

# new horizons

The magazine of the National FFA Organization

July/August 1997

Lights

Camera

ffa live

FFA VISITS HOLLYWOOD

FOR A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

Action

lawn mower man

GROOMING A BUSINESS

FROM THE GRASS UP

bragging rights

FFA CHAPTER FISHES FOR SUCCESS

The very best of

# Diamond Rio

features their *greatest hit* yet,

## How Your Love Makes Me Feel



**Great:**

Two-time winners of the  
**ACM AWARD**  
for Top Vocal Group

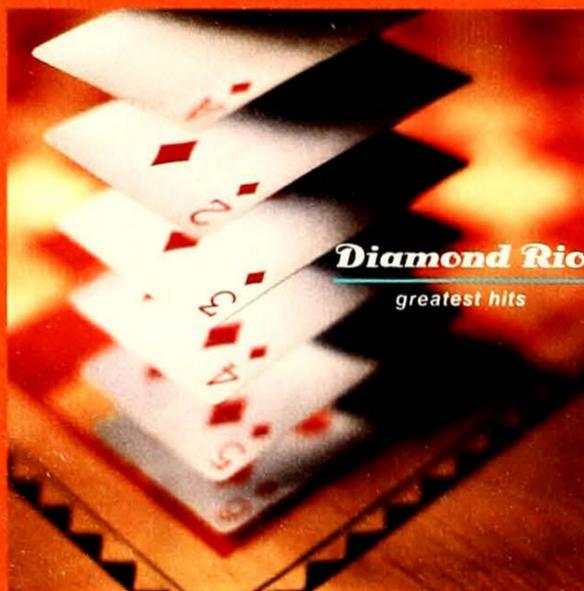
**Greater:**

Three-time winners of the  
**CMA AWARD**  
for Vocal Group  
Of The Year

**Greatest:**

## Diamond Rio

*greatest hits*



*Including*

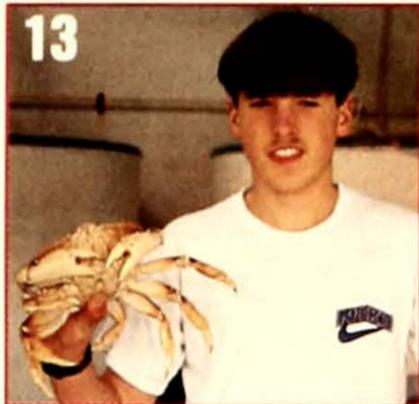
How Your Love Makes Me Feel  
Imagine That  
Meet In The Middle\*  
Mirror Mirror\*  
Mama Don't Forget To Pray For Me  
Norma Jean Riley\*  
In A Week Or Two\*  
Love A Little Stronger†  
Night Is Fallin' In My Heart  
Walkin' Away††  
It's All In Your Head††  
Holdin' ††  
She Misses Him On Sunday The Most ††

\* Produced by Monty Powell and Tim DuBois  
†† Produced by Michael D. Clute, Tim DuBois and Diamond Rio  
† Produced by Monty Powell and Tim DuBois; Associate Producer: Mike Clute  
Produced by Michael D. Clute for Michael D. Clute Productions and Diamond Rio

**ARISTA**  
NASHVILLE

MANAGEMENT: International Artist, Nashville, TN

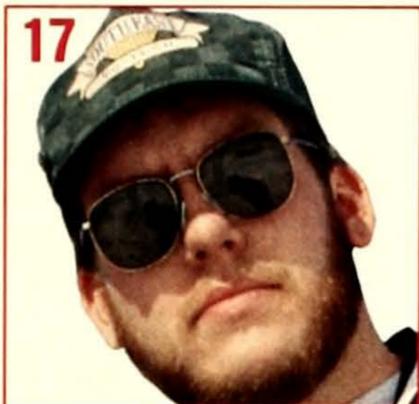
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## features

### 13 Something to Brag About

The Fort Bragg FFA members definitely have something to brag about, but you won't actually hear them bragging—they don't have time. They're too busy in the lab, where they're doing research with the California Department of Fish and Game.



### 17 Lawn Mower Man

Like a lot of kids, he mowed a few lawns here and there to make a little spending money during the summer. For Darl Korthals, however, this grew into a thriving business that now includes mowing, computer-aided landscaping, snow removal and a retail business.



## coverstory

### 10 Planet Hollywood

Hollywood's a place of fiction and fantasy—well, it was until FFA showed up at the Channel One studios on a sunny day last March. FFA was there to shoot a video on something very real, but something very exciting—biotechnology and agriscience. With the spotlights in place and the cameras rolling, a studio audience of FFA members joined industry experts to discuss the promising future of these technologies and the impact they will have on FFA members entering the work force.

## departments

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#### FFA Mission Statement

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

#### Agricultural Education Mission

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



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

one on one with

# Ray Starling

How has FFA helped define who you are? Being raised on a family farm and being from a rural agricultural community, FFA has given me the confidence and the encouragement to know that agriculture is a positive career, that it's a growing industry, that it takes intelligent people to work in the industry. To remain tied to agriculture is something very dear to me. FFA is a way for me, as a future teacher, to keep that tie to agriculture.

What are your career plans? I'm on scholarship at North Carolina State University. For four years they pay for everything with the promise that when I get out of school, I will teach in the public schools in North Carolina for four years. I'm studying agricultural education, so my plans

are to teach agriculture. One day I'd like to become a high school principal—that's probably an odd career goal for a 20-year-old to have (laughs), but I think I'd enjoy it.

Word has it you're a pretty good piano player. How long have you been playing? I started in the seventh grade and took lessons for four years before finally stopping lessons because I got so busy. I love it—it's my passion. It's also a great way to unwind. For some people it's cards, for some people it's shooting guns, for some people it's golf. For me, if I can get at that piano and just turn loose for 15 or 20 minutes, there's nothing I can't do when I walk out of there.\*

## timeline

- **Year 1989**  
saw brothers receive awards at FFA banquet
- **1990**  
attended first national convention  
asked agriculture teacher how to become national officer
- **1991**  
elected chapter reporter  
placed second in state creed contest after forgetting 10 words
- **1992**  
won state extemporaneous public speaking contest  
elected chapter president
- **1993**  
played piano in talent program at national convention
- **1994**  
elected state vice president  
won second place in state prepared public speaking
- **1995**  
ran for national FFA office and lost
- **1996**  
elected national FFA officer

## vitalsigns

**National eastern region vice president:** Ray Starling

**Hometown:** Autryville, North Carolina

**Age:** 20

**Chapter:** Midway

**Advisors:** Barry Croom, Glenn Howell

**SAE:** Nursery crop production and placement in tobacco and swine farm

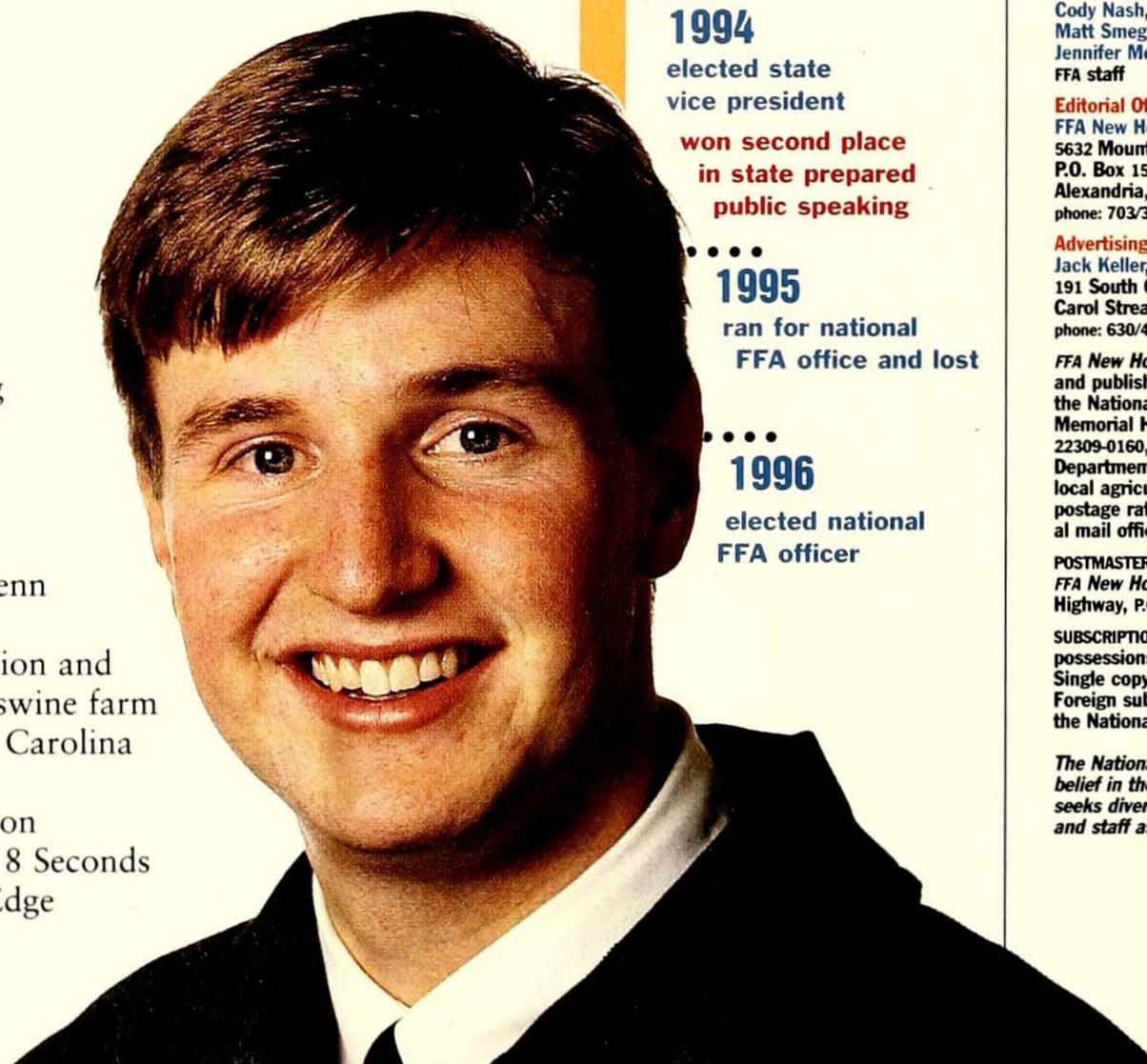
**Education:** Junior at North Carolina State University

