

# new horizons

The magazine of the National FFA Organization

March/April 1999



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EXPLORES  
"A BUG'S LIFE"

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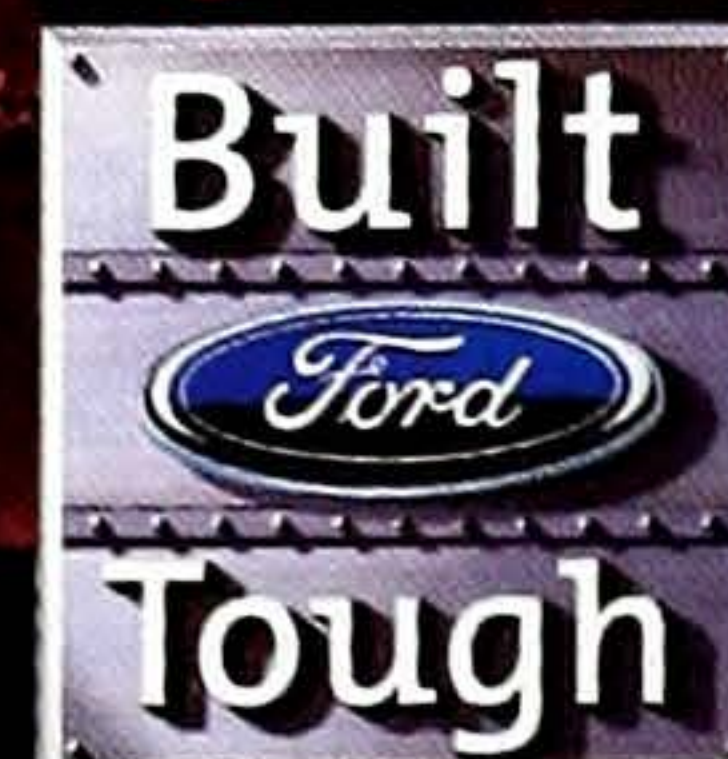
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Editorial Office

FFA New Horizons P.O. Box 68960  
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960  
phone: 317/802-6060  
fax: 317/802-6061

Advertising Office

Jack Keller national sales manager  
191 South Gary Avenue  
Carol Stream, IL 60188  
phone: 630/462-2338  
fax: 630/462-2202

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March/April 1999

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After hearing about FFA member Randy Meissen—a bug expert from Missouri who won a 1998 National Agri-Entrepreneurship Award for his entomology SAE project—we asked him to critique Hollywood's latest effort to make stars out of ants.

features



## 10 Hat trick

Joel Bernhard is an aspiring chef. He's also a musician and an avid hunter. Even though he hasn't been able to see with his eyes since he was five years old, Joel says his only real obstacles are the limitations other people place on him.



## 14 The FFA highway: Texas to Carolina

Join us for a drive on Interstate 20. We'll visit with two rodeo clowns, play on an Arnold Palmer golf course, drive around a 40,000-acre Italian-owned farm, talk to an FFA chapter that doubles as a volunteer fire department, and experience "Meat Goat Mania."



## 20 Spring break solution

Volunteerism is an essential part of being an FFA member. By volunteering your time and effort, you will improve the quality of life in your community, build your chapter's program of activities and improve your chances of getting into college.

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On the cover: Missouri FFA member Randy Meissen. Illustration by Mark Fredrickson.

**missing magazine alert!** If you know of any FFA member who has not been receiving FFA New Horizons, please have that member fill out this coupon and mail to:

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## one on one with Andy Armbruster

When you joined FFA, did you think you would ever be a national officer?

I wanted to be a national officer, but I didn't know if I ever would be. It was actually one of the reasons I joined FFA, but I got so involved in other FFA activities that I eventually put that goal on the back burner—until I ran for national office for the first time two years ago.

Why did you decide to run for national office?

To me, a national FFA officer provides servant leadership, and that is one of the main reasons I wanted to do it. I don't think national officers should be up on a pedestal—I think we should be eye to eye with FFA members. This is also an opportunity to help people grow, and that is satisfying for me.

Describe agriculture in your home state of Kansas.

Kansas agriculture is largely dependent upon wheat and livestock. However, southwest Kansas agriculture is totally different from northeast Kansas agriculture. The southwest part of the state is primarily wheat and stockyards. In the northeast, there is a lot of corn, milo and soybeans.

If you could meet any living person, who would it be?

I'd like to meet former U.S. President George Bush. I was up late one night after the national FFA convention watching a documentary on him, and I was very impressed. He talked about his values, and they really reflected my values. He has a forward-looking vision, yet he relies a lot on tradition and values.

What do you do for fun outside of FFA?

I love to watch college football, where the players play for the names on the front of the jersey and not the names on the back of their jerseys. I also enjoy hanging out with my friends in the FarmHouse fraternity.

Do you have any talents we don't know about?

I like to sing. I was in the national FFA chorus my sophomore and junior years.

What type of name is Armbruster?

It's German. In fact, I learned about it when I went to Germany as a state FFA officer. It means "crossbow" in German. ✱

### VITALS

Hometown: Kiowa, Kansas

Age: 21

Chapter: South Barber FFA

Advisor: Fred Gillig

SAE: Diversified livestock

Education: Junior at Kansas State University

Major: Agricultural economics

My favorite bands: Van Halen and Jars of Clay

Last good movie seen:

Austin Powers

Car: '94 Pontiac

Grand Prix

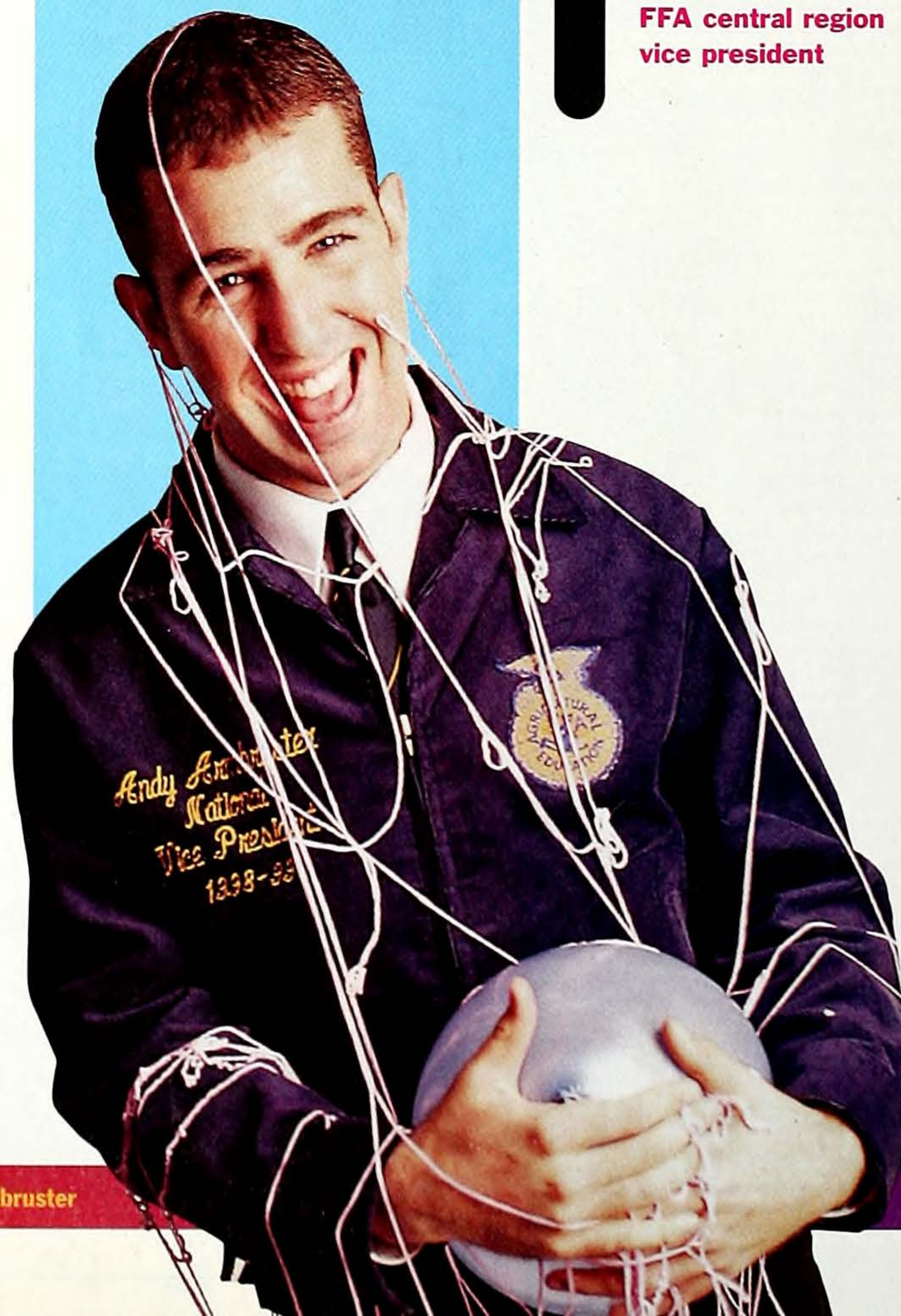
Favorite food: Beef

Last good book: "Improving Your Serve" by Charles Swindoll

### TIMELINE

#### Age

- 14 • joined FFA
- 15 • won state creed competition
- 16 • sang in national FFA chorus
- 17 • elected class president
- 18 • named all-league in football
- elected state FFA president
- started classes at Kansas State University
- 19 • ran for national FFA officer and was not elected
- 20 • elected national FFA central region vice president



Central region vice president: Andy Armbruster





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# ffa in action

## MICHIGAN Online help

It's hard to imagine life today without computers and e-mail. Members of the Marshall FFA Chapter, recognizing that local senior citizens did not have ample access to computers, decided to do something. So, with the help of a government grant, they bought computers for three senior homes and started teaching the residents the ins and outs of word processing, Internet and e-mail. Each senior received seven 90-minute training sessions and received a certificate of achievement.

