

new horizons

The magazine of the National FFA Organization

March/April 2000

WAYS TO LEARN AND HAVE FUN IN
AGRICULTURE'S OWN WINNER'S CIRCLE

Success in the show ring

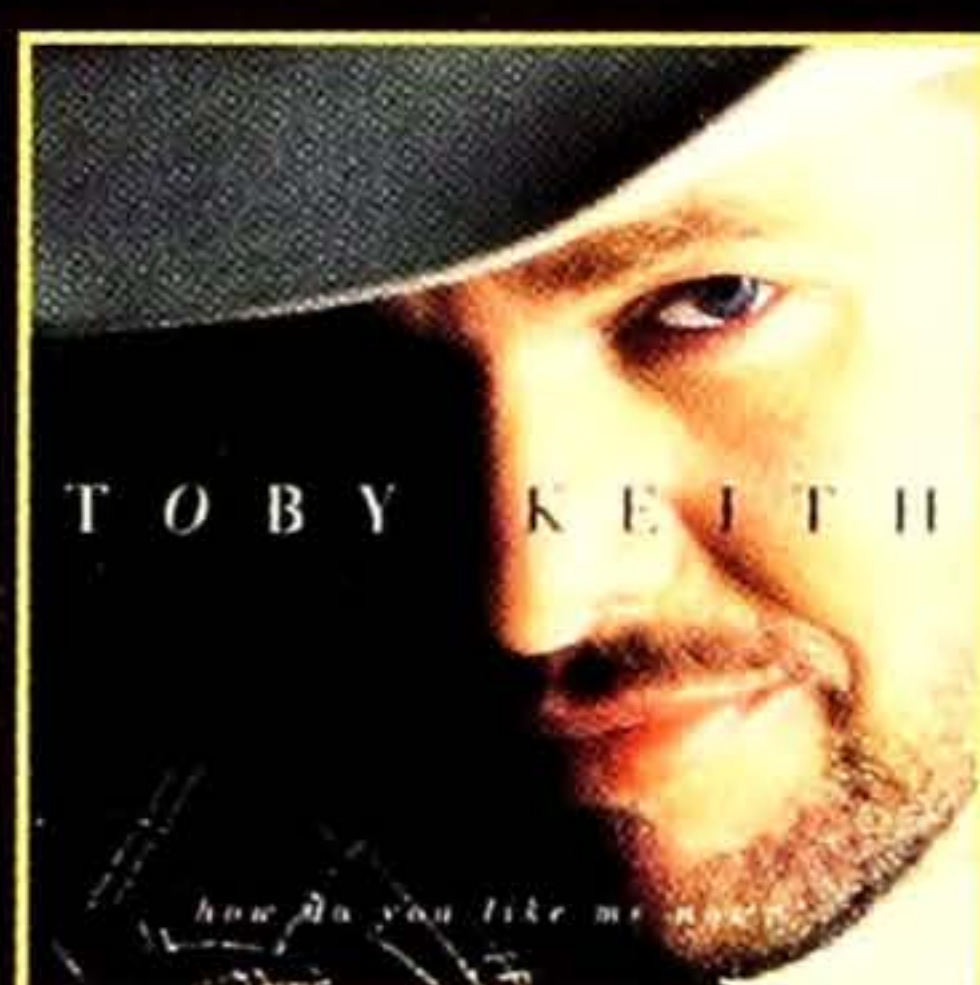
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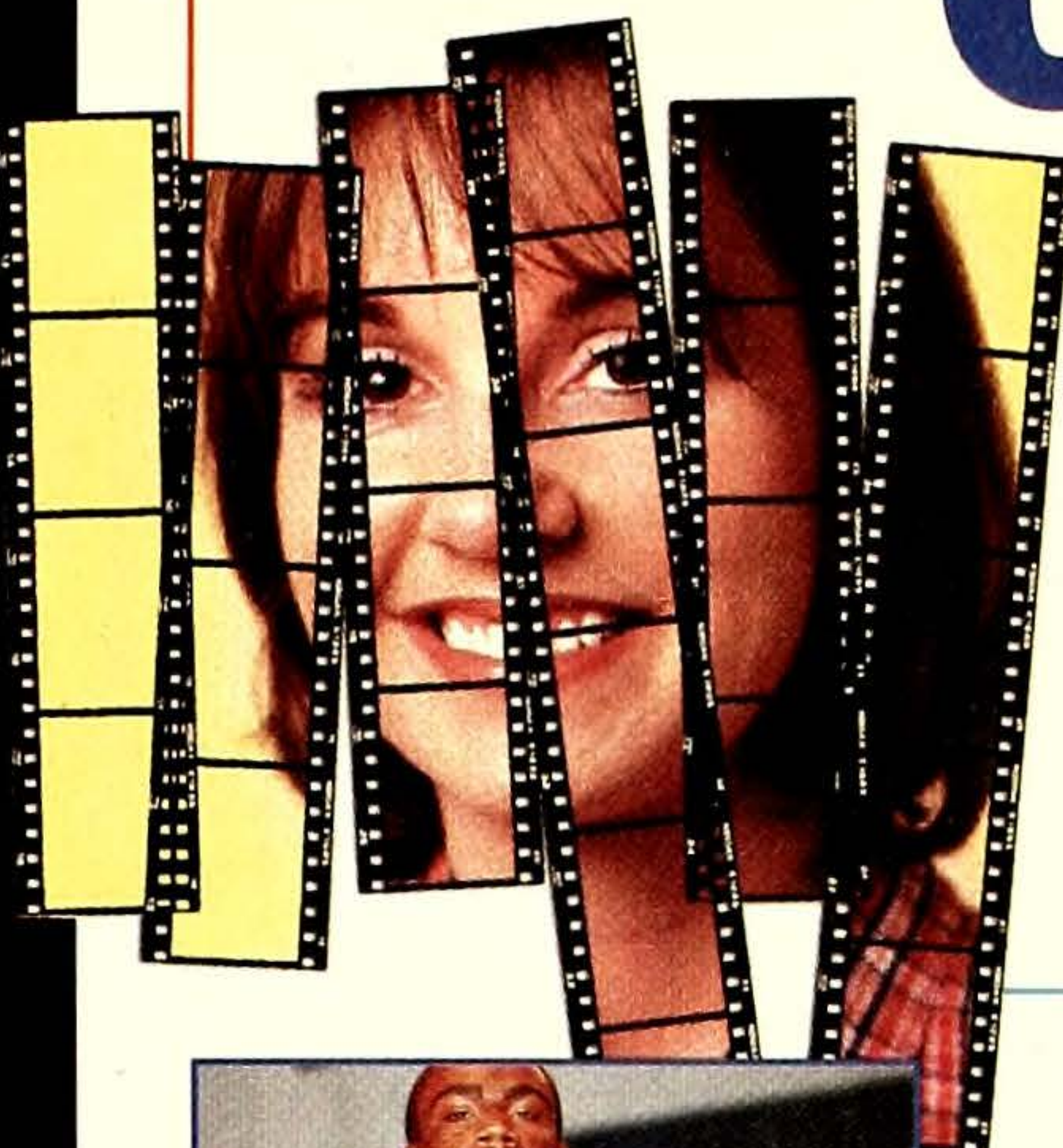
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The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of human beings and -seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff as an equal opportunity employer.

contents

March/April 2000



coverstory

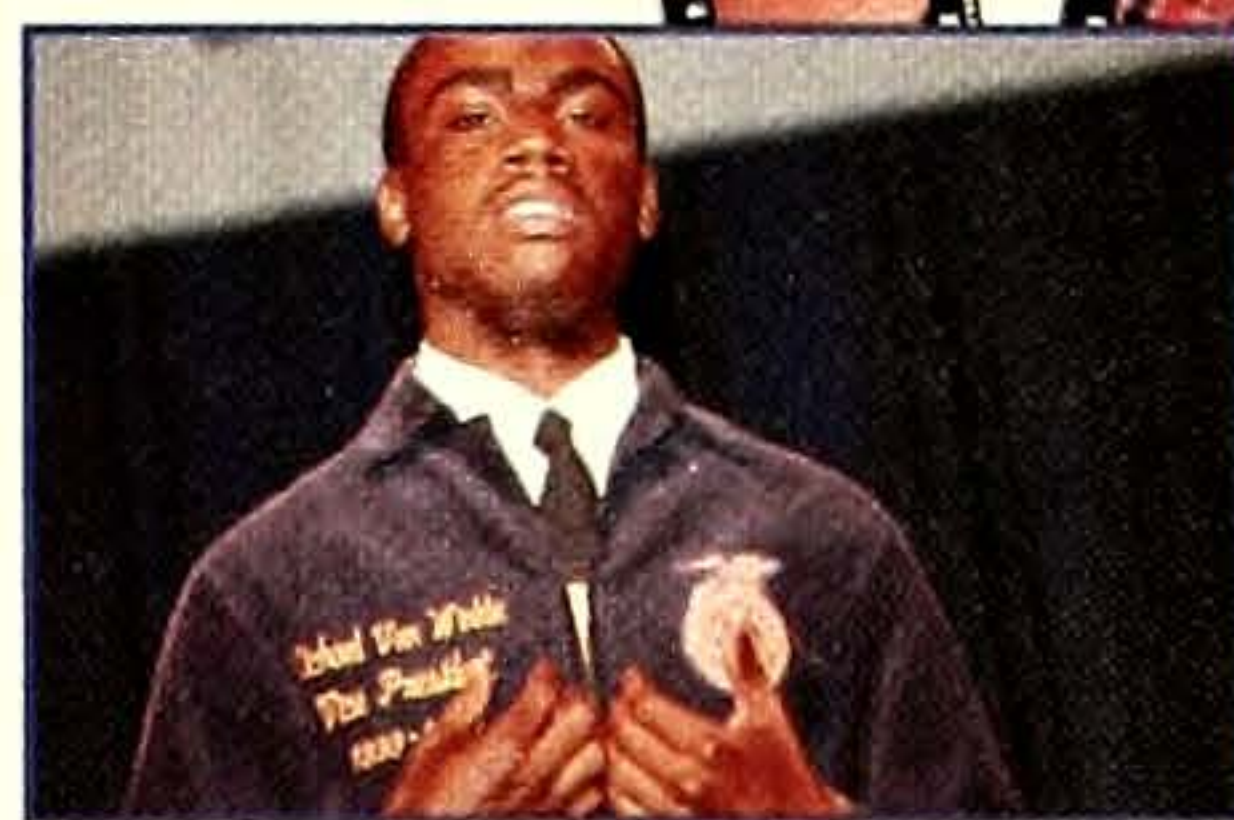
8 Success in the Show Ring

FFA members reveal lessons learned for life amidst the clamor and competitiveness of animal expositions. The exciting world of animal showmanship offers its own set of challenge and opportunity, with an upside of personal gain regardless of "ribbon count."

features

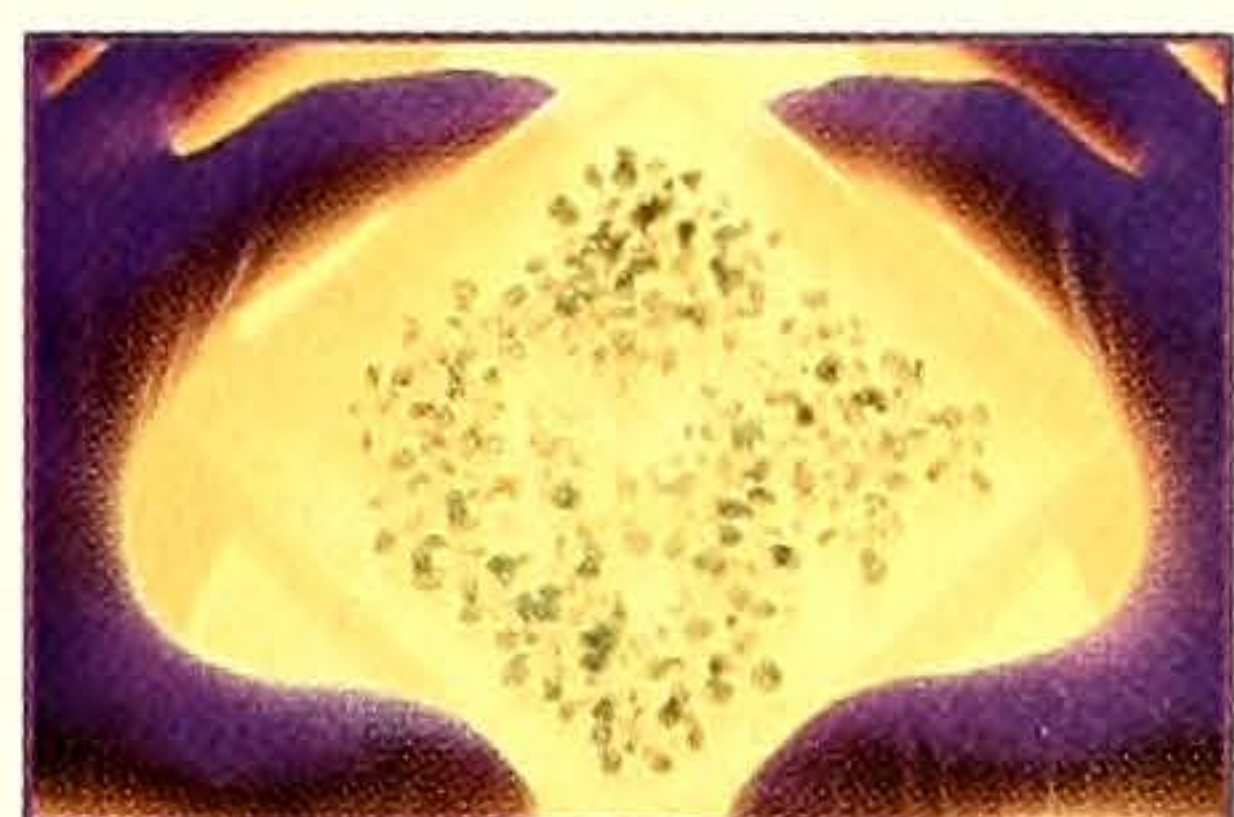
18 The Creed at 70

Only the most special of documents survive the test of time — great novels, constitutions, declarations, and...the FFA Creed. The words of E.M. Tiffany still ring true today to FFA members past and present, especially those who boldly offer the creed's message for all to hear.



22 Biotechnology: A revolution underway

Careers in agriculture can resemble something akin to science fiction as the field of biotechnology evolves. Here's the story on one area of science that's changing the face of agriculture, grabbing the world's headlines and offering great job opportunities.



26 Recognizing the difference

Winning FFA's H.O. Sargent Award is simply the culmination of an extraordinary project for North Carolina's Jessica Skinner. Her promotion of diversity in agricultural education has led to life-enhancing programs for students rooted in different cultures.



departments

2 national officer q&a

4 ffa stars

6 ffa in action

15 what's hot/what's not

28 last laff

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.

On the cover: Robyn Ott Photo by Shane Morgan

Check
out National
FFA Online
www.ffa.org

one on one with Jodee Ruppel

What did you think the day after being elected National FFA Secretary?

I can't believe this is actually real! I was so amazed when I put on my FFA jacket and there were no letters on the back. It took a while to sink in that I was actually a national officer.

Tell us about growing up in North Manchester.

North Manchester is a town of about 5,000 that is awesome! We have two stoplights on Main Street, Louie's ice cream store that's been around for 75 years, Sparrow's world famous caramel corn and Mr. Dave's famous tenderloins. Great friends, and a great community, gave me the foundation to build upon for future successes.

Why has FFA been such a big part of your life so far?

FFA gave me a place to "fit in" during high school. While I belonged to many other groups such as basketball, golf team and 4-H, FFA allowed me to try new things to help me grow as a person and as a leader. Learning about agriculture gave me a passion to tell others about the industry and helped me decide on my career path.

Why major in ag-ed and telecommunications?

I love to talk! I love to promote agriculture, agricultural

education, and FFA to anyone who will listen. So, working with communications and agriculture seemed a natural pick.

Did you buy anything special to get ready for 100,000 miles of travel?

I had to buy my travel toothbrush and toothpaste and other necessities, but the most important items I pack are pictures. I have pictures of my friends, family, and of FFA members I've met. I carry those pictures as a reminder to never forget my friends, family, and where I came from... and, that my foundation, purpose, and reason for being here are the FFA members.

What's the sculpture on your arm?

