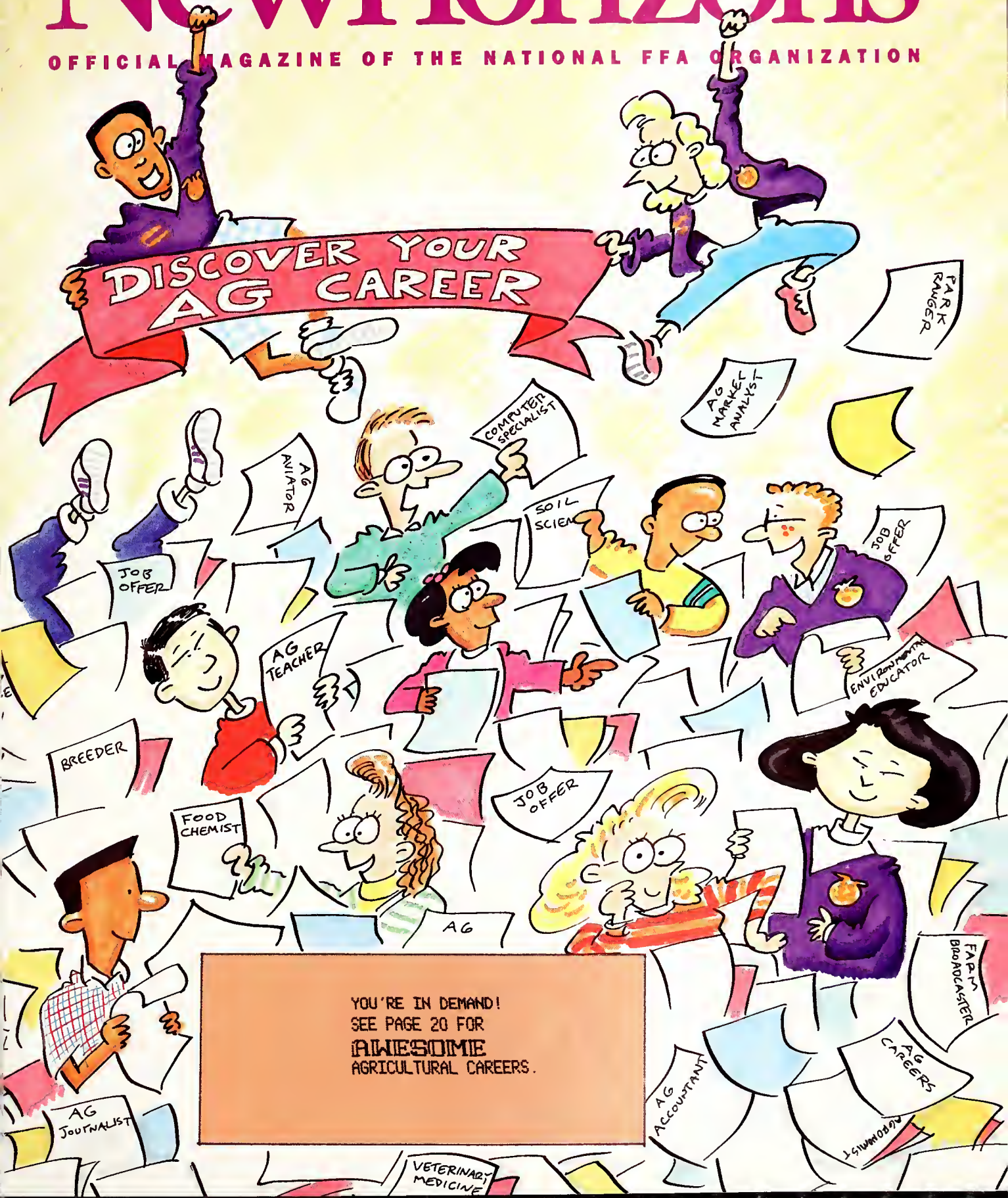


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OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION



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FFA New Horizons

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

April-May, 1993

Volume 41 Number 4



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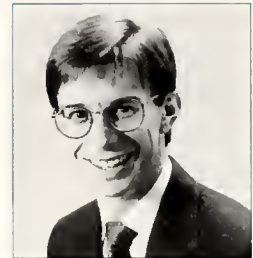
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T H E F R O N T L I N E

Beyond Lip Service

It was only a few hours after being elected that the six newly-elected national officers huddled around a table at Applebee's restaurant in Kansas City. Earlier in the afternoon, they had each heard their names called, rushed to the stage, and, basking in the moment, got their first taste of the spotlight.



Now, over soft drinks and appetizers, they were talking about what it all meant, what they were going to do and how they would approach their new responsibilities. A theme started to emerge. Individually they were saying it in different ways, but the topic always wound up being the same—service.

Amongst the clattering dishes and darting waiters, without any prompting from FFA staff or advisors, the officers agreed to have a theme for their team, "Service Above Self." They agreed it would be their central focus as they approached all of their duties. As a daily reminder to themselves and others, they would even have the phrase printed below their names on their business cards. "We see our role as being there for the members and teachers to further *their* purposes," said John Kleiboeker, central region vice president.

The whole idea of service—reaching out to others while putting your own self-interests in check—is a cornerstone in any organization that tries to make a positive difference in the lives of other people. Take a close look at churches, school boards, volunteer fire departments, youth groups like FFA, and you find people who have chosen to get involved for the good of others.

Service is becoming a national issue. A large portion of President Clinton's inaugural speech centered on service, drawing close comparisons to President Kennedy's "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" call for action. The president has even proposed college financial assistance to young people who are willing to give a year of service in return. It's obvious our national leaders feel it is necessary to motivate the masses to turn off the TV and make a personal investment in their communities.

On an individual level, it takes extra time and effort, but the officers say the personal rewards that you reap are well worth it. "You serve yourself by serving others because it fulfills a part of you that otherwise would go empty," says Dennis Degner, western region vice president.

It takes real focus and determination to stay true to such a weighty commitment as "Service Above Self." Kleiboeker admits, "We've yet to be tested. It's when you're tired and have been on the road for weeks that it will really be put to the test." At the end of the year, the officers will know if they've been true to their goal or not. They deserve congratulations just for making service a priority from the start.

Andy Markwart

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Washington Conference Program Is Coming

Get ready for leadership development and team building at this summer's Washington Conference Program. There are five week-long sessions: June 15-19, June 22-26, July 6-10, July 13-17, July 20-24 and July 27-31. Registration fee is \$450 per student in advance, or \$495 to register at the conference. For more information contact Linda May, National FFA Center, 5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309-0160.

International Flair

Send your applications for three-week summer programs to Australia, England, Germany, Italy and Japan to Student Services/International, National FFA Center, 5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309-0160 before May 1. Ask your advisor for an application—it's in the latest issue of *FFA Advisors...Making a Difference* publication.

Board Notes

The National FFA Board of Directors met at the National FFA Center in January. Highlights include:

- Sweetheart items will not be sold by FFA after August 31, 1993, due to a recommendation by 1992 national FFA convention delegates.
- New national FFA convention workshops for ninth and tenth grade FFA members, chapter officers and Washington Conference Program graduates were approved.

President Signs FFA Week Proclamation

In a ceremony on February 25, 1993, Silverton, Oregon, FFA president Rebecca Fisher, her parents, advisor, and a group of state and national FFA officials witnessed the president sign and approve a National FFA Week proclamation. We'll have more details in the next issue.

Where Does The Money Go?

When it comes to who gets their share of money for bringing food to market, everyone else makes more than the farmer, indicates a Texas A&M University study. On a 60-cent can of beans, for example, 8 cents goes to the farmer while 27 cents goes to the processor, 10 cents goes to the wholesaler and 15 cents to the retailer.

Out of each dollar bill you spend on food, 22 cents or less goes to the farmer who grew it. Out of the other 78 cents, 35

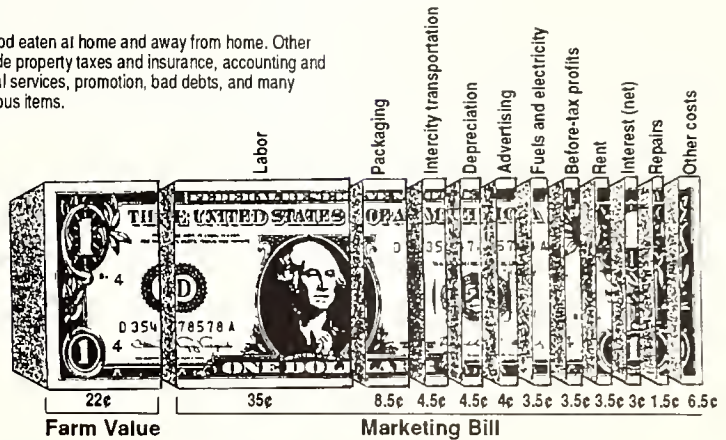
cents goes for marketing labor costs.

Processing and marketing of agricultural products are much larger activities than agriculture itself.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture calculated which industries and services benefit from agricultural production and how much they benefit—to the half-penny.

For instance, 8.5 cents of every dollar goes for packaging, and 4 cents goes for advertising. More facts are on the diagram below.

Includes food eaten at home and away from home. Other costs include property taxes and insurance, accounting and professional services, promotion, bad debts, and many miscellaneous items.



Thank Your Advisor In the Magazine

What have you done for your advisor lately? Here's a way you can recognize him or her for all of their hard work. Type a letter on plain white paper stating what your advisor means to you and why. Include your name, home address, home telephone number, school telephone number, FFA

chapter, and FFA advisor's name. Then send your entry to FFA New Horizons, Advisor Tribute, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309-0160. Letters must be postmarked by May 20, 1993. We'll publish the top entries in the September-October issue of the magazine.



