "If a really nice plant stands out in *Southern Living*," chuckles Ryan, "everybody has to have one. It's amazing the impact one picture can have on our business." ...

The Agricultural Sales and Service Proficiency award is sponsored by Chevrolet Motor Division - Trucks; ICI Americas Inc.; SmithKline Beecham Animal Health; and Northrup King, as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The Word Is...

Perennials, such as creeping flox, are plants that grow year after year without replanting. *Annals*, such as petunias, normally complete their growth cycle in one year.



The family's individual interests compliment each other on the job. Sandy McDougale, center, mother and owner of the business, enjoys planting the perennials the most. Ryan likes the heavy work outside and dealing with the customers. Mitzie is into computers and plant science.

You Make It Happen

A series of articles to help FFA members
get the most out of life

Don't Give up!

By Scott McKain

As I travel across the country and around the world giving speeches for some of America's top corporations and associations, I'm often asked what is the most important ingredient necessary for personal and professional success.

For the answer, I go back to the days of my FFA membership.

When the Crothersville, Indiana, FFA Chapter sponsored a "Sweetheart Dance" during my senior year, we naturally hired the best band we could find. It was "Crepe Soul."

Crepe Soul had two lead singers; a tall guy named Fred and a short guy named Johnny. While Fred would sing the hottest songs on the radio (and often make them sound better than the records), Johnny wanted to sing the songs he'd written himself.

The crowd started to boo Johnny at the Sweetheart Dance. No one wanted to dance to his songs. The crowd only wanted to hear what was popular.

As chapter president, I was to pay the band following the dance. Since I knew Johnny, I gave him the check, and apologized for the crowd behavior.

Johnny said, "Scott, don't worry about it. When I'm singing the songs I have written myself, I'm doing what I love to do. I'm going to keep working at it until I become the best. It doesn't matter what those other people say. Someday they're going to have to pay to hear me sing."

A lot of people have paid to hear Johnny...whom you



Scott McKain

now know better as John Cougar Mellencamp...sing. He persisted until he was successful.

In FFA, a young man from Indiana hears a speaker tell an FFA convention to set a goal and write it down. Then, he said, you must persist until you achieve your goal.

The Greenhand wrote, "Win state FFA public speaking contest."

His freshman, sophomore and junior years, he tried and failed to achieve his goal.

His senior year he wrote his speech nine months in advance, gave it to 32 different civic clubs and organizations, practiced every night in his room to a tape recorder; and, again lost the contest.

But while I didn't achieve the goal, the persistence taught me how to give a speech.

And, just a short time ago, I had the chance to speak on a platform with President Bush, Arnold Schwarzenegger and many other celebrities at the White House and on the steps of the U.S. Capitol on national television.

The important lesson about leadership success is this: persist.

Even when others tell you to stop, even when you don't immediately achieve what you want, don't give up!

Remember, ANYONE can quit when times get tough. Only a winner will have the vision and maturity to persist all the way to success. ...

FFA New Horizons is asking some of the country's top experts in motivation and personal development to share their ideas of how FFA members can achieve their dreams.

Scott McKain is president of McKain Enterprises, a firm specializing in speeches and seminars for meetings and conventions. Scott addresses about 150 groups across the nation each year. He has attended four Presidential Conferences, including the recent "Great American Workout" at the White House, where he was a featured program participant along with President Bush and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Scott served as National FFA Secretary in 1974-75 and Indiana FFA President in 1973-74.

He Earned it Through the Grapevine



FFA member has a sweet deal with SunMaid

By Lynn Hamilton

When Michael Peters sees SunMaid raisins in the grocery store, he sees more than just the red box with sweet, chewy fruit in it. He sees his business.

Michael, a member of the Kingsburg FFA Chapter, grows raisins for SunMaid in California's San Joaquin Valley. He not only sells his crop to SunMaid, but as a member of its cooperative, he is a part owner of the company. He makes money from both the sale of his crop and SunMaid's overall profits. The cooperative is based in his hometown of Kingsburg, California.

He gets a sense of pride from belonging to and growing raisins for such a well-known company. "Just to see something in the stores from Kingsburg and thinking those might be my raisins—it makes me feel pretty good," says the 20-year-old.

Michael grows 30 acres of raisins on his parent's 180-acre fruit farm. He started by renting a one-acre plot from his father as a freshman, and progressed each year. The crop takes patience, year-round attention and lots of management skills, he says.

Of course, all raisins start out as grapes. Michael grows Thompson Seedless, a popular variety, but keeps them on the vine longer than those harvested for table grapes or wine. To get the maximum sugar content, he waits until late August to pick the fruit. He checks the grapes with a refractometer, which measures their

sugar. "You want the grapes' sugar content to be high, about 18-20 percent," he says.

For the huge job of harvesting his 16,000 vines, Michael hires the help of a labor contractor. "A crew of 200 men can go through 30 acres in two or three hours," he says. After the grapes are picked, they are laid between the vineyard rows on paper trays for drying.

After making the transformation from green, juicy grapes to brown, chewy raisins, the fruit is loaded up from the fields and trucked to SunMaid. There, USDA inspectors grade the fruit, which determines not only the price Michael will receive for his crop, but whether his raisins will end up in the SunMaid boxes, or be part of the two scoops of raisins in raisin bran cereal.

Michael has expanded his business to include a trucking operation. He hauls his own crops to market, as well as the produce of 10 other fruit growers and a lumber company. He recently purchased an-

Peters expanded his raisin-growing business into trucking for several other growers.

other truck and hired his father as a driver.

Charles Parker, Michael's FFA advisor, is impressed with Michael's progress as an agribusinessman. "He's made a commitment to it," Parker says. He lists several awards Michael has won, including California's Star Agribusinessman and Kingsburg Community's Junior Citizen of the Year, as evidence. Parker says Michael still works with the local FFA by serving on the agricultural advisory committee and setting up tours of the SunMaid plant for visiting state and national FFA officers.

For his efforts with his Supervised Agricultural Experience, Michael was named the western region winner of the Agricultural Processing Proficiency Award, which is sponsored by Carnation Co. as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. ...

Cooperatives—What's In It For Me?

You might have the choice to sell your crops, produce or livestock through a local cooperative. Research your marketing options, and decide which is best for you. Michael Peters had to decide between selling his raisins at SunMaid or through the Raisin Bargaining Association, a trade organization. He says choosing a cooperative was a good decision.