I made a smiling sun in a clear blue sky because I see the new millennium filled with brightness. Positive attitudes and the belief that anything is possible will lead our generation to create new technologies that will enhance our way of living. Plus, with FFA cultivating such a great group of leaders, the future can't help but be bright! ★

VITALS

Hometown:

North Manchester, IN

Age: 20

Chapter: Manchester FFA

Advisor: Gwen Mize and Ron Smith

SAE: Shropshire sheep and ag communications

Education: Freshman at Purdue University

Major: Ag education and telecommunications

Last good movie:

Runaway Bride

Favorite musician(s):

Dixie Chicks

Reading Now: Developing the Leader Within You, by John Maxwell

Favorite book: Paradise, by Toni Morrison

TIMELINE

Age

- 13** • Lost District Quiz Bowl Contest
- elected Junior Chapter Secretary
- 16** • elected Chapter Reporter
- 17** • elected Chapter President
- lost for District Vice President
- elected District Reporter
- 18** • won State Leadership Ambassador Contest
- placed 3rd in State Job Interview Contest
- named State Star Reporter, Elected State President
- 20** • elected national FFA officer



Jruppel@ffa.org

National secretary: Jodee Ruppel

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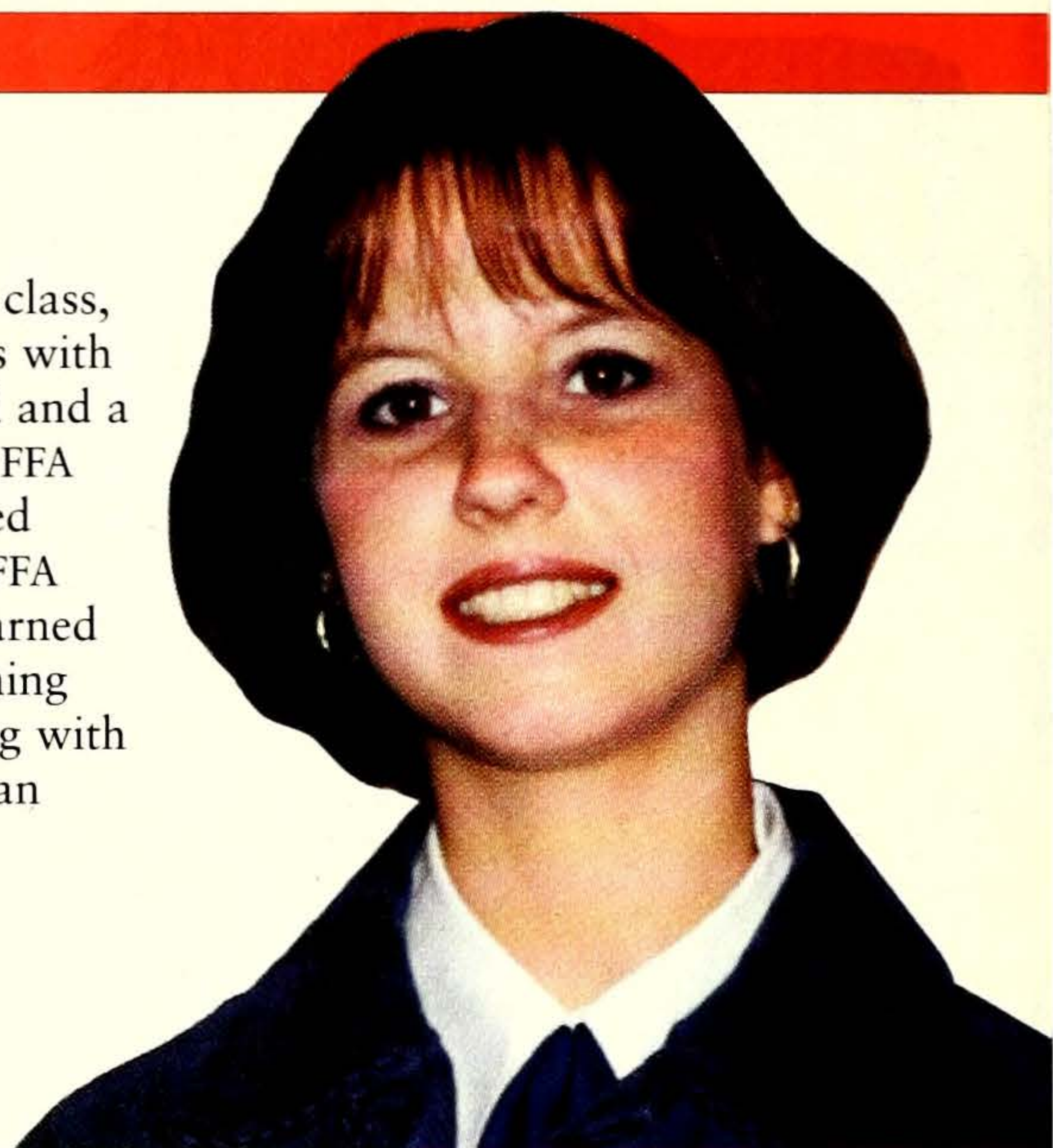
To nominate yourself or another FFA member for "FFA Stars," drop us a detailed note telling us why you or your nominee is a star. Include a photo and the nominee's name, address, phone and birthdate. If nominating someone else, include your name and phone number.

Mail to:

FFA New Horizons "Stars"
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Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960

Jenna Smith

Besides ranking number one in her graduating class, 18-year-old Jenna packed her high school years with FFA awards and achievements. Star Greenhand and a Greenhand office led to three other El Campo FFA Chapter offices, including president. Recognized beyond her chapter, Jenna served as a district FFA officer, received the Star Chapter award and earned her Lone Star Farmer Degree. Her award-winning work in horse judging and showmanship, along with her animal-based SAE, has inspired her freshman pre-vet studies at Texas A&M University. ★

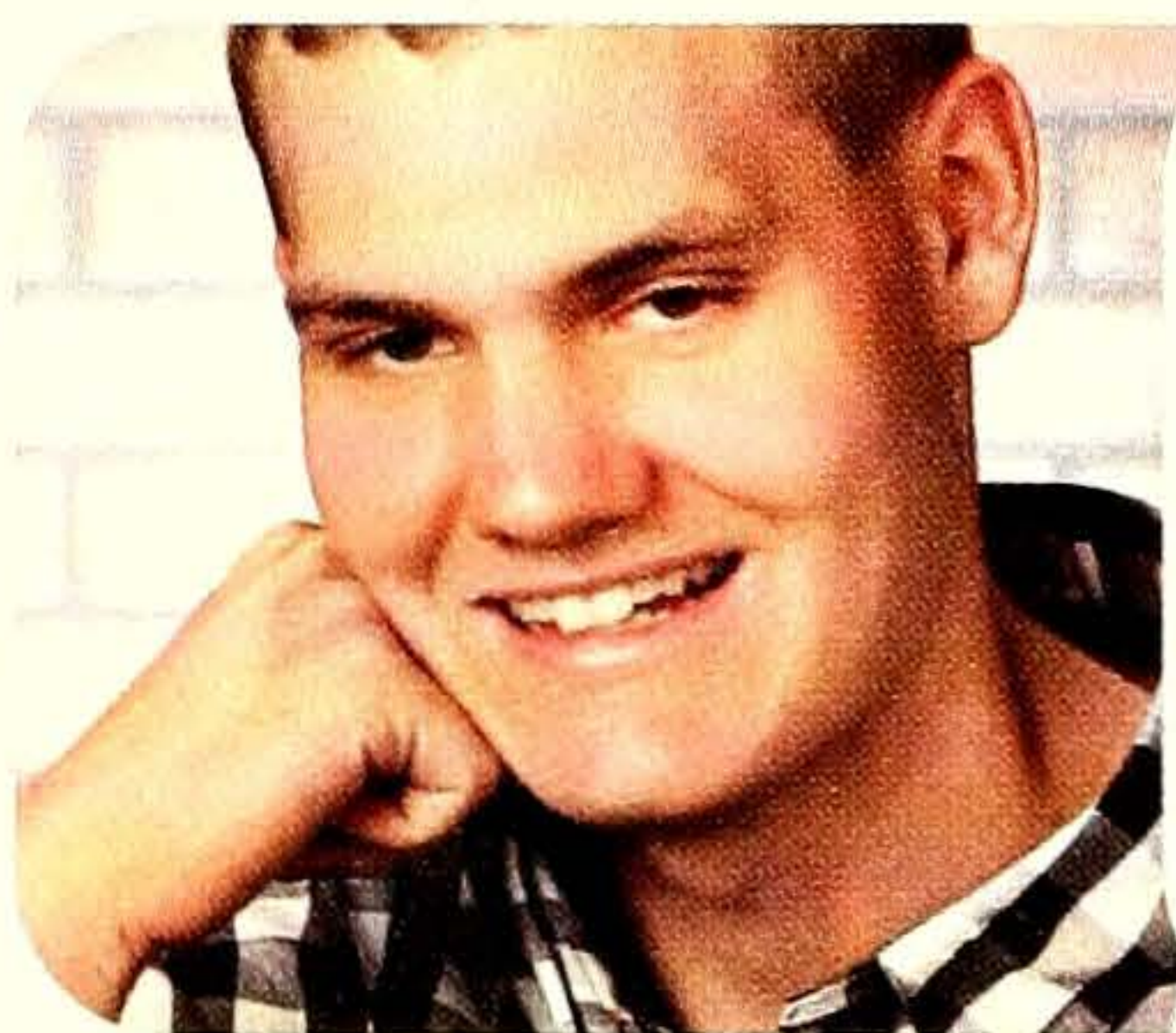


MISSOURI

FLORIDA

SOUTH DAKOTA

WASHINGTON



Ross Becker

As a senior member of Mexico FFA, 17-year-old Ross is capping his high school years as chapter president. He prepared for the office by working as chapter vice president and treasurer, and competing in the FFA knowledge contest, agricultural mechanics contest and poultry judging. While not leading his chapter, Ross concentrates on his SAE of raising show hogs and work on the family farm. He also earned an area proficiency award winner in Emerging Agricultural Technologies. ★



Carla Channell

Carla's love for animals led her to start work at a Gainesville veterinary clinic during her freshman year in FFA. She later applied her livestock interests and handling skills to the hog show ring, where she won numerous awards and blue ribbons. She won first place in the Small Animal Care proficiency award and received her State FFA Degree. The 18-year-old Gaither FFA member earned early acceptance into the veterinary studies program at the University of Florida. ★



Wayne Walters

Wayne, 16, began his FFA years with the Star Greenhand award, an honor earned in recognition of his competition in the creed speaking contest and working on both junior and senior parliamentary procedure teams. He has also achieved top honors in both land and livestock judging. Ever expanding his involvement, Wayne has represented the Wagner FFA at the last two South Dakota FFA conventions, as chapter vice president, and as a contestant in prepared public speaking. ★



Kristen Oas

Kristen, 17, is concentrating on practical experiences while serving as president of the North Kitsap FFA Chapter. While leading the chapter as a state and national convention delegate, she continues her work as a teacher's assistant in the agriculture department. She volunteers to work in the "early hour" before classes begin, but an early start is nothing new. Kristen began work at 15 in a local stable, and continues her practical experiences in a local food market. ★

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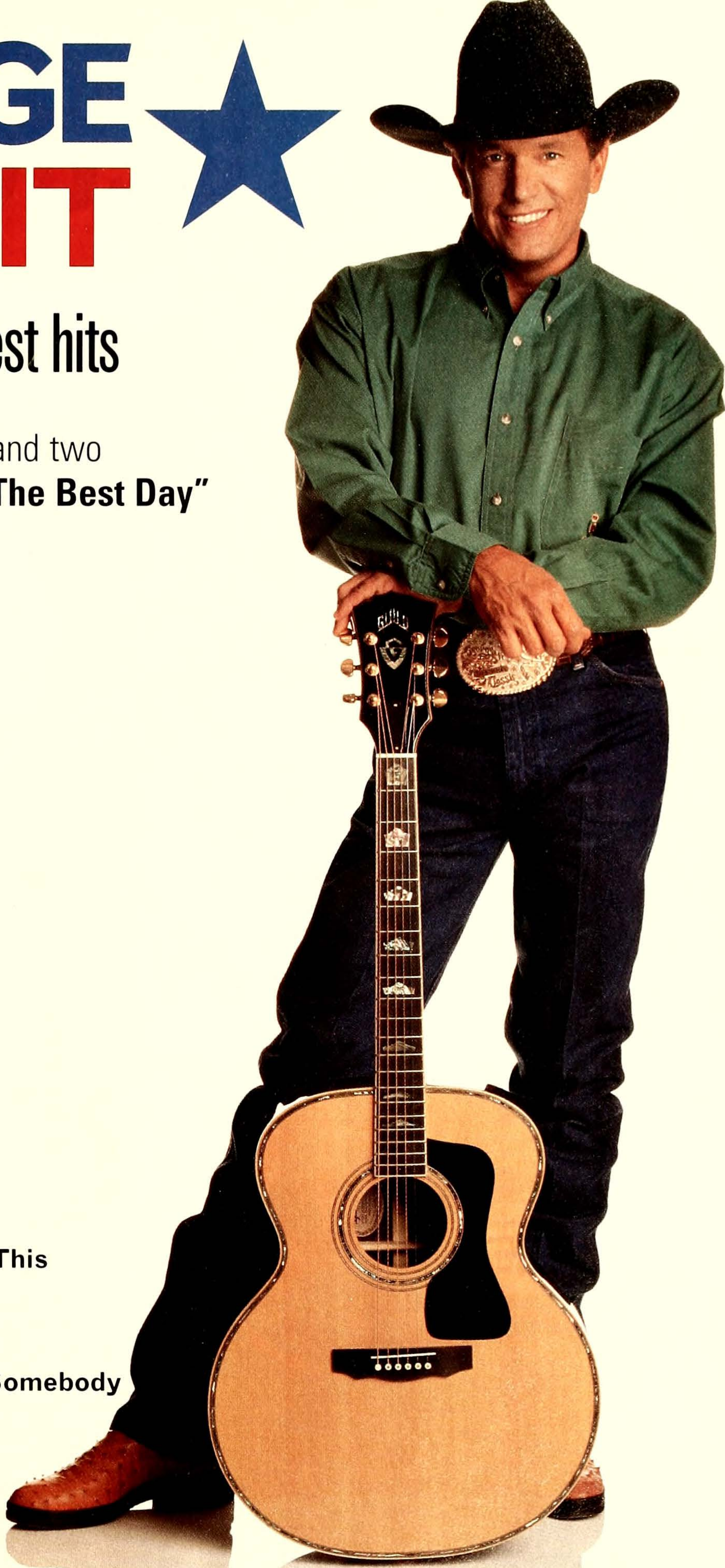
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ffa in action

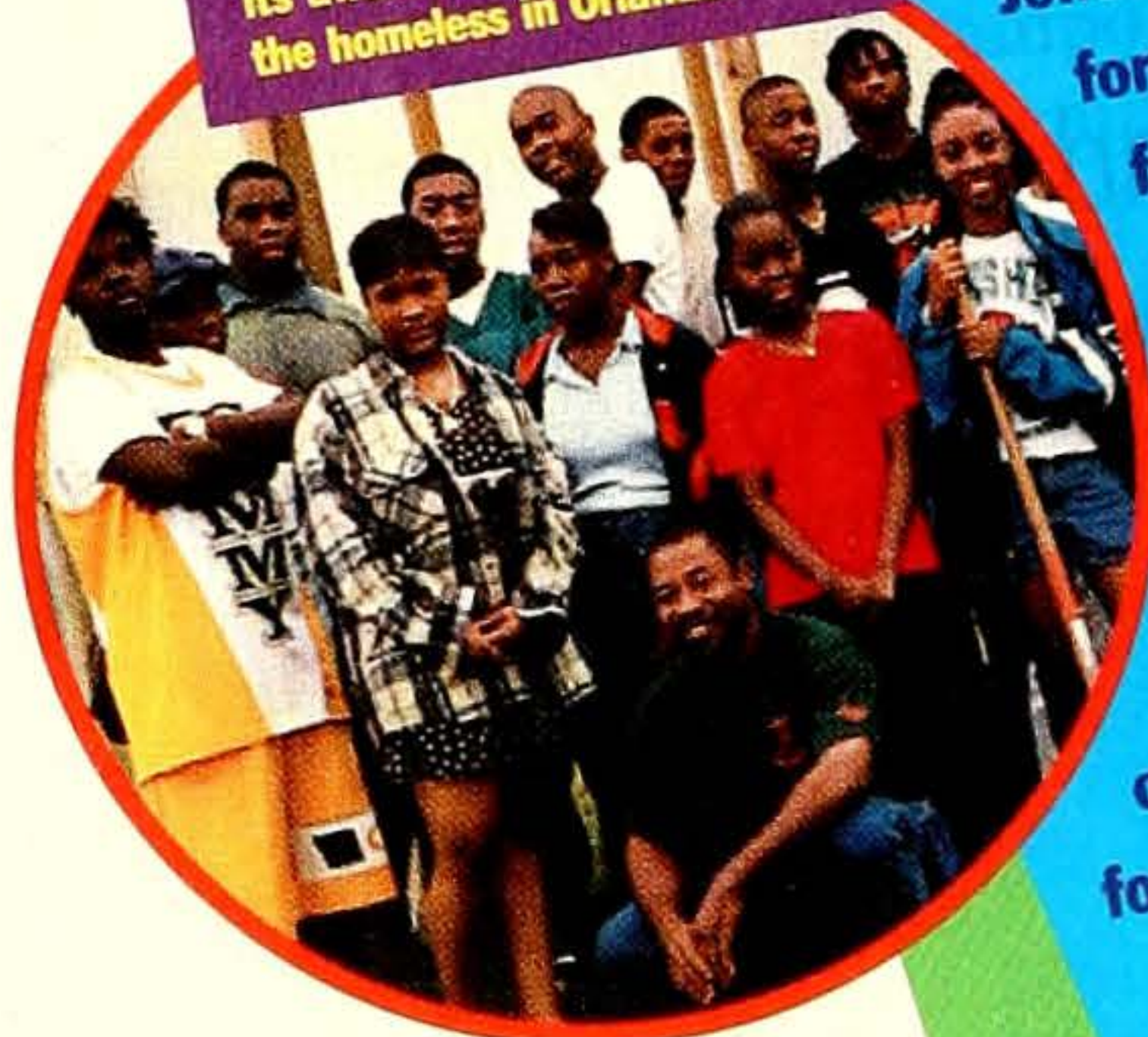
Is your chapter in action?