The chapter is running the program this year with the financial support of local foundations.

Kristine and Sarah Martz enjoy teaching senior citizens how to use computers for sending e-mail, writing letters and searching the Internet.



## GEORGIA Trucking in the mud

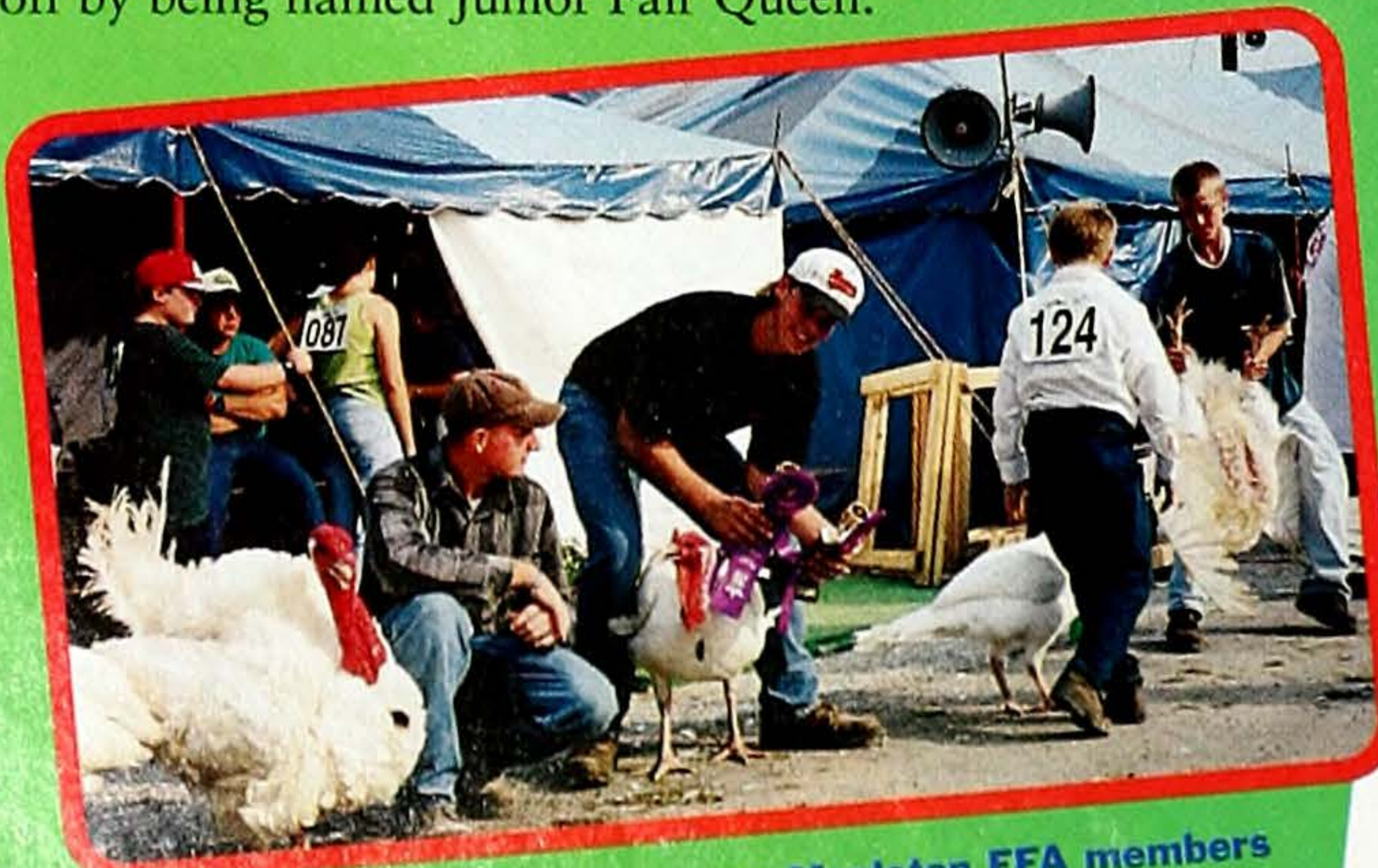


Fans cheer as The Frog tears through the "pit" at the Mud-Bogging competition held by the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College FFA Chapter.

The school farm at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton may never be the same after the recent "Mud-Bogging" competition. Organized and staffed by the college's FFA chapter members, the fundraising event brought in \$1,100 with 65 entries (including a Camaro measuring ten feet high) and over 500 spectators. Members labored for weeks to get the 28,000 cubic feet of mud (also known as the "pit") ready for the mudslinging. Chapter president Jerry Stone called the event a huge success.

## OHIO Turkey triumph

When it comes to turkeys, the Mapleton FFA Chapter owns The Ashland County Fair. Ryan Barr received grand champion market turkey; Seth Ayers received reserved grand champion market turkey and grand champion breeding turkey; and Rob McLaran had the third place breeding turkey. In turkey showmanship, Justin Archer took second, Dusty Predmore took third and Courtney Ayers took fifth. Mapleton FFA members also did well in hogs, cows, goats and chickens. Mandy Iceman topped it all off by being named Junior Fair Queen.



Seth Ayers was among the many Mapleton FFA members who came up big at the Ashland County Fair. He took the grand prize for his breeding turkey.

## TEXAS Riding in style

Members of the Schulenburg FFA Chapter have a new workhorse. It's a 1999 Ford pickup, which they bought with the help of the Schulenburg Young Farmers, the Schulenburg I.S.D. and Chuck Brown Ford. The much needed truck will help the chapter move stuff around for years to come. The chapter plans to hold a fundraiser each summer to help pay off the new acquisition.

Schulenburg FFA officers with the new Ford pickup. Front row, (L-R): Lacy Stryk, Ashley Schwenke, Nicole Bujnoch and Renee Graham. Back row, (L-R): Dustin Ohnheiser, Robert Moeller, Denise Otto and Robin Stuckly.





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## calling all stars

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.

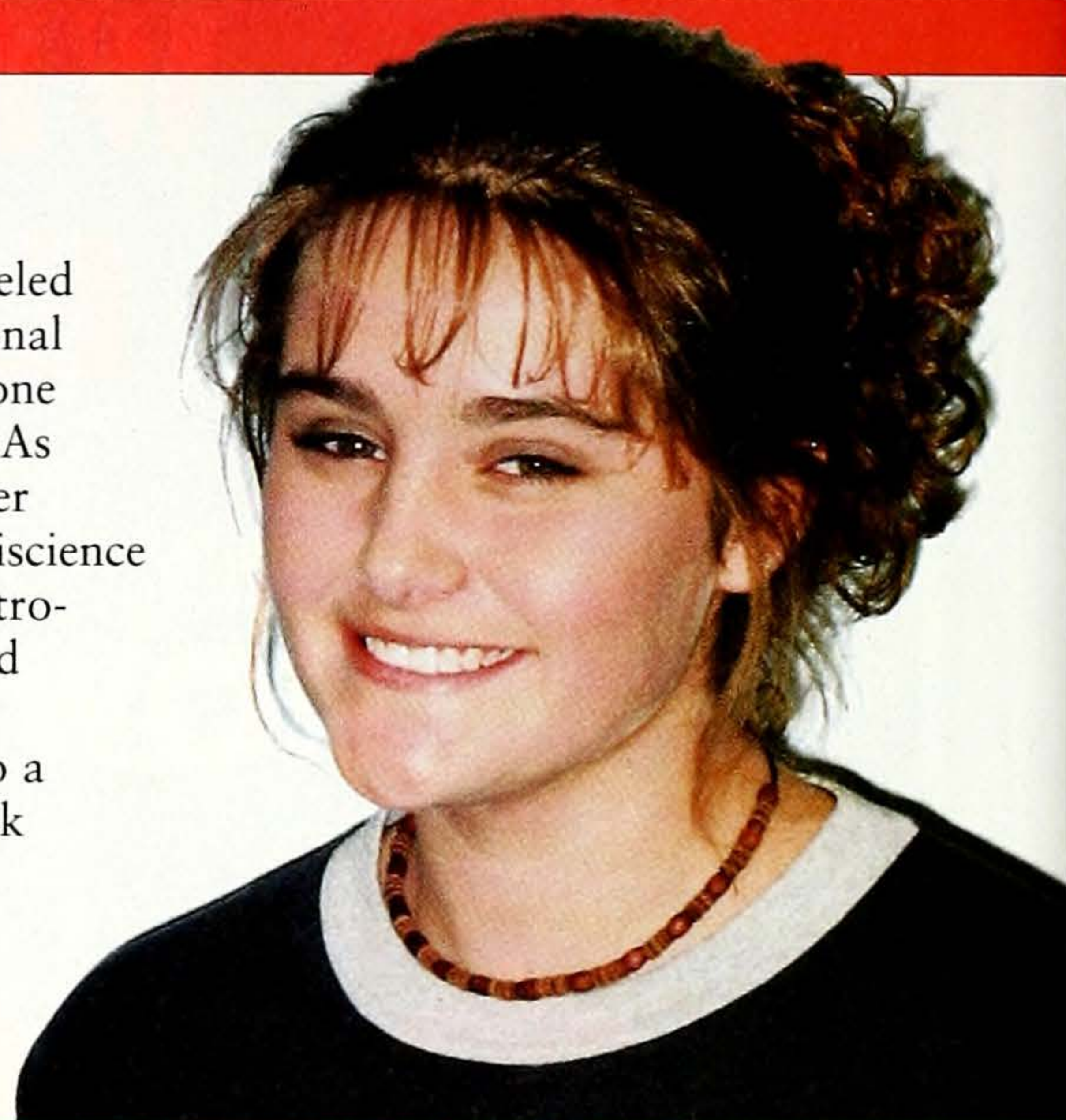
Mail to:

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## MAINE

## Jenni Morin

When the Caribou FFA Chapter nearly canceled its Food for America day due to organizational problems, Jenni, 17, revived it and made it one of the chapter's most successful events ever. As chapter reporter, Jenni redesigned the chapter newsletter, The Caribou FFA News. Her agriscience project, an experiment on the effects of electromagnetic fields on plant growth, won second place in a competition sponsored by the Maine Public Service Company. Jenni is also a member of the varsity cheerleading and track and field teams. ★