"SunMaid is cooperative, so I'm more a part of their business," says Michael. As a member of the cooperative, Michael owns stock in SunMaid, and receives part of the company's profits.

To get involved in the cooperative, all

Michael had to do was fill out some papers and start selling his raisins to them. But instead of getting the money from his raisins when he sells them, he receives four checks a year, which include not only the sale of his raisins, but his share of the company profits. He pays a membership fee to belong to SunMaid.

Michael's cooperative experience proved so successful that his father decided to sell raisins through SunMaid as well.

Check into cooperative opportunities you might have. It's a great way to be part of the agribusiness world.

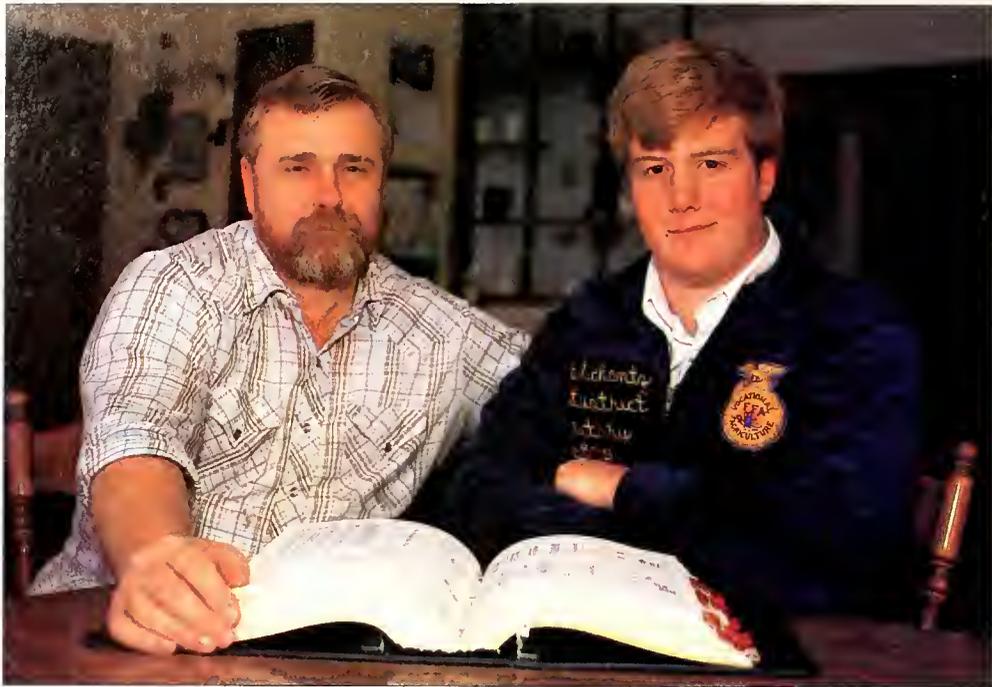


Photo by Author

Curtis and Matt Shantz won't skimp on materials or time to get the job done right.

Quality Counts By Andrew Markwart

Matt Shantz and his father prove that quality service never goes out of style

American business has been taking its lumps recently, and with good reason. It seemed that in the 1980s, there was more interest in getting rich quick than in paying attention to the paying customer. No wonder we lost major industries to the Japanese, who were giving the public what they wanted — a quality product at a reasonable price.

Is it that people just don't care anymore? Has the good old "American work ethic" gone the way of cars and VCRs? In some cases, yes, but not in Alburnett, Iowa. That is the home of electricians Matt Shantz and his father, Curtis, and you will be hard pressed to find anyone as committed to quality products and service as this father and son team.

"There's a difference between quality workmanship and just doing the job," says Matt, national winner of the Agricultural Electrification Proficiency award. He says that his father "drilled into my head all along that you do it right or don't do it at all."

As a young boy, Matt started tinkering with broken motors his dad would throw away. As his interest grew, he started tagging along with his dad to job sites just to watch. Through the years, Matt learned the trade, moving on more difficult jobs. Now, says Curtis, "Matt is at the point that

he can do 99 percent of the jobs, but it's that one percent that makes me go back and check, because in this business, you don't make mistakes."

Along with making sure the job is safe for the customer, you don't make *serious* mistakes in the electrical business because you wind up dead or seriously injured. "I've been fortunate that when I do make mistakes, they are not in the big "kill you" category," says Matt, 20. "A certain amount of fear is appropriate to keep yourself safe.

The business partners pride themselves on using only quality products on jobs for a number of reasons besides safety. "We have to live with our customers," says Curtis. "This is a small town and we live within 10 miles of most of them." Matt adds that return visits aren't necessary if a problem is fixed correctly the first time.

Most of the Shantz's business is based in grain handling systems. Augers, dryers and air circulation systems all require lots of motors and other electrical support. Since the Shantz family farms about 700 acres of corn and soybeans, Matt was able to practice on most of the equipment he now works on for his customers.

Juggling the farming and electrical businesses works well, say the partners, because when farmers are in the field,

they don't want electricians around, except for emergencies, which usually happen during harvest time. That's when the Shantz's partnership swings into action. For most of the jobs, Matt will leave the farm and take care of the problem. If it needs the experience of a seasoned, lifetime electrician, Curtis hits the road and Matt does the farming.

A lot of this kind of business occurs between October and December. Since they're always running to help other farmers, the Shantz's admit that "we're the last guys getting the crop out at the end of the year."

Matt is majoring in business at Mt. Mercy College in nearby Cedar Rapids. He hopes to one day separate the electrical business from the farm and take it over. His father's advice is clear and simple and downright refreshing in a world of flash-in-the-pan opportunists. "It isn't glamorous, but it's sure and it's steady and you're always going to be needed," says Curtis. "If you use good parts and treat people fairly, you'll have all the business you need." ●●●

Matt Shantz is the national winner of the Agricultural Electrification Proficiency award, sponsored by the National Food and Energy Council, Incorporated, as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Celebrating National FFA Week



FFA chapters seems to really get into the annual celebration of National FFA Week every February. Almost every chapter conducts some kind of event. Here are reports of just a few.