If so, let us know about it!

Be sure to send an actual photograph,
preferably showing members.

Send to:
FFA In Action, FFA New Horizons
P.O. Box 68960
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Ag teacher and FFA Advisor
Maurice Uchegbu (kneeling)
leads the Jones FFA Chapter in
its award-winning effort to feed
the homeless in Orlando.

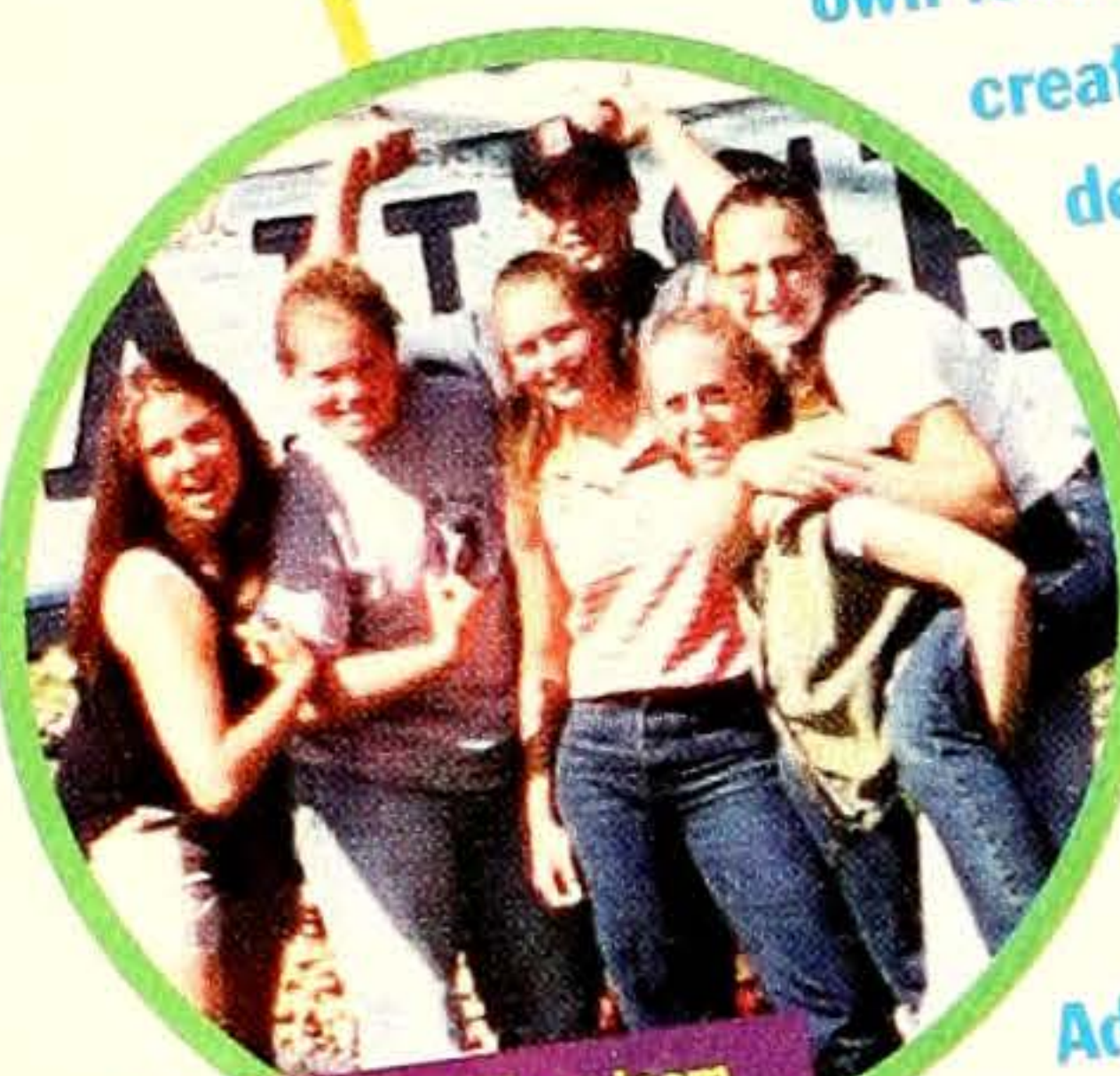


FLORIDA Greens machine

Jones High School FFA in Orlando is preparing for its fourth year of growing collard greens for distribution at a local homeless shelter. The chapter annually delivers more than 300 pounds of fresh, washed and bundled greens to Second Harvest Food Bank in the downtown area. Besides the obvious rewards for such service, the chapter received a 1999 commendation from Orange County Commissioners for outstanding community service.

WASHINGTON Retreat to lead

Chapter officer teams at Yelm FFA spend quality time at their own leadership training workshops. The retreats create unity among officers, and help them develop goals for the coming year. S' Mores on the beach, a Tow Trucker's parade and smokin' the advisors in go-cart races added up to a successful weekend for 1999's team. Attending officers were Becky Wallace, Stephanie Bishop, Rosie Jacobs, Amy VanFleet, Mike Mensonides and Jacquie Loyer. Advisors in charge were Dennis Wallace, Elaine Lewis, Mike Patrick, Chris Scott and Bruce Morris.



1999's Yelm FFA officer team joins a long line of leaders who gather annually for the chapter's own leadership training conference.

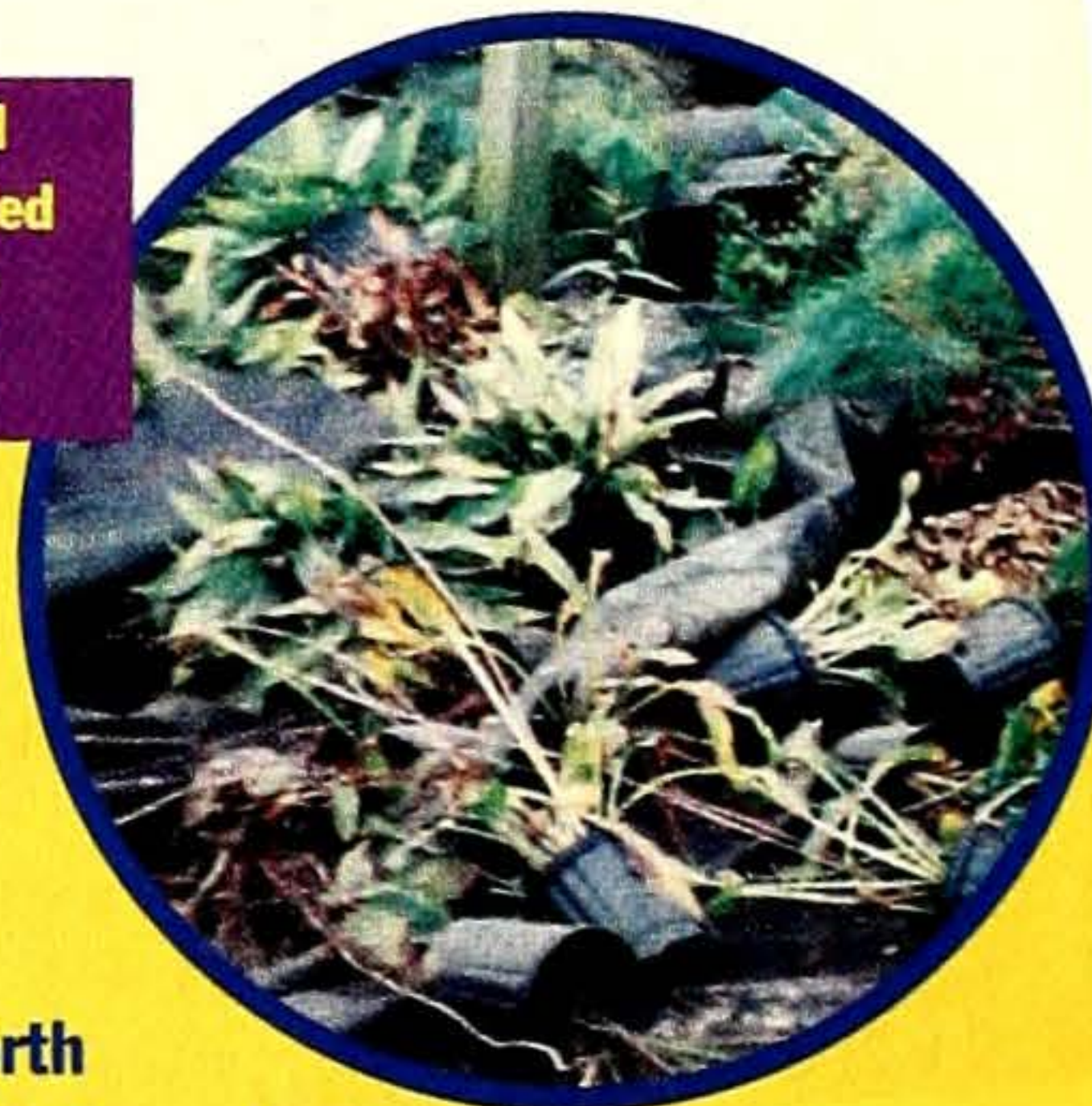
At Savanna High School's homecoming game, FFA members from all grades carried Old Glory across the football field before the traditional raising of colors.



OKLAHOMA Flying colors

Savanna FFA is a big part of school and community life, with chapter members representing more than 10 percent of the town's entire population. As an outreach program, the chapter is increasing its involvement with general school activities, including raising the American flag before every home football game.

Raging waters that assaulted
this greenhouse also prompted
memorable tales of FFA truly
"in action."



NORTH CAROLINA Flooded with help

Last September, a massive hurricane dumped more than 30 inches of rain on eastern North Carolina. Subsequent flooding destroyed thousands of homes and farms, but only one agriculture department suffered serious damage: Vanceboro's West Craven High School. "We had two feet of water in the ag department, and water waste deep in the greenhouse," recalls advisor Lee Kirkman. When waters subsided, members swung into action to rebuild the department from scratch. Advisors worked from an old school bus, directing chapter relief work and continuing the department's activities — including the scheduled fruit sale. Relief came from unexpected places, with the Wauseon, Ohio, FFA contributing a tractor-trailer full of building materials, paint, student desks and other items. Items were still being used four months later for school and community reconstruction. In a nearby county, North Lenoir FFA escaped damage to their department but swung into action helping to rebuild their community of Kinston. Two community development grants from the North Carolina FFA Foundation helped fund the chapter's efforts to rebuild a nature center, hunting club and a Ruritan community building. These facilities had long benefited FFA, providing hunting safety programs, meeting places and other support.

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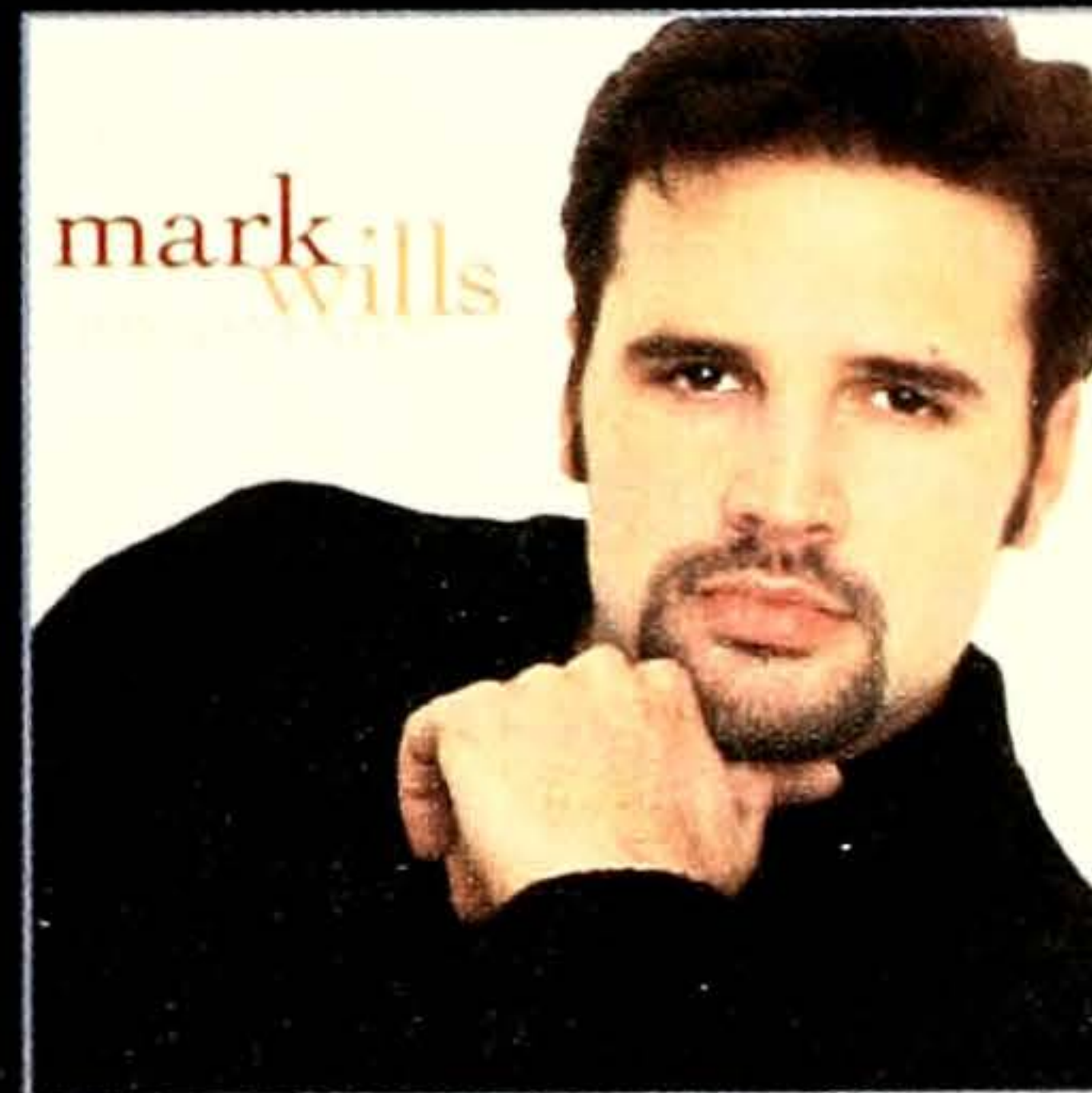
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"Back At One"

**“I’ve always felt that showing animals is about
working hard and doing your best”
— Robyn Ott**

SUCCESS in the show ring

Lots of folks talk about it, many wish they could do it, and others simply do the work necessary for success in the show ring. You’ll find FFA members in all these categories exhibiting everything from dogs, rabbits and poultry to lambs, hogs and steers. When it comes to success, many of the same principles apply no matter which specie you’re showing.

Like many FFA members, Todd Gabel started showing cattle and swine as a 4-H member when he was nine years old. Todd, a Fort Lupton, CO., FFA member, admits it took a while to learn all of the in’s and out’s of the livestock show ring, including proper preparation of his animals.

“You have to be willing to work hard and learn,” Todd

says. “When I started, I didn’t know much about how to prepare animals for show. You have to feed them a little differently along with training them. You learn a lot about responsibility.”

Show ring competition and the required concern for animals’ well-being leads to a better overall understanding of animal husbandry, says Glenn Slack, an FFA alumnus and chief executive officer of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture. “Preparing animals for exhibition is a character-building activity that allows students the opportunity to learn and appreciate the principles of livestock care and handling, as well as food animal quality assurance.”

As with most extensive learning experiences, winning in the show ring demands a

by Jeri D. Mattics

Showing animals is all about working hard and doing your best, says champ Robyn Ott—but hanging with friends helps make the effort fun and rewarding.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHANE MORGAN DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION BY DOUG BESSER

commitment of time. Todd estimates that he spends about five hours a day on average with his show steers during the six months leading up to a competition. "You have to break (train) them to lead easily with a halter, walk them a lot to get them in the right condition, and work on their hair coat," he says.

"Bottom line—spend a lot of time with your show stock."

All of Gabel's hard work has paid off. He competes not only in his local county fair, but also in the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo, the Arizona National Stock Show in Phoenix and the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

"We raise all of our own stock, so it's really gratifying when the quality of your stock is recognized by the judges," Gabel says.

The judges' nods can also equate to cash. In many of the larger shows, a sale requires a placing in the top of a class. Gabel won his class during January's National Western Livestock Show, and promptly sold his steer for a cool \$10,000.

"Some shows are more profitable than others," Gabel says. "But, that was a nice check."

Todd deposits some of his winnings in savings, and invests the balance in his herd.

As with anything, big paydays also carry a downside. With big bucks at stake, the temptation exists to bend or even break the rules. After a well-publicized series of questionable show ring practices several years ago, many shows tightened their rules. In addition, several organizations launched educational campaigns to teach exhibitors ethical practices.