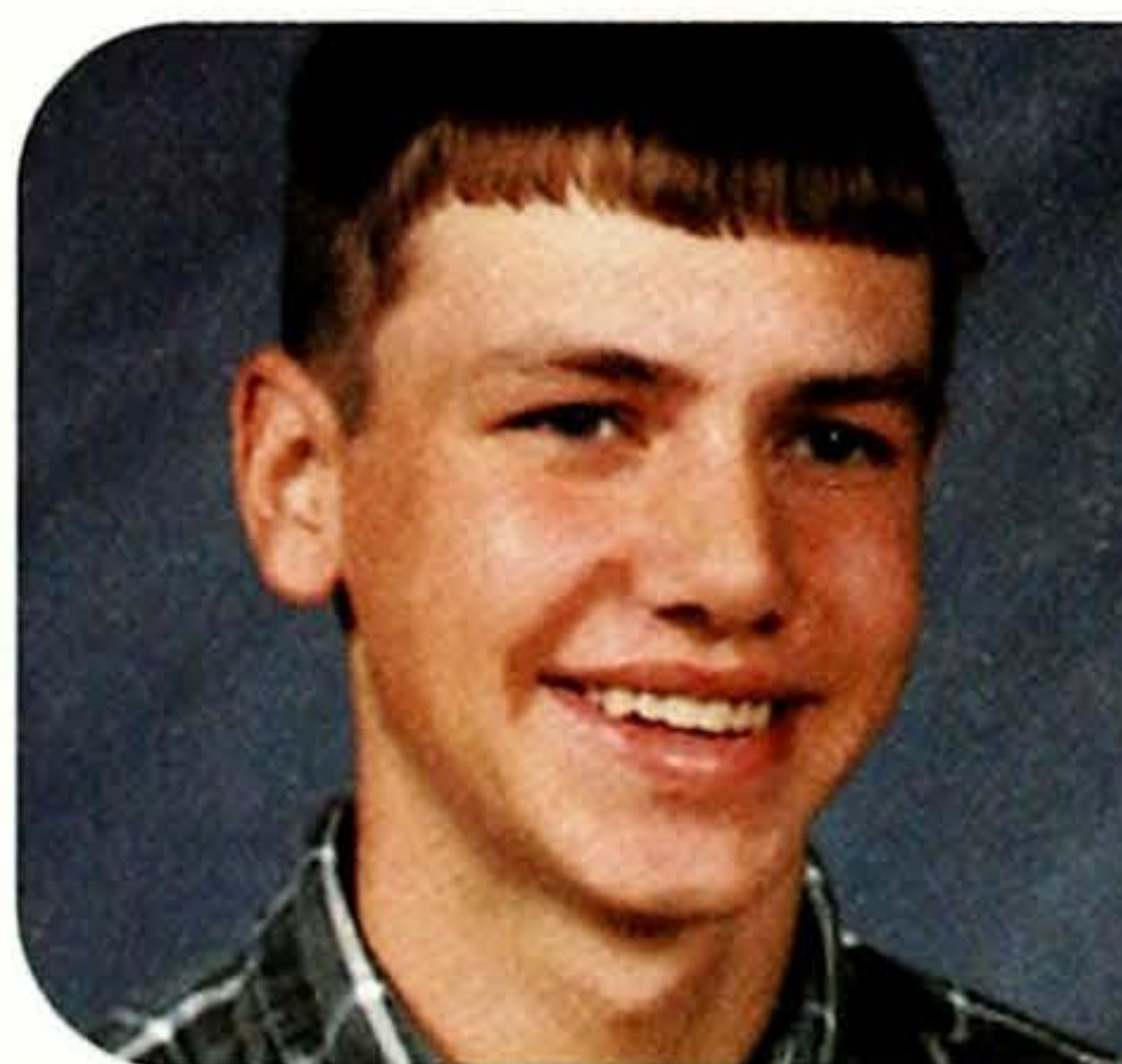


## SOUTH DAKOTA

## WEST VIRGINIA

## FLORIDA

## CALIFORNIA



## Derek Heeran

To prepare himself for college, 17-year-old Derek wants to make the most of high school and he's doing that through FFA. He's the Parker FFA Chapter reporter and has an SAE project consisting of ten bottle calves and 40 acres of soybeans. Derek is also involved in land and meat judging, creed speaking and ag sales. He dedicates time to sports, choir, the National Honor Society and the school newspaper. In his spare time, Derek helps his dad on the farm. ★



## Ashley Roomsburg

As vice president of the Hampshire County FFA Chapter, 17-year-old Ashley leads by example. She competed with her chapter's floriculture team at the 1998 National FFA Convention. Prior to that, she placed third at the state FFA creed competition and won the gold medal at the state floriculture CDE. She is the junior class president and a member of the student council and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Her SAE consists of greenhouse management and raising a lamb and hog. ★



## Marc Christ

Having had international exchange students in his home, one of Marc's goals is to go on an exchange himself. While he's still here, 15-year-old Marc is incredibly busy. As an accomplished showman, he spends much time with his dairy and beef cows. As FFA student advisor, vice president of the junior Simmental association, and vice president of the county dairy club, Marc is a proven leader who puts academics first and who volunteers in his community. ★



## Richard Holtz

Richard is not one to walk away from opportunity. This 17-year-old Half Moon Bay FFA Chapter member got involved early and it paid off. Richard is the North Coast Regional Vice President, and he has his sights set on becoming a state officer next year. One of Richard's SAEs consists of running his own landscape maintenance business. His other SAE consists of raising steers, hogs, goats, rabbits and poultry. Richard plans to pursue a career in agricultural education. ★



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**FFA member and entomology whiz Randy Meissen reviews "A Bug's Life"**



**I**t is a common occurrence to see ants marching in rank to spoil a picnic, but it is a rarity to watch them march across the movie screen. Nevertheless, an entire army of ants serves as the cast for "A Bug's Life."

Disney and Pixar (the creators of "Toy Story") have again combined forces to produce a dazzling digitally animated feature which provides an adorable cast of arthropod actors (even a black widow spider provides comic relief).

In the movie, ants are forced to gather extra food each year to prevent attacks from one of the most sinister and diabolical of all insects (at least from a farmer's perspective)-grasshoppers. While the main character, an accident-prone visionary ant named Flik, is less than a fourth of a centimeter tall, he encounters some problems of—well—Titanic proportions. Due to an unfortunate accident, Flik knocks the grasshop-

pers' food into a puddle of water just before they arrive to feast on it.

## Confrontation erupts

The ants then come face-to-face with Hopper, their evil oppressor, who demands that the ants collect twice the usual amount of food for his renegade band before the last autumn leaf falls from the trees. Flik is blamed for angering the grasshoppers, so he decides to leave the anthill on what is expected to be a suicide mission—a search to find help.

The ants are thrilled when Flik returns with a band of "warriors" to help defeat the grasshoppers. When he discovers that the warriors are actually a group of circus performers, he devises a plan to build a model bird to scare away the grasshoppers. Unfortunately, his plan is foiled and he and the "warriors" are expelled from the anthill.

Nevertheless, Flik and

the circus insects return just in time to prevent the grasshoppers from squishing the ant queen. In the end, Flik inspires hundreds of fellow ants to unite and overthrow their grasshopper oppressors. Flik is hailed as the hero of the anthill and the ants enjoy newfound peace and prosperity. Ultimately, the movie shows that vision and perseverance are necessary to obtain a better way of life.

## The thing that bugs me about the movie

I was astonished that the ants are portrayed with four legs instead of six. This makes the ants look more like pastel-colored aliens than insects. I guess the computer-wise Pixar animators flunked their taxonomy courses. Another blunder is the rendering of the gypsy moth. True gypsy moths are homely tan or dingy white in color. Perhaps the animators also did not realize these moths are responsible for the defoliation of millions of acres of forest in the eastern U.S. Instead, they cast the gypsy moth as a beautiful and exotic silk moth.

Despite these technicalities, "A Bug's Life" is a vivid and imaginative production that indicates innovative technology and insect ecosystems can merge to form a box office hit. ★



**Randy Meissen, a self-taught entomologist, is a high school senior and Salisbury FFA Chapter member. After turning his hobby of collecting insects into an SAE project, Randy eventually started a business called Meissen Entomology, which specializes in selling educational insect collections and decorative butterfly paperweights. He is a winner of the 1998 National Agri-Entrepreneurship Award.**

**Here's how you can contact him: Meissen Entomology, 742 County Road 279, Salisbury, MO 65281; phone: (660) 388-6266; e-mail: rmeissen@hotmail.com.**

**[www.crosswinds.net/columbia-mo/~insects/meissenentomology](http://www.crosswinds.net/columbia-mo/~insects/meissenentomology)**

**The Agri-Entrepreneurship Education Program is a joint activity of the National Council for Agricultural Education, the National FFA Organization and the U.S. Department of Education. The program is sponsored by and conducted in partnership with the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Kansas City, Missouri, as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.**

# an ant with aspirations

**By Randy Meissen**

**Illustration Mark Fredrickson**



# What **trick**

By Erich Gaukel

**As a musician, hunter and aspiring chef,  
Joel Bernhard doesn't let  
his blindness define him**





**A**t high school band rehearsals, Joel Bernhard would hold his trumpet in one hand while his other hand glided across the Braille sheet music on the stand before him. Unable to see the director's baton, Joel relied on his ability to feel the tempo of the music. During deer hunting season, Joel can be found at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, where, over the past six seasons, he has bagged four deer and a turkey. It's not easy, and it can't be done without the help of a hunting partner, but it's an accomplishment of which Joel is proud. "Whoever goes with me sits down right behind me. They kind of watch out for whatever we're hunting

for—I can sometimes hear it too—and then if something comes by, they just kind of poke me and tell me that it's coming. They tell me right or left or up or down, and then when it's safe to shoot." These experiences have proved to those around him that his blindness, while classified as a disability, is really just one of the many traits—like the color of his hair or his easygoing personality—that make Joel who he is.