**Major:** Agricultural education

**Favorite movies:** Toy Story, 8 Seconds

**Favorite book:** Life on the Edge by Dr. James Dobson

**Favorite band:** Alabama



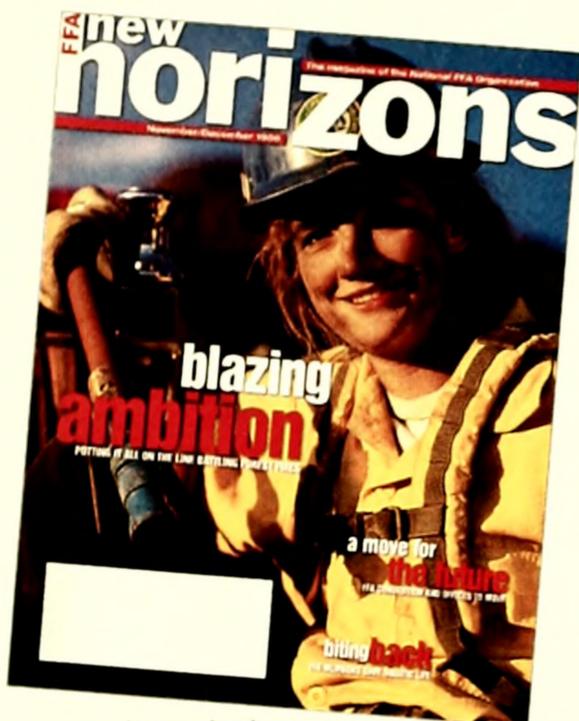
# Hats Off!

You've made *FFA New Horizons* a winner

It's been a year and a half since we overhauled *FFA New Horizons*, giving it an exciting new look and feel.

The response so far has been overwhelming. We're getting more letters, e-mails and phone calls than ever before. We're constantly using this feedback to produce an even better magazine for you, the FFA members.

We're happy to report that our new look and feel have are making a splash with the agriculture industry. At the National Agri-Marketing



Association (NAMA) convention held recently in Nashville, *FFA New Horizons* took first place in the "The Best of NAMA" national awards in the External Company and Association Publications category.

We were up against some tough competition—publications by Cenex/Land O'Lakes, Monsanto, Rhone-Poulenc and Pioneer Hi-Bred. So, hats off to the competition, and hats off

to you, the readers of *FFA New Horizons*. You're the reason we're here.\*



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# BUZZ

## erich'ssay

**T**he cloning of a lamb in Scotland sent shock waves through the world. While experts are not yet sure what it means for the future of agriculture, we thought it provided a timely backdrop for this technology-packed issue. First, we travel to Minnesota for "Lawn Mower Man," a profile of an entrepreneur who's using computer technology to improve his landscaping business. Then we go to California where FFA members really do have "Something to Brag About." Their FFA chapter has linked up with the staff at the California Department of Fish and Game to test new research technology. Then it's off to Hollywood, where the FFA teamed up with Channel One to explore biotechnology and agri-science. See what the experts have to say about future of agriculture, technology and careers.

**erich gaukel**, editor  
e-mail: erich@inforel.com

## Digging for blue and gold

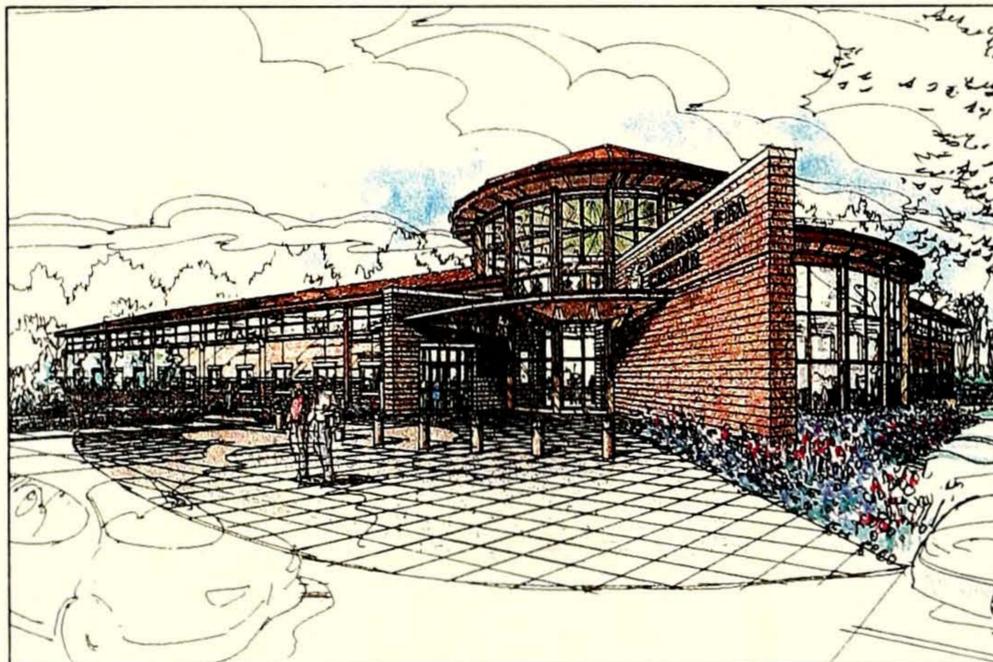
As we reported in the last issue of *FFA New Horizons*, ground has been broken at the site of the new National FFA Center in Indianapolis. Among those on hand for the April 21 ceremony were the national FFA officer team, the Indiana lieutenant governor, Indianapolis mayor, national FFA staff, news media and FFA members from around the Midwest.

The National FFA Foundation has initiated a new fundraising campaign for the project, themed "I Believe in the Future," to help finance the land and building. So far, they've brought in local leadership gifts of over \$2 million from The Lilly Endowment, Dow Elanco, Eli Lilly and Company Foundation on behalf of Elanco Animal Health, and John Deere.

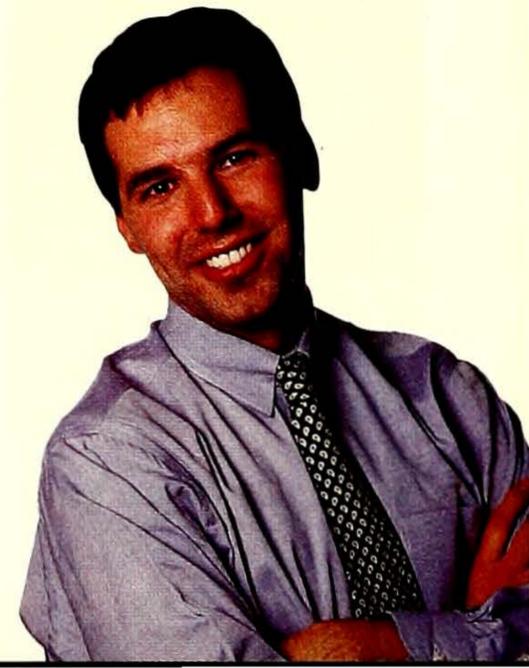
Your chapter can now stake its claim in the future of FFA by having its name engraved on a brick on a walkway leading to the Center. Check with your advisor for details.

Construction of the center is expected to be completed in the spring of 1998.

Below, ground is broken at the site of the new National FFA Center. From left to right: Charlie Jones, southern region vice president; Larry Case, national FFA advisor; Brad Montgomery, central region vice president; Wayne Beck, National FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board Chair and vice-president, supply management, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.; Stephen Goldsmith, mayor of Indianapolis; Corey Rosenbusch, national FFA president; and Joseph Kernan, lieutenant governor and agriculture commissioner of Indiana.



At left, the architect's drawing of the new National FFA Center to be built in the northwest corner of Indianapolis. Being built on a 5-acre plot of land bought at a reduced price from The Dow Chemical Company, the building will house the national FFA staff and will be highlighted by a new FFA Hall of Achievement, set in a rotunda just off the main entrance. The landscaping surrounding the building will include a pond and natural area created through an FFA landscape design competition.



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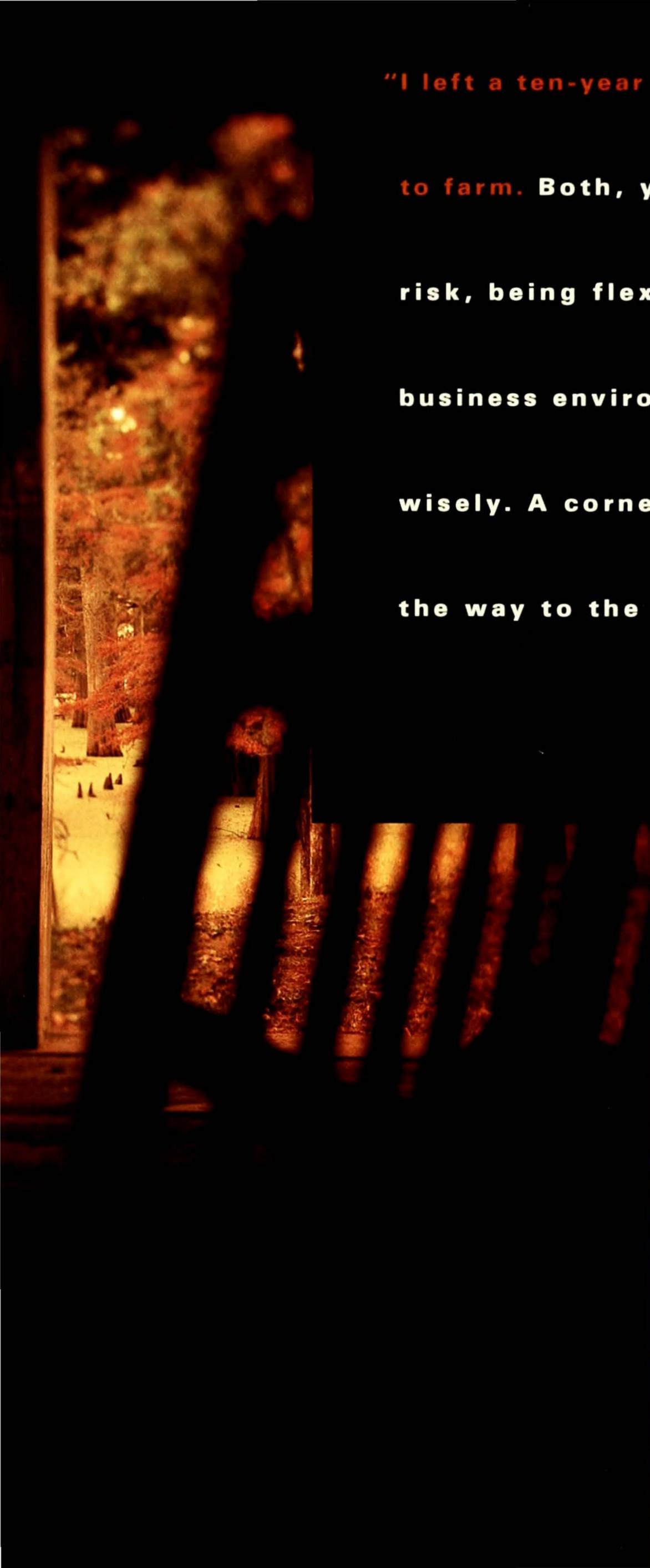
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Don Linn, American Farmer





**"I left a ten-year career in investment banking  
to farm. Both, you see, are about managing  
risk, being flexible in a rapidly changing  
business environment, and investing assets  
wisely. A corner office? Mine reaches all  
the way to the river. And it suits me fine."**

*Jim Lin*

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# Stars.