According to show ring champ Robyn Ott, an FFA member from Fairview, OK, the fruits of these efforts are

beginning to ripen.

"I've always felt that showing animals is all about working hard and doing your best," Robyn says, speaking from experience. She showed the reserve grand champion lamb at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky, this year.

"I think the educational programs and the new rules have really helped," Robyn adds.

Along with good, honest competition, one of the things Robyn loves about showing is the camaraderie. "It's so fun," she says. "At national shows, I see friends from across the country I've met at previous shows. It's a special treat because you get to hang out and have fun."

After she competed in Denver's National Western Stock Show, Robyn and some of her friends went skiing. Fun time with friends is a big payoff for show ring participants. Members such as Todd and Robyn agree that work offers many rewards, including a treasure of friends and experiences that can last a lifetime. ★

Just Do the Right Thing

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture's quality assurance campaign teaches young people how to avoid unethical show ring practices. The campaign is supported by sponsors such as the National Pork Producers' Council and the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Here is a summary of the campaign's message:

- Avoid wrongdoing when competing in livestock exhibitions.
- Don't be pressured into participating in unethical practices.
- Never compromise the welfare of the animal.

Note: Many shows, particularly at the national level, have additional rules, which are listed in the show catalog.

For more information, log on to www.lcionline.org/nlec, or contact NIAA at 1910 Lyda Ave., Bowling Green KY 42104, (270) 782-9798.

Winning Ways

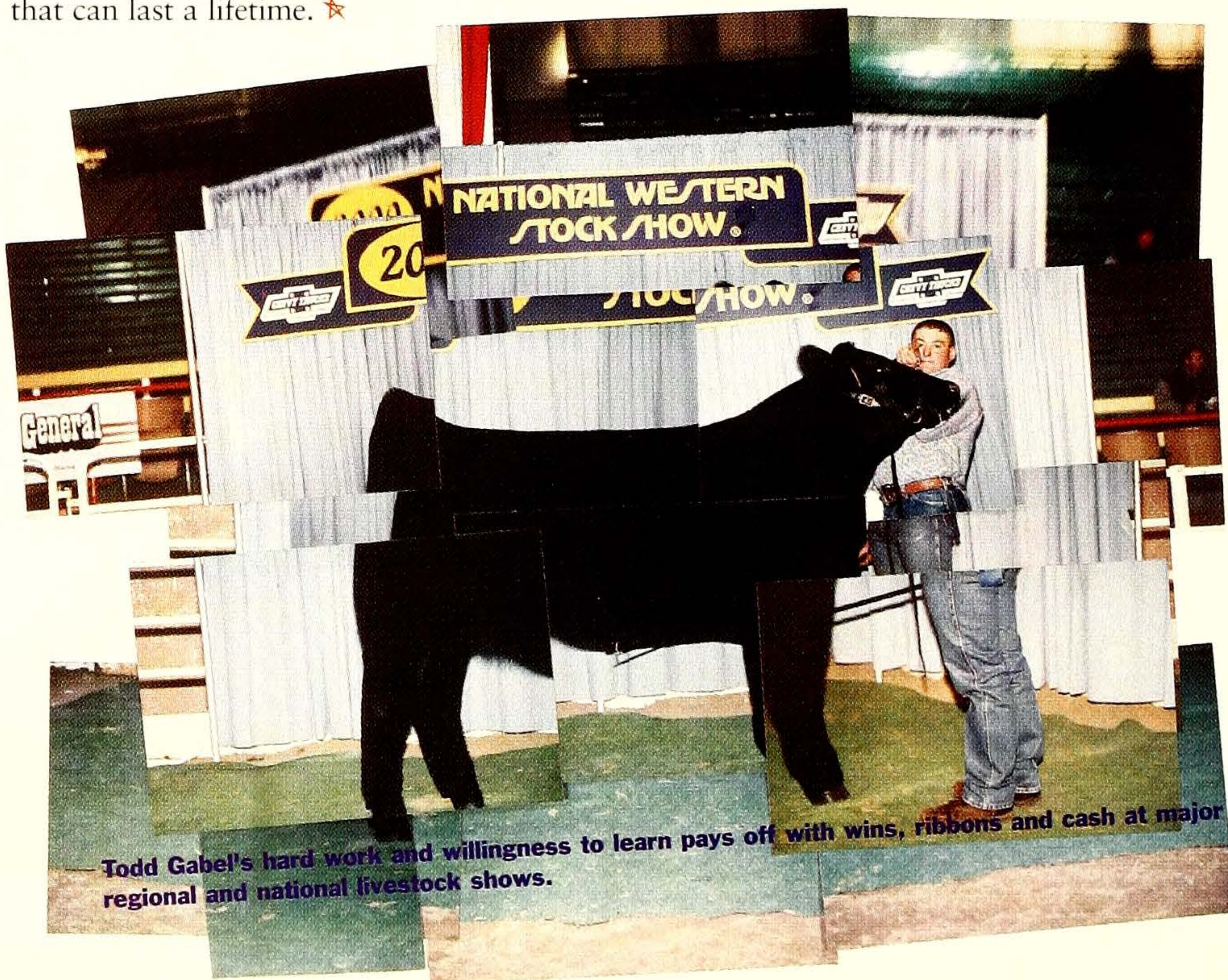
Many rules of good showmanship apply across the board, regardless of specie. Here are a few tips to keep in mind.

- The animal should be clean and well groomed.
- All animals should be docile and trained for the show ring experience.

- You should always position the animal in a way that enhances the animal's conformation from the judge's perspective.
- Avoid positioning yourself between the judge and the animal.
- Be prepared to answer questions about your animal including feed rations and training regimens.
- Be on time! Most judges don't appreciate exhibitors who enter the ring late.
- Keep abreast of current industry trends.

Todd and Robyn's Tips for Success:

- Be willing to work hard and invest many hours.
- When starting out, purchase a lightweight animal so you can show in the lighter classes. You probably won't have a grand champion, but you're more likely to place in the top of your class and make the sale. Plus, you'll learn a lot in the process.
- Don't overspend on an animal, particularly when you're just starting out.
- Find a mentor who is willing to teach you how to feed your animals and prepare them for show. When you start, you may not know much, but helpful people will teach you along the way.





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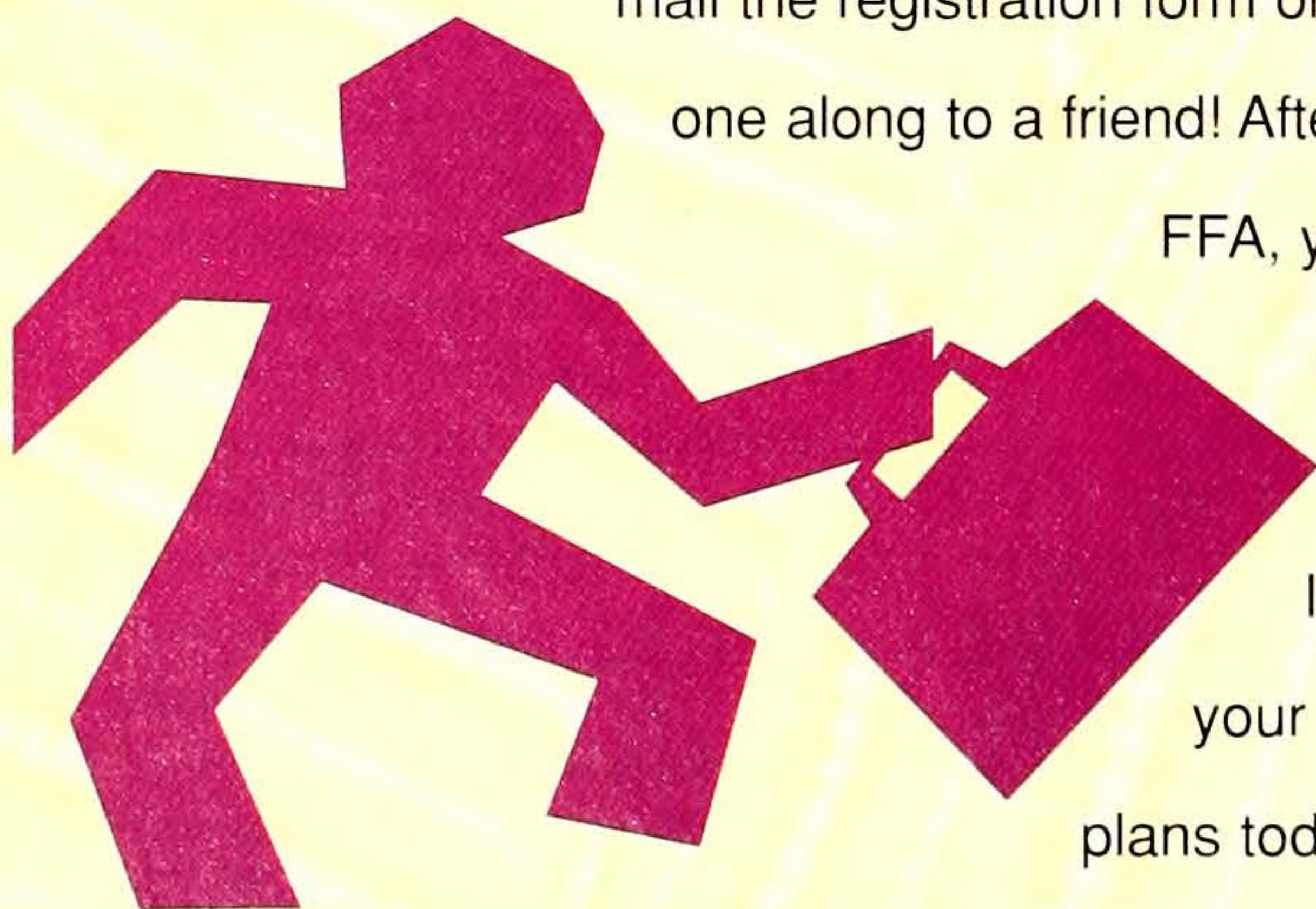
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2000 Student Program

Tuesday—Discovering the Adventuring Spirit

1:00-5 p.m. Conference Registration
5:30 p.m. Dinner
6:30 p.m. "Tickets Please"
8:00 p.m. "Packing Your Suitcase for Adventure"
9:00 p.m. "Planning for the Adventure"
Late Registration
9:45 p.m. Reflections
11:00 p.m. Lights Out

Wednesday—Learning the Native Language

7:45 a.m. Breakfast
8:15 a.m. Photo Session
9:00 a.m. "Learning the Language"
Noon Lunch
2:15 p.m. Congressional Speaker and Visits, Tours: U.S. Capitol, Library of Congress, Supreme Court
4:45 p.m. Photo at Supreme Court Steps
5:15 p.m. Dinner at Union Station
6:30 p.m. Night Tour of Washington, D.C.—Jefferson, Korean, FDR, Lincoln and Iwo Jima Memorials; Vietnam Wall
11:00 p.m. Lights Out

Thursday—Your Passport for the Future

7:45 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 a.m. Visit Mount Vernon — Home of George Washington
11:00 a.m. Lunch
12:30 p.m. "Mapping Your Adventure"
6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Arlington National Cemetery
9:15 p.m. Reflections at Arlington National Cemetery
11:00 p.m. Lights Out

Friday—Exploring Your Environment

7:45 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 a.m. "Embarking on Your Expedition"
11:00 a.m. Lunch
Noon Visit to Newseum
5:30 p.m. Celebration Dinner
6:30 p.m. "Exploring the Terrain"
9:30 p.m. "Unlocking Your Potential"
11:00 p.m. Lights Out

Saturday—Discovering the Ultimate Adventure

8:15 a.m. Breakfast
9:15 a.m. Sightseeing in Washington, D.C.—Smithsonian Institution, Air and Space Museum, Holocaust Museum, Ford's Theatre, National Archives, Washington Monument
11:30 a.m. Lunch at the Ronald Reagan Building
5:30 p.m. WLC Banquet
7:00 p.m. Dance
10:00 p.m. Reflections
11:30 p.m. Lights Out

WLC Advisor Institute

Tuesday—Discovering the Adventuring Spirit

1:00-5 p.m. Conference Registration
5:15 p.m. Sunset Service at Iwo Jima Memorial
6:30 p.m. Dinner
8:00 p.m. "Opportunities for Adventure and Learning"
9:30 p.m. Reflections with Student Program

Wednesday—Learning the Native Language

7:45 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 a.m. "Persuasive Communication for Advisors"
Noon Lunch
2:15 p.m. Congressional Speaker and Visits, Tours: U.S. Capitol, Library of Congress, Supreme Court
4:45 p.m. Photo at Supreme Court Steps
5:15 p.m. Dinner at Union Station
6:30 p.m. Night Tour of Washington, D.C.—Jefferson, Korean, FDR, Lincoln and Iwo Jima Memorials; Vietnam Wall

Thursday—Your Passport to Success in the Classroom

7:45 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 a.m. "FFA Advisors — Leaders with an Edge"
- Building Your Leadership Potential
- Building the Leadership Potential of Members
Noon Lunch — Round Table Discussion
2:00 p.m. Free Time—Georgetown or Old Town Alexandria
6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Arlington National Cemetery
9:15 p.m. Reflections at Arlington National Cemetery

Friday—Exploring Your Environment

7:45 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 a.m. "Helping Students Map Their Adventure"
- Hot Careers in Agriculture
10:30 a.m. Organized Educational Tour
Noon Lunch
1:00 p.m. Organized Educational Tour
6:00 p.m. Special Dinner and Activity

Saturday—Discovering the Ultimate Adventure

8:15 a.m. Breakfast
9:15 a.m. Sightseeing in Washington, D.C.—Smithsonian Institution, Air and Space Museum, Holocaust Museum, Ford's Theatre, National Archives, Washington Monument
11:30 a.m. Lunch at the Ronald Reagan Building
5:30 p.m. WLC Banquet

Schedule and workshop content subject to change. Saturday night's lodging provided with conference registration.

WLC Conference Staff



Debbie Bond

Hometown: Carrizozo, New Mexico
FFA Office: State Secretary, 1996-97
Activities: Alpha Xi Delta Sorority, Mesilla Valley Cowbelles
Education: New Mexico State University, majoring in education



Cory Epler

Hometown: Columbus, Kansas
FFA Office: State Treasurer, 1997-98
Activities: KSU Student Alumni Board, College of Agriculture Ambassador
Education: Kansas State University, majoring in agricultural education



Melissa Gomes

Hometown: Merced, California
FFA Office: State Vice President, 1998-99
Activities: Agricultural Business Management Club, Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers
Education: Cal Poly State University, majoring in agribusiness



Summer Hackett Conference Leader

Hometown: Snelling, California
FFA Office: State President, 1997-98
Activities: California Scholastic Federation, Outdoor Adventure Club
Education: California State University - Fresno, majoring in agribusiness



Melody Higginbotham

Hometown: Greenfield, Missouri
FFA Office: State Secretary, 1998-99
Activities: SMSU Block & Bridle, National Farm Broadcasters of America
Education: Southwest Missouri State University, majoring in agricultural education



Lesley King

Hometown: Mt. Sterling, Ohio
FFA Office: District 9 President, 1998-99
Activities: Agricultural Hall Council, Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow
Education: The Ohio State University, majoring in agricultural education



Kyle Malter Conference Leader

Hometown: Malta Bend, Missouri
FFA Office: State Vice President, 1996-97
Activities: Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity, Agriculture Student Council
Education: University of Missouri, majoring in animal science



Alex Offerdahl

Hometown: Conrad, Montana
FFA Office: State Treasurer, 1996-97
Activities: National Association of Farm Broadcasters, Croatian Agricultural Exchange
Education: Montana State University, majoring in agricultural education



J.R. Peterson

Hometown: Wilsall, Montana
FFA Office: State Vice President, 1997-98
Activities: Campus Crusade Leadership Team, Ag Business Club
Education: Montana State University, majoring in agribusiness management



Kerry Priest

Hometown: Sabetha, Kansas
FFA Office: State Sentinel, 1997-98
Activities: Agricultural Education Club, American Ethnic Studies Student Association Diversity Initiative
Education: Kansas State University, majoring in agricultural business



Tim Sasek

Hometown: Sargent, Nebraska
FFA Office: Chapter President
Activities: Alpha Gamma Sigma Fraternity, College of Agriscience and Natural Resources Advisory Board
Education: University of Nebraska, majoring in agricultural business



Jarrod Smith

Hometown: Temple, Texas
FFA Office: State Vice President, 1998-99
Activities: Texas A&M Fish Camp, Texas A&M 12th Man Student Foundation
Education: Texas A&M University, majoring in education

Washington Leadership Conference



2000 Registration Form

(Mail this completed form to the National FFA Organization: 6060 FFA Drive, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960 or fax (317) 802-6051.)

Conference Dates

Please indicate 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices.

- ☐ June 6-11
☐ June 13-18
☐ June 20-25
☐ June 27- July 2
☐ July 11-16
☐ July 18-23
☐ July 25-30

Notice to Students: Individual student registrations **must be accompanied by payment** or the registration will not be considered.