## Foodforthought

Joel is now finishing up his culinary arts degree at Moraine Park Technical College in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, 15 miles north of his hometown of Lomira. Joel first became interested in food science as a high school student when he developed an SAE project on food preserva-

tion—by means of dehydration—that won him the state proficiency award in food science and technology.

"I learned that it's something I can do that, once somebody shows me how to do the basics, I can pretty well do everything myself," Joel says of working in a professional kitchen environment.

For most people, preparing a meal without the use of your eyes would seem a daunting, if not impossible, task. Not only do you have to measure ingredients carefully, you have to monitor things as they cook or bake and you have to know where to find everything.

For Joel, these are not significant problems. "I have a talking scale for





measuring and a talking thermometer so I can tell when a roast, bread or cake is done, and when a soup is at a simmer or boiling. Other than that, you just go by feel. Everything stays in the same general place so you get used to it." And consider this: He has already been doing things without the use of his eyes since he was five years old. Joel can learn a full kitchen in just a couple weeks.

## Seeing<sup>is</sup>believing

As an aspiring chef, Joel's training in culinary arts is a stark contrast to the assembly line mentality of a fast food restaurant like McDonald's, where he has worked for three and a half years. But that doesn't bother him. It's steady income, it's food-related, and his bosses don't make a big deal about his blindness. "I prep the salads and fajitas in the mornings. During the rush hours I deep fry the french fries and pour

the sodas—I go wherever they need me."

It took some time to convince management that he could operate the potentially dangerous (because of the hot oil) deep fryer. In fact, convincing people has become something of a regular activity for Joel. He'll tell you that his chief problem is not blindness: it's much bigger than that, and it's much more difficult to overcome. As Joel explains, "The challenges are all basically the same—it's always going to be hard, no matter what, for people to accept you and your disability. You've got to prove it to them that you can do it—that's the major obstacle."

Meanwhile, as Joel continues to work part-time and ply his craft in the kitchen, he will go on doing the things he likes to do: hunting, surfing the Internet and playing music on his trumpet. ★

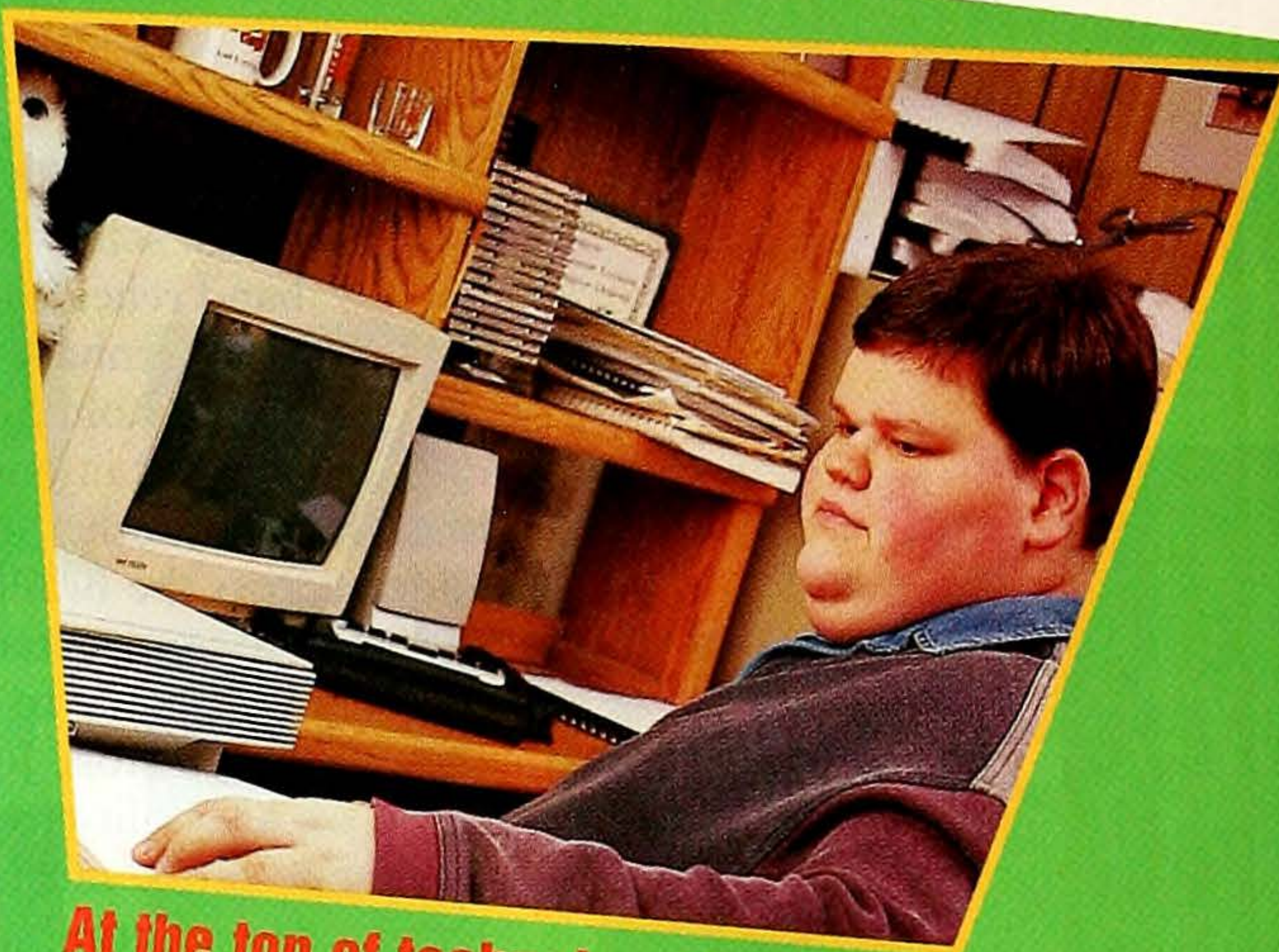
## Opening eyes to blindness

At the 1997 National FFA Convention, Joel won the H.O. Sargent Award, an annual prize recognizing one FFA member and one non-FFA member who have promoted diversity in agricultural education and FFA.

Joel won the award for educating students and faculty at his high school about blindness. Tired of being treated differently, Joel organized a school workshop called "Being Blind," where students at his school participated in three "blind" activities. First they were blindfolded and shown how to find their way down a hallway using a white cane. They then had to spread peanut butter on a cracker and pour water into a paper cup, and then eat. For the final activity, Joel had each student remove the blindfold and learn to write his or her name and a message in Braille.

Joel has since done similar workshops with high school teachers and at Moraine Park Technical College.

The National FFA Organization re-established the H.O. Sargent Award in 1995 to remember the New Farmers of America (NFA) and recognize their place in the history of FFA. The award is sponsored by Merial as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.



### At the top of technology

Using some pretty sophisticated technology, Joel has full access to the world of computers. One of his two computers has refreshable Braille, which allows Joel to read as he types on a specially designed Braille "pad," which produces Braille using pins and a rubber pad. To read through what he has already written, Joel just uses the arrow keys.

Because the Braille pad isn't compatible with the Internet, Joel uses a more advanced computer for searching the Internet and e-mail. Using a program called "Jaws," he can read anything on the Internet. With two active cursors, he can read the main text of website plus any information boxes or windows. This is particularly useful when Joel is doing research for school.





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**Male actor** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Author** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Food** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Artist** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Baseball team in '99** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Pizza topping** \_\_\_\_\_