A photograph of the five members of the country music band Sawyer Brown. They are standing in a field of tall, golden grass at sunset. The background is a warm, orange-red sky. The band members are dressed in country-style clothing, including jackets and a cowboy hat. The overall mood is nostalgic and celebratory.

When Sawyer Brown was saluted as Top Vocal Group by the Academy of Country Music it marked a journey that began twelve years ago.

This only goes to prove that dedication to your dream and hard work are what stars are made of.

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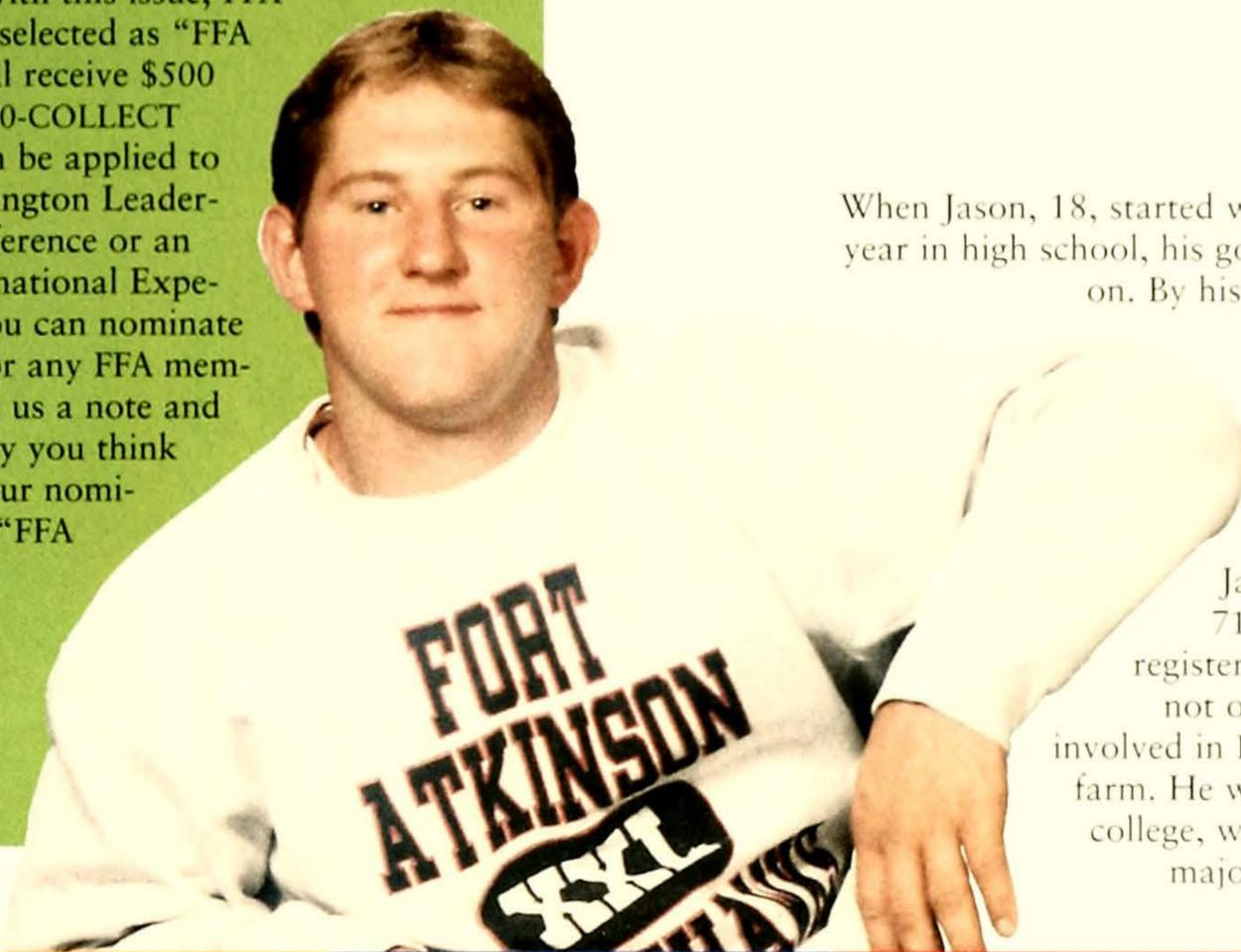
**The Easy Way To Save.\***

1-800-COLLECT and Sawyer Brown salute all FFA members for making a difference.

**1-800-COLLECT**

**calling all stars**

Starting with this issue, FFA members selected as "FFA Stars" will receive \$500 from 1-800-COLLECT which can be applied to the Washington Leadership Conference or an FFA International Experience. You can nominate yourself or any FFA member. Write us a note and tell us why you think you or your nominee is an "FFA Star." See page 24 for more details.\*



**FFA stars**  
Members making a difference

**WISCONSIN**

**Jason Foerster**

When Jason, 18, started wrestling during his freshman year in high school, his goal was to be a state champion. By his senior year, he had achieved his goal, crowning his 38-1 season with Wisconsin's Division I championship at 189 pounds. In his four years as a wrestler at Fort Atkinson High School, Jason racked up 112 wins and 71 pins. This year alone, Jason registered 22 takedowns. When he's not on the wrestling mat, Jason is involved in FFA and works on the family farm. He would like to hit the books in college, where he hopes to wrestle and major in agricultural education.\*

**GUAM**

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

**NEW YORK**

**PENNSYLVANIA**



**Victor Day Day**

As a member of the Binichachos FFA Chapter in Guam, Victor, 17, is a hard working student who is devoted to the many activities in which he's involved. He recently made "All-Island" in football and wrestling. As busy as he is with his sports schedule, Victor still has time to be active in FFA. He's currently building his poultry operation. He is seen in this photo working with his FFA Advisor Michael Bailey (left) in the greenhouse.\*



**Codi Vallery**

Her outgoing personality and enthusiastic attitude make Codi, 16, a valuable member of the Newell FFA Chapter. In addition to chairing the "Agriculture Spotlight" committee, which informs the community on chapter activities, Codi has excelled in job interview and parliamentary procedure CDEs. Codi recently won the local level of the Veterans of Foreign Wars' "Voice of Democracy" speech contest with her speech, "Democracy, Above and Beyond."\*



**Amy Swezey**

This Hartford FFA Chapter member is royalty in Washington County, where she served as the county's Dairy Princess. In this role, Amy, 17, educated grade school students and the community on the benefits of a healthy diet that includes—of course—milk. As a senior, Amy made the most of her opportunities by serving as student government president, national honor society member, captain of the basketball team and member of the field hockey and softball teams.\*



**John Whitehead**

He's an honor roll student, president of the largest FFA chapter in the nation and was junior class president last year. This is quite a resume. What makes it more impressive is that John, 18, endured illness and personal problems, forcing him to repeat his entire freshman year. Instead of getting discouraged, John made the most of it, getting back on track with hard work and dedication.\*

# Planet HOLLYWOOD

**W**hat happens when FFA hooks up with Hollywood? We'll tell you this much. Brad Pitt, Sandra Bullock and the gang didn't stop by for cameo roles, although Sheryl Crow's hit, "Every Day is a Winding Road," is the theme song.

What are we talking about? "Agriculture: The 21st Century and You," a candid look at the future of agricultural career opportunities, a television special many of you saw in school back in March on Channel One.

It's only fitting that the taping of this information-packed show would take place in sunny Hollywood. The Channel One studio, with its abundance of technology—cameras, editing equipment, lighting, microphones, mixing consoles—proved the perfect backdrop for a program focusing on how technology is brightening the futures of those planning to pursue careers in the world of agriculture. With a studio audience of FFA members and advisors on hand, a panel of agriscience and biotechnology experts answered questions and offered their own views on agriscience, biotechnology and the careers that are developing along with these technologies. Here are some of the highlights of the program. What the experts say might surprise you.

Did you know?  
There are over  
200 different  
careers in  
agriculture.

"Agriscience as a field, as an industry, is really growing very rapidly. It's analogous to what the computer industry has been going through in the last 10 years. Therefore, you name it, you can do it."

*Check out these career choices pointed out by Mr. Germain.*

**Communications/Public Relations**  
"There will be a tremendous need to communicate and educate the consumers on the benefits of biotechnology, which is the next frontier for agriscience."

#### **Law**

"You spend lots of money investing in new technology. You'd like to protect the technology."

#### **Marketing**

"There will be a tremendous need to use marketing to get those products to consumers."

#### **Biotechnician**

"There will be lots of careers in this area."