Payment Method:

- ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Account # _____

Expiration Date _____

Cardholder's Name _____

- ☐ **Check Enclosed** Payable to: National FFA Organization
☐ **School Purchase Order** Fax or mail with registration form
☐ **Bill to Chapter #** _____

Package (Check One):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| <input type="radio"/> Student Package (quad occupancy) | \$495 |
| <input type="radio"/> Advisor Package (double occupancy) | \$525 |
| <input type="radio"/> Advisor Package (single occupancy) | \$700 |
| <input type="radio"/> Advisor/Guest Package | \$875 |

Prepaid*

Scholarship: include scholarship form with registration

- ☐ Scholarship amount \$ _____
☐ National FFA Foundation
☐ National FFA Alumni Association (National FFA Alumni form must be attached)
☐ Multiple student discount taken

Name _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Email Address _____

FFA Chapter _____

Advisor Name _____

School Phone _____

School Fax _____

Is an advisor or chaperone attending with you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Advisor/Chaperone Name _____

Do you have special needs? _____

Rules and Regulations: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

*CHAPTERS: Registration fee must be paid within 30 days after invoice to avoid a \$45 late fee. For chapters with four or more students attending, half the group may be registered at each hotel to ensure students receive the maximum benefits of a national experience, unless otherwise requested by the advisor. For general conference information, please call (317) 802-6080. For specific information regarding payments and registration, please contact Tina Paris, (317) 802-4309 or Melinda Findley, (317) 802-4252. **CANCELLATION POLICY:** There will be a \$225 cancellation fee for registered participants who do not attend.

Please copy this registration form and pass it on to others interested in attending WLC.
To avoid billing duplication, either mail **or** fax this form only one time per attendee.

Survey

what's hot

Movie _____

Female actor _____

Male actor _____

Web site _____

TV show _____

Career _____

Fruit _____

Country artist _____

Rap artist _____

Rock artist _____

Place to visit _____

NASCAR driver _____

what's not

Movie _____

Female actor _____

Male actor _____

Web site _____

TV show _____

Career _____

Fruit _____

Country artist _____

Rap artist _____

Rock artist _____

Place to visit _____

NASCAR driver _____

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What's Hot
P.O. Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN
46268-0960**

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Chapter _____

Comedian Adam Sandler gains favor over heart-throb Leonardo DiCaprio — just as DiCaprio's star vehicle, "Titanic," sinks in your ratings. Ag teachers are still inspiring FFA members, who'd like a similar job, and pizza remains a fave cool-weather fare. Be sure to fill out those surveys on page 14!

Special thanks to the Reedley, California FFA Chapter for sending in the most surveys.

hot the matrix

movie

titanic

not

hot jennifer lopez

female actor

goldie hawn

not

hot adam sandler

actor

leonardo dicaprio

not

hot drew carrey

tv personality

bob saget

not

hot teacher

career

garbage collector

not

hot summer

season

winter

not

hot earth

planet

pluto

not

hot stephen king

author

r. l. stine

not

hot pizza

food

broccoli

not

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"Carlene"



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your money

Tips on managing your cash

get a big jump on savings and investments

sock away money and watch it grow, or maximize your savings to reach your goals

Here's a fact: The younger you are, the more time your money has to earn more money! That's the great thing about interest-bearing accounts. So, you don't earn the big bucks? At a younger age, smaller amounts of cash saved can become bigger amounts of money in later years.

Of course, it's important to use discipline when dealing with cash. A big bank account can be tempting to anyone. You have to remember that a key principle of saving and investing is planning for the long-term. How much money will you have 2, 3, or 10 years from now? Do you have expensive things you need to buy in the near future? What about money to maintain those costly items, such as a car, livestock or the latest computer equipment?

It's important, too, to avoid situations where the money you're paying for money, such as interest on a credit card, isn't huge. As you become a better money guru, both earning more money and saving more money, you'll have more opportunities to borrow and charge. Watch those

rates! You worked hard to earn your money—now, work to protect it.

Just do it!

Saving and investing doesn't require a college degree. Anyone balancing agriculture classes can certainly learn the basics of investing. Financial wizard Ken Little, writing in his About.Com column on money management for teens, says it really isn't difficult to grasp the basics of investing. Successful investing, Little says, requires three things:

- Common sense.
- A willingness to remember your future is as important as the present.
- Someone to help you along the way.

When should I start investing?

Yesterday would have been better than today, but today is better than tomorrow. "It doesn't matter how old or young you are," advises Little. "What's important is a willingness to start and stick to a disciplined approach. Time is your best friend in investing. With time on your side,

even a very modest investment budget will grow to a respectable sum."

Little's advice boils down to a three-point process:

- Set a goal.
 - Find the money.
 - Stick to the plan.
- ..and you will be successful.

Work it out on-line

To get the scoop on savings plans, help is on the web. For instance, at www.financenter.com, a financial calculator can

tackle most any savings scenario. Web-based calculators are fun, free and easy to use. Based on simple inputs, such as your savings goal and date you'll need a cash stash, a calculator estimates how long it will take to save the amount of money you need. If you're employed, your boss can help with tax rates. (Have a favorite Website for money management or finances? Forward the URL to jtenant@farmprogress.com)

Here's what a typical calculator looks like, using a \$2,500 goal in two years as an example:

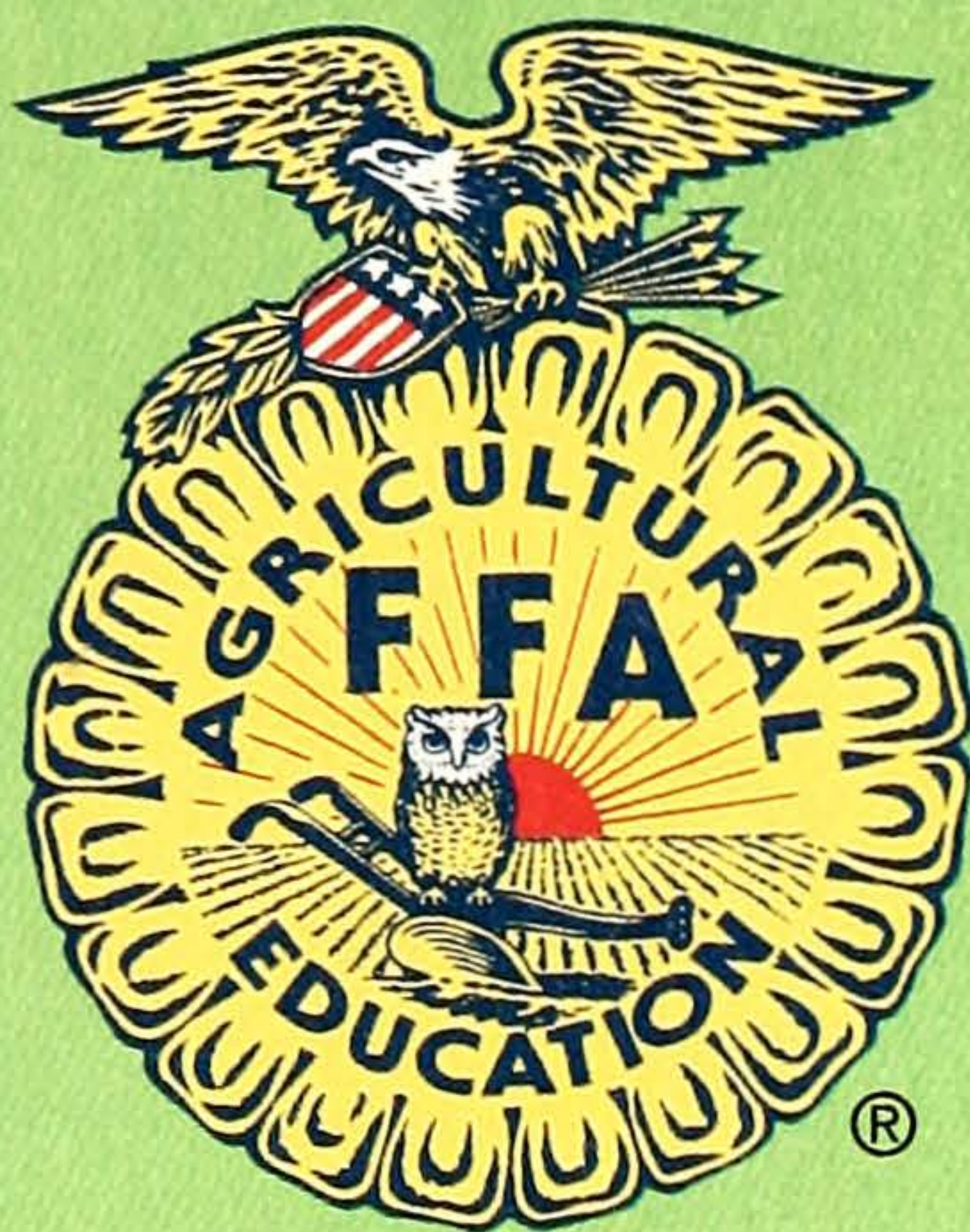
Total Amount You Need	\$ 2500
Amount You Can Invest Now	\$ 500
Amount You Can Save Monthly	\$ 50
Months You Wish to Save	24
Return You Can Earn	5 %
Your Federal Tax Rate	15 %
Your State Tax Rate	0 %

If you invest \$500 now and \$50 monthly for 24 months at 5%, you'll accumulate \$1,795. Your actual rate of return is 4.2% after paying taxes.

To achieve savings of \$2,500 you'll need to:

- Increase the amount you invest now to \$1,149, or
- Increase the monthly amount you invest to \$79, or
- Earn a rate of return of 35% if you pay tax on earnings, or 30% if you don't.

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the creed @70

By Chris Hayhurst

Turning 70 has been easy for the FFA creed. It's been revised only two times since being officially adopted at the third national FFA convention in 1930. And, neither revision changed the creed's overall meaning.

In essence, the creed is as young today as it was when it was first written. Those who memorize the creed's words in 2000 can relate to it just as easily as those who learned it decades ago.

"The principles the creed contains are something that all people should believe in," says Michael Van Winkle, a sophomore at Nettleton High School in Nettleton, Ark., and the 1999 National FFA Creed Speaking champion. "It doesn't matter if you lived in the 1930s or here at

the beginning of the twenty-first century. We still need to believe in working hard and earning what we have, and not depending on someone else to get done what we need to do."

Jim Armbruster agrees. He learned the creed as a high school freshman in 1971, and now works as a teacher services specialist at the National FFA Center in Indiana. "The creed is still relevant to those people who were high school students in the 1950s," Armbruster says. "And it continues to speak to those who were in farming and agriculture in the 60s and 70s. People can accept what it says as their own personal beliefs."

Today, nearly three decades after he first saw the

creed, the words of E. M. Tiffany continue to roll off Armbruster's tongue. "It talks about personal respect, about leadership," he says. "It talks about dependence on oneself and standing on your own two feet. It's been 29 years and I can still say the creed almost all the way through without missing a beat. I look at the creed as a statement of my beliefs."

Michael finds the creed's words to be particularly appropriate to his own life. "When I started reciting it, I began thinking about it personally. I learned the skill of sticking with something and working hard to attain my goals." In addition, says Michael, who had to overcome some of his natural shyness to compete in the contest, "I learned the art of public speaking."

Michael owes much of what he has learned to his advisor, Doug Ward. From the very start, Ward makes the creed a major part of every one of his students' lives. "I try to not only get them to memorize it,

but understand the meaning and maybe what Mr. Tiffany was thinking when he wrote those words," says Ward, who feels that every paragraph of the creed speaks to a different aspect of what it takes to be successful in agriculture. "It says that students must believe in agriculture," says Ward. "It says they've got to be politically involved in it. They've got to believe in the qualities that make America great."

In most cases, those beliefs come quickly. It's the deeper understanding that takes time to develop. As Jenna Smith, FFA creed speaker and graduate of El Campo High School in El Campo, Texas, explains, "As a freshman it was just memorizing the words. But as a senior the creed meant more. It had more to do with life."

Seventy years from now, as the FFA celebrates the creed's 140th anniversary, you can bet those words will still ring true. ★

Creed Speaking 101

Learning the creed is one thing. Reciting it and discussing 70 years worth of meaning before hundreds of people and a panel of judges at the National Creed Speaking CDE is quite another. Still, according to last year's champ, Michael Van Winkle of Nettleton High School in Nettleton, Ark., the hardest part was memorizing the words and then preparing answers to potential questions. "Once I did that," recalls Michael, "it was pretty easy to deliver."

Care to compete? If you do, remember the following rules:

- Recite the creed from memory. No flashcards, no help from the audience.
- Keep your recital time under four minutes. Go over the limit and you'll be docked one point per second.
- To win, you'll face three rounds — the preliminaries, semifinals, and finals. "By the time you reach the finals, more than 200 people are watching," says the event's superintendent, Dr. Billye Foster.
- Answer three questions each round, but do so in five minutes or less. And, watch what you say. "The event is decided as much by the answers as by the presentation," says Foster.
- Should you emerge victorious, spend your cash from \$300 for first place to \$225 for fourth and an opportunity to participate in the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC). Cash awards and financial assistance for WLC attendance are dependent on sponsor support.

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the Creed

I believe in the future of agriculture,

with a faith born not of words but of deeds—achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years.

I believe that to live and work on a good farm,

or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuits, is pleasant as well as challenging; for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in hours of discouragement, I cannot deny.

I believe in leadership from ourselves and respect from others.

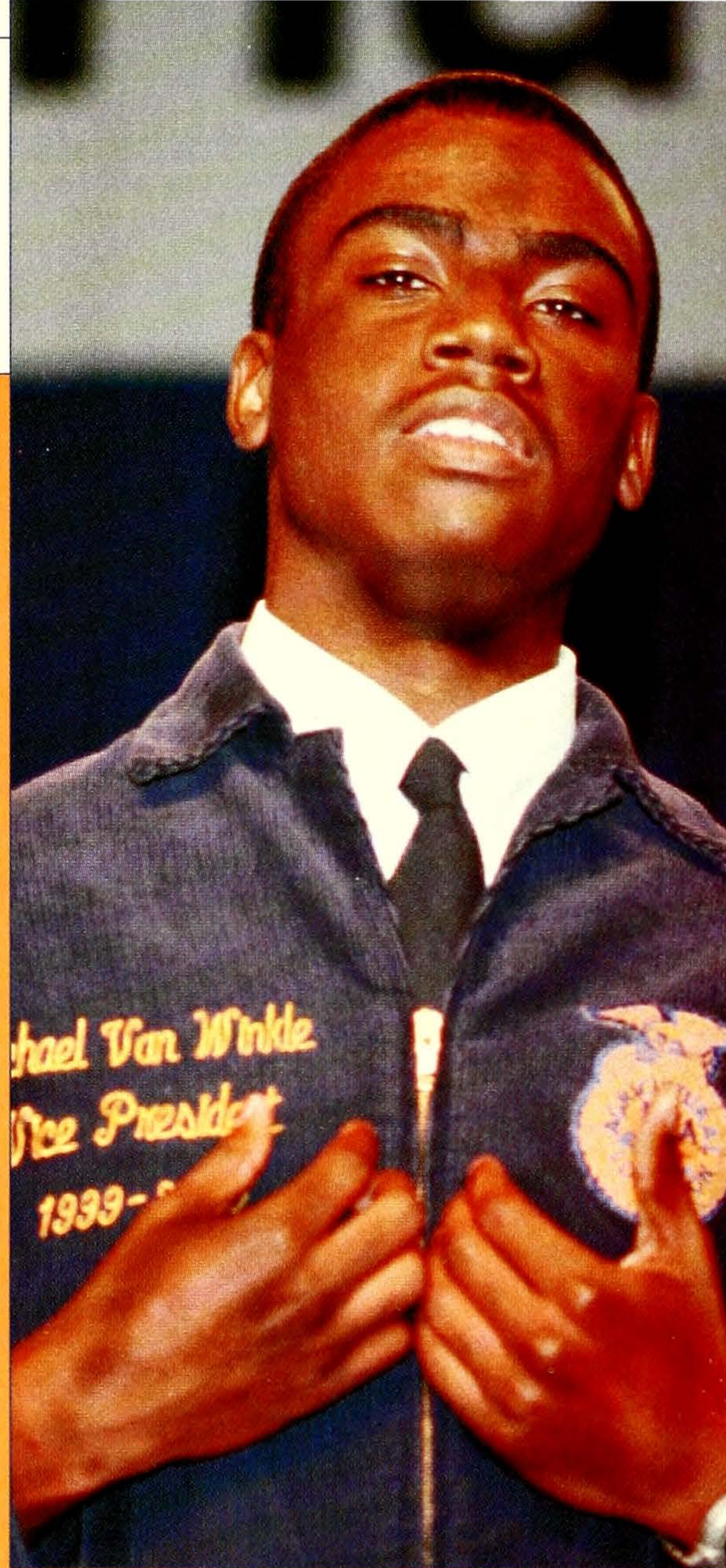
I believe in my own ability to work efficiently and think clearly, with such knowledge and skill as I can secure, and in the ability of progressive agriculturists to serve our own and the public interest in producing and marketing the product of our toil.

I believe in less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining;

in the life abundant and enough honest wealth to help make it so—for others as well as myself; in less need for charity and more of it when needed; in being happy myself and playing square with those whose happiness depends upon me.

I believe that American agriculture can and will hold true to the best traditions of our national life,

and that I can exert an influence in my home and community which will stand solid for my part in that inspiring task.