National wildlife management proficiency award finalist Sierra Stoneberg has worked in the Alaskan alpine area.

Alaskan Adventure

FFA prepared this member to live and work in our northernmost state

*By Paul Bolstad
FFA Member, Gays Mills, Wisconsin*

For many high school seniors, the summer after graduation means loafing around home enjoying the last few weeks of freedom before entering the "real world" of work or college. But for Sierra Stoneberg of Hinsdale, Montana, that summer meant studying moose, mountain sheep, and avoiding bears in the land of the midnight sun.

During the summer of 1991 Stoneberg worked for the National Forest Service in the Seward Ranger District of Alaska.

While in Alaska, she did everything from studying range grass to building bird nest boxes.

Her high school summers were filled working for the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Montana. FFA activities and SCS work gave Stoneberg valuable experience she needed to get the job in Alaska. "I was the only crew member without a degree. I was qualified because of my work in FFA."

Stoneberg first became interested in botany through the Montana Range Days when she was in seventh grade. Range Days are two to three-day workshops where students learn about botany, biology, and

other range sciences.

"I found, rather to my surprise, that I didn't want to do anything else," Stoneberg says.

Her interest in plant sciences led her to become an active member of her FFA chapter. She chose projects in areas as diverse as sheep production and computers in agriculture and competed in an agricultural mechanics contest.

"FFA definitely helped me," Stoneberg says. "I did a lot of things, and FFA helped me tie them all together. It gave me an important sense of self-confidence."

At the end of her senior year, after two summers with SCS, Sierra wanted a

All of a sudden, the bear sprang out of the brush and up a tree. I was close enough to see hair on its nose.

change of pace. She learned about a position with the Forest Service in Alaska. After some calling around, she was accepted as a volunteer at the Kenai Lake Work Center.

"You volunteer with the understanding that you will work 40 hours a week without pay. In return, you get plane fare there and back plus room and board."

"I stayed with 12 other workers in a dorm just off the highway by Lake Kenai. It was a typical dorm. The kitchen was downstairs, and upstairs were 12 simple rooms."

The dorm was 26 miles from Seward, Alaska. Stoneberg enjoyed the secluded location of her Alaskan home.

"It was basically just the 12 of us on the shore of the lake. It was a fascinating chance to get to know a small group of people very closely."

Stoneberg quickly adapted to life in the northernmost state. Because of her travel with FFA, she says it was easy to adjust. Even the literally endless summer days in Alaska were no problem.

"I got used to sleeping in the light—in fact, I had trouble getting used to the dark again. It was funny to wake up early and think 'oh no, I've only got 22 hours of daylight left. What'll I do?'"

It's the little things that stick in your mind," Stoneberg says of the beauty that surrounded her in Alaska. "I was just amazed at the the incredible, huge green trees and mosses." She also loved, "walking in the woods...or finding a unique mushroom, or a burned out log that's from a fire you've heard people talk about."

During part of her stay Stoneberg lived and worked high in the mountains. Some of her fondest memories are of the time she spent in the alpine country.

"We lived on the top of a mountain in this little tent city. I remember all of the tiny plants and lichens (crustlike, scaly or branching fungus growth on rocks or tree trunks). They were similar to the ones we have at home, but they were way up in the mountains. There was so much light and sun up there."

Stoneberg monitored fertilizer on rangeland for sheep herds and took data on range grass. She also looked for eagle nests and scouted moose habitat. The work brought Sierra close to nature, and in-

involved plenty of physical labor.

"There wasn't a lot of accessibility up there, so a lot of times we had to pack all of our gear and haul it into the woods."

Stoneberg had no problem being the youngest member of her work crew. Although she was intimidated by the older people at first, she quickly became confident.

"As it worked out, when they had a plant question, they'd come to me. We were all wildlife biologists, but I happened to have the most plant knowledge."

It was her animal knowledge though that may have saved her life. During her second summer, when she was a paid employee, Stoneberg had a run-in with a black bear. "I was walking in the woods, alone. I sang as a safety precaution, but because I was in brush and near a stream, neither the bear nor myself heard the other until we were very close. Something inside me said that something wasn't right. (Stoneberg went through bear safety course the summer before.) All of a sudden, the bear sprang out of the brush and up a tree. I was close enough to see hair on its nose. It

had huge ears, and I remember thinking, 'Oh my God, its Mickey Mouse!'"

Stoneberg slowly managed to back away from the bear. The crisis passed.

Fortunately, not all of her encounters with Alaskan wildlife were so dangerous.

"I have a lot of good memories. Part of my job was tracking birds early in the morning. The sun rose at 3 a.m., which meant we had to be ready to go by 2:30. It was neat to be out in this sort of half darkness. It's a thing most people never see."

Stoneberg channeled her FFA experience and her interests in biology, botany, and range science into an adventure she will never forget. As for the future, Sierra, now a sophomore at Montana State University in Bozeman, plans to earn a masters and Ph.D.

"I hope to continue in research, combining wildlife biology and range science." ...

The Wildlife Management Proficiency Award is sponsored by Buck Knives and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

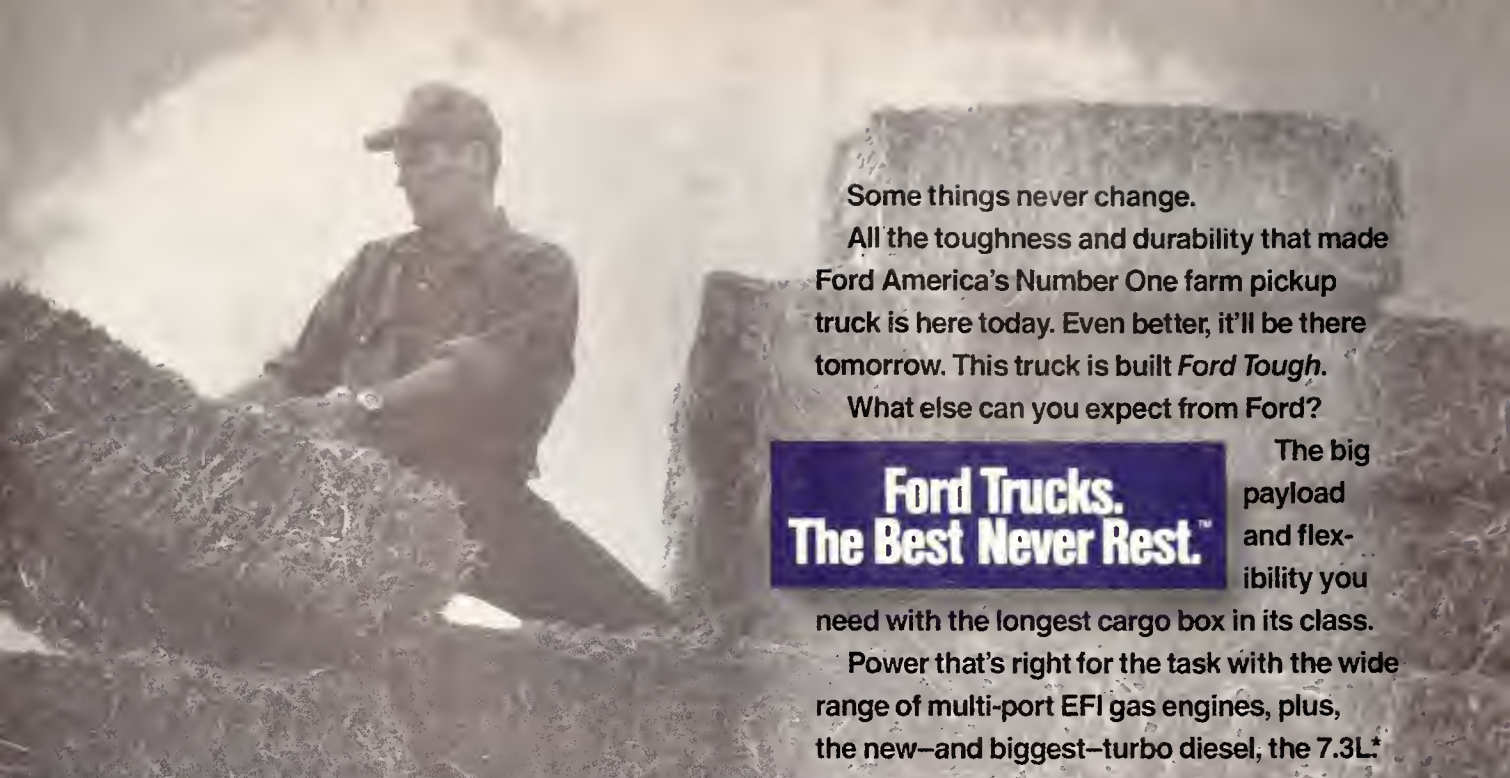


Looking for eagle nests and scouting for moose habitat brought Stoneberg close to nature and involved plenty of physical labor.



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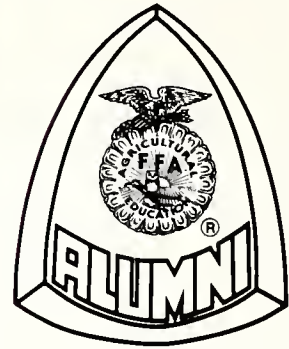
THE BEST-SELLING AMERICAN TRUCKS
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Photo by Ron Graber



Teaching elementary students about agriculture is one of Carthage, Missouri, Alumni member Sarah Wallace's favorite activities.

Former members give back to FFA



Beyond the Blue & Gold Horizon

By Jennifer West
Hesperia, California, FFA member

Amidst the rigors of life after high school, former FFA members often find it hard to keep in touch with their chapter. "Some FFA members think that when their active membership expires, they don't have any effect on their chapters," says Wendy Lewis, an agribusiness technology major at Crowder Junior College in Neosho, Missouri. As part of the Carthage FFA chapter in her hometown, she competed in various contests and was chairman of the Building Our American Communities committee.