Mohawk, Ohio — A legs contest started and continued throughout FFA Week in Mohawk, Ohio, trying to find out who has the "best pair of legs." Contestants included five men teachers. Mr. Long was the winner and Mr. Bennett placed second. Votes cost 25 cents a piece and proceeds went to Children's Hospital. (Chad Arbogast, Reporter)

Mesa, Arizona — For National FFA Week, the Westwood FFA of Mesa, Arizona, set up displays to make citizens aware of chemical safety. We also put up posters in our local nurseries. (Kristi Sawyer, Vice President)

Warsaw, Kentucky — The Gallatin County FFA officers in Warsaw, Kentucky, presented flowers and American flags to the families of participating soldiers in Operation Desert Storm. (Rena Swangin, Reporter)

Fort Valley, Georgia — The Fort Valley State Collegiate FFA and its Alumni affiliate sponsored a sprayer tune-up workshop on Tuesday afternoon of FFA Week. The college

research workers were invited to attend the workshop conducted with materials provided by the National FFA Foundation and Spraying Systems Incorporated. The workshop featured a sprayer calibration video which was followed by a discussion of safety procedures and environmental issues.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma — To start FFA Week, the 1990-91 chapter officers of the John Marshall FFA Chapter in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, served dinner to their two advisors. As the week went on the chapter went rollerskating, bowling, had a dinner/movie night, served coffee and donuts to their school faculty and ended the week with their local livestock show. (Jennie Smart, President)

Powell, Wyoming — National FFA Week for the Powell, Wyoming, Chapter started with a breakfast for the high school faculty and with the students wearing cowboy costumes on Tuesday. The following day the chapter sponsored an all club social at school.

On Thursday, the chapter gave pies to buyers of livestock from the previous summer's county fair. On Friday, an open house for incoming freshman was held after school. The

second annual member/alumni basketball game on Saturday was won by the alumni team. (Casey Boardman, President and Tim Lawrence, Reporter)

Trenton, New Jersey — The New Jersey FFA Association sponsored a tour of the American Cyanamid Company Agricultural Research Division operation in Princeton, New Jersey, for chapter presidents, advisors and school administrators.

The day began with Liz Jost, state president, giving comments on the week and on agriculture in New Jersey. FFA Week materials were distributed. The day was divided into two sessions with several keynote speakers during the morning session including Dr. James Gramlich, director of American Cyanamid; State Secretary of Agriculture, Arthur R. Brown, Jr.; and Mr. Robert Jocoby, New Jersey Department of Education.

In the afternoon the groups were shown some of the newest technologies in agriculture such as biotechnology and the use of robotics in the lab. (Sharon Duckworth, Reporter) ••

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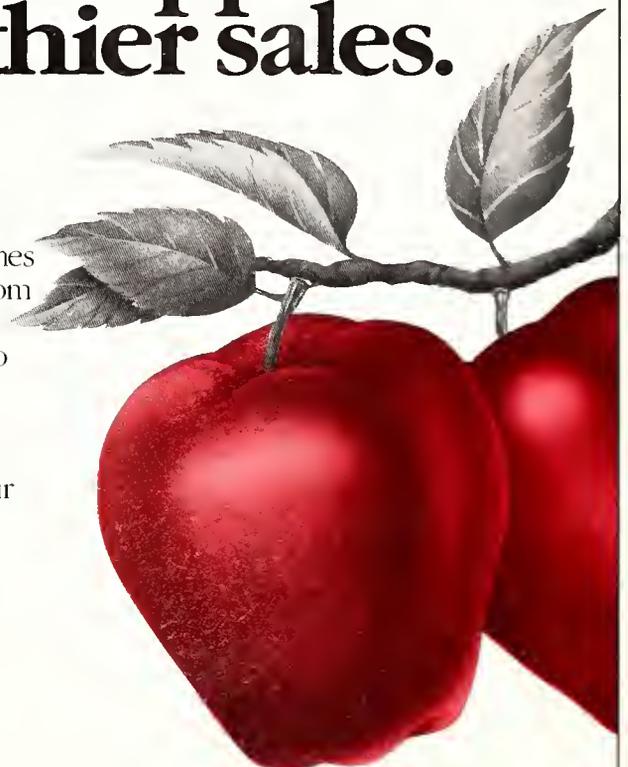
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On The Home Front

When FFA advisors left for Operation Desert Storm, chapter officers and others filled the leadership void

By Shirley Sokolosky

When FFA advisors were called up for Operation Desert Storm, the people they left behind quickly discovered the uncertainties of war and the challenge of running an FFA chapter by themselves. Leadership, they found, was more than giving speeches, and the job of an advisor far more complex and time-consuming than they'd ever dreamed.

"I just prayed and prayed he'd come back."

It was a normal Friday night, September 4, 1990. Members of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin FFA chapter were working their concession stand at the football game. Advisor Gary Anderson's wife drove up to say that he'd had an important call, so Anderson walked to the school building to use the phone.

When he returned, it became a not-so-normal Friday night. Anderson told his students that his U.S. Coast Guard unit had been activated and that he was to report for duty by 7 a.m. Sunday morning. "There were some tears and some hugs when I told them I was leaving," says Anderson of the scene that ensued.

The next day, Anderson spoke with the substitute teacher and on Sunday, he joined members of Port Security Unit 303, bound for Dharam, Saudi Arabia. As a lieutenant commander, Anderson was second in command of the unit, which provided waterfront security for King Abdel Aziz Port.

Sun Prairie's chapter president Brian



FFA advisor Gary Anderson, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, hugs his daughter, Tracy, after being away for 175 days. Anderson is a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve.

Rademacher remembers the early days of Anderson's absence. "I didn't want to be a boss, but I had to ask people to do things." He quickly discovered that many decisions had to be made and remembers the multitude of details that came with planning a trip to the National FFA Convention. "I learned that you have to ask people what they think, and once you make a decision, stick to it, and don't back down."

Rademacher sensed that some FFA members were uncomfortable with him in the driver's seat. "Some people got sick of me because I made decisions," he says, "I felt kind of bad and didn't know what to do." Help came from Donna Dykes, the substitute teacher who advised Rademacher to "do what you feel is best." The atmosphere improved when members learned they had to get along with each other. Rademacher says it's just good training for adulthood. "Later we'll be without an advisor all the time."

Advisor Anderson's tour of duty was a time of fear for Rademacher. "I was scared for him and I just prayed and prayed he'd

come back," he says, "and I also knew I had this whole chapter in my hands and he wasn't just around the corner.

"I am the teacher"

One day Brian Ostler was a student teacher, learning the ropes at Tooele, Utah. The following Thursday he was in Nephi interviewing and come Monday morning, he faced a class of students as sole teacher and FFA advisor. Advisor Calvin Baird had been sent to Germany as part of the 1457th Engineering Battery.