During last year's national convention, Arkansas FFA member Michael Van Winkle became the first-ever champion of the National FFA Creed Speaking Contest, a new event sponsored by Papa John's International.



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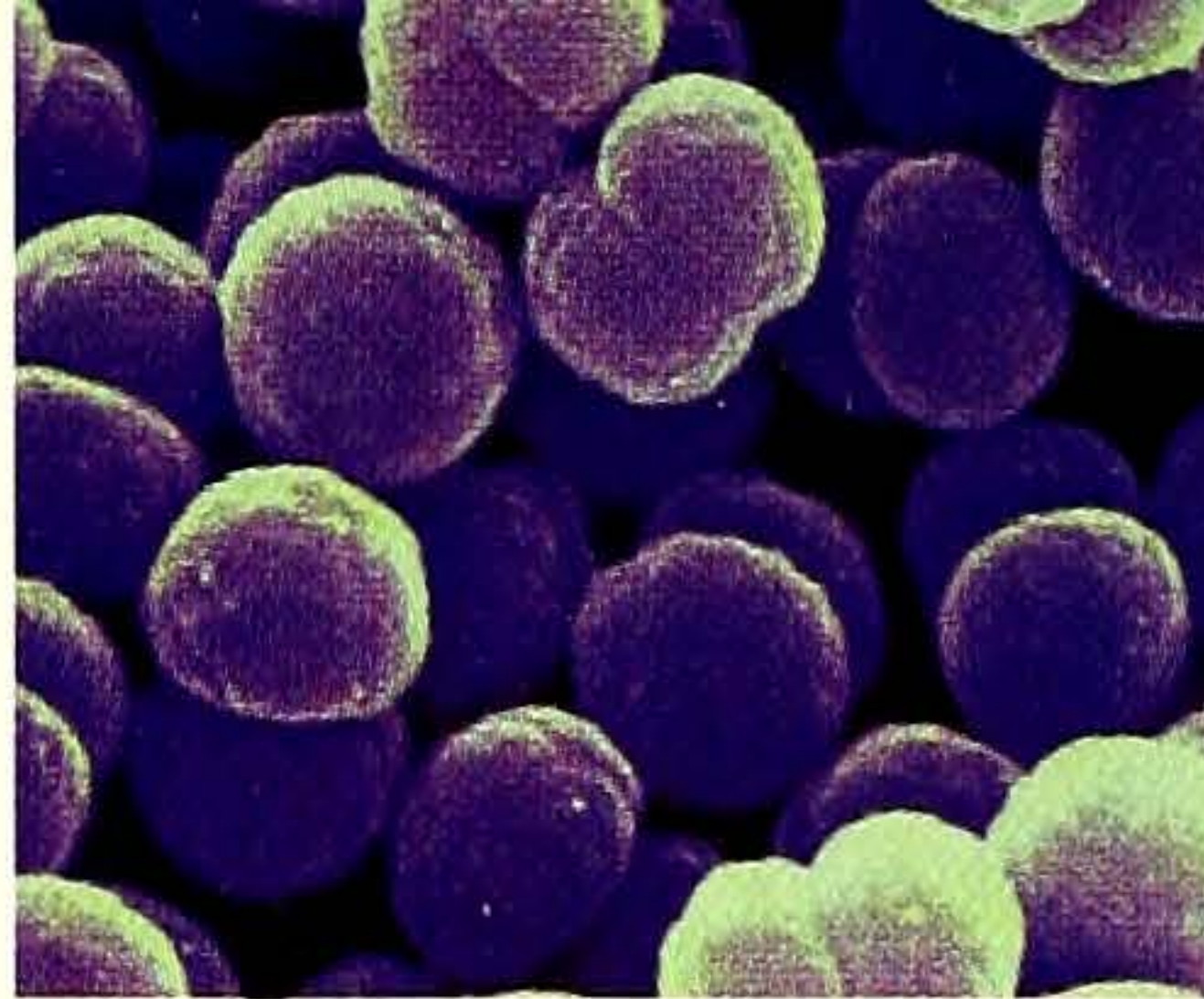


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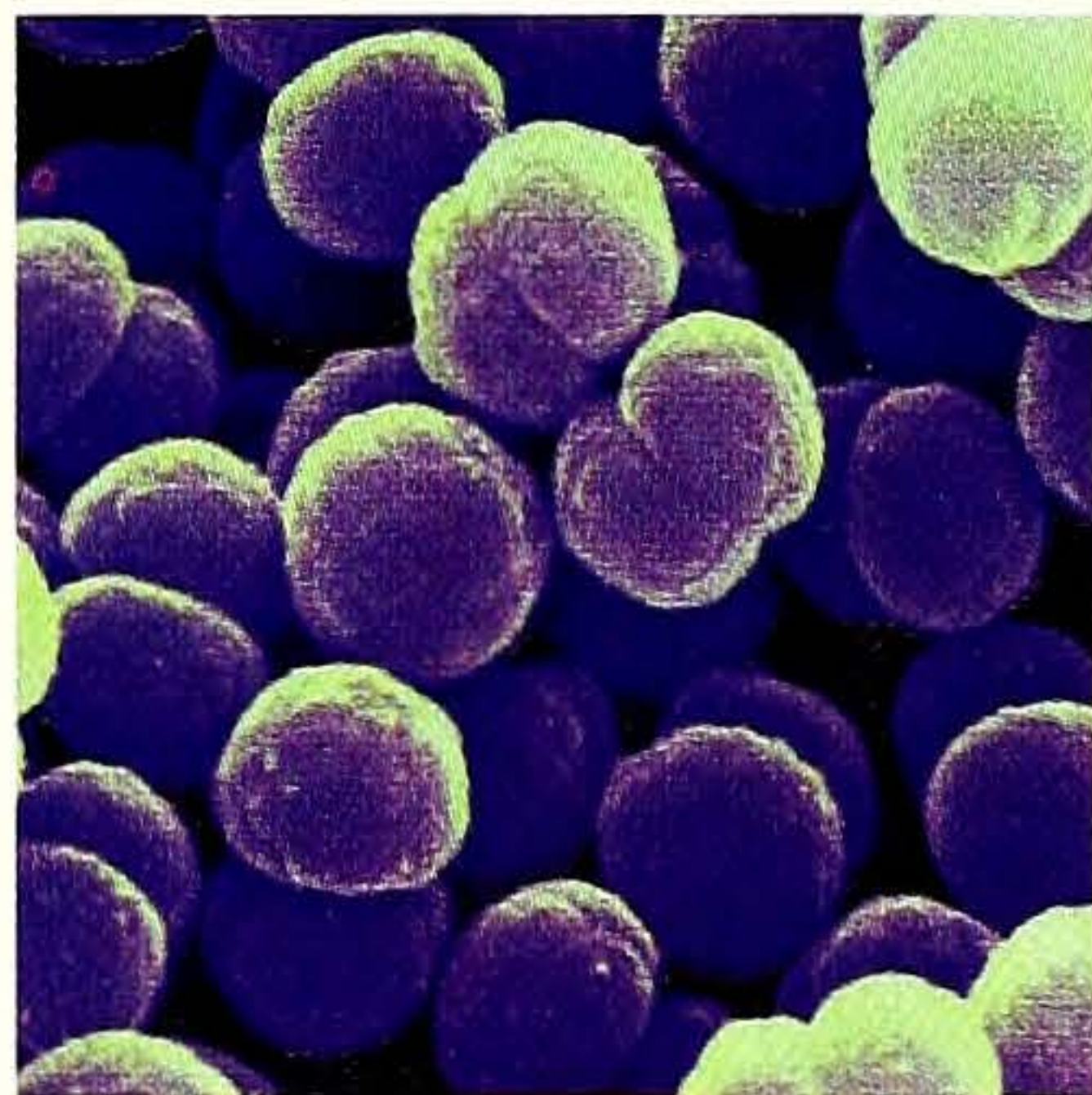


careers in

biotech

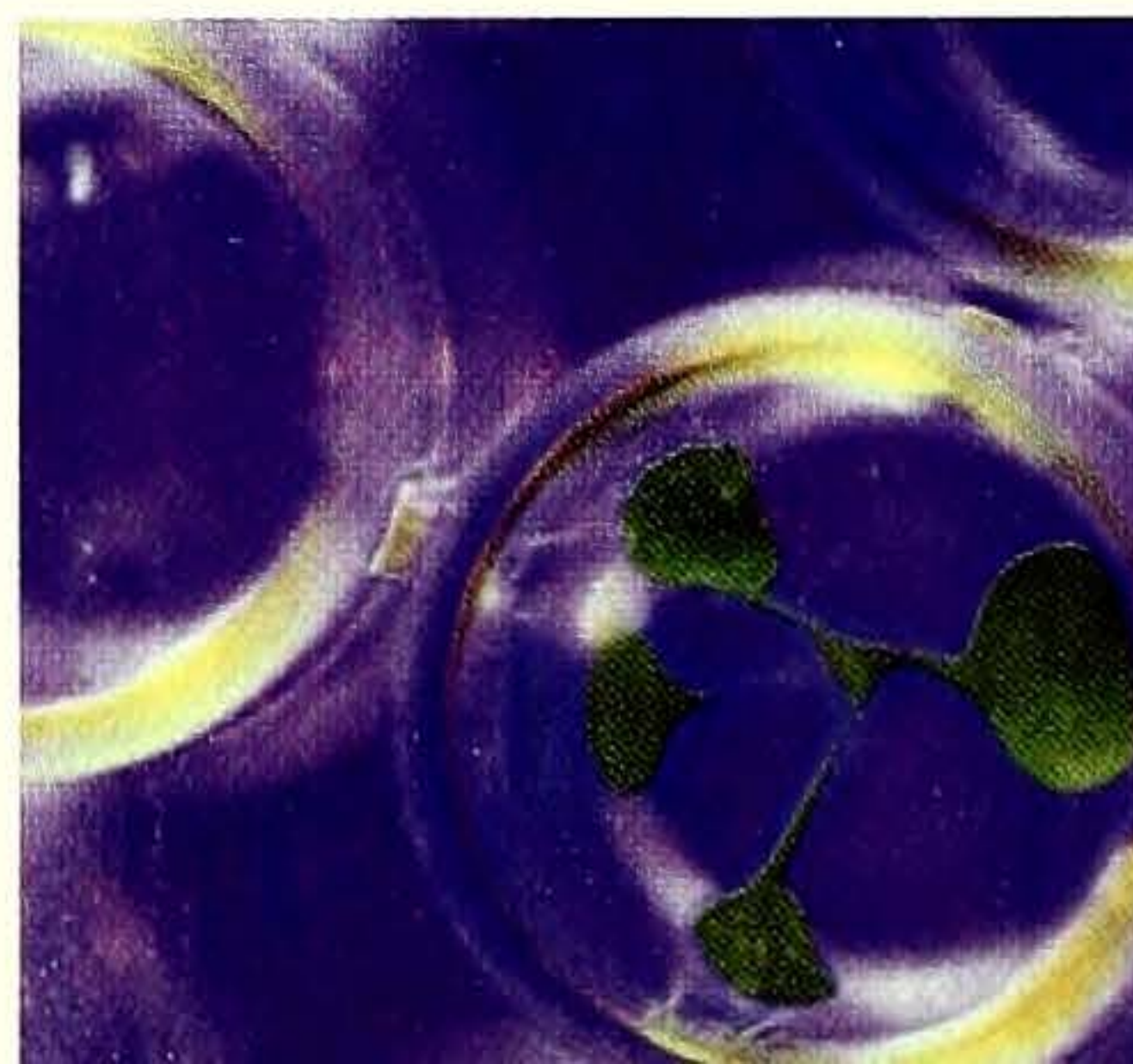
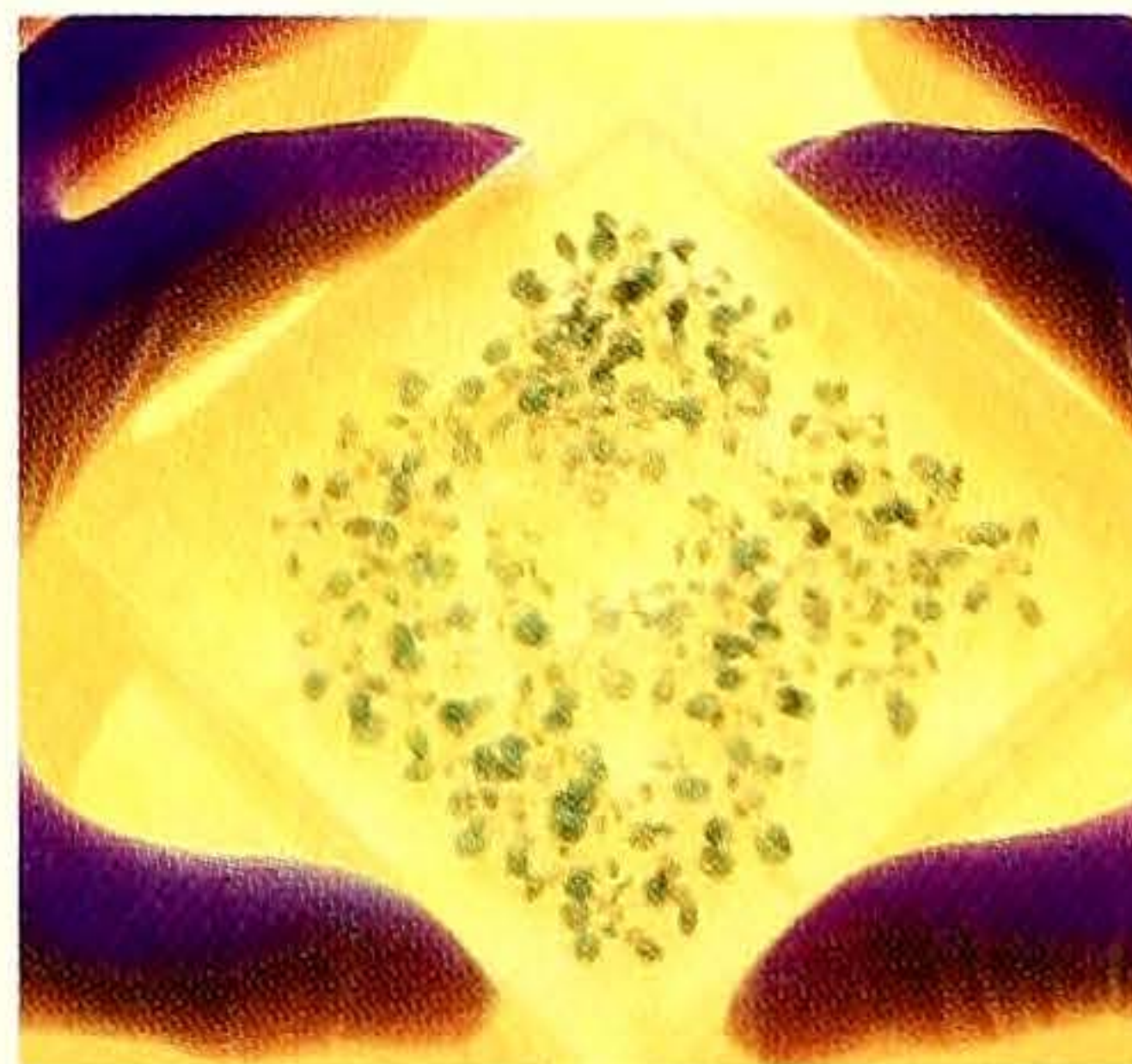
A technological revolution is underway that has nothing to do with the virtual world of computers, the Internet or DVD. This “other” revolution—the agricultural biotechnology revolution—is about life. And, if you play your cards right, it may be about jobs.

by Michael West



But, just what is biotechnology? How does it affect us today? And, what does the future hold, especially for careers?

The basic concept behind biotech is fairly simple. Your work as a scientist or lab technician might include a day like this: Using sophisticated laboratory techniques, locate an organism's genes — those microscopic heredity packages that determine whether your eyes are green, your hair is brown, or a plant needs lots of water to survive. Then, also in the lab, play with those genes just enough to get the organism to do something it's not used to doing. In the case of that thirsty plant, for example, convince it that water is overrated by giving it a gene from a cactus. Ultimately, if all goes as planned, the new, “genetically modified” plant will survive periods of drought. And, the farmer that grows the new plant will have one less thing to worry about come growing season.





Luke Ryan, Monclova, OH

Are you a New Century Farmer?

DuPont Crop Protection and Pioneer Hi-Bred, in cooperation with the National FFA Organization, want to help pave the way for young prospective farmers like you to be successful in the 21st century. We invite you to apply to be part of our fantastic education and networking program—the New Century Farmers Program—and challenge yourself in a four-day, power-packed series of educational sessions, interactive work shops, mind-stretching exercises, field tours and lots of fun.

The first step to becoming a New Century Farmer is to contact us today at 1-800-293-2387 to request an application. Or you can find one on our website at <http://www.ffa.org>

The deadline for applications is April 14, 2000, so contact us today!

The New Century Farmer Program is sponsored by DuPont Crop Protection and Pioneer Hi-Bred as a special project of the National FFA.



DuPont Crop Protection

Many people believe that such genetic manipulation has led to significant improvements to agriculture, especially in terms of increased crop production, better flavor and higher nutritional values. Still, the issue is open to debate.