She says her chapter's success would not be possible without the support of the

Carthage FFA Alumni Association. "There's a close relationship between the chapter and the alumni. We go to so many contests and activities that without the Alumni's help in paying expenses, we wouldn't be able to go. In fact, we probably wouldn't have much of a chapter without their support."



Alumni member Sarah Wallace agrees. "Our Alumni association is the backbone of the FFA chapter. Our chapter has over 150 students. Alumni helps out when the teachers can't do everything." In 1992, Carthage hosted the national invitational horse judging contest.

An American Degree recipient studying agricultural education at Southwest Missouri State University, Wallace's involvement with the Carthage Alumni stems from a family interest in FFA. Her older brother, a former member, is now an advisor, and her mother is a lifetime Alumni member and past president of the local association. "I was active in FFA, and when I graduated from high school three years ago, I didn't want to give that up. I think it's important to stay involved, to give something back to the chapter."

Wallace's work with the Alumni helped her decide on a career. "My mom and I worked together on a Food For America presentation. We talked about products produced only in Missouri, and about where the food they eat comes from. Teach

ing kids is something I enjoy, and that helped me want to be an ag teacher."

"It's important for students to continue their experiences in agriculture and to expand," says Ken Olcott, one of the founders of an agricultural group for college students known as the National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization (PAS). Fifty colleges in 13 states offer PAS. Nearly 50 percent of the 1,200 PAS members were in FFA, including the PAS national officers.

"We're interested largely in leadership aspects and career planning, and we tie it in to the agriculture industry," says Olcott.

Another organization that helps former FFA members develop their leadership potential is the National Young Farmer Educational Association. Anyone studying agriculture in adult high school classes or night school can join.

"For me, the Young Farmers was a natural next step...a good way to continue my education," says Ray Schlabs, past national president. A former FFA member from Hereford, Texas, he'll soon go on a tour to Europe with the Young Farmers.

"Through the program, I got to see



farming practices across the nation," Schlabs says. "I learned about agriculture's diversity, that ag is a high-tech business. It definitely had a positive influence, especially when it came to learning to deal with other people." ...

"I think it's important to stay involved, to give something back to the chapter."

—Sarah Wallace

Where The Action Is... After High School

FFA Alumni

- The purpose of the FFA Alumni is to support and promote FFA on local, state and national levels.
- National annual dues are \$7.00. You can get a lifetime membership for \$100 (this fee will go up to \$150 on November 1, 1993).
- Total 1992 membership was 35,396.
- There are about 1,200 affiliates in 42 states.
- Anyone who wants to support FFA can be a member.

For more information contact:

Robert W. Cox (703) 360-3600, ext. 292
P.O. Box 15058
Alexandria, Va 22309-0058



The FFA Alumni sponsor many FFA activities. One way they gain money is through their auction of items such as this 4-wheel drive Chevy pickup truck which sold for \$18,000. This money is used for FFA scholarships.

National Young Farmer Educational Association (NYF)

- The purpose of the young farmer's group is to help members learn about the latest technologies and skills in agriculture as well as to develop leadership skills. One of their goals, according to Executive Director Wayne Sprick, is "to provide a mechanism for production agriculture to take part in the community. We help young farmers seek information to develop their position on an issue, whether about the environment or agricultural spending, and to give them training to help them get their point across."
- Anyone interested can join. You don't have to be actively farming to participate.
- A recent survey found more than 62 percent of members are former agricultural education students.
- You must not be more than 40 years old to hold a national office or to participate in the Spokesperson For Agriculture Program.
- National yearly dues are \$5. A lifetime membership is \$100.
- Every other year selected members of the group tour agricultural sites in Europe.
- There are 16,000 members in 25 states.

For more information contact:

Wayne Sprick
(703) 360-3600 ext. 296
5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway
Alexandria, Va 22309-0160

Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization (PAS)

- The mission of PAS is to provide opportunities for members to develop the skills and abilities needed to enter and advance in careers in agriculture.
- The PAS motto is Uniting Education and Industry in Agriculture.
- Several notable activities are the Employment Interview Contest and the national Ag Mechanics Technician Award.
- Chapters are located in one and two-year colleges (those that do not offer a baccalaureate degree).
- Active membership is open to students enrolled in agriculture, agribusiness, horticulture and natural resources programs at a postsecondary institution.
- There are 50 chapters in 13 states.
- Annual fees are \$15 per active member plus \$50 per postsecondary institution.
- Anyone who wants to support PAS can be an associate member.

For More Info Contact:

Kimberly Perry
PAS Executive Director
P.O. Box 15440
Alexandria, VA 22309
Phone: (703) 780-4922
Fax: (703) 780-4378

Future Frontiers Of Pesticides

A look into the evolution of insect and weed control

By Michael J. Major

Insects and plants that live where humans don't want them are considered pests. Because these bugs and weeds harm crops that people need for food and fiber, scientists began developing synthetic chemicals (pesticides) to kill them. But nature evolved chemicals to kill pests long before man did. Some plants contain chemicals that are toxic to insects. When the insect eats the plant leaf it dies. "It is like a naturally occurring insecticide," says Dr. Richard Wilson, Sandoz Agro, Inc. Some plants have built-in, naturally occurring herbicides, or chemicals that prevent other plants from growing near them, he adds.

Synthetic or naturally occurring chemical pesticides aren't the only way to kill pests. Parasites and disease-causing organisms can also kill pests in nature.

The Natural Way

According to James Vaughn, research leader for USDA in Beltsville, Maryland, several biological companies are now producing the natural enemies of insects. These come in two forms, external predators and internal parasites.

Using lady beetles for aphid control is an example of external predators. Female parasites lay eggs in the body of the aphid pest. The developing parasites then feed on the body fluids of the aphid and kill it.

Biological microbes or bacteria found in nature cause internal damage. For example, farmers spray *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) on their cotton crop. The larva stage of bollworms eat the sprayed leaves. Then the Bt bacteria creates an ulcer, paralyzing the bollworm's gut and eventually killing the insect. Other biological microbes form certain types of caterpillars, mosquitoes, black flies, and

the Colorado potato beetle.

Bt's work especially well because they attack specific harmful pests without harming other insects, wildlife or humans.

Now, with biotechnology, scientists have transferred the Bt gene responsible for creating the ulcer in insects into cotton plants. Since these new plants produce the same insect toxin the bacteria did, they don't have to be sprayed with Bt to kill pests. Wilson says insect-resistant cotton is in the late stages of research and that someday researchers may bioengineer more plants with built-in pest repellants.

Another way to get rid of pesky critters is to give them a lethal case of the flu. A virus is now on the market that works against the Gypsy moth.

The wave of the future includes sneaky plans to mess up insects' sex lives. Saturating fields with pheromones disrupts mating habits of the oriental fruit moth and tomato pin worm.

Joan Fisher, laboratory manager at Trece, Inc., in Salinas, California, reports her company uses sex hormones to lure the males of a species into a trap. Using this method, farmers can tell how many insects are infesting their fields. The traps help them decide when and how much insecticide to apply.

Low Doses

Many of the first insecticides and herbicides would kill just about anything if you applied enough. One of the earliest herbicides for example, was kerosene or oil. Farmers poured it on the offending weed, which eventually died.



Before a new pesticide is brought to market, it is run through more than 120 safety and environmental tests. Here, scientists analyze a soil sample for product residues.

More chemicals now target specific reactions that occur only in the plants or insects they want to kill. So farmers can apply small doses (ounces in some cases as opposed to several pounds per acre in the past) and get the same or better control.

Smaller amounts of chemicals applied in the field means less chance for chemicals to contaminate ground and surface water.

Wilson believes farmers will continue to use synthetically produced chemicals as well as naturally occurring, biological controls to control pests. "Farmers are increasingly concerned about the environment," agrees Susan Kelly, Sandoz Agro, Inc. "They are looking for ways to cut down on the use of pesticides." •••

Up With Agriculture
Writing Contest

WINNERS

Your high school guidance counselor asks you why you want to enroll in agriculture. What is your response? These four students were faced with that question and answered eloquently in 100 words or less. National winner, Jennifer West, Hesperia, California, receives \$1,000. Seth Derner, Bartlett, Nebraska, placed second winning \$500, Lorelee Woods, Grady, New Mexico, was awarded third with \$300 and fourth place national winner Kelly Snyder, Robesonia, Pennsylvania, won \$200.



1st Place
 Jennifer West, 18
 Hesperia FFA Chapter
 Hesperia, California
 Advisor, Jon Evans

Agriculture affects our daily lives in ways we often take for granted. From the sheets on our beds to the food on our tables, we owe our lifestyle to the American Farmer. As modern agriculture shifts its focus from the fields to the laboratories, new and better methods are being discovered to maintain America's status as the world's breadbasket. Agriculture is good for the economy and good for us. By enrolling in agriculture education classes, an individual can perhaps gain a greater understanding of this industry and its workings, as well as preserve the future of America's largest employer.



2nd Place
 Seth Derner, 18
 Wheeler Central FFA
 Bartlett, Nebraska
 Advisor, Robert Swett

Why wouldn't I want to enroll in the field of agriculture today? The opportunities and possibilities facing agriculture today are more numerous than the ears of corn in a field. Agriculture is leading the pack in biochemical, mechanical, nutritional, and environmental research. The research being done in laboratories now is reshaping agriculture forever. I want to get involved in a field that holds the promise of promoting new and positive change for the future. I am also, however, reassured of agriculture's strong, traditional past. These are the reasons why I want to enroll in the field of agriculture today.



