

FFA

FEBRUARY-MARCH, 1993

New Horizons

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION



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FFA New Horizons

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

February-March, 1993

Volume 41 Number 3



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Photo by Lawinna McGary

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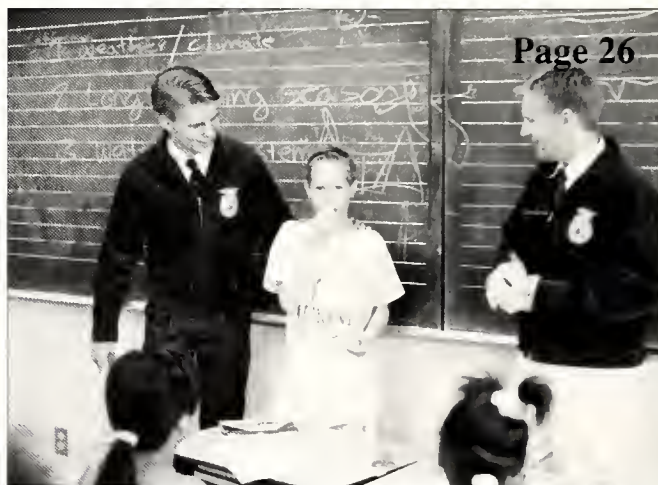
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FFA New Horizons (ISSN 0027-9315), formerly The National FUTURE FARMER, is prepared and published bimonthly by the National FFA Organization, 5632 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, Virginia 22309-0160, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education as a service to state and local vocational agriculture education agencies.

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Let's start at the very beginning. You're born. They take you to a house with strange people you come to know later as your family. It's here that you begin to learn the bare essentials of life—your name, how to eat, how to talk. As time passes you learn some of the more subtle things—how to pronounce and spell words correctly, what foods you like, how to fight with your brothers and sisters. All of these things define our view of the world.

Do you remember the first time you spent the night at a friend's house? The food was prepared a little differently, their house rules weren't the same. It was nothing to be afraid of, but it wasn't like home. Chances are, there were some things you liked about their house ("Ron gets to stay up until ten") and other things that made you appreciate home even more ("Mrs. Jones puts weird noodle things on top of her casserole").

When you travel outside your home state, you begin to see even bigger differences. You can't order breakfast in the South without being asked if you want grits with your eggs. In Maryland, people armed with knives and hammers belly-up to tables covered with brown paper and spend half the evening dissecting steamed blue crabs for the tasty parts. Go to a sports event in Milwaukee and it's just as easy to find a bratwurst vendor as a hot dog salesman.

It's not just the food that's different. Anyone who has ever attended national FFA convention has enjoyed hearing the accents from Georgia, Vermont, Texas and Minnesota. It's these differences that give flavor and color to our organization, which is really a reflection of the character of our country. It is these differences that makes our country interesting and unique. But you can never fully understand this until you experience it. You have to get out there.

The same goes for international travel. Yes, people in far away places do things *really differently* than we do here in America. Weren't things different at your friend's house? Aren't things really different in Oklahoma compared to Maine?

Listen to what Tara Sathers says about living and working in Russia ("My Life in

Russia" page 10.) When she returns to the U.S., she will enjoy things she never considered before, like a regular shower and supermarket shelves full of food. In the meantime, she is making friends, learning a new language and feels like she is experiencing a slice of history. It will also look pretty good on her resume'.

Linda Flint, who designs this magazine, has lived in England, Germany and in many states here in the U.S. She has traveled all over the world because her husband was in the Air Force. She says "whenever I hear a person say 'America, love it or leave it!' it causes me to wonder about the person saying it. Does this person love America solely because they were born here? I think the best thing any American could do for themselves is to leave America—for awhile." She says you can only really appreciate America after you have traveled to other countries and see the U.S. from another point of view.

Travel. Take the time now and visit a distant relative or organize a chapter trip to an FFA chapter in another state. If you're interested in traveling overseas, there are a number of good international youth exchange organizations, including the FFA. The National FFA Organization offers programs that have been created just for FFA members. The International team would be glad to help you explore what experience would be right for you. Write: Time to Go!, FFA International Programs, 5632 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309-0160.

Many people are surprised that FFA even has international programs. It makes a lot of sense when people like Mrs. Flint ask questions like, "FFA's roots are in agriculture and American agriculture often brags that it feeds the world, but do we know "who" the world is?"