"Biotechnology is somewhat controversial," notes Stacy Byrd, an agriscience teacher at Eagle's Landing High School in McDonough, Georgia, and the 1999 National Agriscience Teacher of the Year. "There's this whole notion of 'appropriate technology,' which means 'just because we can do it, should we do it?'"

"I think, though, that as long as biotech improves food quality and food availability, the field itself is just going to boom."

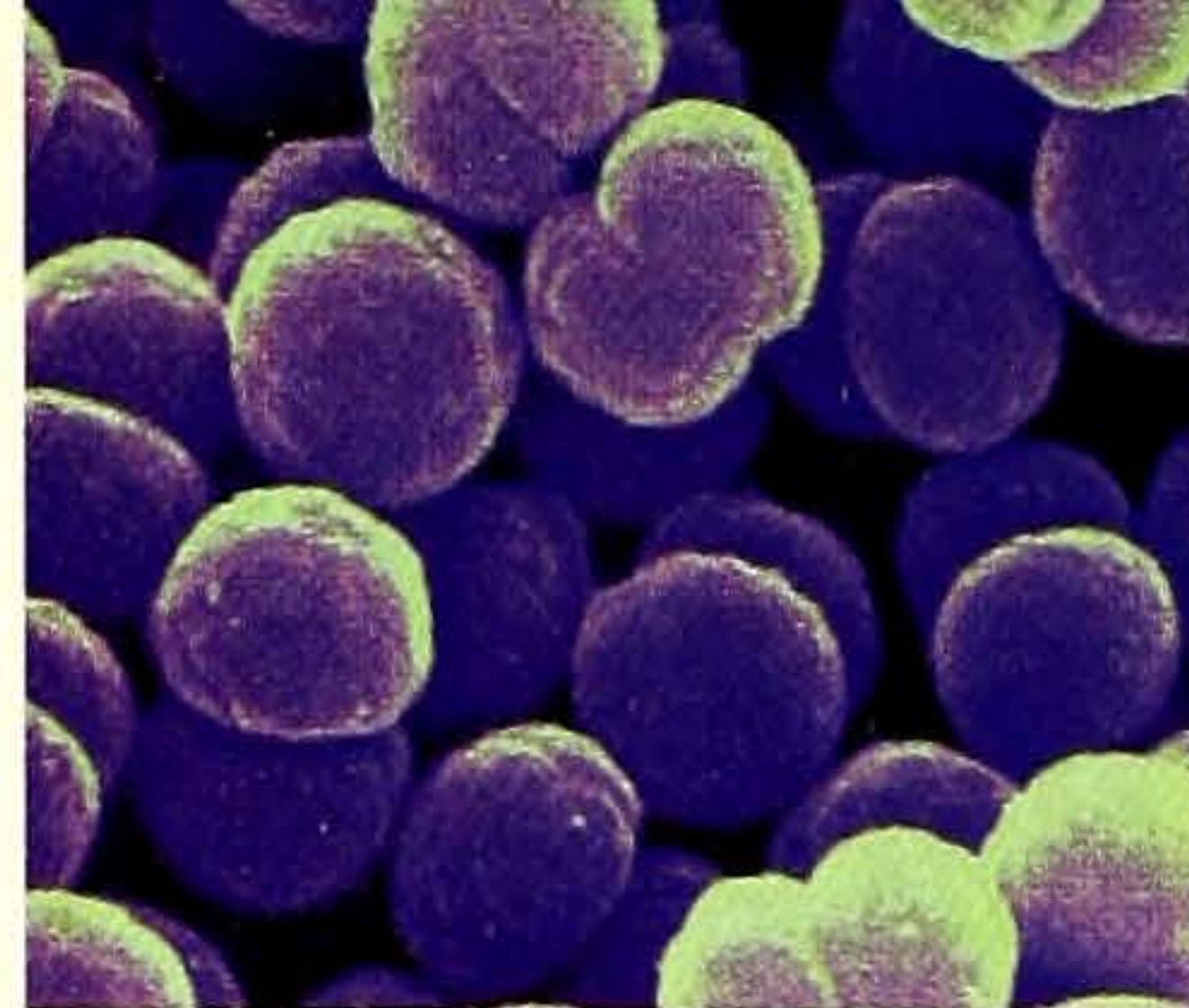
In other words, if you're thinking about a career in agriculture and just happen to have a talent for science, here's your chance.

Dan Eramian couldn't agree more. He's vice president of communications for the Biotechnology Industry Association, and speaks for more than 850 of the world's leading technology companies and academic institutions.

"If you want to get involved with an industry that's growing, and will be even larger in the future, biotech is the place to be," he proposes.

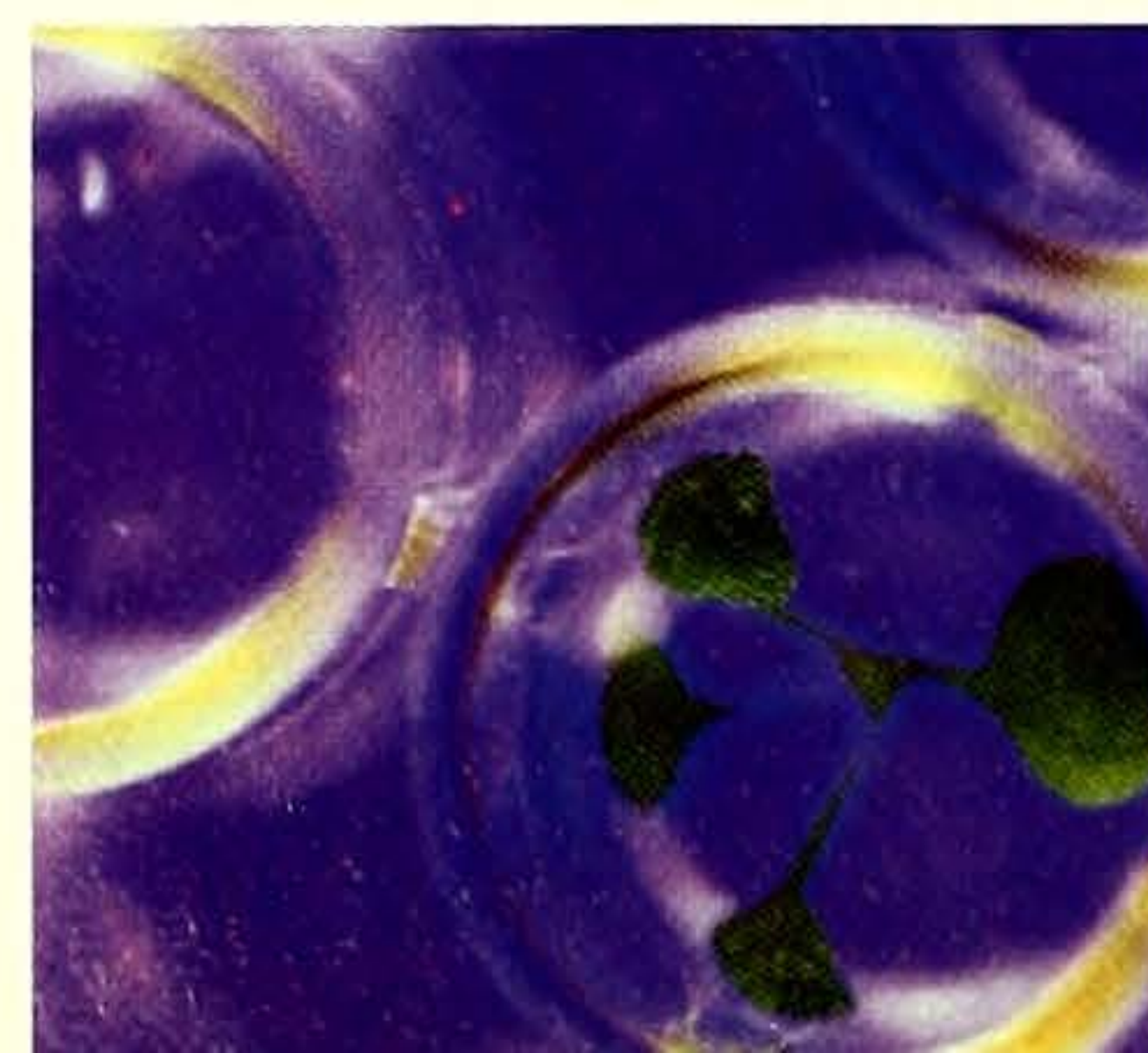
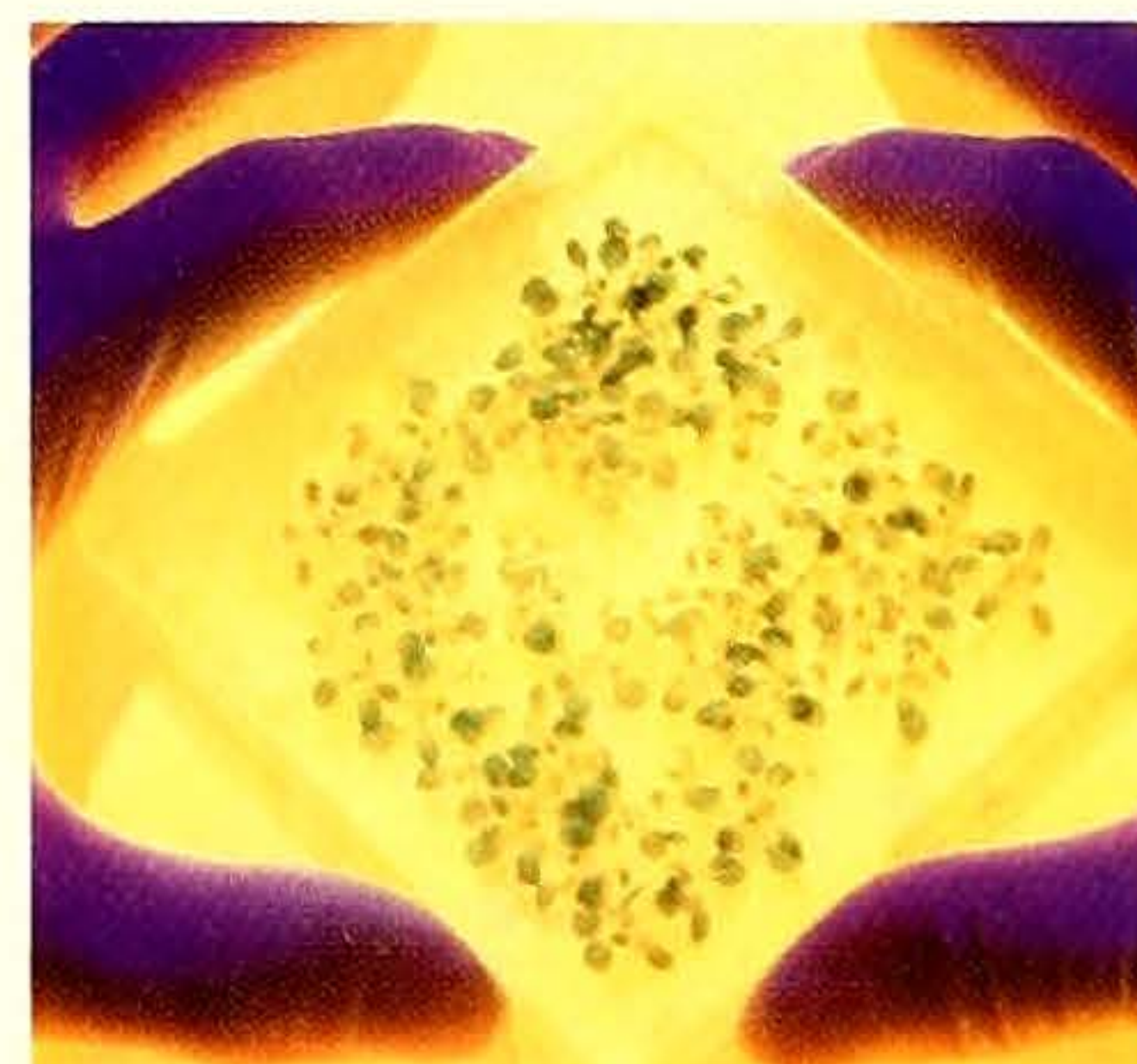
Currently, many biotech positions are available throughout the country in a range of public and private settings. Most positions involve research, testing, or screening — the kinds of things required before a new product (like an insect-resistant potato, for instance) can be sold on the market. You'll find jobs everywhere from small start-up companies developing high-tech tomatoes, to large organizations responsible for ensuring new products are safe. The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers jobs related to food development, nutrition and safety.

So where do you begin? For one, load up on those science classes. In the world of biotech, science is key — especially biology, chemistry, and genetics. Next, talk to your advisor about job opportunities in your area. Perhaps you can line up an internship or an supervised agricultural experience at a local biotech company or schedule a class visit to a



nearby university for some hands-on lab experience. Often, biotech companies will allow interested students to "shadow" their employees to get a feel for what it's like to work in the industry. The goal is exposure. The more experience you can get while in school, the more prepared you'll be for a future career in biotech.

Whatever you do, take your time. Scientific expertise isn't something you gain overnight, and expertise is definitely necessary in this demanding field. And besides, there's no need to rush. According to Dr. Richard Stuckey, executive vice president of the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology, the biotech boom is here to stay. "There is so much promise in biotechnology," says Stuckey. "Biotech people are in demand. Their future is bright." ✧



Biotech briefs

- The United States is home to 1,283 biotech companies.
- The U.S. biotech industry employs more than 153,000 people.
- The U.S. biotech industry spent \$9.9 billion in research and development in 1998.
- Thirty percent of North America's corn and 50 percent of its soybeans are grown using biotechnology.

(Source: Biotechnology Industry Organization)

The Scoop on Biotech

For more information on biotechnology — its past, present, and future — contact the following organizations:

Biotechnology Industry Association,
1625 K Street NW, Suite 1100,
Washington, DC 20006;
202/857-0244; www.bio.org

Biotechnology Information Center,
National Agricultural Library, 10301
Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville,
MD 20705; 301/504-5755;
www.nal.usda.gov/bic

Council for Agricultural Science and Technology, 4420 West Lincoln Way,
Ames, IA 50014; 515/292-2125;
www.cast-science.org

National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, Building 38A, Room 8N805, Bethesda, MD 20894;
301/496-2475;
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

National Council for Agricultural Education, 1410 King Street Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314;
703/838-5881;
www.agedhq.org/council.html

Ready to compare notes and size up your science skills? Check out FFA's Agriscience Student Recognition Program, Agriscience Teacher of the Year award and FFA Agriscience Fair. All recognize outstanding individuals who are studying or teaching the application of scientific principles and emerging technologies in agricultural enterprises and in the classroom. Go to www.ffa.org, select "site index" and click on any "Agriscience" topic.

alecia elliot

Of all the teenage singers Nashville has signed in the past several years, 17 year old Elliott might be the best pure talent.

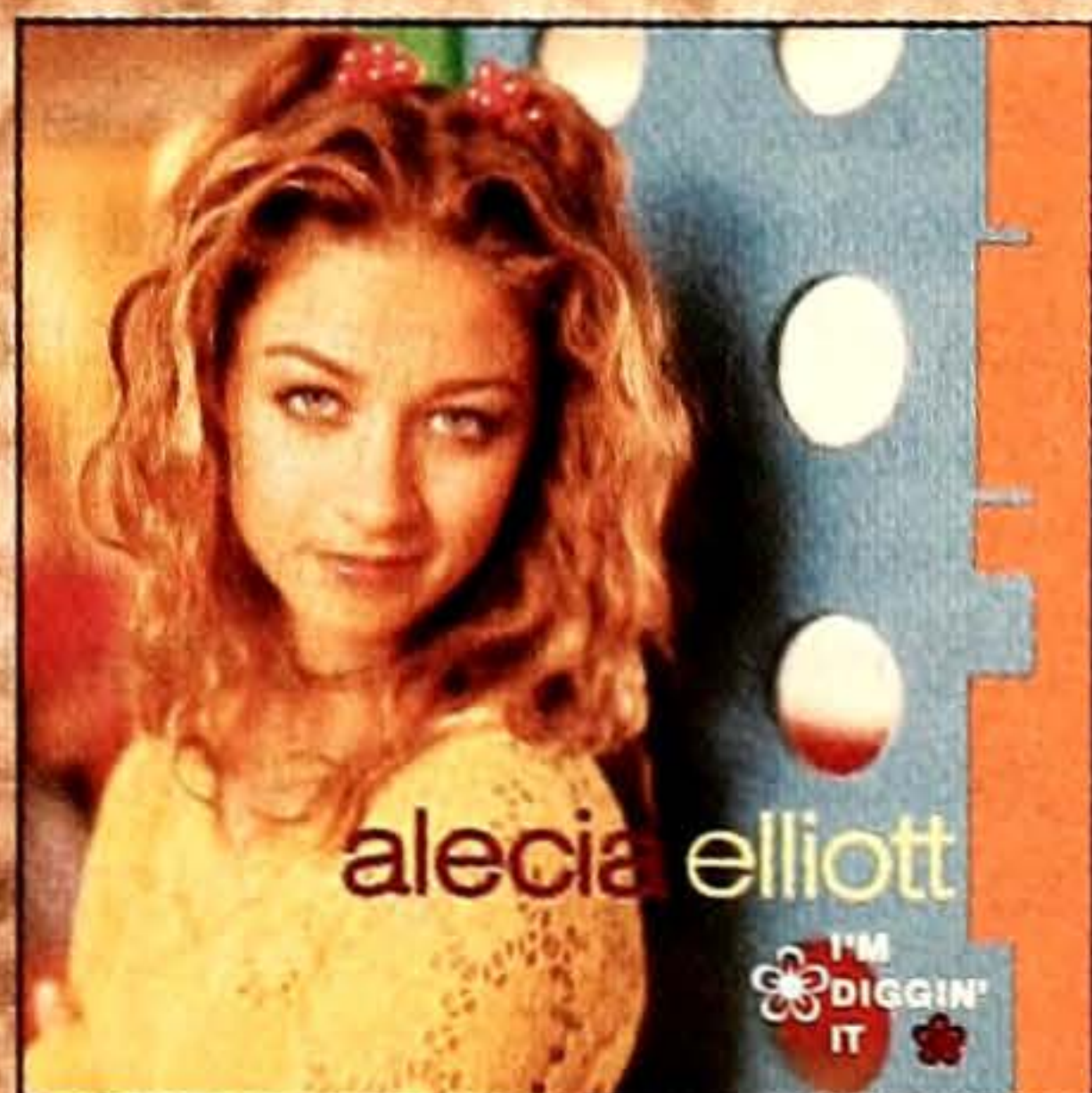
USA TODAY 1/25/00

The minute Elliott opens her mouth, she exhibits a depth that's blind to the date on her birth certificate.