3rd Place
 Lorelee Woods, 17
 Grady FFA
 Grady, New Mexico
 Advisor, Tommy Thompson

Someday, I hope to live in a world where every man, woman and child have the necessities of life; clean air to breathe and water to drink and a healthy environment in which to live. The agricultural industry faces many challenges: an increase in population, a smaller production area and pollution. Bright, positive, well-educated people are needed to push technology and science forward to meet those challenges and provide every human being with a high quality, economical food supply and a safer, healthier environment.



4th Place
 Kelly Snyder, 16
 Conrad Weiser FFA Chapter
 Robesonia, Pennsylvania
 Advisor, Stephen Miller

The reason I have chosen to enroll in agriculture is very clear to me. I plan to major in elementary education, and I intend to make agriculture a large part of my curriculum. Agriculture is everywhere. It is vital to our existence. I want to make the excitement of agriculture come alive for young people. It is important for them to realize what agriculture is and everything it involves. I am using my high school classes to learn all I can about agriculture in order to develop young minds and increase agricultural awareness so agriculture's future is a bright one.

This contest is a special project of the FFA Foundation sponsored by ICI Seeds.

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

Soar With Your Strengths

Life is exciting. If you understand your strengths, you can accomplish your goals

By Lawinna McGary

Pain was a regular part of Emory Austin's high school life. Physical pain wasn't her problem—she never had any major surgeries, diseases or accidents. Instead, her affliction was the fear of not fitting in. "I was taller than all of the other girls and miserable about my height. I tried to slink around and hide in the shadows. I was inclined to be shy anyway and because I felt I couldn't excel at being popular, I became a bookworm. Mother had to make all of my clothes, and she had no concept of what young people were looking for. And that wasn't all. My name was Emory. I wanted names like all the cute girls had." Apparently, Emory didn't sound like a cute girl's name to the government either. She got a draft notice when she was a senior in high school. "It just about killed me," she says. "Everything people judged me for were the things I didn't like about myself."

Now a successful motivational speaker, who loves her name—because it's unique, people remember her—Austin says she knows she wasn't alone in her high school misery. "Nobody feels like they really fit when they're young." The irony about that, she says, is that not always blending in is the best thing that can happen to you. "Your strengths come from your differences."

Look at what you do and don't like about yourself, she says. Figure out how you can turn your natural characteristics into strengths. Take Austin's passion for books as an example. At first she turned to books as an escape from the world. Now she uses the words she learned from reading to excel in her work as a professional speaker.

Her height, once her horror, now turns out to be a positive point. It's hard to lose her in a crowd. Many people recall who she is, just because she's taller than average.

Austin didn't just wake up one morning and magically love all of the things about herself that she used to hate. The turnaround took years of honest evaluations of who she was and what she wanted.



Emory Austin

Take Charge

"A horrible story to me is Sleeping Beauty. The woman laid around for 100 years, waiting for someone else to come along and do something. Suppose no one had shown up?"

In real life, says Austin, you're responsible for rescuing yourself. To develop survival skills, always evaluate yourself and what you're allowing yourself to become. After you know where your strengths are, set goals in those areas. If you do this, "You can have a tremendous impact and have a lot of fun doing it," Austin says. "Life is really about figuring out why you were born and what you're planning to do about it."

Be curious about everything around you. "Don't lull yourself day by day into thinking, 'What do I need to do to get by.'" Instead, she recommends, "Ask not what life is going to hand you, ask what you can hand it back."

"Casino floors are packed with people with glazed eyeballs who want something for nothing. Although there's nothing wrong with dreaming," she says, you've got to work for your success. ...

Three Ways To Soar With Your Strengths

- **Find Your Passion.**

Try everything that interests you...as long as it's within the law. Keep your options open. It's hard to stay enthused about life if you don't have anything you really enjoy doing.

- **Be A Word Wizard**

Once you know your strengths and know what you want to accomplish, Austin says you need to be able to clearly state your points and communicate your goals to other people. Words can be effective tools in helping you accomplish your goals.

- **Go For The Dramatic**

Whenever you have a choice between doing something an ordinary way, or putting some excitement and drama into it, Austin says, go for the dramatic. People will remember you for being original and they will be impressed.

The Art of FFA

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- A limited number of the national winning T-shirts will be sold at this year's national FFA convention

Design Categories:

- A. FFA leadership and the environment
- B. FFA leadership and community involvement
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How To Enter:

- Draw your design (in the colors you want) on the T-shirt outlined on this page. You may want to make copies of this page to practice.
- Type your name, age, home phone number, and address; high school name, phone number, and address; chapter name, advisor name, color of T-shirt you want your design to go on and design category you're entering on a separate sheet of paper.
- Send your entry to:
Design Your Own T-Shirt Contest
National FFA Organization
5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway
Alexandria, VA 22309

Entries must be postmarked by June 10.

Designing Tips:

- Ask yourself, is this a T-shirt you would want to buy if you saw it in a store?
- Does the design appeal to both males and females?
- Make sure the design upholds the positive image of FFA and is in good taste.
- FFA must be identified somewhere on the T-shirt.
- Do not use the FFA—The Spirit of Leadership logo.

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FFA

MAILBAG

Animal Mishaps

While reading your magazine, we noticed the Viceroy butterfly (December-January 1992, page 12). We then noticed that it was referred to as a Monarch butterfly. We realize these butterflies are commonly mistaken because of their striking resemblances.

*Becky Gillman, Carl Shufeldt
and Kent Sprague
FFA Entomology Team, Lenapah,
Oklahoma*

Advisor Gives Hope

Menifee County, Kentucky is a poor rural area where jobs and opportunities are extremely limited. After years of hard times and slow growth, people tend to develop a sense of hopelessness.

However, there is a rising star for the kids in the Menifee County FFA. His name is Orbin Rudd, the chapter advisor. He has given these kids back their pride. They believe in themselves and the future. Under his leadership, they are working hard and receiving recognition for their efforts. He gives them more than just his time, he gives them self respect and the knowledge that nothing is impossible through hard work and determination. The young adults coming out of the FFA are strong leaders and excellent role models for the other kids in the county. Thank you for caring, Mr. Rudd.

*Jon Looless
Menifee County, Kentucky*

Agricultural Education Convert

Thanks for pointing out the diversity of an agricultural education degree in the latest issue of *FFA New Horizons* (December-January 1992, page 14). The variety of this degree, combined with my FFA experience, opened a world of doors when I hit the job market this spring. Just because you study education doesn't mean you have to teach. I ended up in farm broadcasting.

*Carey Martin
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

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



Televisions, Tractors and Global Trade

National officers experience Japan

By Jeri D. Mattics



The officer team spent an afternoon at Tokyo Engei Horticultural High School, which sits on a beautifully landscaped acreage, visiting with FFJ members. From left to right, National FFJ Vice President Takashi Uno, Kevin, Rick, John, Todd, Dennis and Travis.



Along with business, governmental and school visits were several cultural activities. Pictured here in front of an incense burner at the Asakusa Kannon Temple in Tokyo, are Todd, Dennis, Rick and Kevin.

Japan...the land of the rising sun, exotic foods, electronics and automobiles.

Believe it or not, the United States has a lot in common with this country that eats more raw fish and rice than meat and potatoes. For one, Japan buys about 40 percent of its food and fiber from the United States. That was \$10 billion of worth agricultural products in 1991. In return, we purchase cars, electronics and a host of other goods.

The national FFA officers have travelled to Japan for the past 14 years, courtesy of Mitsui & Co., Inc. While overseas, the officer team meets with business and education officials and members of the Future Farmers of Japan.

Here are some highlights of their trip.



In a country where the senses are overwhelmed with new sights, sounds and tastes, the golden arches were a welcome sight. From left to right, Dennis Degner, Todd Hingson, Kevin White, John Kleiboecker, Rick Perkins and Travis Park.



AG CAREERS: join a winning team

If you're interested in agriculture, you're in demand!

By Michael Wilson



study reveals that by the year 2000, food sciences will be one of the fastest growing career areas in the nation. But USDA also predicts a 4,000 annual shortage of college graduates for those ag-related jobs throughout the 1990s.

"In the last five years, we've been running an 11 to 12 percent deficit as far as college graduates for jobs available in agriculture," says Jay Runner, a district field advisor for Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education, a group of individuals promoting ag education in Illinois.

"There are only a handful of qualified candidates out there to fill the jobs that are open," says Perry Schneider, President of Agra-Placements, Ltd. With four offices in four states employing 16 full-time consultants, Agra-Placements is one of the largest agricultural search firms in the nation.

Fortunately for you, FFA members are already a step ahead of the competition. How's that? It's your interest in agriculture.

No matter what job you pursue

after high school or college, you have to have certain kinds of skills. That's where FFA comes in.

"You have to be able to communicate, you have to sell yourself," Runner says. "There's no better way to do that than through FFA, with public speaking contests, chapter offices, and other programs. Ag classes help develop some of those human skills you're going to use in the work force no matter what job you take. It's a part of the ag education program that can be reinforced through FFA activities."

FFA can also fill in some gaps if you don't have a strong agricultural background, says Schneider.

"Belonging to an FFA chapter would be extremely important," he says. "Not everyone in this country can grow up on a farm anymore, so FFA becomes your ag background. You could have all the agricultural background in the world but if you're not able to present that to somebody develop your communications skills and work ethic—you won't get any job."

Sounds great so far. So what could be wrong, you ask? Well, seems there's a perception problem—no, there's a ton of perception problems. Let's clear them up, one at a time:

- You can get involved in an agricultural job even if you don't come from a farm.

"Over sixty percent of students in the

Someday you're going to compete in a race to land the job that will start your career and enable you to make a difference in the world. But this race is going to be a little easier if you're interested in agriculture.