**Movie** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Female actor** \_\_\_\_\_  
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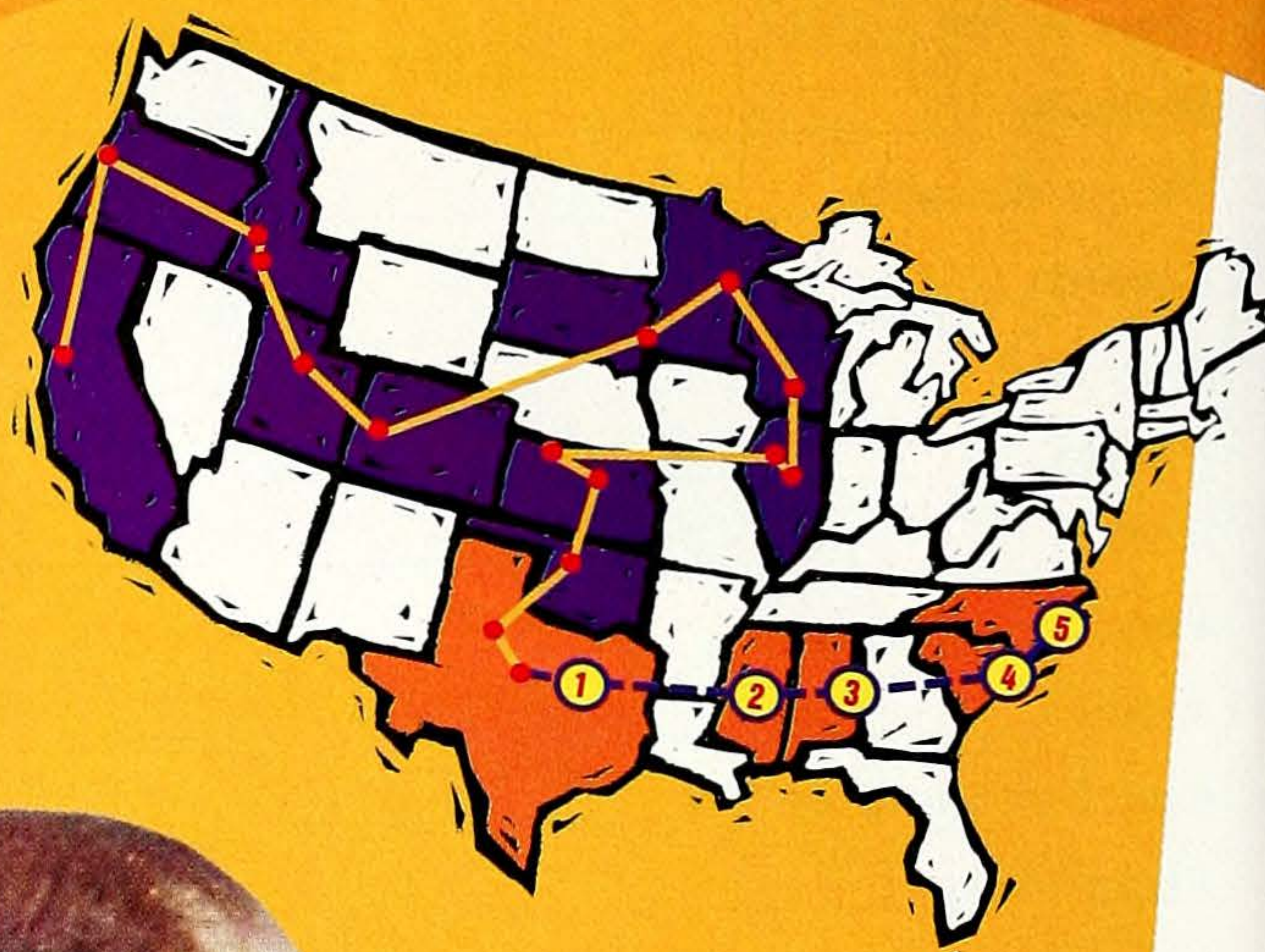
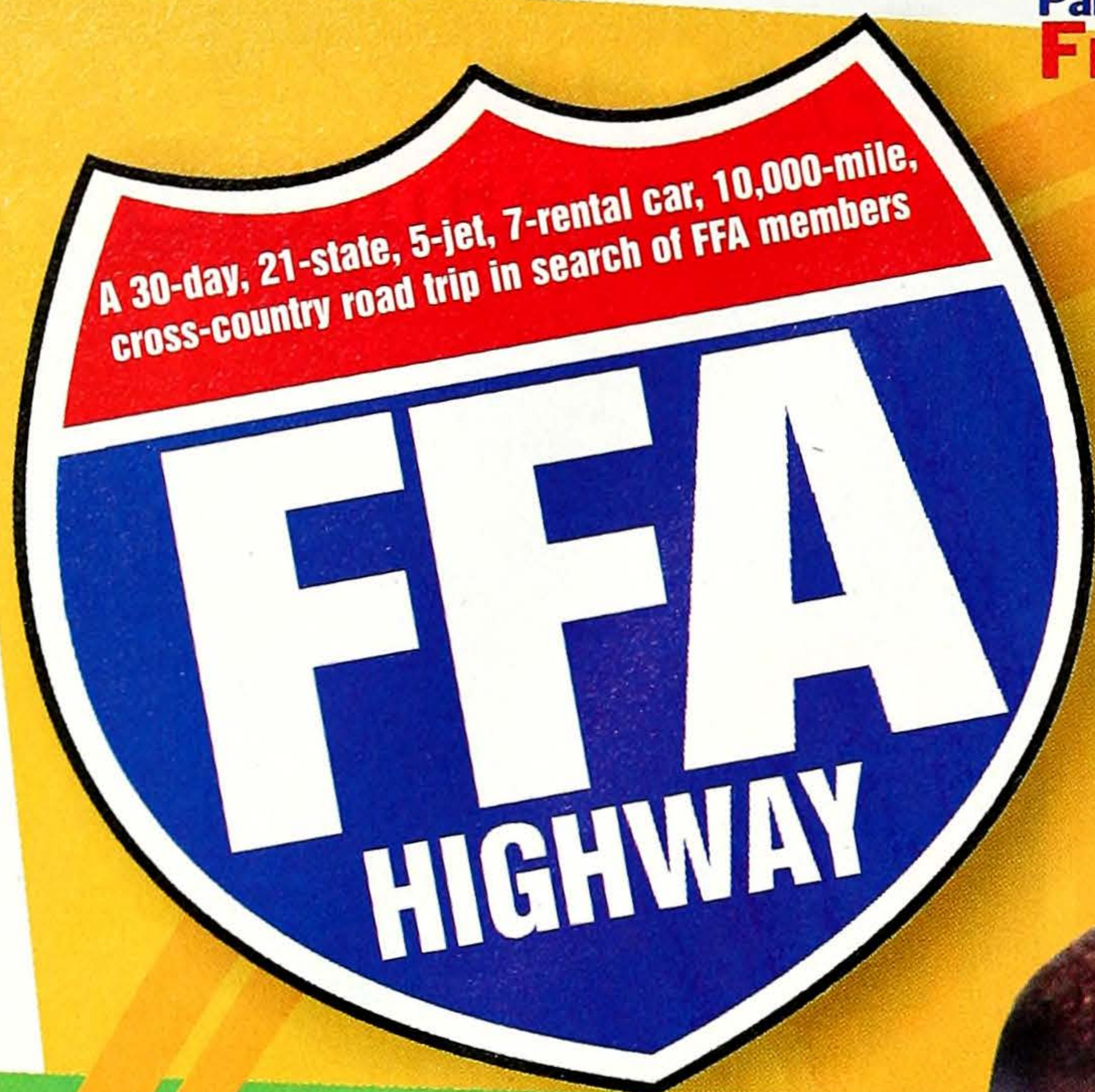
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by Erich Gaukel

# 1 Granbury, Texas

It's known as the "show of shows" in Texas goat showing. According to 16-year-old Granbury FFA Chapter member Kyran Larner, who participates in 40 Texas goat shows a year, "It's one of those things where if you want a good pen, you get there the night before." It's called Meat Goat Mania, and it's held in Abilene each year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. In 1997, Kyran was Grand Champion and high point winner. The latter of these two distinctions won him a luxury goat trailer, on which he has already put thousands of miles. Kyran, who is very active with his FFA chapter, won the 1997 state proficiency award for specialty animal production and was a meat goat showmanship winner at the Houston Stock Show. As a junior, he still has a lot of competitions and shows left, so look for him to bring home a few more trophies, and maybe even another trailer.

Kyran Larner, a member of the Granbury FFA Chapter, is among the best in Texas goat showing.



This road trip  
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continued on page 16



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Brothers Norman (wearing the tie) and Clayton Thompson, both former presidents of the Purvis FFA Chapter, are serious about clowning around at the rodeo.

2

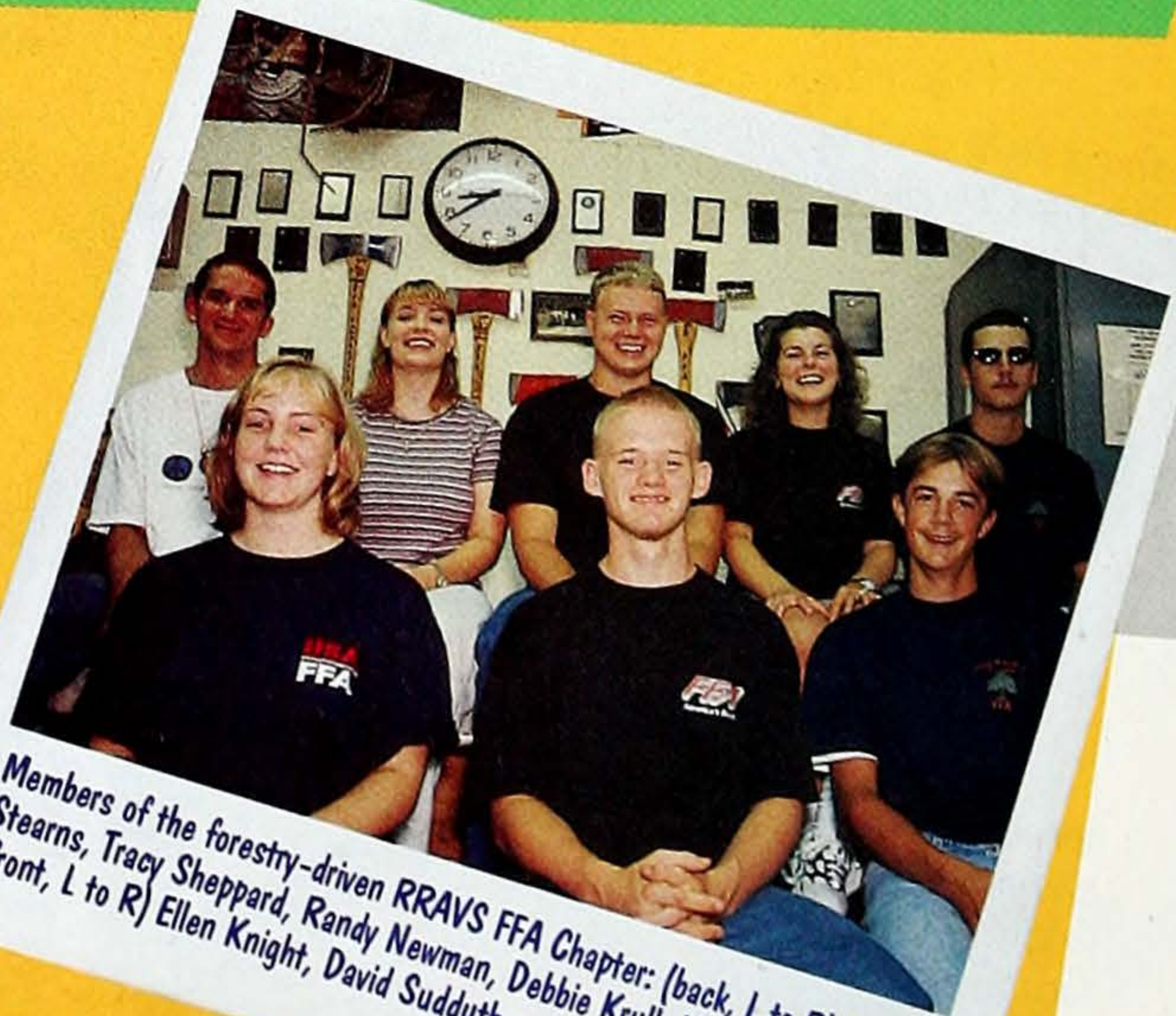
## Jackson, Mississippi

By day, Norman Thompson, 22, and brother Clayton, 21, are bricklayers in the town of Purvis, where each once served as president of the local FFA chapter. On this June night, however, their faces are made-up, their clothes are in tatters and they are wearing bullet-proof vests. What's the occasion? It's the Mississippi High School State Finals Rodeo at the state fairgrounds equine center in the capital city of Jackson. For these brave brothers, who are the event's resident bullfighters/clowns, this is like a vacation. Says Clayton: "When you get all the make-up on, it changes your whole personality—it gets you ready. And then you get down there and they turn on the rock and roll—they get that music kicking—and that kind of pumps you up too." Norman and Clayton entertain the audience, but they say their primary objective is cowboy protection. They keep a low profile until a competitor's hand gets hung up in the rope or if a bull charges a competitor. It being the fourth night of competition when I visited with them, Clayton told me things had gone pretty smoothly so far. One night, however, at the end of the rodeo, Clayton went on what promised to be a routine bull recovery. "It was a long-horned bull," Clayton explains, "and he hung his horn under my pants and towed me about 15 feet outside the chute then slammed me down. I was lucky—really lucky. It could have been a lot worse."