**Information technology/management**  
"You use information to transform the way we live our lives today."

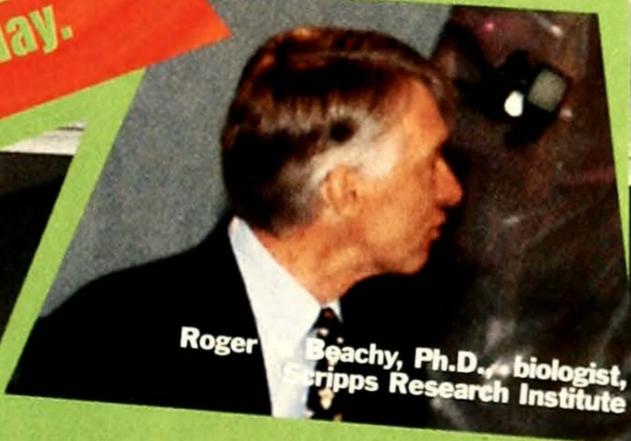
Lincoln Germain, co-director  
of Monsanto Corn Products

As world population increases, so does the need for agriscience and biotechnology. FFA traveled to Hollywood to find out what this means for you.

# WOOD

**Did you know?**  
There are more jobs than college graduates to fill them.

**Did you know?**  
In 2010, there will be twice as many people on earth as there are today.



"Biotechnology covers a wide range of science, from something as simple as DNA fingerprinting to help the plant breeder in his crossing... to isolating genes and doing gene transplantations to develop new crop varieties that can do different things for farmers. For example, there are new varieties of crops that are being developed that will require less or no insecticide.

Or there will be crops that have higher nutritional value. These are all important issues, especially in sustainable agriculture. We need to find ways to produce more on this earth without using additional chemical inputs, but yet protect the environment from the kind of damage that has characterized agriculture over the last 25 or 30 years."



**Rachel:**  
Here's an E-mail question for panelist and national officer Rachel Fehringer from Amy Chassen of East Thibodaux Junior High School in Louisiana:

**Amy:** "For some it seems only men work in agriscience. Are more women being accepted into the many career areas in agriscience?"

"Yes, in fact, last week I had dinner with a woman who is the CEO of a multi-million dollar company. She said women are being more and more accepted into the agriculture industry. Especially in the business industry, for the insight and diversity they offer."

To learn more about the more than 200 exciting careers in the world of agriculture, visit the Internet and check out National FFA Online, [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org), and the agriculture section on [www.StudentCenter.com](http://www.StudentCenter.com). Also talk to your guidance counselor or call a local agribusiness—they may even invite you over for a tour.

## California

### The word is out

Over the last holiday season, the Fullerton FFA Chapter made its presence known among alumni, local dignitaries, donors and the local agriculture industry with its annual holiday greeting. Consisting of a greeting card plus a copy of the chapter newsletter, the *Fullerton FFA Times*, this gesture not only spreads holiday cheer, but also an awareness of the importance of community FFA involvement. Second year students in the advanced animal and plant science class head the project. The chapter officers arranged for the newsletter cover photo (shown here) with Minnie Mouse during a visit to Disneyland.\*



Fullerton FFA Chapter officers huddle around Minnie Mouse. The photo was featured in the chapter's holiday newsletter.

## Maryland

### Speedy creed

All 24 first-year FFA members enrolled in the agribusiness and animal science class at Hartford Tech High School in Bel Air successfully recited the FFA Creed in a one-week period. This enabled them all to earn their Greenhand FFA Degrees during the official Greenhand FFA Degree ceremony held during FFA Week.



These first-year members of the Hartford Tech High FFA Chapter earned their Greenhand FFA Degrees after they all recited the FFA Creed in a one-week period.

“This is a very special group of young people who share a deep love for animals and have bonded together to expand their skills in the veterinary health field,” says chapter advisor Naomi Knight.\*

## North Carolina

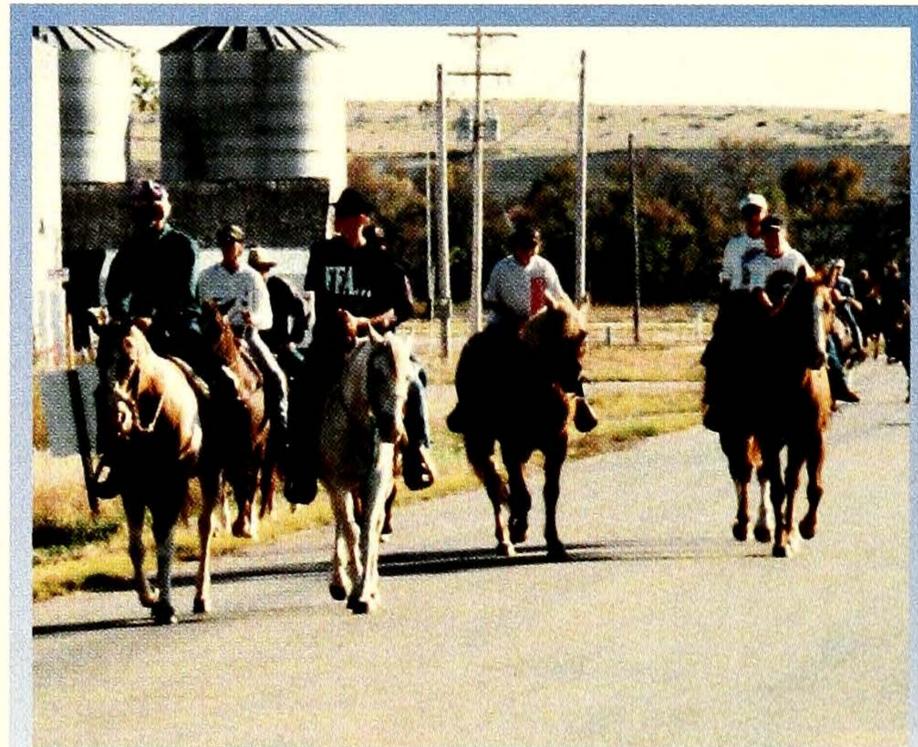
### Cooked to perfection

Using their welding talents, members of the Orange FFA Chapter are busy building charcoal grills and gas pig cookers. They churn out between 30 and 40 grills and between seven and 10 of the gas pig cookers every year. Each grill can bring in as much as \$50 while the cookers can yield up to \$1,000 for the chapter and its members. This has enabled them to re-invest something back into the community. The chapter's latest community service project is the building of a trailer with six large gas grills for the local Baptist Men's Relief Project.\*

## Arizona

### Cool clean-up crew

Members of the Westwood FFA Chapter in Mesa finished a local clean-up project after racking up over 180 hours of hard work and sweat. Using skills they learned in the classroom and in their school's land laboratory, the Westwood members trimmed and removed trees, demolished an old building and removed old furniture, grass and brush. Heidi Jackson, chapter sentinel, and her father organized the clean-up and provided tools for the job. The City of Mesa's "Block Watch" program provided debris removal containers.\*



## Kansas

### Riding for fun—and funds

The Atwood FFA Chapter members rounded up 35 horses and riders to raise \$600 for St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Riders collected pledges for the ride and were awarded T-shirts, sweatshirts and gym bags for their efforts. They rode 10 miles through scenic rangeland and canyons, challenging each other to short races. The Lutheran Brotherhood provided lunch to the hungry riders.\*

Members of the Atwood FFA Chapter and friends during their 10-mile horse ride, which raised \$600 for a children's hospital.

Below right: Josh Admire displays a fish from his FFA chapter's marine lab. Far right: Rosie Elmore reaches inside a fish as part of her research project. Right: Marshall Efishoff barehands a crab.



**F**ort Bragg is a northern California coastal town whose economy relies heavily on its sport and commercial fishing industries. Sea urchins, abalone, rock fish and cabezon—these are some of the animals that make the fishing industry thrive here. Tourists also come to this dramatic Pacific coastline to watch sea lions and whales. The California Department of Fish and Game's local outpost, the Noyo Marine Laboratory, is the primary caretaker of the ocean here. Researchers monitor every aspect of the ocean to help keep the sea life plentiful. Only one problem—they don't have the lab or the people power it takes to maintain a marine aquatic research facility, something essential to the research that needs to be done to look after the area.

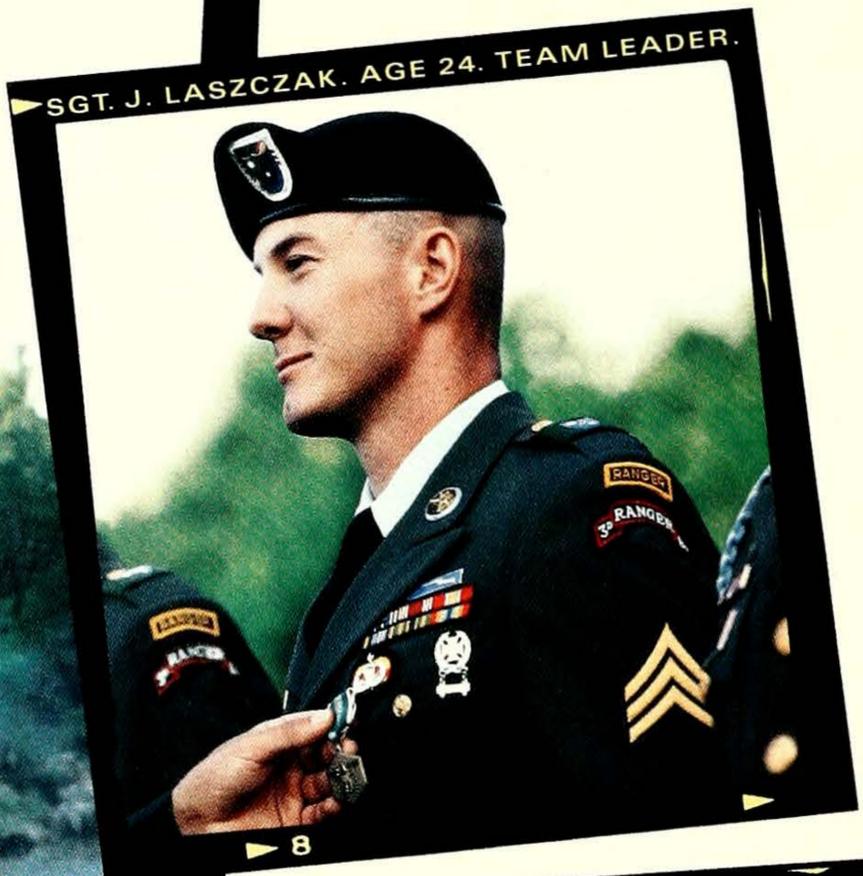


**Members of the Fort Bragg FFA Chapter in northern California are a vital link in research that's helping the local economy and marine life**

**by Erich Gaukel**

# Something to **Bragg** about

YOU'LL BE THE ONE OTHERS LOOK TO. YOU WILL BE A LEADER.