The industry is battling with demand for qualified people in more than 250 career areas. According to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, more than 48,000 jobs open up each year in agriculture. A Purdue university/USDA

College of Agriculture at the University of Illinois come from Chicago and surrounding suburbs," notes Runner. "Over a third of the jobs in Chicago are ag related. Plus 20 percent of our nation's work force is made up of ag related jobs, but only two percent of those are farmers."

•A farm background does not limit you to a future only in farming.

"Students can apply farming or agricultural skills in many other jobs," says Runner.

One student he talked to came from a farm but wanted to be a chemist. "I suggested he apply that interest in chemistry and his experience on the farm to a career in biotech research related to agriculture, possibly as a researcher for an ag chemical company," he says.

•Agriculture is a very diverse field. Take the McDonald's hamburger test for example. That hamburger came from a beef animal likely raised on a farm. How did it get to the restaurant? The farmer sold it, probably to a cattle buyer who worked for a meat processing firm. Next,

consider all the jobs in that processing plant: butchers, inspectors, inventory specialists, for example. Don't forget all the truckers needed to move the product from one level to the next.

After processing, a wholesaler may be needed to sell the beef product to a franchiser. At the franchise, there may be a whole host of jobs in advertising, accounting, public relations, retail sales, or marketing. Don't forget packaging. Over 15 jobs are related to that hamburger. The same test can be applied to dozens of commodities or services related to farming.



These aren't dead end jobs. Most entry level college degree jobs range from \$16,000 to \$20,000.

•Agriculture has opportunities, but you still gotta pay your dues.

Ripe opportunity doesn't mean you'll start at \$30,000 a year in management. Not by a long shot. But that's true in any career field.

"Some of our students don't want to start at a lower rung of the ladder," says Runner. "But you may have to take a lesser job first to get to that ultimate point."

•Any experience is a bonus.

You may already know what career field you are interested in. If that's the case, go out and get as much work experience as possible—even if it means working for nothing. Schneider says.

He recently found a job for a new college graduate who had worked for nothing, doing plot work for a professor in college. "There was work but no job, so he told them he would work for nothing," relates Schneider.

This student recently started a job at a farm equipment company that pays a base salary of \$23,500, plus commissions and a car. "He beat out people with experience because he was able to communicate his enthusiasm, desire to get the job done, and convince the employer he would do the job that was necessary," says Schneider. •••

Five good reasons why you should look for a career in agriculture

This is my life story:
Grew up on a farm.
Got involved in FFA.
Didn't really know what to do for a living.
Got an internship writing for a farm magazine. Liked it.
Graduated from college.
Landed a job in agricultural journalism, one of the hundreds of jobs related to agriculture.

I'm telling you this because it may someday sound very familiar to you. In fact, it may be your own story to tell others. So let me give you a few good reasons why I believe agriculture is a great place to make a living:

1. *The nicest people work in agriculture.* This may sound naive. Yup, there are jerks in any profession. But all in all, I come in contact with some fine people throughout the course of my day, both on the farm and off. I respect and cherish the professional and personal relationships I've built with these folks. Ninety nine percent of the people in this business have their hearts and brains in the right place.

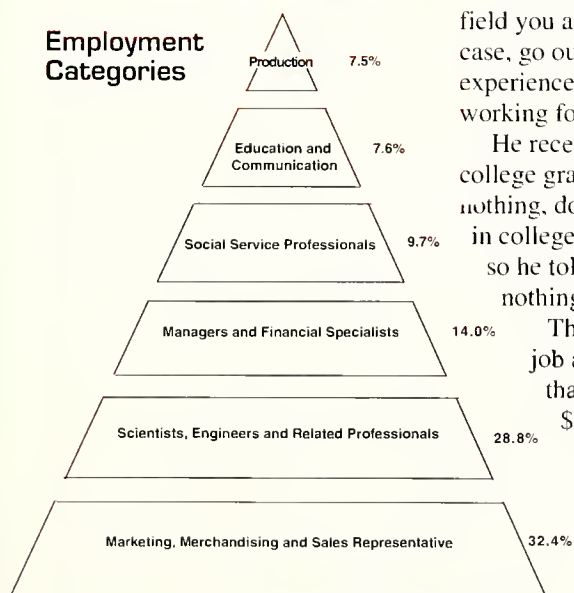
2. *The purpose of agriculture is positive.* You could work just to make money and get by every day, or you could work in an industry whose goal is to end world hunger. Believe me, it makes a difference.

3. *Most ag jobs offer diversity and challenges.* Friends in ag sales tell me they get to do a little of everything. The industry itself is dynamic, so you're challenged to change with the times.

4. *The money's not bad.* Most entry level college degree jobs range from \$16,000 to \$20,000—more if you're in a specialized field such as ag engineering. Although it's not as much as you would make starting out on Wall Street, it's pretty respectable compared to most professions.

5. *It's an industry too big to ignore.* One out of five jobs in the United States is related to agriculture. U.S. industries that serve agriculture by producing, processing, marketing, and preparing food and fiber products for consumers account for about \$700 billion in economic activity each year, which is about 16.5 percent of Gross National Product. So when people tell you that agriculture is "just farming," set them straight.

Career Opportunities in Agriculture



Source: Higher Education Programs, Cooperative State Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

THE WATER

WATCH PATROL

FFA members, biology students and elementary kids are joining forces to monitor water quality



FFA member Rachelle Campbell, far right, leads kids across the water before they start to work. "I love Water Watch!" says elementary student Adam Petrey. "It hits the hearts of children. It inspires us to learn."

This is chaos. Twenty-four elementary students in Garrard County Kentucky are tromping around in knee-high creek water. A kid who yells, "Hey, I found a snake!" attracts a crowd and becomes an instant hero, until somebody else snags a crawfish.

Exploring the creek guarantees mud-splashed, water-soaked clothes, but the students don't seem to mind. They're discovering a world of underwater life they never knew existed.

It's all part of an afternoon's work for elementary kids, FFA members and biology students who test water quality in secondary streams. In a program called WaterWatch, they monitor waterways. The Kentucky Division of Water doesn't have time or resources to track

"It provides students the opportu-

nity to bridge the gap between science and agriculture," says FFA advisor Chuck Stallard. "Water Watch also gets students working together to solve problems."



FFA member Amy Grant, middle, and two elementary students seine the waterway to find underwater critters. For every two hours spent collecting data in the field, students spend another hour analyzing results in the classroom.

Junior FFA member Rachelle Campbell says pairing with the seven and eight year olds makes a perfect team. "Since they look up to us, if they see us taking care of the environment, they'll take care of it too."

High schoolers and elementary kids check water for nitrates, chlorides, dissolved oxygen, iron and pH levels. They sweep stream bottoms with seines and nets to determine plant and animal life, and they measure water volume, depth, temperature and speed.

Keeping an eye on the younger students who help collect data was a job senior FFA member Lori Campbell dreaded at first. "I thought they would be bratty, but they really paid attention and tried to learn things," she says. "I learned second graders can be fun to be around."

•••

EDUCATING STUDENTS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE

According to a poll by Sandoz Agro, an agricultural chemical company, 36 percent of farmers surveyed say they have participated in efforts to educate the public about farm-related environmental issues. Twenty nine percent of those surveyed say farmers have the primary responsibility for educating the public.

The Garrard County Kentucky FFA chapter is using Water Watch to not only help the Kentucky Division of Water, but to also teach elementary students to care for the environment, and to let them know farmers care too.

"On the national and global level the environment is a major issue, and agriculture does play a big role in that. It's important we educate the general public that agriculture wants to reach out and educate people...that we're not out here to destroy the land and use it all up," says advisor Chuck Stallard.

FFA member John Grimes says the education process is working. "Water Watch teaches kids to be aware of pollution. Maybe when they grow up they will follow in our steps."

He also says Water Watch is a wonderful public relations tool. "A lot of kids think farmers don't care (about the environment), but farmers are really conscious about it because this is their life." Grimes says when students learn farmers are working hard to preserve the environment, they'll pass the positive word on to their parents.



These two crawfish are just two of the animals that were caught and then released during the Water Watch student's research. The FFA, biology and elementary students monitor three streams in Garrard County Kentucky each month.

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AUSTREES are being successfully used for fund raising by many FFA chapters. The trees are a natural for fund raisers as FFA chapter members do something good for the community as well as the chapter coffers!! Everyone gets educated about trees and the need for more of them. Take Shane Sutton for example, as the FFA advisor for Casper, Wyoming. Mr Sutton used Austrees as a fund raiser in 1991 and made a profit of \$4,500, again in 1992 making \$7000 and ready to go again in 1993 for more profit for his chapters.

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How To Place First In

By Linda May

Oh sure. I know what you're thinking. Impossible. How can anyone win first place in everything? I'll tell you. Let's start with my freshman year and dairy judging.

There I was...dressed in my brother's old FFA jacket and a pair of jeans. It was my advisor's idea. What did I know about cows? I'd never seen one in real life before. And I hated milk.

When the cow lifted it's tail, I thought great, I'll get a closer look. Little did I know a lifted tail meant back off, a shower is coming. Wet, cold and humiliated, I slinked home.

My advisor didn't let my shame stop me. His next project was to make a public speaker out of me.

I knew to be a winner, you had to have a speech that could captivate the hearts of judges. Crying got their attention alright. After a chance to calm down, I tried again. My speech took 15 minutes, 7 minutes of contest and 8 minutes of ahs...ums...and assorted shaking.

Do I still believe you can be a winner of every FFA contest? Yes. Read on.

New year. New excitement. I was chairman at the district parliamentary procedure contest. The motion was simple. Send students on a work experience abroad program—known as WEA. But two hours earlier I had made more than 400 posters for WKAU, a local radio station, promoting a haunted house fund-raiser.