3

## Wedowee, Alabama

Lots of trees. That's how I would describe the drive over from Jackson to Wedowee. Here, I met with members of the RRAV (Randolph-Roanoke Area Vocational School) FFA Chapter, which specializes in forestry and is led by advisor James Morris. Students come here from four area high schools to learn forestry-related skills, ranging from controlling fires (their chapter is a certified volunteer fire department) to surveying to building nature trails. Members put their minds, muscles and skills to work at forestry judging competitions, as well as Alabama's Lumberjack and Woodsmen competitions. Because forestry is the number one industry in the state, this FFA program is a launching pad for careers in firefighting, landscape management, wildlife management, environmental science, soil and water conservation, construction and the timber industry. At the time of my visit, fires raged to the south in Florida. Alabama had managed to remain mostly fire-free throughout the summer, but the RRAV FFA Chapter did get called out to control two wood fires in a single day.



Members of the forestry-driven RRAV FFA Chapter: (back, L to R) Josh Stearns, Tracy Sheppard, Randy Newman, Debbie Krull, Kevin Knight; (front, L to R) Ellen Knight, David Sudduth and Chad Meadows.



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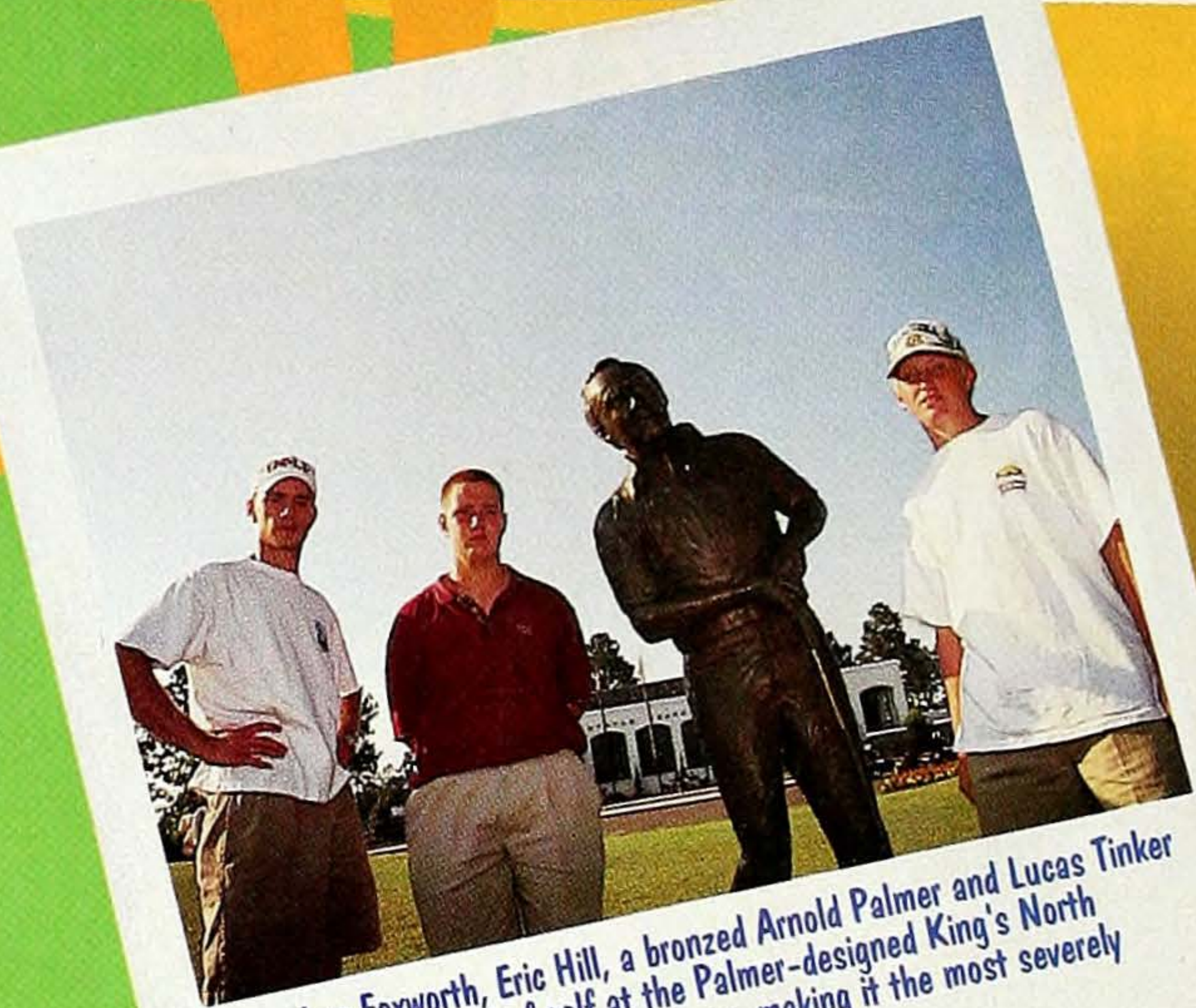


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## Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

Bordered by North Carolina and the Atlantic Ocean, Horry County, because of its magnetism for tourists, is an economic hot spot for South Carolina. In the coastline areas surrounding Myrtle Beach, the center of all the action, it is estimated that 50 percent of South Carolina's tax base is generated. Tourism here brings in \$10.2 billion annually. A major reason people flock here is golf. There are over 100 golf courses here, which is probably the highest concentration of golf courses in the world—a perfect setting for the golf course management program at the Myrtle Beach Academy's for the Arts, Science and Technology. Harry DuBose, who heads the program and FFA chapter, works with students on the fundamentals of golf course management, both in the classroom and on the course. Some of the students work part-time at the Dunes Golf and Beach Club for superintendent Randy Allen. This top-notch course hosted the 1997 PGA Senior Tour Championship, and Myrtle Beach FFA members were there on the course, fixing divots and raking sand. Along with state vice president Jonathan Foxworth, I joined Myrtle Beach members Mike Sturzenbeck, Rob Walker, Lucas Tinker and Eric Hill for a friendly round of golf.



Jonathan Foxworth, Eric Hill, a bronzed Arnold Palmer and Lucas Tinker after a brutal round of golf at the Palmer-designed King's North course. Hole 18 boasts 42 sandtraps, making it the most severely trapped hole in the world.



## Beaufort, North Carolina

It is believed that the last battle of the American Revolution took place here in April of 1782. Eighty years later, Union and Confederate forces fought over the area as the Civil War rolled through town. Today, this peaceful coastal town and the surrounding communities are a center for tourism, commercial fishing, farming and shipping. Amanda Jessee, president of the East Carteret FFA Chapter, invited me to visit this historic area and her very active chapter. When I arrived, Amanda and five friends showed me around their school's agricultural shop and barn, then took me to Open Grounds Farm, a local 44,000-acre Italian-owned farm that grows corn, soybeans, small grains and cotton. Amanda's mother works at the farm, so Amanda conducted a study on corn nutrient deficiencies here for her SAE. J. Samuel Brake, crops manager at the farm, took all of us on a guided tour of the sprawling operation and gave us a few pointers in agronomy.



J. Samuel Brake gives an agronomy lesson to East Carteret FFA Chapter members (clockwise from the top) Travis Baker, Charles Edwards, Major Jarman (far right), Terry Wade and Amanda Jessee.



## what's

The Kern Valley FFA Chapter from California narrowly tops the Cheyenne FFA Chapter from Wyoming and the Sierra FFA Chapter in California in our contest to see which chapter sends in the most "What's Hot/What's Not" surveys. Thanks to everyone who mailed them in!