"I wished I'd had more student teaching, but here I am the teacher," says Ostler. "I heard a lot of 'That's not how Mr. Baird did it.'" Ostler says he had to make a firm stand, and had to emphasize that he was in charge. During the stressful early days, some students dropped their ag classes.

Ostler says that Baird's departure and that of the other reservists had a traumatic effect on the community. Members of the National Guard Reserve from several area cities were called, and in their absence, the people left behind pulled together to

keep things going as normally as possible.

"The FFA officers and seniors were given a lot of responsibility," says Ostler. "They had to do everything for the first few weeks—planning, phone calls, setting up meetings.

"They knew," says Ostler, "that if they didn't do it, it wouldn't get done." Because Ostler was immersing himself in his teaching duties, the FFA members found themselves accomplishing things they might not have ordinarily had the chance to do.

"They learned that teachers are human, too, and I learned that even if we're older, we should still rely on our students."

Brent Worthington, Nephi chapter president, says that Baird's departure left him with a blank feeling. "You don't know if they're coming back, if you're ever going to see them again.

"It takes quite a lot out of you to watch them go."

"We did what he would have wanted us to do."

The TV sets in Leeds, North Dakota, were on constantly during those early, worrisome first days of war. Ag teacher Daniel Stave was part of the 132nd National Guard unit whose job was water purification in Saudi Arabia, exact location unknown.

Everything was always uncertain, says Superintendent James Isaak. "We never knew what was going to happen until it happened, and we knew he'd be gone, but not how long."

Stave first started preparing for his departure the last of August. With the aid of the state department of education, the Leeds school started looking for a replacement. They hired a former ag teacher, and when Stave left in late September, there was a lapse of only three days before substitute Mark Wagenman started.

Lori Stevens, chapter secretary, says the students had been expecting to hear that Stave had been called, but she was still shocked when it actually happened. "I really didn't want to see him go there," she says.

"It was a weird feeling that Mr. Stave was going to be gone and that he could be involved in a major conflict," says Shawn Blegen, chapter president. "But we figured he wasn't going to be on the front lines."

Stave was behind the front lines in a unit that moved about frequently. When the Iraqis started firing SCUD missiles, James Isaak says the students and teachers were on pins and needles. Referring to the attack on a barracks which killed National Guardsmen, Isaak says they were

all fearful that Stave might have been in danger. "The students kept asking me, 'Was he one of them?' 'Was Mr. Stave near by?'"

For the FFA members, fears for Stave's safety were not the only concerns. At a meeting before Stave's departure, he told them what he expected of them. Blegen recalls that Stave reminded them that they knew what he would want done in his absence.

"He's the type of teacher who shows you how to do something, but then lets you do it," says Blegen. "We did what he would have wanted us to do."

Lori Stevens says she wondered how the chapter would manage without him and says that things were pretty shaky immediately after Stave left. "Our substitute teacher and the officers had to pull together," she says, "and it was a lot more work than it was when Mr. Stave was here." ...

As of April 15, Gary Anderson was back in Sun Prairie, wading through "two feet" of mail and preparing for the chapter banquet. Daniel Stave was believed to be somewhere in Kuwait. Calvin Baird was with his unit in Grafenwohr, Germany.



Mail call was good to Anderson, who received boxes of letters from concerned students at Sun Prairie.

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CHAPTER SCOOP



The Stroud, **Oklahoma**, FFA Chapter started their school year off with a "bang" by immediately planning a conference.

A fencing crew from LeFlore, **Oklahoma**, FFA put up fence around the local headstart school and then added new around the agriculture building on campus.

"I Support the Troops" buttons were sold by Portage, **Wisconsin**, FFA in February and profits were used by the chapter to help send a care package to troops stationed in the Gulf.

Members in the Fairbury, **Nebraska**, Chapter had a computer network game tournament. Winners were awarded pizza.

The Chapter Scholarship Award for Oak Harbor, **Ohio**, FFA went to Lou Brough at the banquet. Other members in the top ten percent of their ag classes were also recognized.

All of the Narbonnes, **California**, Chapter seniors have been accepted at agricultural colleges for next year.

In Chappell, **Nebraska**, the FFA is building a sand volleyball pit for the community.

Silver Lake FFA in **Massachusetts** is constructing an interior landscape in the classroom with a small greenhouse, water fountain, patio, statue carved with a chain saw, landscape timbers and plants.

Honor roll students of the Bethel, **Oklahoma**, FFA get their names mentioned in their chapter newsletter.

Eldon, **Missouri**, FFA and FHA collected supplies for the needy.

When Northwestern FFA and Young Farmers in **Ohio** made their whole hog sausage, they had a USDA inspector on hand. Members of both organizations worked together to cut, mix, grind, add seasoning and wrap in five pound packages for resale.

Anyone in the Lakota, **Kansas**, FFA who sold over \$275 in the fruit sale for the chapter got a steak dinner.

Madison-Moyodan, **North Carolina**, FFA has joined the ranks of chapters who have adopted a section of local highway.

Ceres FFA in **California** used the "Take Pride in America" video narrated by the Oak Ridge Boys to introduce a poster contest for junior high school classes.

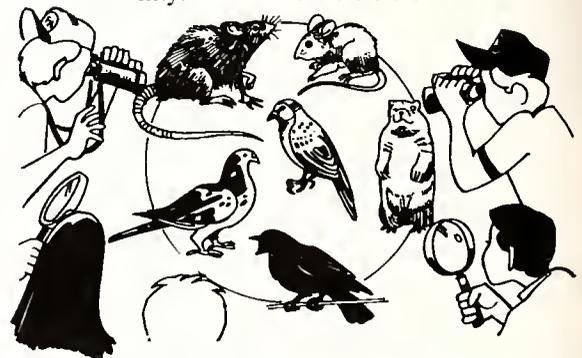
Candidates for chapter officer positions at Genoa, **Ohio**, FFA were asked questions by other chapter members present at the meeting about their reasons for running and what improvements they felt they would make next year. After the question period, members voted.

Lee High FFA in **Virginia** distributed food boxes to families in their community.

Big plans are underway for the New Athens, **Illinois**, FFA banquet this year to celebrate the chapter's 50th anniversary.

Yates City, **Kansas**, FFA had a chicken barbecue and then practiced their marksmanship on clay pigeons at a local gun club.

St. Vrain Valley, **Colorado**, reporter, *James Mohan*, took pictures at the National Western Stock Show as a slide show project for an elementary school in Longmont.