LOS ANGELES TIMES 1/23/00

"I'm Diggin' It"

The debut album by Alecia Elliott, is available now.



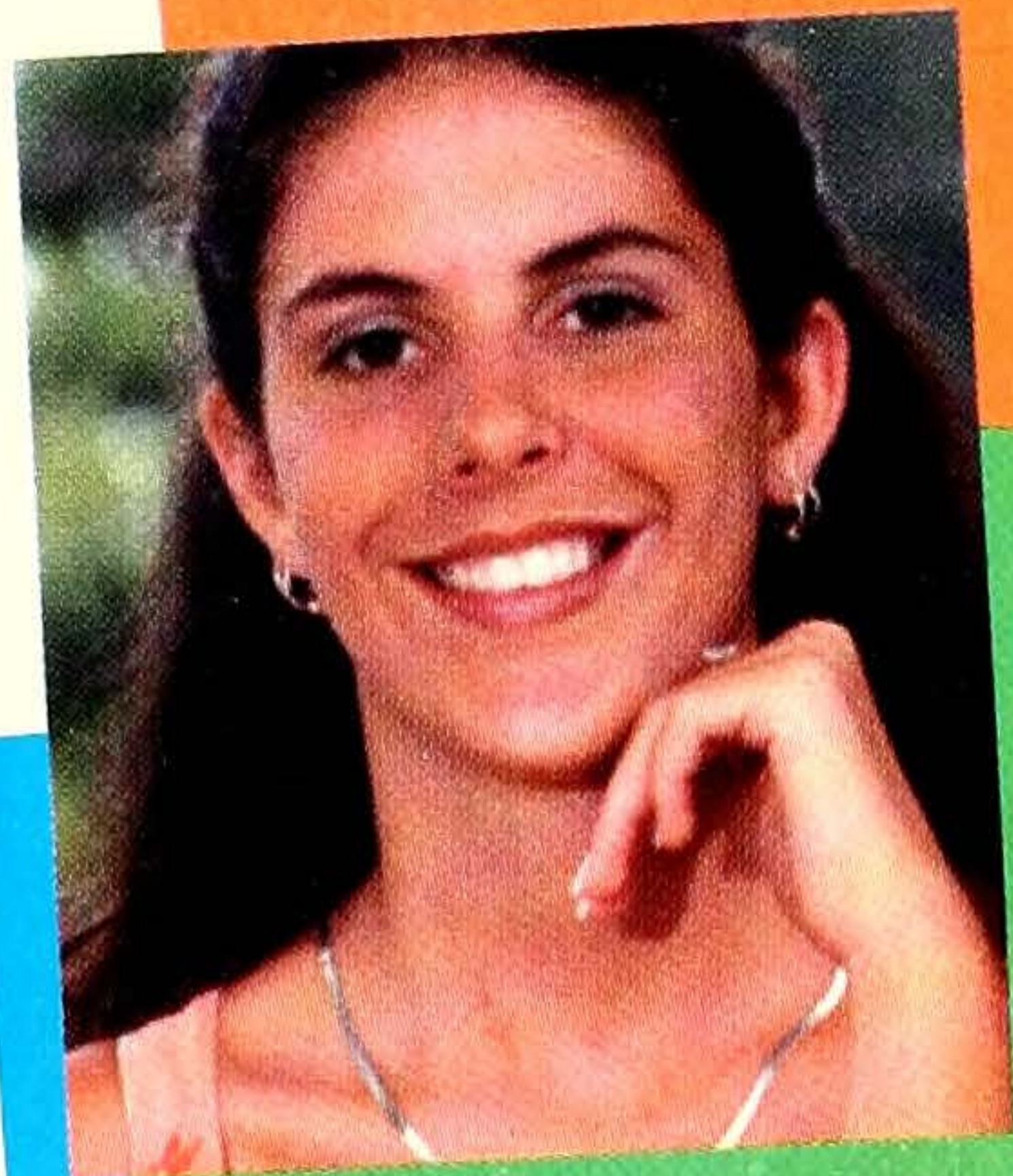
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H.O. Sargent Award celebrates 'diversity among us'

recognizing difference

By Fran Alt



Jessica Skinner

Growing up in the small town of China Grove, North Carolina, Jessica Skinner didn't pay much attention to farming until she needed an extra class. Some of her friends "took ag," and said it was fun, so Jessica signed on.

Agriculture courses were not only fun, but led Jessica to several high school highlights: involvement in FFA, her boyfriend Zac, her best friend Jennifer and ambition for a career in agriculture.

Another bonus that came with her agriculture class included travel for FFA activities. During her freshman year, Jessica placed second in her state's Extemporaneous Public Speaking contest. Jessica's career development events, Agricultural Sales and Agricultural Issue Forum teams each finished number one in the state, which meant a trip to national convention. There, Jessica finished seventh in the nation in Agricultural Sales, and her Agricultural Issues team finished sixth — and that was just the beginning.

Today, the 17-year-old high school senior says, "All of these things have helped

me become a more outgoing person. I am now able to talk more easily with others and I realize the differences in others as well."

Recognizing the difference in others is important to Jessica's story. In fact, it is the story. Jessica is the 1999 recipient of the annual FFA "H.O. Sargent Award," which recognizes outstanding individuals who promote diversity in agricultural education.

Most people are familiar with the word "diversity" when it comes to agriculture — today's farmers are rarely producers of a single commodity. The H.O. Sargent Award, however, honors a different type of diversity — a diversity of culture.

When China Grove experienced an influx of both Asian and Spanish speaking students, Jessica noticed the prejudice and discrimination that the students face because of the language barrier. Realizing that many students in the community needed to learn English, Jessica enlisted the help of friends to develop a tutoring program for children and teens who could not speak English. The tutorial team decided to start working

at the elementary level.

Because Jessica and her friends had after-school jobs and other commitments, the project had to be implemented during school hours. This meant getting permission from the principals of the high school and the elementary school. Jessica visited with each, and with their help she soon had 30 high school students actively involved as tutors. The team dubbed their program "ESOL" — English for Students of Other Languages.

David Cress, Jessica's agriculture teacher, suggested she apply for the H.O. Sargent Award. He says that it's not just the ESOL program that makes Jessica special, but her concern and compassion for her fellow students as well.

"Jessica goes out of her way to find the person who looks as though they feel left out," says Cress. "She talks to that student and has a talent for making others feel good." Cress adds, "Jessica is fun-loving. The other students know that if Jessica is around, it's going to be fun." ★

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NEW HOLLAND

Last Laff

Q: How do you make a handkerchief dance?

A: Put a little boogie in it.

Ali Kinter
Lamar, Colorado

Q: What has a foot on each side and one in the middle?

A: A yardstick.

Chad Griffith
Avilla, Indiana

Q: What cars do ranchers prefer?

A: Cattle-acks.

Leeman Parker
Wilton, California

Q: What time is it when an elephant sits on a desk?

A: Break time.

Yuri Lagoda
Dayton, Virginia

Q: What do you call cheese that isn't yours?

A: Nacho cheese.

Curt Rabenberg
Tea, South Dakota

Q: How much does a pirate pay for earrings?

A: A buccaneer.

Ashley Beck
Red Rock, Oklahoma

Q: What's a buccaneer?

A: Too much to pay for corn.

Kim Hillman
Nacogdoches, Texas

Q: Why did the gum cross the road?

A: It was stuck to the chicken's foot.

Anthony Bezant
Marshville, North Carolina

Q: What is an astronaut's favorite dessert?

A: Moon pie.

Josh Nalley
Morganfield, Kentucky

Q: Where do you find prehistoric cows?

A: In a moo-seum.

Joshua Berg
Altamont, Illinois

Q: What did the mayonnaise say to the refrigerator?

A: Shut the door, I'm dressing.

Joseph Cole
Floral, Alabama

Q: What did the daddy tomato say to the baby tomato when he fell behind?

A: Come on, ketch-up.

Renelle Coty
Raymond, Washington

Q: How is a pancake like the sun?

A: It rises in the yeast and sets in the vest.

Matt McFarlin
Cochrane, Wisconsin

Q: What's a container with no hinges or lid, yet just inside golden treasure is hid?

A: An egg.

Mark Swapp
Virden, New Mexico

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

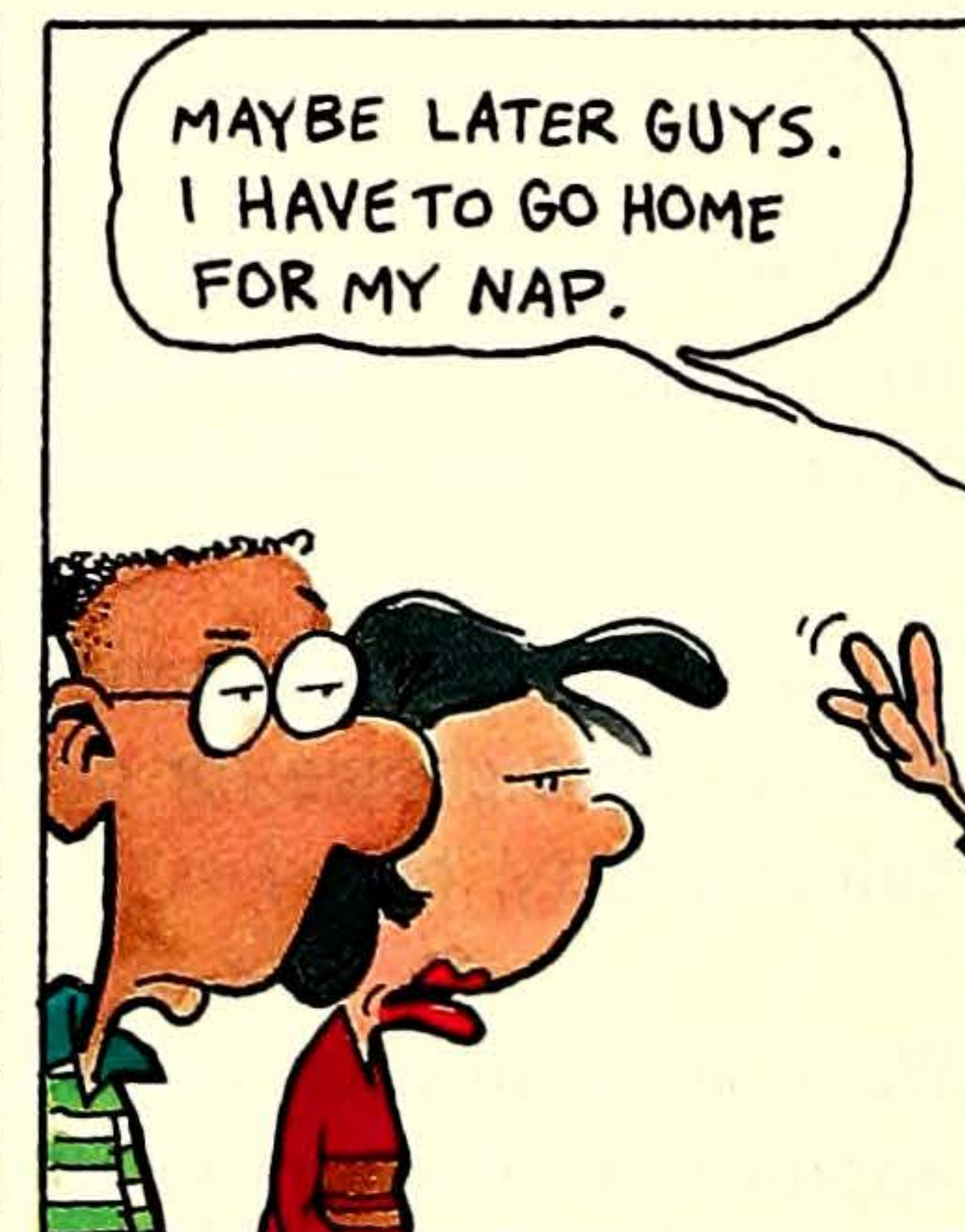
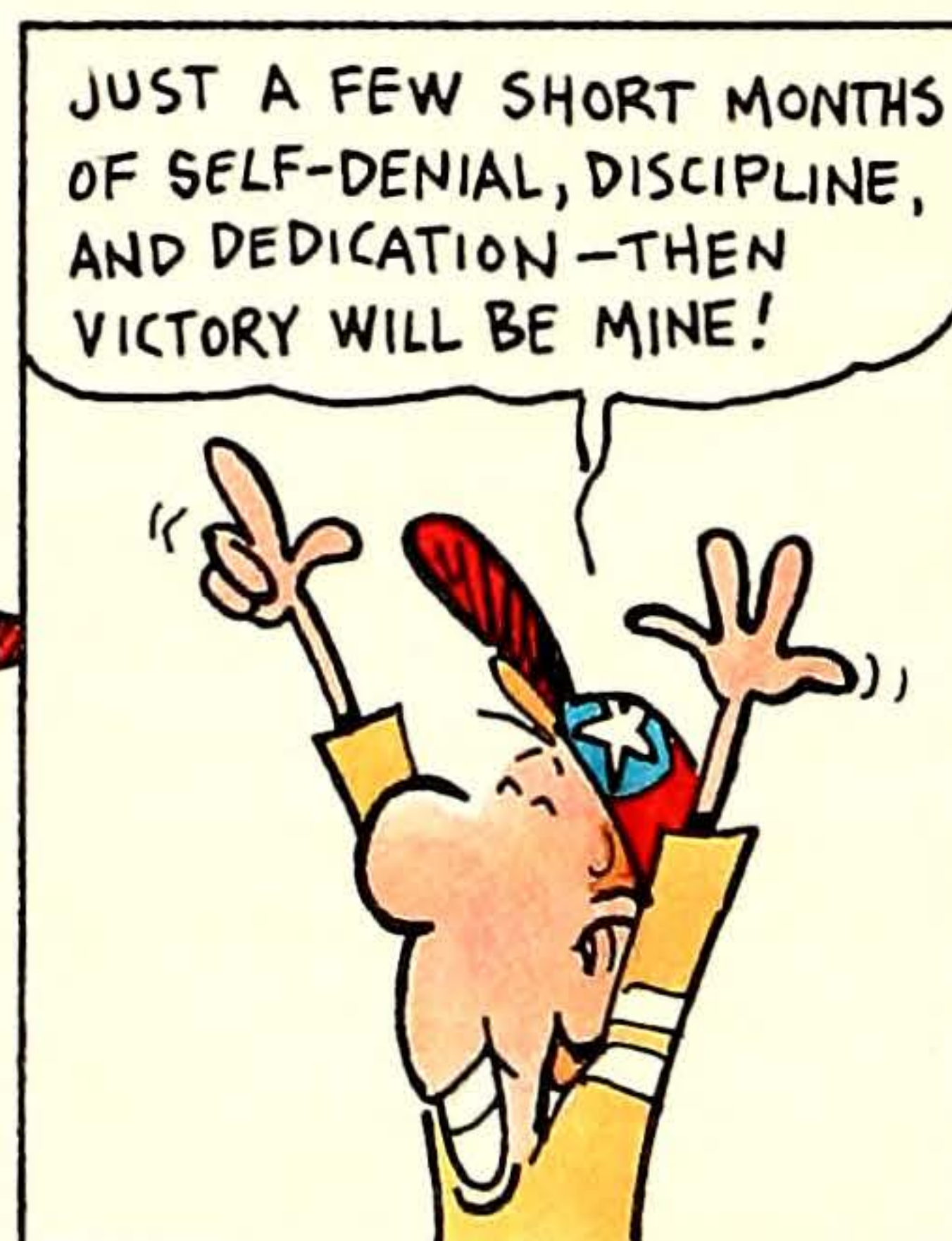
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