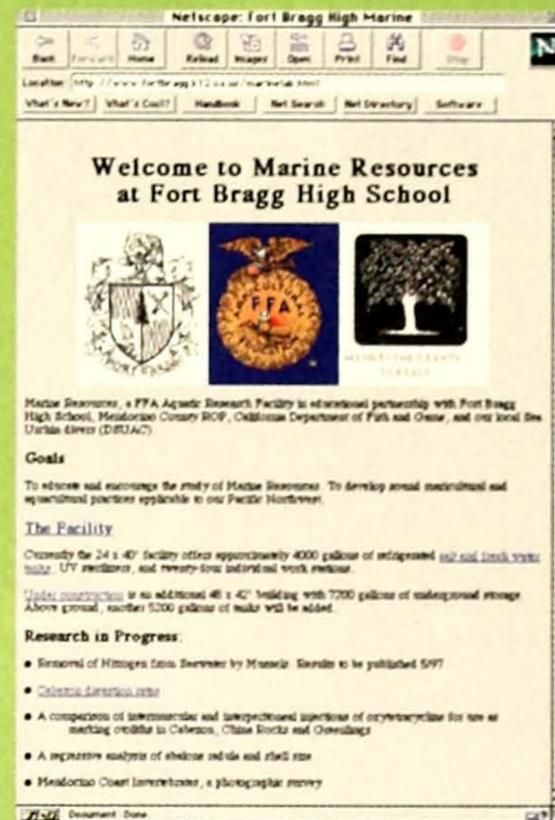
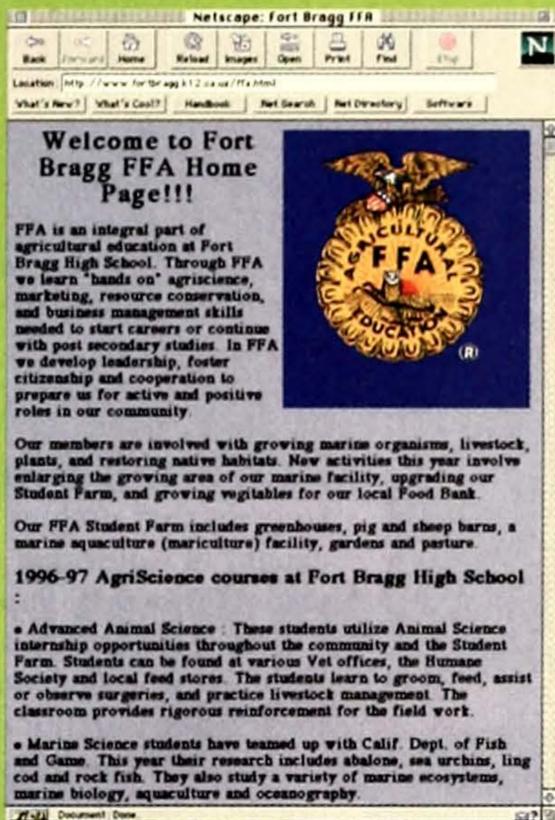


**ARMY**  
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# Get webbed!

Check out the Fort Bragg FFA Chapter's website—  
<http://www.fortbragg.k12.ca.us/ffa.html>



If you think the research these FFA members are doing is cool, wait until you see their website! You can find out more about their research projects here, or find out what else is going on in the chapter. Who knows, it might even give you some ideas for your own chapter. They've even got a page of their favorite Internet links.

## FFA steps in

Around 10 years ago Fort Bragg FFA Chapter Advisor Fred Rubin started a small fresh water aquaculture program in the school's greenhouse. Eventually, the program grew out of the greenhouse and into a new facility.

Today, the program's popularity among students has prompted construction of yet another facility that provides some much needed space. With the growth came a new focus: salt water mariculture.

A key to the success of this program is the relationship the chapter has developed with the local Fish and Game lab. It's a mutual relationship that places students like

Rosie Elmore, Shannon Cleary and Shane Sevey in the middle of real research projects being conducted by the department. Rosie, Shannon and Shane gain skills and experience; the Fish and Game staff gain

much needed data from students' research.

The arrangement also provides Fish and Game the facilities needed to conduct the research. On the other side of the coin,



Local businesses give the chapter a helping hand. This fish market chips in by pumping and providing ocean water for the Fort Bragg FFA Chapter's storage tanks.

the chapter benefits from the expertise of the Fish and Game staff, like Konstantin Karpov, a researcher who has been working with Shannon and Rosie on a project involving cabezon, a local fish.

Karpov says the relationship with the Fort Bragg FFA is a "vehicle" that accomplishes two things: "One is to help students work on projects that have real applications." The other, he says, "helps us because there is no other local aquarium system here to do the kind of research that we've been trying to do."

## Fish food

Rosie and Shannon have been investigating the digestion rates in cabezon.

Their research will be one of many factors involved in a larger research effort being conducted by Fish and Game which will, among other things, help researchers learn more about the cabezon and the other marine life forms it eats, particularly abalone.

Rosie's and Shannon's task in this project is to find the digestive rates of a sample group of cabezon in the lab. The data they come up with will be useful to Karpov, but that's not all he's looking for. He's also interested in the success of the techniques they use, which he designed specifically for this research.

Here's how it works: Shannon and Rosie feed a cabezon a scheduled diet of chopped squid. At a set time following the feeding, they anesthetize the fish by placing it in a pool of a chemical called MS-22.

The anesthetized fish is placed on a table, where its mouth and thorax are held open by depressors made of PVC pipe. Rosie and Shannon remove its stomach contents, first by removing large pieces with tweezers, then inserting a tube and rinsing what's left with water. They take what they've removed and then calculate the digestive rates.

"When you're describing the [research] methods," Karpov says, "you have to say it took such and such a time to put these fish under ... For us, it's maybe a paragraph in our methods, for a student it's a real worthwhile project that comes up with a scientific result."

## Scary, yet sophisticated

"It was scary at first," says Shannon, "because the fish are really big, and they had big teeth and everything. The first time

long after anesthetization cabezon can survive. This is important because, in the future, when he's doing research on cabezon from the ocean, he needs to be able to know

the fish are recovered).

## Urchin urge

Shane Sevey, a senior, now knows more about sea urchins than he ever thought possible. He's feeding urchins different quantities and types of food so he can see how this affects their ability to produce roe, the eggs of the urchin which are used in sushi.

The harvest of the sea urchin is big business here because in Japan, where sushi is very popular, there's not enough caught locally to fill the demand. Rubin says the demand is so great that urchins caught in California are actually flown to Japan.

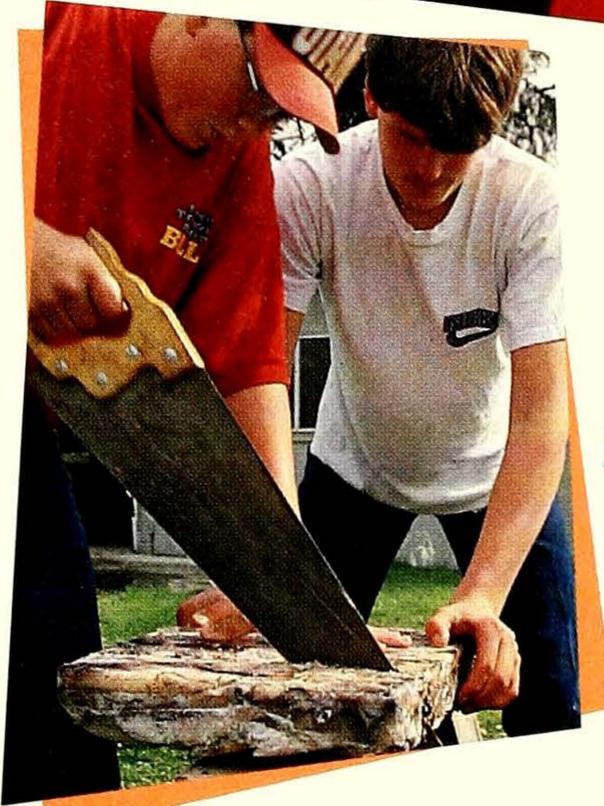
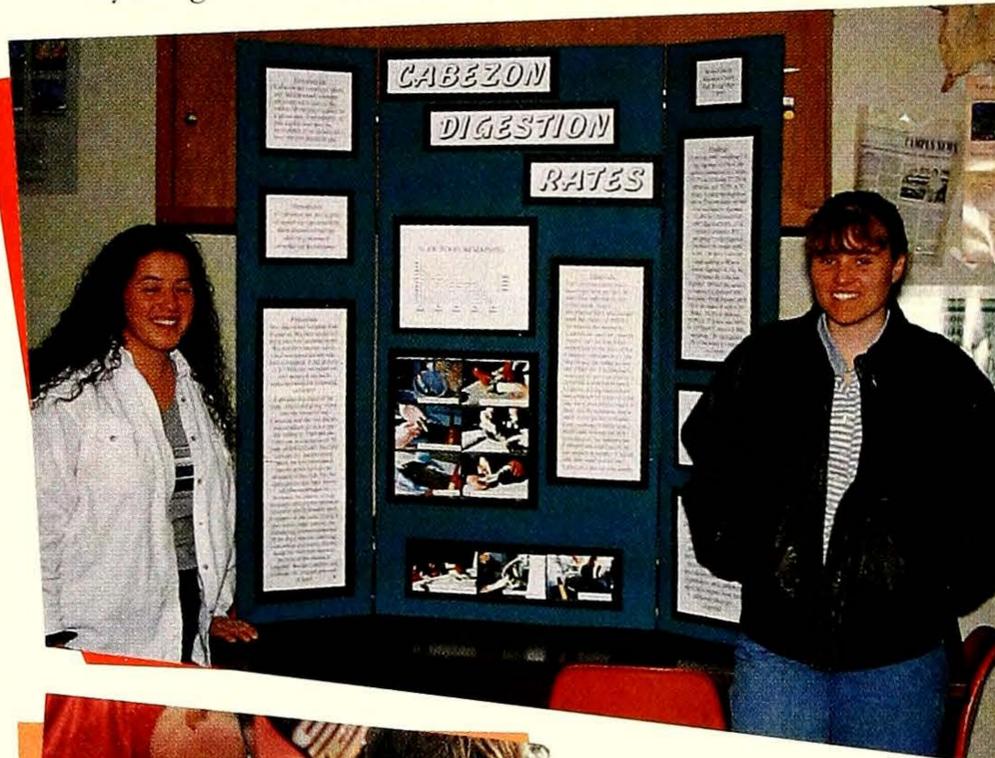
Shane's research will help Fish and Game and the local sea urchin divers better understand how the urchins' diet affects roe quality and quantity.