The Northwestern, **Ohio**, FFA Chapter sponsored a "Pest Hunt." Points were determined by kinds of pests such as mice, rats, groundhogs, pigeons, sparrows, and blackbirds.

The Elmwood FFA from Bloomdale, **Ohio**, won a basketball tourney for Wood County chapters.

Hopefully more reporters out there will try their hand at sending us news about a successful new idea. Remember, most chapters elect officers, go to fairs, are in judging contests and go to state convention. Try to come up with something different.



The Forest Grove, **Oregon** FFA conducted their first "Critter Roundup" during December. Members collected stuffed animals for a local children's hospital.



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Americans At Their Best.

Lighten Up

You can lighten your work load by using computers at school, home, work, play

By Jack Pitzer

Personal computers and all kinds of software make life easier for many FFA members. We've asked some of them for examples of how computers have become a major part of their daily lives.

"I used the computer to prepare agendas for every FFA meeting and to produce the chapter banquet program. On our farm we use a computer for all of our records and it also runs our feed mill. I don't know how an average farm could be properly or efficiently managed without a computer."
— Mike Ver Steeg, West Lyon, Iowa.

"As secretary of the chapter, I utilize a special template to store the minutes of our meetings quickly and accurately."
— Mark P. Lee, secretary, West Lyon, Iowa.

"This year with the help of computers, applying for a proficiency award was easy compared to last year when everything had to be typed and editing was messy and time consuming. Computers also allow

me to save a lot of time when I am writing a news article."—Aaron Metzger, reporter, West Lyon, Iowa.

Computers for Beginners

Dominic Salce from Springerville, Arizona, FFA, was one of the national finalists in the Computers in Agriculture (CIA) award program last year. He had been introduced to computers in sixth grade with games and basic programs.

He has helped install and operate a \$2.1 million technical center at his high school. Dominic provided student input on the vocational education grant that funded the center. Because of his experience with computers, he is frequently called on to help with the center and to install new equipment.

Although he is still in high school, Dominic is a state FFA officer and uses his computer constantly for speeches, records, calendars and time management.

His major career related applications for computers are in his landscape business and providing desktop publishing services for local customers.

Dominic's high school agriculture department at Round Valley High School in Springerville, Arizona, has four IBM computers, four Apple IIe computers and a Macintosh.

It is typical of the high percentage of high school agriculture departments that have changed from just a single computer used by the teacher or maybe the officers to several in the classroom for all students to use as part of their classes.

"I feel using computers in the ag classroom has helped me develop a better understanding of agricultural markets and trading. In our classroom we have used several programs on the computer such as Trade Simulator, Farm Bureau ACRES, and the AgriData Network to give us a firsthand look at how the marketing of various commodities is carried out. — Tessa Teems, Pendleton, Oregon.

Computers for Projects

Because of their comfort level with computers, members have been quick to adapt computer technology to experience projects, BOAC projects, agriscience research projects, fund raising record keeping, judging team preparation, speech preparation, filling out application forms, and carrying out officer duties.

"A computer is a 'must' in business. I use one for keeping inventory, pricing, billing, customer addresses, phone numbers and direct mailing as my job in our family's sales and service business. — Flournoy Simpson, Fulton County, Kentucky.

"Working with computers really helps

you when you have to work on contest materials. Computers make things easier and quicker while it expands your knowledge. Computers and agriculture go hand in hand."— Tammie Stewart, Couch, Missouri.

Melissa Hath from the Merced, California, Chapter was a finalist in the CIA award program last year.

She developed a template that replicates the California Record Book that is now being used by the entire chapter because the template makes it is easier to transfer figures from a written record to a computerized system.

She also helped develop a computerized version of the state FFA degree form for use by her chapter and a neighboring chapter. Plus she used the National FFA Proficiency Award computerized application form from the FFA Supply Service to prepare an ag sales and service entry.

Computers for FFA

The really exciting story is how members have made the computer their personal tool to do more: get better grades; manage their money and earn recognition in FFA, school, or clubs.

"With the computer, my secretary's book placed superior in the region and will compete in the state contest in June at state convention. — Sean Caldwell, Fulton County, Kentucky.

"As secretary, I use the word processor almost daily for minutes, agendas, announcements, thank-you notes, inventories and certificates. The annual calendar as well as the program of activities are done entirely on the computer. Taking away the computer would be disaster to me and my chapter. It is the most used tool we have. — Katy Blanchet, Pendleton, Oregon.

Karla Williams, last year's national CIA winner from Joliet, Montana, has made computer technology work for her as an FFA leader.

"As a freshman I used the Apple IIe to complete the program of activities using a word processing program. As FFA treasurer I designed and used a spreadsheet on the IBM to keep track of our chapter financial transactions."

"In 1989 I designed and produced the first state FFA convention newspaper titled "The FFA Legend." Four issues were published during the convention. I used a Macintosh SE, scanner and laser printer to lay out the master template for the newsletter."

"I even scanned the CIA application to convert it to a graphic file and then placed

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Buying Your First Computer?

Spend Some Time Planning Before You Spend Your Money

One of the common misconceptions people have about buying a personal computer is that you should buy the hardware (the physical system) first, and then think about the types of software (the programs, or sets of electronic instructions) you will use in the system. Wrong.

Before you spend your hard-earned bucks on any hardware, you should spend some time deciding what it is you want your computer to be able to do. This will help you avoid buying too much—or too little—computer.

Are you planning on using your PC as an electronic typewriter? If so, you can save money by buying a lower-powered system. You may even want a monochrome monitor instead of color. Do you want to play arcade-style games? You'll want a color monitor then, and probably a mouse and joystick to manipulate the action on the screen. Maybe you'll also want to install a sound board, a piece of hardware that will enhance the sound capabilities of your PC.

Do you want to be able to hook your computer up to the telephone, in order to access online information services? Online services provide a wide variety of information for a monthly or hourly charge. There are also private "bulletin board" systems you can access to exchange messages with other users. If you want to go online, you'll need to get a modem and communications software. Do you plan on using your personal computer to complete projects that you start at school? Make sure you get a system that is compatible.

In short, the types of activities you want to do on your computer determine the software you need. The software determines the hardware. Once you have thought about what you are going to be doing on your PC, then you can be sure the system you buy will be able to let you accomplish these tasks.

PC Novice magazine, a magazine written for the personal computer beginner, is published by Peed Corporation, P.O. Box 85380, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501. For subscription information, call toll free (800) 331-1978.