I couldn't get the whole motion out of my mouth without three team members standing at a point of order correcting the letters WKAU to WEA. The result? After losing the contest I knew the only way to avoid a lynching from my team was to travel on WEA overseas (or was that WKAU?)...somewhere far, far away.



Every FFA Contest



Everything I tried just wasn't good enough. Take chapter officer elections for example. When I was a sophomore, I dreamed of being elected chapter reporter because I loved to write. I became historian instead, and kept record of other people's writing. They called me 'old Sticky' because of the amount of Elmer's glue I went through in a year. As a junior I longed to be vice president. After a year of keeping up with the chapter's history, I wanted to get out and make some of my own. In my chapter's infinite wisdom, I was voted treasurer. What can I say? The sticky fingers came in handy when I became treasurer. Just kidding. Senior year...my last chance. Why not think big? President. I got close...I sat next to her when I kept the minutes as chapter secretary.

I know what you're thinking now. This person who's never won a contest, never got elected to an office she really wanted, is promising you that you'll win every FFA contest you ever enter.

Here's a hint of success with the crops judging team. Being from the city, the closest I'd ever got to crops judging was my seven grain cereal in the morning and flipping through the Burkee seeds catalog each spring.

This was it. I was focused. Fifty seed jar samples. Check. Old crops tests. Check. Notes. Got 'em. Ready for hyper-study mode. Two hours each day in cropland. Crops were me.

Jackpot. I won seventh high individual in the state.

Still...no trophy or plaque with my name on it. How can I promise you great

winnings when I can't even rack them in? Don't stop now. Big things are about to happen.

Senior year. Time for glory. My advisor brainstormed potential success areas. Plants, he said. Stick with the plants.

Dare I even hope for success? Or would my dreams of winning first place in the floriculture judging contest wither before me?

The pressure was too much. I didn't even stick around for the results after the state contest. A couple of hours later my advisor called me at home. I won first place. Four years of waiting and victory was finally mine.

What? You read through all of this drool just to see that I only won one medal? I know I promised to tell you how to win every time. Okay. This is it, the secret you've been waiting for.

The answer is you. No, this is not a cheap ending. Awards and trophies don't make first place. You've heard the cliché, winning isn't everything, it's the only thing, and that's what I used to think.

Now I know I didn't fail. I really placed first every time. I triumphed at dairy judging from learning to deal with the stress of competition. From public speaking and parliamentary procedure I gained confidence that I could speak my opinions and lead discussion. The offices I held taught me pride in my work and respect for a job well done. Floriculture and crops contests taught me if you have interest in an area, you're more likely to excel. Somewhere in those four years I came to believe in myself...and that's what winning really is.

Secrets To Winning

Take on a winning attitude and try this advice. You'll reap the awards of self confidence.

If You Want It, Be It. Imagine what you want to be. If you can visualize yourself speaking perfectly, hitting the free throw or meeting someone new with ease, you're more likely to do it right in real life.

Have Fun. Think beyond the prizes. Involvement in contests could lead to friendships, travel and adventure.

"If At First You Don't Succeed..." Everyone gets nervous in competition. Just plunge in. Be willing to fail, correct your errors, fail again and so on...until you master the skill.

Tune Into Your Natural Talents. Some things you naturally do better than others. Use this to your advantage. If you like to talk and share ideas...try public speaking. Is reading and research more your style? You might enjoy the Agriscience Student Recognition Program.

Be The Fool. Are you afraid you'll look ridiculous if you try something new? Do you quit or never try at all because you're embarrassed? It takes time to learn skills. First attempts may look awkward. Second tries may not be any better. If you stick with it though, and learn to laugh at yourself, eventually you will triumph. That's when the risk of looking silly will pay off.

Believe In Others. Look to your friends, FFA advisor or family for support and encouragement.

Don't Sabotage Yourself. You know what lengths you'll go to avoid something new. Don't talk yourself out of winning.

My speech took 15 minutes, 7 minutes of contest and 8 minutes of ahs...ums...and assorted shaking.

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DANGER

Former FFA member stays in control during turbulent times in Desert Storm

By Kellie Tomita



Safely on the ground in front of their KC-135E in Jiddah, Saudia Arabia, are: left to right, former FFA member Captain Jay Selanders, pilot; Captain Greg Mermis, navigator; Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Sweeney, aircraft commander and Senior Master Sergeant Steven Stuckey, boom operator.

Somewhere over the Arabian desert, violent turbulence from another plane miles ahead tossed the Air National Guard's air-refueling plane around with tornado-like force. Pilot and former FFA member Jay Selanders didn't yet know it, but two of the plane's four engines had been ripped off. The nearly 200,000 pounds of jet fuel aboard threatened to drag the plane down into a fiery crash.

After some of the turbulence let up, Selanders says, the four-man crew did a systems check to see what still worked and if they could land. They discovered the two left engines had encountered so much force they separated from the aircraft—just as they are designed to do. If the engines had remained attached they might have bent the wing, causing the plane to go down.

Also during the systems check, the crew found their altitude was dropping drastically—a rate of 800 feet per minute. Because the weight of the fuel was too much for two engines to carry, they had to dump much of it. The plane dipped dangerously to 10,000 feet before they regained altitude.

The crew continued wrestling with manual controls to physically compensate for the uneven engine thrust. The struggle to maintain balance was so physically draining, the two pilots switched control every three minutes.

The other pilot, Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Sweeney, says his crew did all of the right things during their one hour and 15 minute journey back to Jiddah, Saudia Arabia. If it happened again, "we would react exactly the same."

What kind of training prepares a crew for the kind of catastrophe this one barely avoided? Before Desert Storm, the crew drilled together for two and a half years at Forbes Field in Topeka, Kansas, as part of the

190th Air Refueling Group. They were sent to Saudi Arabia in December 1990, where they refueled aircraft in the air.

According to Selanders and Sweeney, teamwork, trust among the crew members, and basic aviation and airmanship skills contributed to their success. Though it was a team effort, Sweeney gives a lot of credit for their safe return to Selanders. Sweeney says Selanders reacted with the utmost cool and knew exactly what he needed to do. "He was a magnificent team player."

Selanders' ability to react well under pressure began with his experiences in FFA.

Selanders says his ability to react well under pressure began with his experiences in FFA. He joined the Garnett FFA Chapter in Garnett, Kansas, because his friends were members and because he could learn welding and shop skills. One of the scariest things he remembers as a new FFA member was standing in front of an audience to speak extemporaneously. He believes being trained by FFA to react instantly with an intelligent, appropriate response helps him in many aspects of his life.

While still in high school, his concentration on FFA leadership helped him excel in public speaking. In 1976 he became the state's FFA president. Today, the confidence he gained in FFA helps him in his military career and as an attorney.

Relating his FFA experience to Desert Storm, Selanders says he has learned that preparation for any event is the best tool for preventing failure. Whether it's practicing law or flying airplanes, anticipating the unexpected and being fully knowledgeable increases the odds for success tremendously.

Selanders joined the Air National Guard in 1984 out of a passion for flying and a sense of duty and pride. He thinks most FFA members relate to those feelings because they take pride and honor in their association with agriculture. "You have a purpose, you have a direction, you have a lot of meaning other than a paycheck." •••

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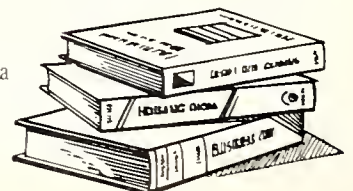
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The Comeback Kid

After recovering from a serious farm accident, John Thompson has big plans for his life

By Lynn Hamilton

If you work around farm machinery, listen up. A voice of experience has something to say to you.

"Just don't take farming for granted. It's dangerous, and you've got to be careful around it," says John Thompson, the Hurdsfield, North Dakota, teenager whose arms were ripped off by a power take-off (PTO) shaft in January of 1992.

Thompson was lucky. Doctors were able to reattach his arms, and have been impressed with his progress. He says early education about farm safety though, could keep more accidents like his from happening.

"In the first grade, people teach kids about drugs, but you don't hear about farm safety until high school," he says. "We've got to educate people earlier. By the time the time is right, it's way too late for them."

Though his ordeal brought national attention to the issue of farm safety for a short time, he's not sure his story has made a lasting impact on people. "A guy from my area died last week from a PTO accident," he says. "People were really cautious around here for a couple of months after my accident, but as soon as they're out in the field, their minds are on getting the job done."

To keep people constantly aware of the dangers, he says, "I don't think anything can be done unless you put my picture on every PTO shaft in the country."

Thompson's doctor, Dr. Allen Van Beek, got John involved in a farm safety video project, which was a joint venture with Minnesota Farm Bureau. On the video, he talks about the dangers of farm



Photo by Jean Walton, North Dakota REC/RTC Magazine

equipment, and his experience. "I wanted to show more real things—like pictures of my arms lying on a table without me attached to them—but they wouldn't let me," he says. He thought the shock value of the real-life horror might make people think more about what they're doing on the farm.

John has also visited farm accident victims. "They can look at me as an example; they see me and they can see the other end, the recovery," he says. "It gives them support, and they get a better outlook."

More than a year later, physical therapy and surgery are still part of John's life. He's had eight major operations on his arms, and has had more minor surgeries than he can count. "When I was first in the hospital, I was knocked out (anesthetized for surgery) every day for three days, then it was once every three days," he says. "I kind of liked it. It didn't hurt me any, so I didn't care."

John now has wrist and elbow movement in his right arm, though his left arm isn't quite as flexible. He can make fists with both hands and squeeze objects, but he cannot yet extend his fingers. Three more surgeries are planned this year to give his hands more flexibility.