Shane is also providing data that will help researchers as they study the feasibility and practicality of feeding urchins in the ocean to promote roe growth and hatching and raising urchins in captivity.

The research has grown on Shane. "It's my best class," he says. "I just come here and do my thing. It's fun."

Aware of the impact his research may have on the local industry, Shane explains, "I'm hoping that in the future we'll have a big area where we can grow sea urchins, harvest the roe and send it to Japan. It would be good for California."

"They're becoming involved in the stewardship of their own resource," Karpov says of these FFA members, who are also his part-time research colleagues.\*



**Top: Rosie Elmore and Shannon Cleary prepare their research for competition. Above: Josh Admire nets a fish in the lab. Left: Josh and Marshall Efishoff team up to cut up frozen squid which will be used as fish food.**

was kind of gross because we didn't know what to expect, and all this stuff came out. We got used to it after a while."

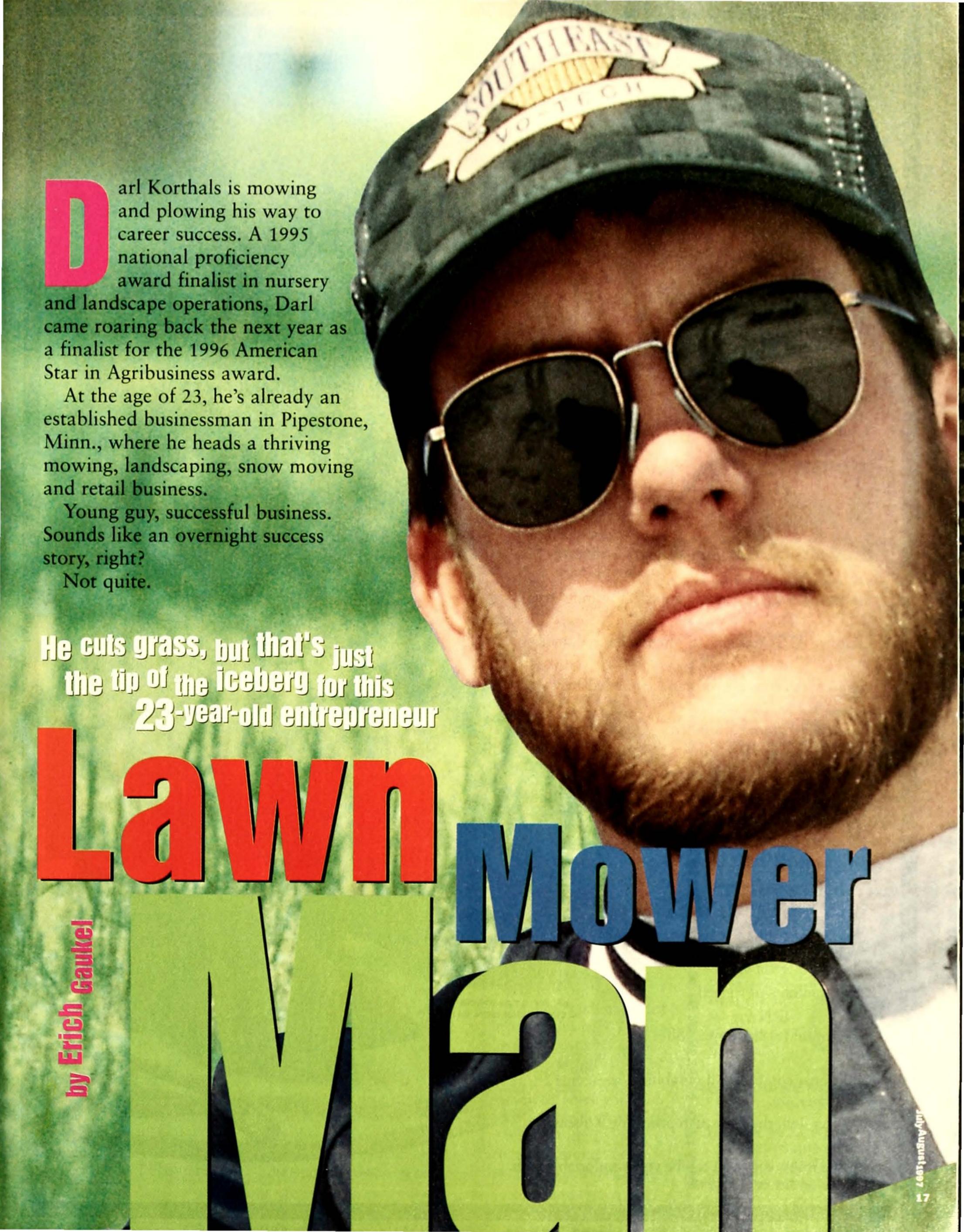
"The students also got into measuring fish," Karpov says, "learning how to anesthetize them, actually drawing blood on them—some very sophisticated lab techniques that you'd never see in a high school setting."

Karpov also hopes Rosie's and Shannon's work will show him how

that the fish will survive after being tagged and returned to the ocean.

Why?

Because he builds his research by studying the same fish over time. With a reward program offered by Fish and Game, the sport and commercial fishing boats help the researchers by checking their daily catches for tagged fish. If they find one, they will bring it to the department. (Karpov says around 8 percent of



**D**arl Korthals is mowing and plowing his way to career success. A 1995 national proficiency award finalist in nursery and landscape operations, Darl came roaring back the next year as a finalist for the 1996 American Star in Agribusiness award.

At the age of 23, he's already an established businessman in Pipestone, Minn., where he heads a thriving mowing, landscaping, snow moving and retail business.

Young guy, successful business. Sounds like an overnight success story, right?

Not quite.

**He cuts grass, but that's just the tip of the iceberg for this 23-year-old entrepreneur**

# **Lawn Mower**

**by Erich Gaukel**

# **Man**



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## Landscaping with mouse and keyboard

Computer technology is changing the way Darl does business. Besides the benefits of computerized billing and accounting, Darl is doing landscaping on the computer. In this sample Darl generated, the "before" image is a photograph of a new house with an unfinished yard. The "after" image shows Darl's computer landscaping treatment, which can be printed and presented to the client before the physical work begins.



Darl's business has grown client by client since the days when he pulled a push mower behind his bicycle at the age of 10. With hundreds of clients, three facilities located around town, several employees and a lot of equipment, Darl has made a commitment to the business—and to the town.

"I was getting to the point where it was so big," Darl says, recalling the growing pains the business experienced, "I had to hire

people. I said this is a need we have in this town. And I like being outside, I love working with my customers, I like being with my employees. It's something different every day. You can wake up and enjoy going to work. It's great, I love it."

## Wave of the future

I visited Darl on a sunny March day. With the massive amounts of snow that had already hammered the upper Midwest in the

preceding months, the sun was a welcome relief.

He drove me in his big red Chevy pickup, its front end equipped with a yellow blade for moving snow, a service that keeps the business going in the winter.

With one hand on the wheel, Darl explained how he made the transition from the kid on the bike to the successful businessman.

"It was just to make some spending money. I didn't get an allowance or anything like that. My mom knew some people, so I went and mowed for them. They told their friends and it just kind of grew from there."

No sooner had he said this than he slowed the Chevy down to a near crawl as we approached downtown Pipestone. He looked to his left,

stopped talking, and very slowly waved his free arm to the driver of a passing car. I noticed he'd been waving to just about everyone we passed. As Darl drove on and continued talking about his growing business, I realized he knew just about everyone in town.

Not a bad situation, especially when you consider each of people is one of two things: a current customer or a potential customer.

## The business of growing

"I really haven't done much advertising, except the last two years now, with the garden center being developed and the landscaping part growing," Darl says. "Word of mouth is the cheapest and best way to go."

Darl's approach—reliance on word of mouth and ability to connect with a wave—seems to be working. His business is growing.

During the summer, Darl has two crews out mowing a total of 20 lawns a day. The total number of mowing clients is up at around 450. This accounts for around 40 percent of the business's income.