Excellent Environmental Ideas

Readers respond to the national officers' challenge for creative ideas on helping the environment.

In the February-March issue of *FFA New Horizons*, the national officers offered their views of how to improve the environment. They challenged all FFA members to respond with their own ideas. As promised, here are the top six ideas from FFA members.



Robyn Hoffman
Custer City, Oklahoma

"Write letters to your legislators and community leaders. Encourage them to join in the fight for the control of pollution. If anyone is going to make a difference, it has to start with YOU!"



Amanda Fischer
Galena, Missouri

"I give a "Let's Care About Our Air" speech, complete with a fact-filled hand-out at every opportunity in our community and nearby communities. Learn what you can do to make our air better."



Karen Schwartz
Slayton, Minnesota

"You can make compost with leaves and grass clippings or food scraps. In fact, every year each one of us tosses out about 1,200 pounds of organic garbage. If we composted that garbage instead of throwing it away, we wouldn't have such a big trash problem."



Lee Mayfield
Wellford, South Carolina

"Be wise consumers. FFA members, just as all people, buy goods every day. As we do so, be conscious that what we buy has the potential to harm the environment. Be wise consumers by using paper, not plastic; by purchasing biodegradable material; by buying environmentally safe products, and by properly disposing our goods after we use them."



Mike Popkins
Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

"Work with others. You can join environmental clubs or organizations and take on roles to improve the environment. Work with others on little jobs that can make big differences."



Kim Kenney
El Dorado Springs, Missouri

"In addition to recycling, buy products that are made of or partly made of recycled materials—things such as pop bottles, tin cans, cardboard boxes, and other paper products. Recycling is indicated on the item's packaging."

FFA IN ACTION

Iowa

Leadership Fund Raiser

Early in December, the junior class FFA members at West Lyon FFA in Inwood, Iowa, were surveyed to determine how much interest there was in the National FFA Washington Conference Program (WCP). Of the 16 junior class members, 15 indicated that they were interested in attending the conference because of its past reputation of providing excellent leadership and life skills. Later in the month, the parents of the interested members got together and discussed several different fund raising activities.

In the past, members attending WCP were able to finance one-half the expenses of the trip through donations from local businesses and supporters of the FFA. But with the large number of members going, the total cost was too much to ask. So the members and parents set a goal of raising \$4,500 through a combination open house and soup supper.

The soup, pie, sandwiches and ice cream were all made and donated by juniors and their parents. Donations at the soup supper brought in about \$1,500. The leftovers were auctioned for \$370.

During the open house, seed donated by local seed dealers was purchased by area producers through a silent auction. The bids brought in about \$1,500.

Several booths throughout the open house informed the public about the FFA organization and the activities the chapter participates in during the year. The agriculture department's new IBM computers, purchased through a grant, were demonstrated at the open house. The 13 computers are linked through a network file server. The network includes one laptop, and a LCD projection device to serve as a leader screen, two pin printers and a laser printer. We use the computers to teach DOS, word processing, data bases, spreadsheets and record keeping.

Also during the open house the 15 members were auctioned off to area farmers and businesses for eight hours of labor. This generated another \$1,500.

With \$4,500 raised at a successful open house and soup supper, the 15 members are excited about spending July 16-20 in Washington, D.C. (Aaron Metzger, Reporter) ...

Virginia

School Recycling Service

The Culpeper County Senior Chapter of Virginia has been conducting a recycling program this school year. We covered cardboard boxes with colored paper and stapled a sign which read "Recycle all papers HERE."

We then placed the boxes in each classroom, office and the library. We also conducted a community wide collection of plastics and glass on the first Wednesday of each month. The money we received from the recycling project was donated to the local food closet. We collected a total of 2,100 pounds of paper, 1,100 pounds of glass and 1,000 pounds of plastic. (Susan Ratcliffe, Reporter) ...

Alabama

Flying High

The Oakman, Alabama, Chapter put up 125 flags in their town and built a sign honoring the men and women serving in the Persian Gulf.

Members also coordinated activities, parked cars and sponsored a petting zoo at Old York, USA, a heritage park that features an 1860 replica of the town and attracts 200,000 people per year into a town of 950.

In conjunction with the University of Alabama Program for Rural Research and Development, the Oakman students hosted a solar energy workshop demonstrating methods of cutting energy costs by building and using solar water heaters or greenhouses. ...

Pulling For Success Michigan

Lesa Ann King, national vice president from the western region, was guest speaker for the regional leadership training camp for new chapter officers held in Sturgis, Michigan. Lesa, in the dark glasses, joined in the fun and frolic and set an example for some "teamwork" by pulling with one of the teams. ...



Texas

Bull Pen Star

Members of the Ysleta, Texas, FFA participated in the annual Southwestern International Livestock Show Rodeo Parade. They served as float participants, horse riders and even created a "pooper-scooper" patrol. The parade served as an opening for the five-day children's barnyard and petting zoo hosted by the chapter each year.

Over 30,000 visitors came through the area where over 80 head of livestock and poultry were exhibited for visitors to pet and feed. "Bovo" the bull and "Blanco" the llama were big attractions. ...

(Continued on Page 36)

Sports Champions

By Chris Feaver

it in PageMaker where the information was typed in on screen. I then printed the completed application on a laser printer. This procedure of converting applications is very useful for our chapter."

In addition to her work in FFA, Karla has made quite an impact in her local agricultural community. "I used my knowledge and skills to assist three county offices in integrating computer applications to improve and enhance portions of their operations."

"I compiled snow survey data collected from 18 survey sites, collected during the years 1935 to 1988, for the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) office. The data was then formulated into bar graphs for each site," says Karla.

"The county extension office had a computer and needed assistance integrating computer applications in the fair registration and sale operations. So I used my IBM laptop computer to design and operate a fair and sale program at the 1989 fair. It resulted in more accurate bookkeeping, consolidated the work of four persons into one, and made it possible to get everything done the day of the fair—even check writing."

"The county weed district supervisor wanted to know if a computer would be a good investment for his office. I interviewed him as to his needs and tasks and helped set up a system that included many useful reports such as a database to record the type and amounts of chemicals used by the weed district."

Computers for Life

FFA members have made personal computers a tool they use everyday.

"Computers have cut in half the time it takes to finish speeches and research papers. I would have had to type my FFA speech 50 times before I got it right!" — Phillip Melton, Couch, Missouri.