Since his accident, Thompson has become a celebrity of sorts. He's been invited to appear on Oprah, Geraldo, and Phil Donahue's talk shows, though his

Thompson writes college papers by talking into a headset connected to his voice-activated computer. He still drives himself by using his specially equipped four-wheel-drive Chevy truck.

busy schedule has prevented him from accepting yet. Few 19-year-olds get the chance to sing the national anthem before 47,000 fans at a Minnesota Twins game, or get asked to be an honorary coach for the Pittsburgh Steelers' spring training, but John did both last summer.

He's now pursuing life as a college freshman at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota, where he is a vocal performance major. A voice-activated computer, donated by IBM, Dragon Systems and Okidata, helps him do his college coursework. He has his own room in a campus dormitory, and drives the 90 miles to Hurdsfield by himself on weekends in his four-wheel-drive Chevy truck. The truck has been slightly modified, with a three-prong tripod on the steering wheel, and push button dashboard controls.

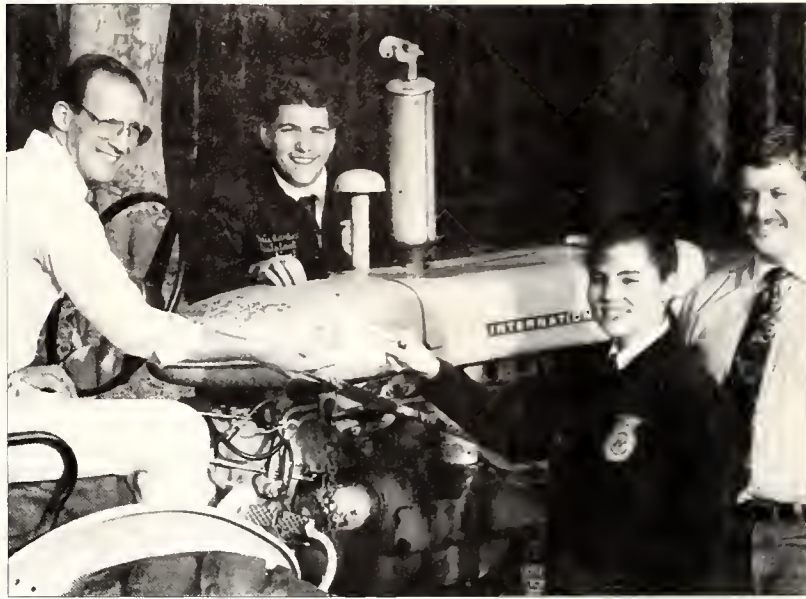
John plans to spend the summer in Minneapolis, where he hopes to work for Northwest Airlines. A recording studio has invited him to cut a demonstration record. "I'm really going for getting in the music business," Thompson says. Travel is also high on his list of priorities. "I'm dying to get to Alaska," he says.

Farm work is one thing John hasn't been able to do much of since his accident. He was a member of the Bowdon FFA Chapter, and worked on his family's 1,600-acre grain farm. Last summer John was able to haul haybales, his first farm work since the accident.

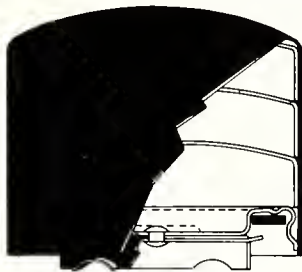
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Turning The Tide

An FFA member's agriscience research tells the rest of the story about water quality

By Lynn Hamilton



Burton tested 26 water samples for nitrates, phosphates and pH levels.

Farmers in Idaho had been getting some bad press, and Renee Burton wanted to get to the bottom of it.

The Meridian, Idaho, FFA member knew agriculture was blamed for polluting the Snake River. Environmental groups claimed algae blooms that were killing fish (by depleting the oxygen supply in water) were caused by farmers using too much fertilizer. Burton couldn't find facts that backed the claims, so she set out to clear agriculture's name.

"I was curious why someone would think people who depended on the land and water for their living would try to damage it," she says.

She researched water quality and water pollution laws in the library and contacted state agencies for more information. Dr. Loren Carter, head of the Boise

State University chemistry department, gave her advice on water testing and let her use a chemistry lab and equipment.

Armed with gallon milk jugs, Burton set out to gather data. Since irrigation run-off was targeted as the main culprit, she took her water samples from run-off water in a drainage ditch during the peak season. She also sampled fresh water from an irrigation canal before it entered the fields.

Nitrates and phosphates are the most common chemicals in agricultural fertilizer. If water from fields contains too much of either, rivers and streams can be polluted. Both chemicals can cause overgrowth of algae.

Burton tested each of her 26 samples for nitrate and phosphate content. She then entered her results on a computer,

and compared the chemical content of the fresh water versus the run-off samples.

Her tests showed the run-off water had highly concentrated levels of nitrates and phosphates, but she found that none of the run-off water appeared to flow into the river. Farmers in her area trap the run-off water in ponds, and recycle it by pumping it back on the field through sprinkler irrigation. The only way polluted water could make its way into the river was if irrigation systems were overloaded during heavy rains.

Many people were interested in Burton's results, but some wanted to blow them out of proportion. She says she had to explain that although run-off samples were highly concentrated, the water ran back into the recycling pond, not the river.

Burton, who is now a freshman at Ricks College in Idaho, says becoming a national finalist in the Agriscience Student Recognition Program had more rewards than just the \$3,500 in scholarship money. "Our state was going through a battle with the legislature; they were about to cut funding to ag programs," she says. Her project, gave Idaho agricultural education some well-timed publicity.

"It was able to show the legislature and others that agricultural education was really important...that we take science and agriculture and put it to use." Burton says. She plans to take her message to the Idaho State School Board to lobby on behalf of agriculture programs.

She advises other students who want to start an agriscience project to first find a topic that fascinates them. Burton says, "The most important thing is to find something that you're really interested in. That way you'll get really involved in it, and it'll be more fun, too." ...

The National Agriscience Student Recognition program is sponsored by Monsanto Agricultural Company as a special project of the National FFA Foundation

FFA IN ACTION

Ohio **Deer Hunter Safety Video**



West Muskingum, Ohio, FFA members Brent Johnson, Justin Embrey and Pat Michel demonstrated proper deer hunting safety procedures for a local television station. Camera operators filmed hunting scenarios such as entering and exiting tree stands safely; identifying your target and beyond before firing; the importance of wearing hunters orange; and how to use and transport shot guns and muzzle loaders safely. (Robert M. Daniels, Advisor)



The Duluth, Minnesota, FFA Chapter collected 180 pounds of aluminum can tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House for kids with cancer.

(Continued on Page 34)



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FFA IN ACTION



The New Lexington, Ohio, FFA sponsored a mushroom contest. The largest mushroom was 9 inches tall and 11 inches in circumference.

You're On The Air



Members of the East Clinton, Ohio, Chapter kept their community informed about chapter activities through radio programs on the Farm News Radio Station, WKFI. Left to right are Laura Gall, reporter; Clayton Morgan, president; and Mike Henry, sentinel. (Laura Gall, Reporter)

Montello, Wisconsin, FFA held a toy tractor show and sold cheese and calendars at the school fund-raising event called Autumn Fest. Other activities for the fundraiser were a rummage sale, craft show, tractor pedal pull contest, silent auction, bingo and booths set up by school clubs. (Ann Schmitz, Reporter)

The Silver Lake, Massachusetts, FFA started an incentive award program based on interpersonal skills, scholarship and FFA participation. Each team will be awarded items from the FFA catalog. (Jessica Nord, Reporter)

Every year the Essex FFA Chapter in Massachusetts rents a roller-skating rink for a night. They also rent a pizza restaurant and hire a disc jockey. Both events are free for all 300 members. (Matthew T. Hooper, Reporter)

During the holiday season, many community organizations help local charities. After the holidays, donations drop off and the shelters are left with very little. To prevent this from happening to their local shelters, the chapter in San Marcos, California, held an "After Christmas Food and Clothes Drive." (Becky Wiles, Reporter)

The Rapid City, South Dakota, FFA organized and promoted a city-wide scavenger hunt to find various products from agribusinesses. Members learned about the many different types of agricultural firms and met their owners. (Malisa Steele, President)

Ohio Two Chapters Better Than One

Two Ohio chapter officer teams spent a weekend exchanging ideas. Seven officers from the Eaton FFA and five officers from the Preble Shawnee FFA participated.

They discussed their programs of activities, goals, leadership and ideas such as a county-wide Building Our American Communities project. (Heather Zwiesler, Eaton Reporter)



Kansas They're Back!

To drum up support for Plainville, Kansas, FFA's new Alumni affiliate, former members were invited to the Friends of the Ag/FFA Fall Picnic. A special feature this year was The Leadership Ritual Challenge, a competition that matched the opening ceremony skills of the 1970's era officers against those of the 1980's.

After the competition, four alumni who were in high school from 1965 to 1979, and two current officers, conducted opening ceremonies for the meeting.

"It takes me back to my own FFA days when we performed this ritual in public for the first time...it gets you excited and nervous all over again. You can't help but feel proud to have been a part of it," said Jack Burton, 1965 officer.

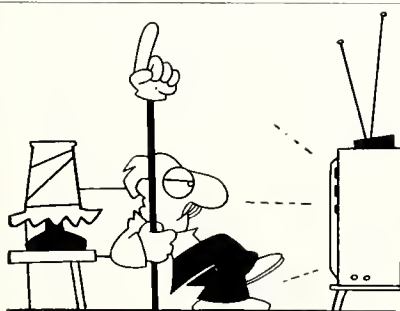
After the meeting, everyone was invited to play bingo. Lucky card-holders claimed over \$250 worth of prizes.

Texas Tractor Art

The East Bernard, Texas, FFA sponsored their third annual FFA Tractor Art Contest for kids in kindergarten through fourth grade.