Note: We've changed the categories for the next issue, so be sure to fill out and mail the new survey on page 13. If you'd rather not tear the survey out of the magazine, you can e-mail your picks to us at [erich@infoel.com](mailto:erich@infoel.com)

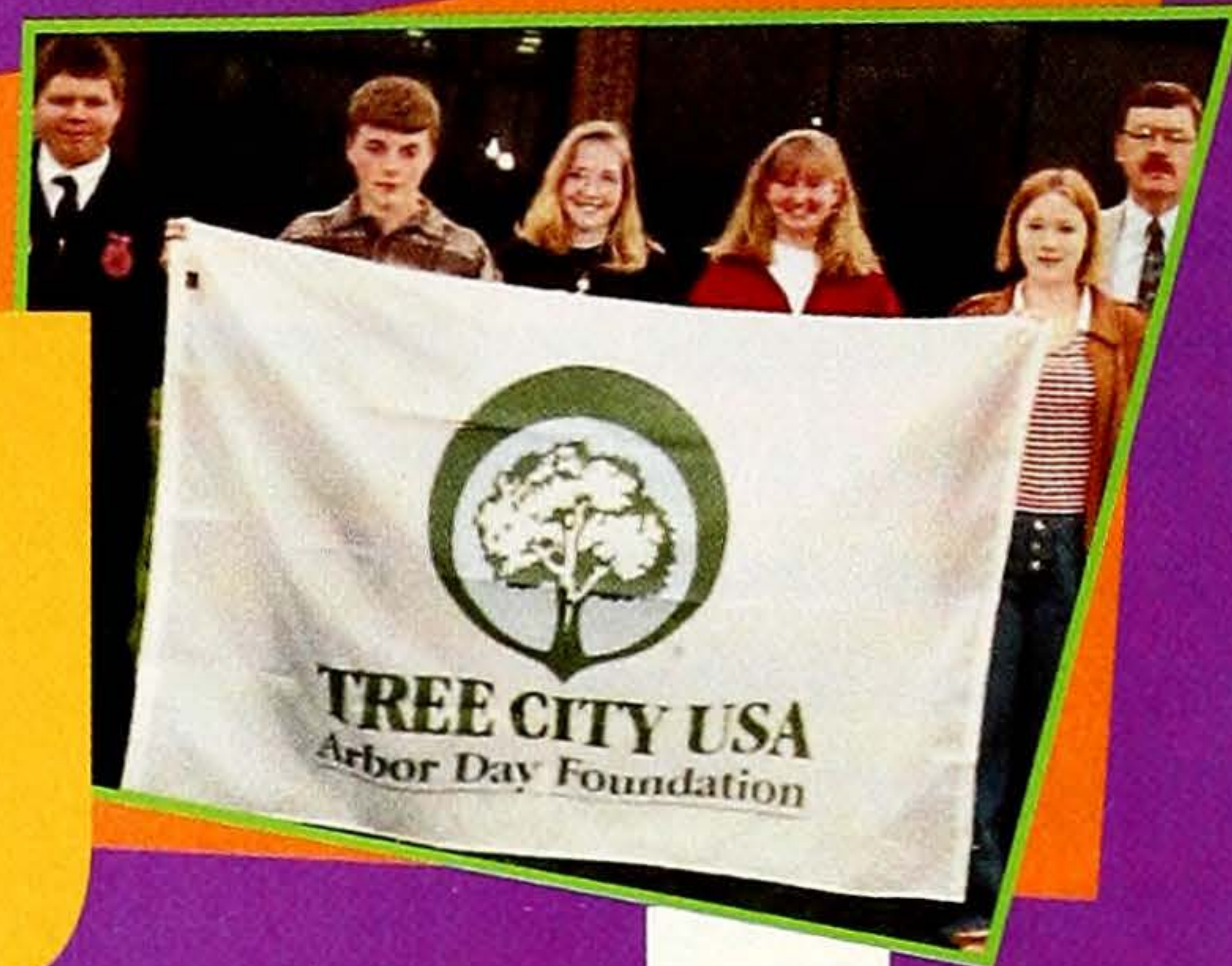
hot	the waterboy	movie	titanic	not
hot	blue	color	pink	not
hot	dog	pet	cat	not
hot	europe	place to visit	iraq	not
hot	nike	athletic shoe	reebok	not

## what's

hot	snowboarding	winter leisure activity	skiing	not
hot	movies	place to go on a date	fast food	not
hot	football games	school event (non FFA)	pep rallies	not
hot	ffa convention	ffa event or function	highway cleanup	not

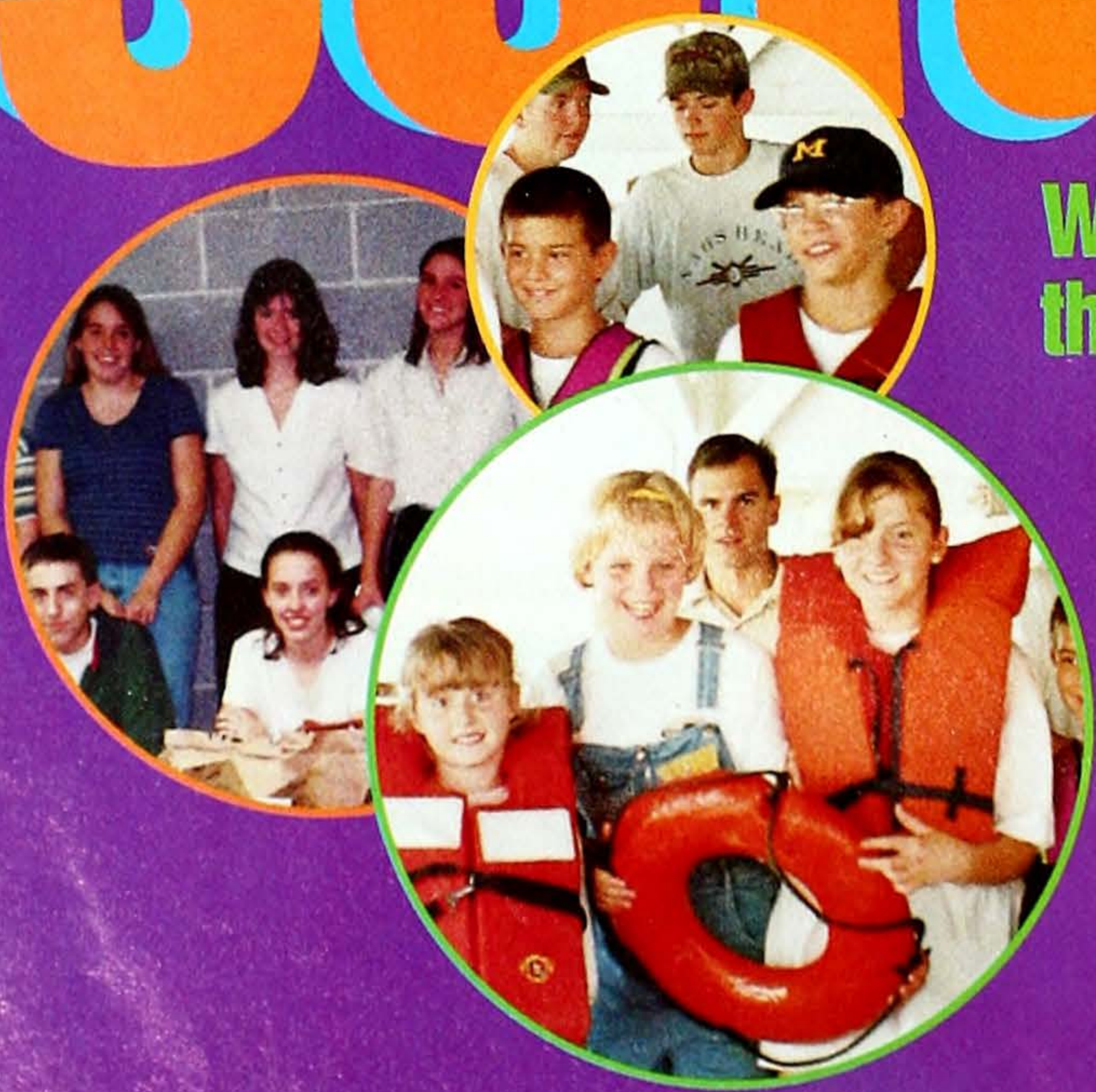


# spring break solution



**Why now is the time to start planning those volunteering projects**

Sure, you'll have to give up some of your valuable time. Sure, you won't get paid. But that's what great about volunteerism—you are investing your time and effort for a cause that will help others and improve the quality of life in your community. As a bonus, you can build your FFA chapter's program of activities and strengthen your college apps and resume. Any time is the right time for volunteering, but there are a couple of reasons for you to start planning volunteerism projects right now.





is  
this



*Charles Pearce, 1995 National Agri-Entrepreneur*

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*Annthie Kramer, 1998 National Agri-Entrepreneur*

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For more information, complete and mail the attached reply card, look for information on the web at [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org), or contact Kevin Keith, National FFA Organization, P.O. Box 68960, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960, e-mail: [kkeith@ffa.org](mailto:kkeith@ffa.org).



*Shequilla Pruitt, 1997 National Agri-Entrepreneur*



## **National Volunteer Week: April 18-24**

National Volunteer Week began in 1974 when President Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteerism. Every U.S. president since then has supported the program. The President's Service Awards are awarded to those individuals and groups whose programs have made a significant impact in their communities. The Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National Service manage the event on behalf of the White House. Read more about it at [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)

First, you can coordinate your volunteer project with National Volunteer Week (April 18-24), a national initiative involving hundreds of thousands of people nationwide. If the National Volunteer Week dates don't match up with the dates of your spring break, don't worry—you can create your own volunteer week.

## **Finding a project**

The most difficult part of volunteerism is finding a project. The best strategy is to focus on situations or problems in your area. Chances are, you already know of some things you can do to make a difference. For example, on your way to school, maybe you have noticed that a park in town is always covered with trash or debris. You could clean it up. Or maybe you read

in the newspaper that the local animal shelter is overflowing and needs help finding homes for dogs and cats. You could put up posters to build awareness, or even drop by the shelter to take the animals out for a walk.

If there are retirement or nursing facilities in your area, you could drop by to visit with the residents. Or you could collect donated magazines and books for patients at the local hospital.