"I use a computer almost every day for keeping track of my notes, checkbook and other records. I also use Flight Simulator 4.0 for fun." — Eric Gerber, West Lyon, Iowa.

"I used the computer to write a ten-page research paper for British Literature. The computer made it a lot easier putting in footnotes and editing. Computers make school fun!" — Loma Fluit, West Lyon, Iowa.

FFA members have grown up with computers. Their enthusiasm for the technology has led them to discover countless computer applications for themselves as students, FFA members and young adults. •••

It was a cool night in early April in Austin, Texas. Like many nights, a baseball game was being played at the University of Texas. But despite the game being only an exhibition, this one drew more publicity than most. And why not? After all, it isn't every day you get to see a father pitch against his son.

Of course, this is no ordinary father. He's Superdad. He's Everybody's Hero. He's Nolan Ryan, of the Texas Rangers.

Ryan and the Rangers easily won the game; though for Nolan it was not his best performance. He gave up three runs in five innings of work tuning up for the major league season. His son Reid, a freshman at the University of Texas, was not so fortunate. He gave up five runs in 1 2/3 innings.

But in no other circumstance do we see the older member of these duos playing perhaps their best baseball ever. However, with Nolan Ryan, that is the case. Despite being 44-years-old and having pitched regularly in the Major Leagues since 1969, many believe Nolan Ryan is pitching his best baseball.

This at the age when very few pitchers have ever found much success in the Major Leagues. Those that have found success have done so by being junk-ball specialists, nibbling at the corners of the plate and throwing breaking pitches to hide their lost speed. Ryan again, is the exception to the rule. Though he has lost some speed on his fastball, which was once in excess of 100 miles-per-hour, he still consistently throws the ball by people. His fastball, combined with a change-up and a wicked curveball, makes Ryan one of the most-feared pitchers in baseball.

While his baseball exploits have attracted attention to Ryan, it is his good nature and down-home life-style that has made Ryan the biggest hero in the big state of Texas. In an era where it seems most Major League stars get a little too big for their britches, Ryan is down-to-earth, living an exemplary family life in Alvin, Texas.

Alvin, a town of 16,000 about 25 miles south of Houston, has been his home for most of his life. He grew up there and he married his high school sweetheart, Ruth. They have three children: Reid, 19, Reese, 15 and Wendy, 14.

His baseball success has made Ryan prosperous, but he has remained in Alvin for every off-season. He now owns three ranches in the area, working on them hard, getting down-and-dirty with the steers.



Nolan Ryan

Recently he bought a bank near Alvin and has helped bail it out of financial problems.

The legend of Nolan Ryan has grown since he moved to the Texas Rangers from the Houston Astros in 1989. That season, he threw his 5,000th strikeout (his closest competitor is the now-retired Steve Carlton at 4,136) and went 16-10 with a 3.20 Earned Run Average (ERA). He followed that performance in 1990 by not only winning his 300th game, a feat few have equalled, but he threw his sixth no-hitter against the Oakland A's. This May, he chalked-up his seventh no-hitter against the Toronto Blue Jays, striking out 16 batters. Only one other man, Sandy Koufax, has thrown as many as four no-hitters.

Perhaps even more amazingly, Ryan has led his league in strikeouts for the past four seasons, giving him 11 strikeout titles overall. This from a man who first pitched in the Major Leagues in 1966. He has the best hit-per-game ratio of any pitcher ever, allowing 6.5 per nine innings. He has struck out 9.57 batters for every nine innings he has pitched, another all-time Major League record.

Some say this is the last year Ryan will pitch. But they have been saying the same thing for the past several seasons, until they watch Ryan pitch. Whenever he does decide to retire, he will do it with the class and dignity he has displayed throughout his life, both on and off the field. •••

FFA IN ACTION

(Continued from Page 33)

New Hampshire
Plants Outside Class

Members in agricultural mechanics and agricultural products classes at Coe-Brown Northwood Academy in New Hampshire are working together using indoor plants that help improve the quality of air and add to the indoor environment of the school.

Last fall members of the agriculture products class began taking cuttings of hanging plants to start new ones for use around the school building and in classrooms.

They were already supplying plants to the main office and library, but decided to expand the operation to allow students and faculty to see their work and to improve the building's environment.

When the agricultural mechanics class members joined the project, they designed a plant hanger that could be fabricated in the shop.

Plants are now being displayed throughout the school in the guidance offices; English, family and consumer homemaking classrooms and the main offices. ...

City Showmen Virginia

Roy Slaughter, left, and Ben Nuckols, right, manned the Patrick Henry, Virginia, Chapter's exhibit at the Richmond Centre. The chapter was invited to design and build a landscape for the Maymount Flower and Garden Show that attracted 20,000 to see the work of the major landscape firms in the area. Dogwood, azaleas and tulips were "forced" in the greenhouse and planted around a brick patio and a fountain. (Wayne Ambler, Advisor)



California

National President Surprises Chapter

It was a regular day walking into the classroom. We have a routine meeting every Wednesday, and this particular day happened to be Wednesday. As I sat down to go over the usual business my advisor had a different topic for discussion. He announced that we were to have a special visitor arriving at Kingsburg FFA Chapter. It was National FFA President, Mark Timm, who was in California, and one of his chapter visits was to be with our members.

We took him to lunch at a nearby cafe where conversation was fun and everyone enjoyed themselves. After lunch Mark stopped at the junior high school to speak to the eighth graders, then back to the high school to speak at a school assembly.

After school the advisors and officers took Mark to a research center and arranged for a ride in a helicopter to see California agriculture from the air.

That evening the officers and parents met Mark Timm for dinner. (Stephanie Wilmeth) ...

New York

Careers Under the Big Top

The St. Johnsville, New York, FFA and Montgomery County Young Farmers and Ranchers hosted the first annual Careers Ag-Travaganza, for seventh and eighth grade students, on March 13, 1991. Students from four schools, Fonda Fultonville, Owen D. Young, Fort Plain and St. Johnsville, attended.

Speakers informed the students of non-traditional careers in agriculture. Jobs represented were public relations, biotechnology, agricultural sales, financial management, government, horticulture and robotics.

While telling the students about the "non-traditional" careers that they held, the speakers also gave some pointers on finding the right career. One point that many of the panel members kept stressing was to make goals, but to keep your mind open for many different possibilities. They also said to start looking for jobs that you might possibly like, and to get all the information that you can on them. (Annette Jones, Reporter) ...