Students draw and color pictures of farm tractors which are displayed in the elementary school. Members of the FFA tractor mechanics team judge the entries and give donated toy tractors and equipment as prizes. Winners and their parents are recognized again at the spring FFA banquet.

(Continued on Page 36)



Dad saved \$100 by building his own remote control.

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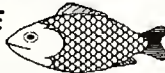


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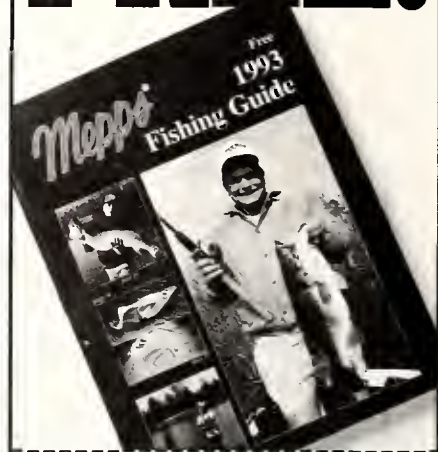
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FFA IN ACTION

(Continued from Page 35)

Minnesota

Did You See Them On TV?



The theme for the float played on the tie with Hope, Minnesota, and President Clinton's hometown of Hope, Arkansas. Members Amy Stoltz, Michelle Kraay, Nick McShane and Bill Pirkl made the trip.

Four members of the Owatonna, Minnesota, Chapter were in the Washington, D.C., inauguration parade for President Bill Clinton and Vice President Albert Gore.

They were part of a float from their community titled "Youth and Agriculture: Rural America's Hope for the Future." The school district includes Hope, Minnesota, a community of about 100. Their partners on the project were members of the Hope Hustlers 4-H club.

On Inauguration Day the members were up at 6 a.m. to assemble their float that included signs about leadership, agriscience, global awareness and learning by doing. Then the group reported to the Pentagon to line up. The president and his family waved to the group and the vice president gave them a "thumbs up."

The idea for the float was prompted by their Congressman Tim Penny. He and his staff encouraged parade organizers to have agriculture—especially young people in agriculture—represented.

Members helped paint banners and gather materials for the float. When the group left early on Sunday, January 17, a crowd of well wishers and media gathered for a send off. The tractor, hay rack and straw for the float were borrowed from dealers in Maryland. Some support also came from the chapter's local alumni and the National FFA Alumni.

After their arrival in Washington, D.C., the FFA and 4-H members met their congressional delegation as well as leaders such as Skip Humphrey, state attorney general.

Iowa

Dressing Up For the Occasion



The state officer team dressed in tuxedos to escort state fair queen candidates. After the ceremony officers toured the fairgrounds.

Iowa chapter members worked hard at their state fair. They were ushers for the grandstand; worked as stage hands for entertainment shows and were guides for

state fair campers.

The state officer team planned, organized and presented an educational display on corn utilization where they fea-



For five years the Memphis, Missouri, FFA Chapter has won the Missouri Pork Knowledge Contest sponsored by the Missouri Pork Producers.

tured many corn-based products, free samples of lemonade and Oreo cookies, a video on the corn processing industry and a laboratory demonstration of the wet milling process. About 30,000 people passed through the display each day.

GET TO KNOW

Dennis Degner

Todd Hingson

Hurling insults can be an artform, even in elementary school. Dennis Degner tells about one especially nasty fight he had with a fellow fourth grader. He doesn't remember what they were so upset about, but he does recall his opponent's last cutting words, "Oh yeah? At least my parents wanted me." To an adopted ten-year-old this is probably the ultimate slam.

Dennis says he didn't even have time to

Both Dennis and Todd say they were teased a lot about being adopted when they were in elementary school. The jokes bothered Todd so much, he says, "When I was in the fourth grade I remember asking mom, 'Is it bad to be adopted?'"

Eventually, Todd decided being unique was a good thing. "Being who you are is what will make you successful," he says. But success didn't come right away. As a sophomore he ran for Suwannee, Florida,



Dennis Degner



Todd Hingson



One-year-old Dennis grew up on a diversified crop and livestock farm.



18-month-old Todd's family grew soybeans, tobacco and watermelons.

think though, before he shot back with, "At least my parents had a choice." The reply wasn't tough for the Malone, Texas, native to come up with. "My parents love me so much and have always shown me that being adopted didn't matter. It's almost as if it never even happened."

Todd Hingson, who is also adopted, says people often feel sorry for him when they find out he's never known his natural parents. "People usually feel I'm less fortunate. They think adoption is hard to handle, but it really isn't. The relationship I've had with my parents made them my mother and father. It's not the blood that makes the family, it's the love."

FFA chapter reporter. He got sentinel instead. Todd tried for vice president the next year. It didn't happen. He was bumped down to reporter. His senior year Todd ran for FFA president and lost again. "It was really devastating because I was working really hard and getting beat for everything I ran for on the chapter level."

"Through the whole thing, I learned I wasn't always going to get what I wanted. That's just part of life."

Meanwhile Dennis was racking up the chapter awards. He climbed from Greenhand president, to sentinel, to vice president.

His farm business management team

went to the state competition three years in a row. And he invested money won from showing market steers into a registered Angus cow-calf operation.

Being a state officer was a dream that seemed within his reach. But not everyone encouraged him.

"A friend told me I was wasting my time in FFA. She said wanting to be a state officer would only hurt me in the end. But it was something I really wanted and I had to try for myself."

Although Dennis didn't get exactly what he wanted—he ran for state president and was elected first vice president instead—he says, "Not being president really wasn't that big of a deal. I knew there were other plans in my life to be fulfilled."

Once Todd got past the chapter level, his FFA career took off. He was elected district and federation president his senior year and state president the next. Much of his success, he says, was due to a state officer he knew in high school who, "was genuine and down to earth, but still achieved. He really showed me I could be myself and achieve. Until then I was under the impression you have to fit in with cliques and change yourself to get ahead."

One thing Todd and Dennis don't want to change about their lives is being adopted. "If I had it to do over I would want it to happen the same way. I couldn't have picked better parents," says Dennis. ...

JOKE PAGE

Q: If a chicken crosses the road, rolls in the mud and then crosses back, what is it?

A: A dirty double-crosser.

Robert Taylor
Gordonsville, Tennessee



"So which came first, the chicken or the McNugget?"

A rancher asked a veterinarian for some free advice. "I have a horse that walks normally sometimes and limps sometimes. What should I do?"

The veterinarian replied, "The next time he walks normally, give him away."

Nancy Rau
Forest Grove, Oregon

Riding instructor: What kind of saddle do you want—one with a horn or without one?

Student: Without I guess, there doesn't seem to be much traffic around here.

Rex Clark
Poland, Indiana

Q: Why do ghosts like health food?

A: Because it's super natural.

Christie Jennings
Ada, Oklahoma

Q: What part of a hen has the most feathers?

A: The outside.

Alicia Cargle
Bryan, Ohio

Traveler: How far is it to the next town?

Local Citizen: Two miles as the crow flies.

Traveler: How far is it if the crow has to walk and roll a flat tire?

Bobbie Mae Cooley
Bowen, Illinois

A couple of men were sitting on a street corner, fishing into a bucket and looking very forlorn. They were dressed in tattered clothes and worn shoes.

A kind-hearted woman walked by, observed them, then went back and gave them a dollar.

Noting their fishing efforts, she asked, "How many have you caught today?"

"You're the seventh," they told her.

Carolyn Stewart
Collinsville, Oklahoma

Brother: Do you think we should throw away the round table in the dining room?

Sister: Why?

Brother: Because we're having a square meal tonight.

Jessy Jobe
Connersville, Indiana

Q: What do you call it when a ghost makes a mistake?

A: A Boo-Boo!

Bobby Davis
Belzoni, Mississippi

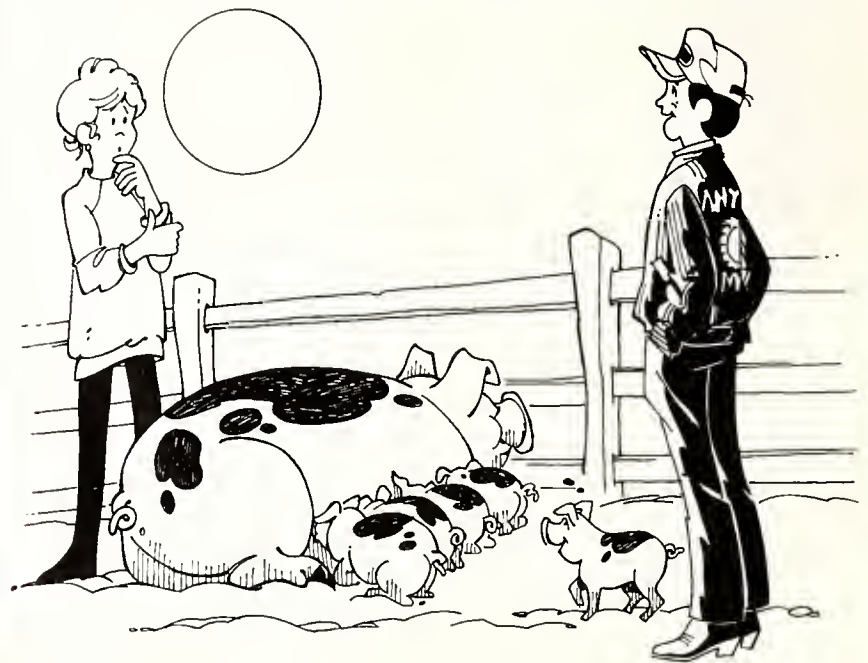
Jake: What room do horses stay in when they sleep in a hotel?

Woody: Beats me, where?

Jake: In the bridle suite!

Mark Phelps
Creswell, North Carolina

Charlie, the Greenhand



"He's the runt...we call him Bacon bits."

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