## **Plan of action**

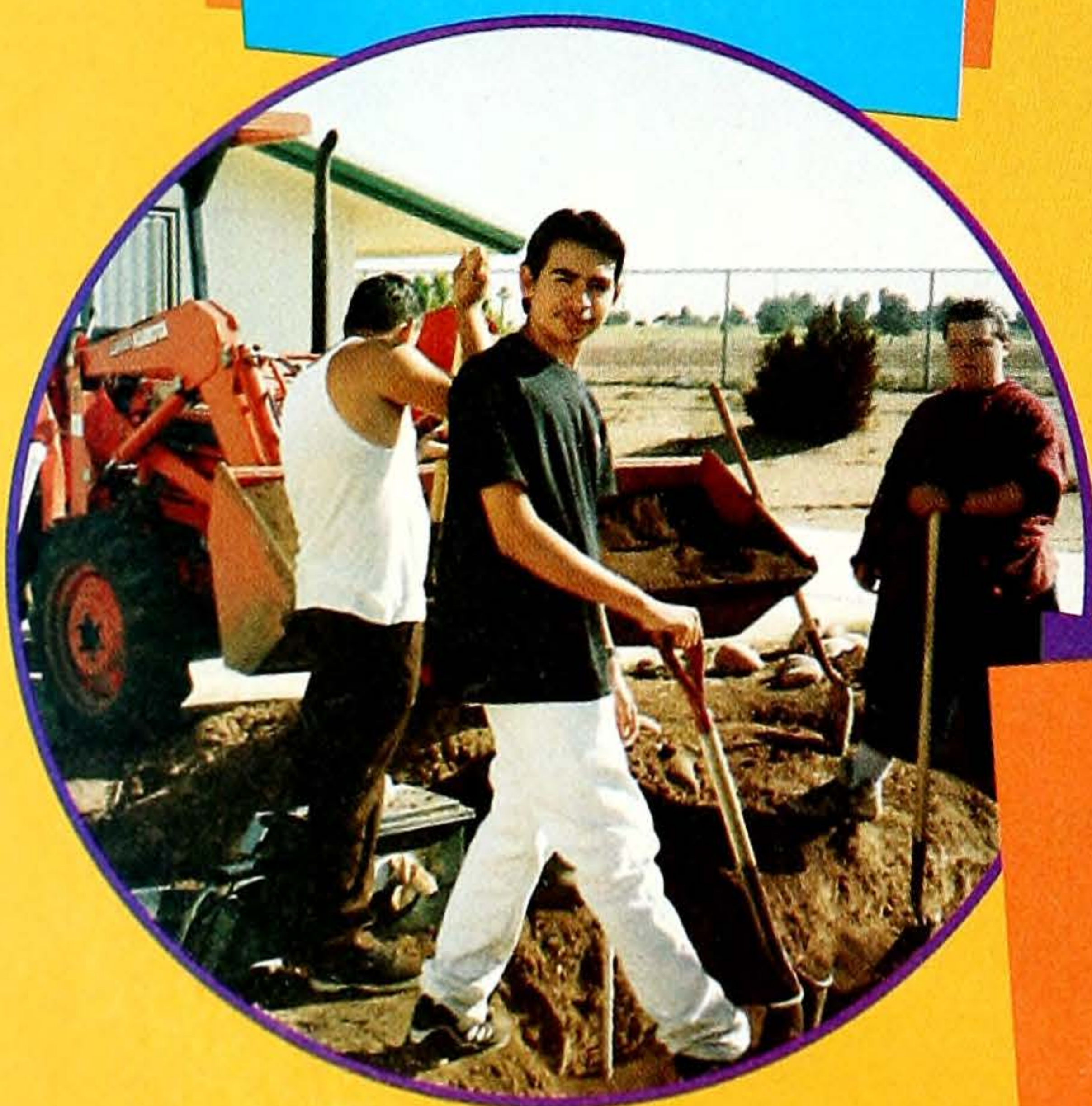
Your FFA involvement gives you a leg up when it comes to planning. Use chapter meetings to figure out which projects are needed, which projects are feasible and which projects will work into your chapter's program of activities. By organizing volunteer projects within your chapter, your chapter can become eligible for the National FFA Organization's National Chapter Award in the Community Development area.

By getting everyone involved and working as a team, you will find that volunteering is fun, challenging and rewarding. Most importantly, though, you are taking action that will benefit others—and the world can always use more of that. ★

## **Make a Difference Day: October 23**

If you want to follow up with a project this fall, consider getting involved with Make a Difference Day, which happens annually on the fourth Saturday in October. This is a national community service effort that challenges participants to make a difference in their communities by planning service projects and activities. Outstanding projects will be featured in USA Weekend magazine, which organizes the event with The Points of Light Foundation. You can get ideas for projects and more information at [www.usaweekend.com](http://www.usaweekend.com)

# spring break solution



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...the more they stay the same*

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# Last Laff

**Q:** What's a cow's favorite TV show?

**A:** Steer Trek.

**Alicia Spoelstra**

*Lynden, Washington*

**Man 1:** Hey, did you just put coins in your coffee?

**Man 2:** Yes, the doctor said I needed a little change in my diet.

**David Mays**

*Roseland, Virginia*

**Q:** How do you tell FFA members apart from their classmates?

**A:** They're out standing in their field.

**Lana Kidrowski**

*Clara City, Minnesota*

**Q:** What do cobras study in college?

**A:** Hisstory.

**San Luis Obispo**

*FFA Chapter California*

**Q:** What did the posts say when the fence was built?

**A:** Wire you all over us?

**Bryan Kuhler**

*Brunswick, Missouri*

**Q:** What does a car run on?

**A:** Wheels.

**April Maxwell**

*Portland, Indiana*

**Q:** What kind of cars do body builders drive?

**A:** Muscle cars.

**Gary Causey**

*Santa Fe, Texas*

**Q:** What do you call four bullfighters in quicksand?

**A:** Quatro sinko.

**Anna Burge**

*Salyersville, Kentucky*

**Q:** What kind of math do owls like?

**A:** Owlgebra.

**Virginia Dinwiddie**

*Denair, California*

**Q:** Who is the coolest aunt in the world?

**A:** Aunt Arctica.

**Bret Mayfield**

*St. Paul, Oregon*

**Q:** Which is the left side of the pie?

**A:** The side that has not been eaten.

**Jessica Milner**

*Yukon, Oklahoma*

**Q:** What do you get when you cross a fish and an elephant?

**A:** Swimming trunks.

**Sarah Ridenhour**

*Belle, Missouri*

Shayne: Knock knock.

Paula: Who's there?

Shayne: Olive.

Paula: Olive who?

Shayne: Olive you.

**Bryan Lee Rosewell**

*Jefferson, Texas*

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.

Address your jokes to:

**Last Laff**

**FFA New Horizons**

**P.O. Box 68960**

**Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960**

The next issue of FFA New Horizons hits the streets around May 15

**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.

## Agrinuts by Jim Bradshaw

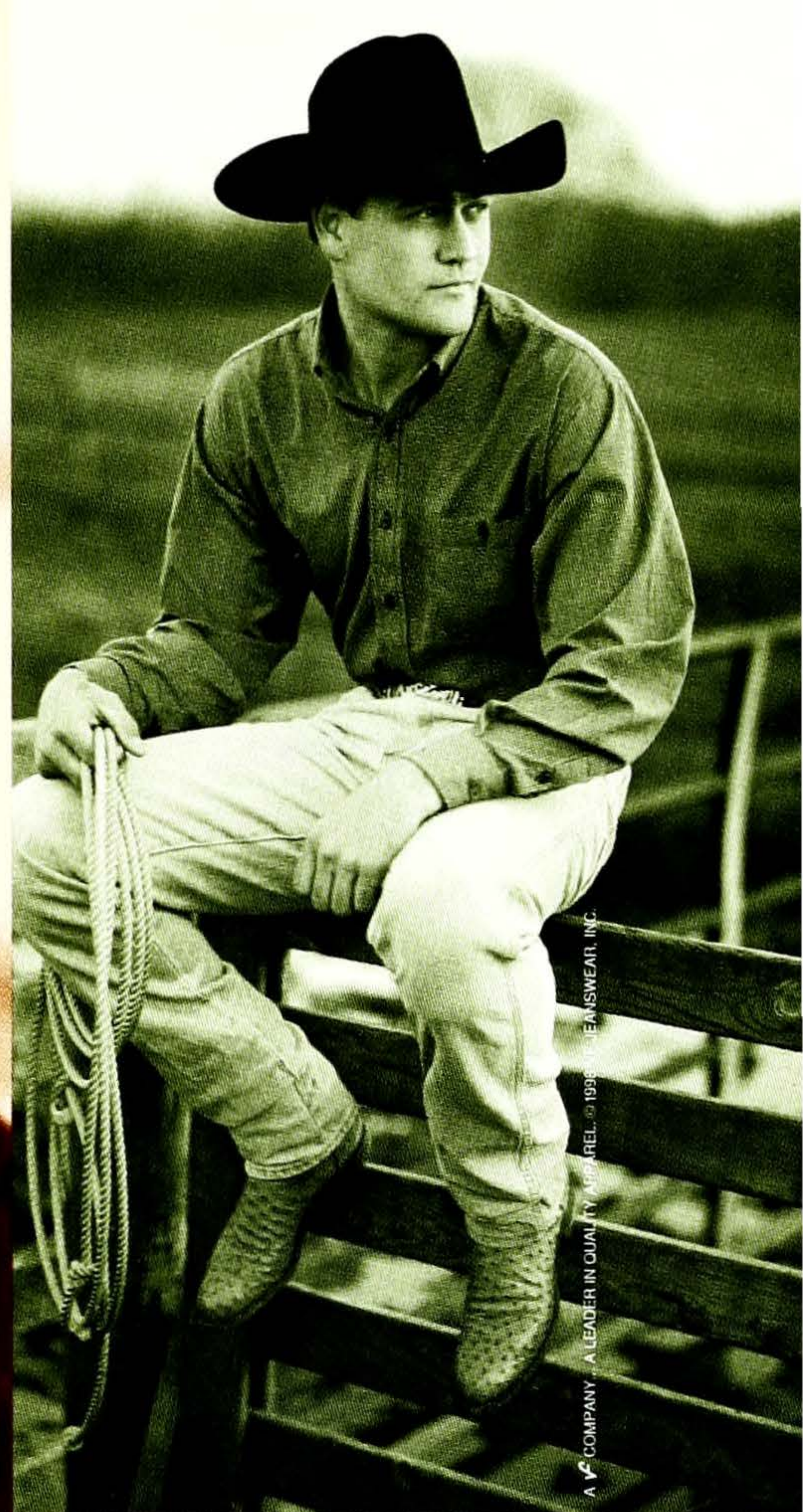




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