Landscaping accounts for another 40 percent

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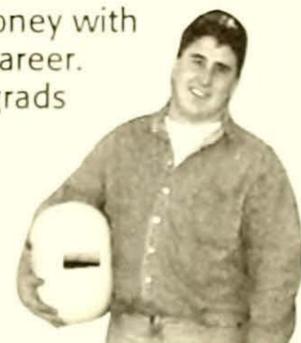
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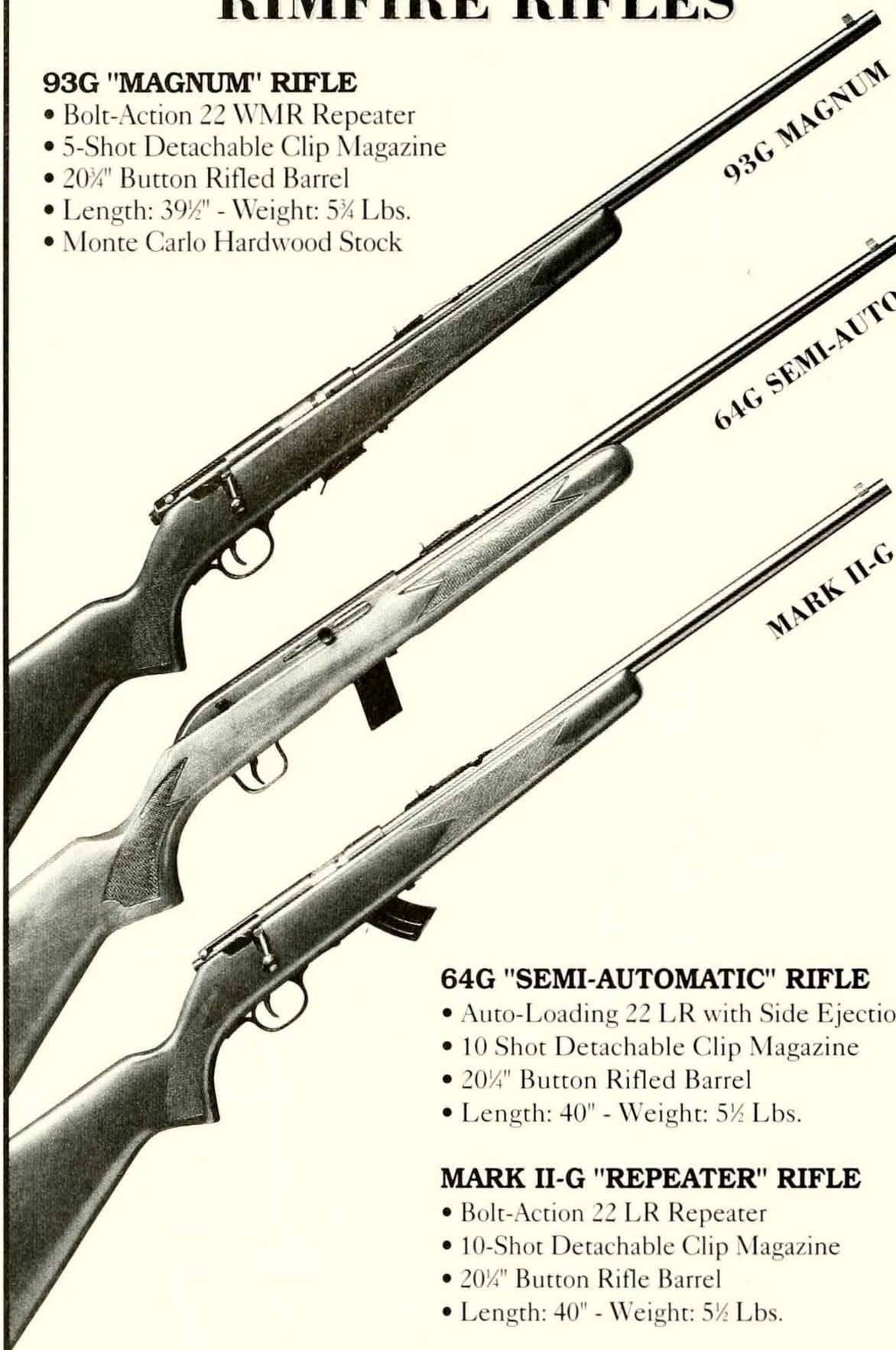
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and draws around 50 clients. Snow removal brings in much of the remaining 20 percent of the income.

### Shifting into high gear

Darl's just starting an aggressive retail plan with a new garden center on the highway on the edge of town. Here, Darl sells trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, retaining walls and Christmas trees.

With the help of a state-of-the-art computer system, Darl's broadening the landscaping business.

He's using a software package designed specifically for landscaping design, which gives him a leg up on the competition because he can go to a client's house, photograph it, scan the photo into his computer, pull the image up on the screen and then design the landscaping right there on the computer.

As landscaping business picks up, Darl has his sights set on more geographic coverage. "Right now we cover a 15 to 20 mile radius from Pipestone," Darl says. "I want to cover a 50 to 75 mile radius to get a larger landscaping clientele. I want to do the tri-state area—Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa—if possible ... It's a goal," he adds.

While he's positioning for the move across state lines, Darl knows there are risks involved in rapid growth. "The business is growing so fast sometimes it's out of control," he says. "You've got to stop yourself and say, 'this is reality, slow down and get it back where it's supposed to be.' You don't want to overdo it."\*

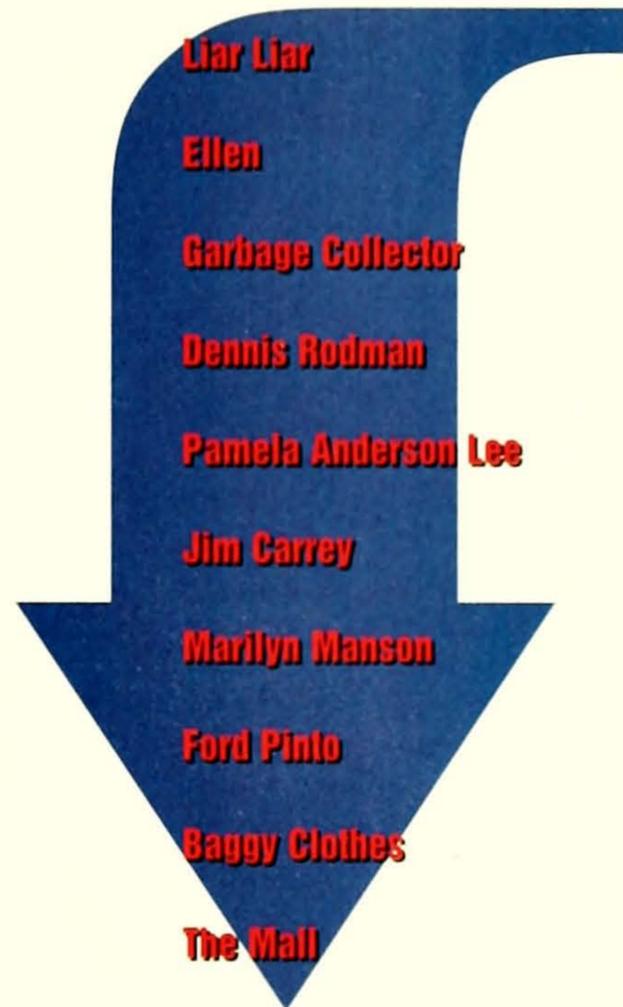
# what's HOT

George Strait, Tom Cruise and "Home Improvement" hold their positions on the "Hot" list for the second straight issue, while Dennis Rodman, Pamela Anderson Lee and "Ellen" continue to sink. What do you think?

# what's NOT



- Movie:
- TV Show:
- Career:
- Athlete:
- Actress:
- Actor:
- Musician:
- Car:
- Clothes:
- Place to go:



## what's HOT NOT

# Survey

Movie \_\_\_\_\_  
 Actor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Actress \_\_\_\_\_  
 Athlete \_\_\_\_\_  
 Musician or band \_\_\_\_\_  
 Car \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pickup truck \_\_\_\_\_  
 Magazine \_\_\_\_\_  
 Website on Internet \_\_\_\_\_  
 Place to go \_\_\_\_\_  
 Weekend activity \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sport \_\_\_\_\_  
 FFA event \_\_\_\_\_  
 Clothes \_\_\_\_\_  
 TV show \_\_\_\_\_  
 FFA fundraiser \_\_\_\_\_  
 Career \_\_\_\_\_

Movie \_\_\_\_\_  
 Actor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Actress \_\_\_\_\_  
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# Ron Miles

**Engineering was his calling, music was his dream—now he's polishing a successful career as a jazz trumpet player**

Ron Miles had been playing trumpet since he was 11 years old. He hadn't even thought of pursuing it as a career. As he studied engineering in college, he realized that his musical interest, which he had kept up on the side, had turned into real talent. Now, with two CDs in release and a busy tour schedule that takes him all over the United States and Europe, Miles has found his groove. He spoke to *FFA New Horizons* from Denver, where he's also an assistant professor of music at Metropolitan State College.

**As a music performer and teacher, where do you go to learn new things about music?**

A lot of the times I learn it from the students actually. They have some really great ideas about stuff, so I learn a lot from them. And from the people that I play with. That's where I learn more than anything else.

**When kids start playing musical instruments in third or fourth grade, it seems like a lot of them see it as more of a chore than a privilege—**

Right—it was for me too!

**—so, when did you get beyond seeing the trumpet as a chore, and start seeing it as a privilege?**  
Well, probably in high

school, when I actually started to see some of the rewards of the labor. Because I was really bad! I mean, I was the last chair my whole time in junior high school, and I had braces. It was really painful! So, by the time I got to high school, the braces were gone and I started improving. Also, for the first time, I started to hear music that was truly great music. I heard Clifford Brown and Miles Davis and all these people who were doing really outstanding stuff. So then I understood what it was I was trying to get to ... It's really important in schools that teachers kind of let students know what it is they're shooting for.

**Why did you pick the trumpet?**

I had never heard a trumpet. My mom was teaching summer school and she needed me and my sister to do something while she was teaching. So she made us join the summer band. They put us in this room where there were all these horns that looked kind of interesting. The trumpet was shiny, and my sister picked the clarinet. That was it.

**Did you ever consider a career outside of music?**

Yes, when I went to college I was an electri-

cal engineering major. When I was in high school I would do internships during the summer. I did an internship at Bell Laboratories and at C&K Petroleum. So that was actually the way I was going. It was the idea of music not being a practical career, even though I really loved it. I just didn't think I was good enough to even think about it. It wasn't until I got to college that one of my teachers told me, "you can really play—I don't know if you know that." I changed my major that afternoon. I was so excited.