Ohio

Four-legged Basketball

The East Clinton, Ohio, Young Farmers and FFA Alumni sponsored a donkey basketball tournament in March. Teams in the tournament were East Clinton Young Farmers and FFA Alumni; East Clinton Band; faculty and community people; and senior FFA members.

Each team fought hard for their victories. At half time all the little kids got to ride one of the donkeys.

The final championship game was played by the Young Farmers and Alumni against the senior FFA members. The



Tracy Fliehman, FFA president, sets far back on his donkey to take a three-point shot.

game was very close, but as the game drew to the end, Matt Snyder put up a last second buzzer beater to give the seniors a 17 to 16 win over the opponents.

All proceeds from the ticket sales will go to the community service projects. (Mike Warnock, Reporter) ...

Ohio

Trees To Learn By

The Versailles, Ohio, FFA Chapter recently bought 1,000 white pine trees from the state department of natural resources.

The trees were distributed through the elementary teachers to grades K-6 upon approval from the administration. Directions were provided so that the teachers could review this with the students.

The trees provide an opportunity for many young students to learn about the environment. ...

(Continued on Page 37)

MY TURN

Matt Lohr



Matt Lohr

During a recent planning conference in Washington, DC, my fellow national officers and I shot some hoops at a local fitness center. While I was in line to grab a bite of food, the serving lady asked what the "FFA" stood for on my sweatshirt. I began to explain and when I said the word "agriculture" she laughed. She replied, "I don't know why we need you. I can always get my food from the grocery store!"

As I headed home that night I wondered how people can still see no need for farmers and agriculturalists. It's frustrating that so many Americans still see "agriculture" as the man in overalls plowing the field behind his old horse. They have no concept of who and what we agriculturalists are all about.

The truth is we are diverse, bold, innovative and excited individuals trying to maintain the backbone and heritage of what this nation was founded on. Why is it that those in agriculture who support all life in our nation are not given the full cooperation and support they deserve? The people are not fully educated!

This is where all FFA members and advisors play the key role. Words trigger pictures. For too long the word agriculture has triggered farming and the word farming has triggered the plow and horse!

Over the past few years FFA members have worked to broaden our organization to cover all phases of the industry and attract new members. The time is at hand that we team together and spread the exciting news of agriculture to those people

uneducated and unaware of what we are about.

How can you and your chapter take a leadership role? The first step is through public relations. This is your chance to educate your community. Be creative in developing new ideas and strategies to reach those audiences. Summer is a great time to start because people will be around and moving. Remember — target those people in urban and suburban areas who know the least about agriculture.

A combined effort by your chapter can work wonders. Recently I visited Massachusetts and saw public relations at work. The school board was opting to close down Bristol Aggie High School due to funding. The chapter organized rallies, educated the people on agriculture, and spoke at the town hearing. The end result — the school board decided to keep the school's program. Only because they were made aware of the true importance of the ag program.

The second way to educate people is a solid Food for America program. We all know the leaders of tomorrow are the youth of today. By starting when they're young, we can plant seeds in children's minds and correct this agricultural literacy problem.

My dream is that one day people will hear the word agriculture and see efficient farmers using the latest technology, scientists working in a lab, and hundreds of other careers — a day when we all appreciate and respect the ones providing our nation's food and fiber. ●●●

"Each nation's standard of living is determined by the education of its people and the efficiency of its agriculture."

John Alesso

FFA In Action

(Continued from Page 36)

Oklahoma

Sophomore Sparkplugs

In January, Danny Grellner, national secretary, and Lesa Ann King, western region vice president, brought "The Precious Present" to the 1991 Oklahoma Sophomore Motivational Conferences. There were 2,000 members at the event.

The sophomore conferences provided an extra boost to members at an important



Les Ann King, speaking at the head table, and Danny Grellner, right, were anchors for the training team.

point in their school and FFA careers.

Danny and Lesa presented workshops focusing on goals and priorities, self-esteem and positive reinforcement.

Lisa is also a songwriter in her spare time and she impressed the sophomores with her conference wrap-up. "Good Times, Good People and the FFA" is the title of the original song she performed to tie the conference together.

In addition to the conference activities, Danny and Lesa visited chapters across the state. (Kelly McIntire) ●●●

Indiana

Congressional Delegation

National FFA President, Mark Timm, was in Washington, DC, earlier this year and called on Senator Richard Lugar from Indiana, his home state.



J O K E P A G E



A newly elected politician was in the market for purchasing a computer for his office when he asked the salesman what the computer did. Replied the computer salesman, "This computer is the top of its line. It's a combination word processor and food processor, just in case you have to eat your words."

Gale Wilson
Elgin, Oregon

Q: What is a hermit?

A: A girl's baseball glove.

Matt Stefanel
Zephyrhills, Florida

Q: What would you get if you crossed a ghost and an owl?

A: Something that frightens people but doesn't give a hoot!

Chad Guidry
Church Point, Louisiana

Mr. Brown: "Billy, have you heard the calculator joke?"

Billy: "No."

Mr. Brown: "It figures."

Gary Pauley
Given, West Virginia

An excited woman telephoned her doctor. "Doctor, Doctor, my husband swallowed a mouse! What shall I do?"

"Wave a piece of cheese in front of his mouth until I get there," the doctor said.

Fifteen minutes later he arrived at the house to find the woman waving a sardine in front of her husband's mouth.

"I said a piece of cheese, not a sardine!" explained the doctor.

"I know you did," the woman replied, "but I have to get the cat out first."

Ronnie Barnett
Noetor, Kentucky

The Russians hint that their next satellite will contain cattle. It will be the first herd shot around the world.

Canadian FFA
Canadian, Oklahoma

A middle-aged man was shuffling along, bent over at the waist as his wife helped him into the doctor's waiting room. A woman in the office viewed the scene with sympathy. "Arthritis with complications?" she asked.

The wife shook her head. "Do-it-yourself," she explained, "with concrete blocks."

Pat Juenemann
Clements, Minnesota

A son took his new bride home to meet the family and to experience country life, because she was from the city. A three-year old little sister took the new bride out to show her the farm. When they came to the calf pen the sister asked, "Do you know how to tell the difference between the girl calves and the boy calves?"

Not sure of what was coming the city girl prepared herself and said, "No. How can you tell?"

"It's easy," replied the sister, "heifers have the ear tags."

Beth Carpenter
Bronson, Michigan

Charlie, the Greenhand



"Gee, Mom—the labels only have washing instructions. They don't have picking up instructions."

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