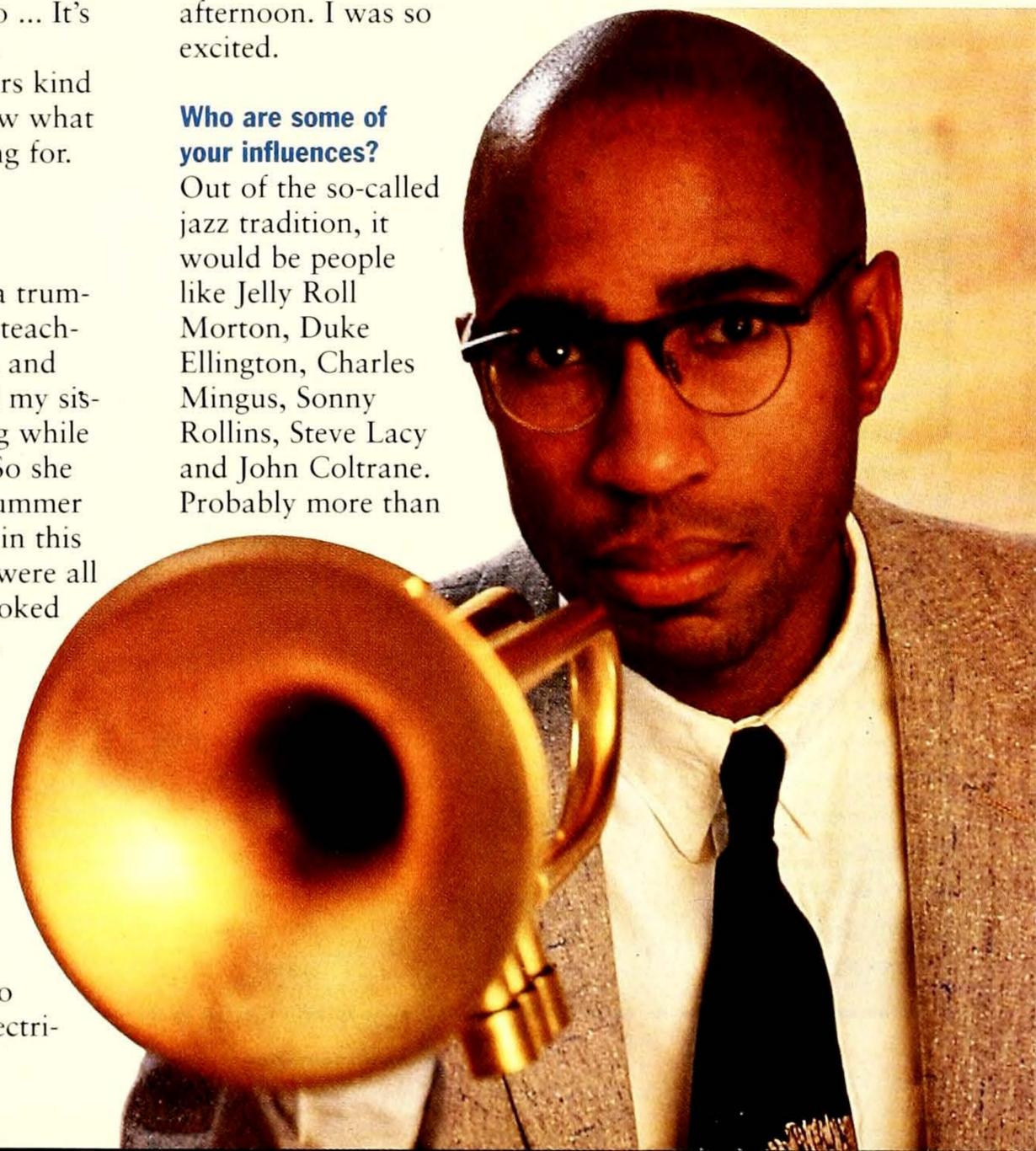
**Who are some of your influences?**

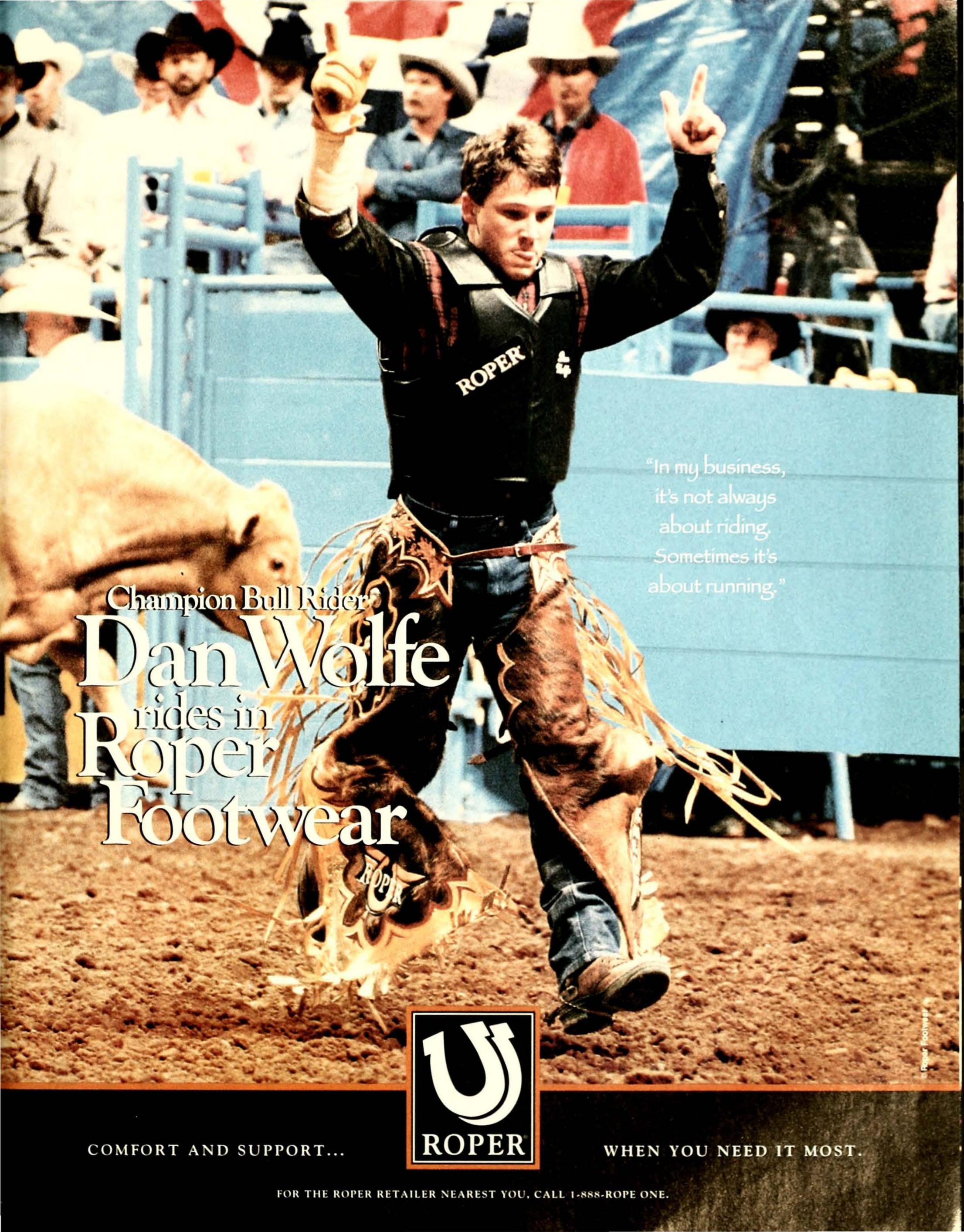
Out of the so-called jazz tradition, it would be people like Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Sonny Rollins, Steve Lacy and John Coltrane. Probably more than

any living musician, it's Prince. Outside of him, the first music I remember listening to was the Archies (from the '60s TV cartoon) and The Jackson Five.

**What are your goals?**

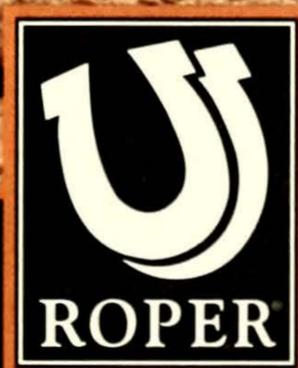
To play better than I play today is my primary goal, as far as music goes. And to make a contribution to the music on the level of those people that we talked about. That's what I'm trying to do. Not just to tread water, but to actually give something back to the music.\*





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# Last Laff

**Q:** What do you get when a sheep eats a tin can?

**A:** A bag of steel wool.

**Carolyn Stewart**  
Collinsville, Oklahoma

**Q:** How do you clean a chicken?

**A:** With a feather duster.

**Lynnsay Hagerty**  
Antelope, Oregon

**Q:** What's the best way to count cows?

**A:** With a cow-culator.

**J.R. Rother**  
Wolbach, Nebraska

**Q:** Did you hear the joke about the pencil?

**A:** It's pointless.

**Jenica Froke**  
Willow Lake,  
South Dakota

**Q:** What day of the week does a chicken hate the most?

**A:** Fry-day.

**Eric Blakeney**  
Guin, Alabama

**Q:** What do you call a breeze in the capital of Maine?

**A:** A-gusta wind.

**Josh Klam**  
Schulenburg, Texas

**Q:** What did George Washington's father say when he saw George's report card?

**A:** George, you're going down in history.

**Robert Middleton**  
Pahokee, Florida

**Q:** Why did the boy stick a hose in his friend's ear?

**A:** He wanted to brain-wash him.

**Emily McBlair**  
Colville, Washington

**Q:** Where do ducks go on their vacation?

**A:** Albu-quacky, New Mexico.

**Richard Covington**  
Pamplin, Virginia

**Q:** Why did the worker leave his job at the doughnut factory?

**A:** He was fed up with the hole business.

**Corey Devereaux**  
St. Johns, Michigan

**Q:** What does a camel wear in the desert?

**A:** Camel-flouge.

**Aaron Matthews**  
Fort Smith, Arkansas

**Q:** Why does a milking stool have only three legs?

**A:** Because the cow has the udder.

**Bri Myers**  
Ijamsville, Maryland

**FFA New Horizons will pay \$5.00 for each joke selected for Last Laff. In case of duplication, payment will be for the first one received.**

**To submit a nomination for "FFA Stars," tell us why you think you or your nominee is an "FFA Star." You must also include the following: color photo, name, address, phone number, chapter and age of nominee, as well as your name and phone number (if different).**

**Jokes and nominations for "FFA Stars" must be addressed to:**

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Alexandria, VA 22309-0160**

**Contributions cannot be acknowledged or returned.**

## Agrinuts by Jim Bradshaw and Michael Bettendorf

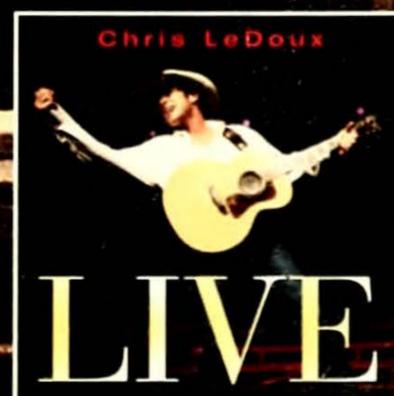


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