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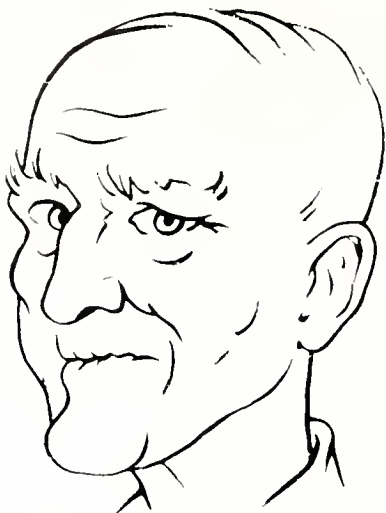
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NEWS IN BRIEF

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February 22-26, 1993

Getting your sprayer ready to go doesn't have to be complicated. "The few minutes it takes to put on a fresh set of spray tips can make hundreds of dollars of difference in reduced chemical costs and improved yields," says Dr. Stephen Pearson,

of Spraying Systems Co.

"Sprayer Tune-Up Week gives chapters an ideal addition to ongoing community service, safety and education activities," says National FFA President Travis Park.

Celebrate FFA, The Spirit Of Leadership

Chapters from across the United States are gearing up for National FFA Week, February 22-26. To help you plan for events, ask your advisor to see the FFA Week brochure sent to every chapter. It features sample radio announcements, a poster and artwork you can clip and put in your local newspaper.



MAILBAG

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

Pen Pals, Please

I think that your magazine is great, but I know how you can make it better. Why not have a section for pen pals? That way FFA members all over could get to know each other!

Mandi Pyles
Carrollton, Kentucky

This seems to be a popular request, so we are looking into the best way to provide this service to FFA members. With over 400,000 members, you want to have a good system in place to get the best pen pal possible!—Ed.

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

Correction

In our December-January, 1992-93 issue (page 11), three advisors should have been included with the other advisors listed. The listings should have included David Nilson, advisor of national secretary Kevin White, California; Larry Little, advisor of western region vice president Dennis Degner, Texas and Roland Zimmerman, advisor of eastern region vice president Rick Perkins, Ohio.

National FFA Winners Make Hard Work Look Like Fun



Mark Yates, Fishtail, Montana

Mark Yates of Fishtail, Montana, defines hard work as planning his home and farmstead improvement project...then making it happen!

Sarah Abel, Laura Davis and Mary Paoli — the Ruby Mountain FFA Agricultural Sales team from Elko, Nevada, — consider hard work a year's worth of dedication, study and practice, practice, practice!

But they all agree that being named National FFA award winners makes all that work seem just like fun!

Mark, the 1992 National FFA Home and/or Farmstead Improvement proficiency award winner, based his project on improving the efficiency and environment of his family's 600-acre ranch. And Sarah, Laura and Mary, winners of the 1992 National

Agricultural Sales contest, learned that teamwork, goals and confidence gave them greater insight into sales and marketing...as well as their own career plans.

The Upjohn Company and Asgrow Seed Company salute Mark, the Ruby Mountain FFA Agricultural Sales team...and all the other industrious young people who make FFA what it is today. As sponsors of the Home & Farmstead Improvement Proficiency Award and the Agricultural Sales contest, we realize that the future of agriculture depends on young leaders like Mark, Sarah, Laura and Mary.

And that's a comforting thought.



Ruby Mountain FFA Agricultural Sales Team,
Elko, Nevada.
(l-r) Sarah Abel, Chapter Advisor
Tom Klein, Laura Davis,
Coach Joe Payne,
Mary Paoli



The Upjohn Company



Asgrow Seed Company
Kalamazoo, Mich.

DON'T EAT IT!

RESEARCHERS TRANSFORM CROPS INTO AMAZING NEW PRODUCTS!

Grow your own plastic. Make breakfast with kitchen utensils partially made of corn starch. No, these aren't outrageous dreams of mad scientists or National Enquirer headlines, they're patented projects researched by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (ARS). These exciting uses for agricultural products are waiting around for companies or universities to develop them into household products.

Because of the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986, which encourages companies to work with ARS scientists, and gives the companies first chance at exclusive licenses to use the technology, more patents than ever before are being developed. In all, ARS has 1,200 patents. One-third of the patents are now licensed.

As much as 30 percent of rubber products, whether they're shoe parts, kitchenware or automobile tires, can be made of starches from plants such as corn. Switching to starches as rubber reinforcing agents could significantly reduce reliance of a prime ingredient with a petroleum base: carbon black.

"Manufacturers start with a big chunk of material called elastomer,

and they add as many as 40 ingredients to make it become the rubber we know," says William M. Doane, Plant Polymer Research Unit, in Peoria, Illinois. Up to 30 percent of a tire may be reinforcing agents.

The type of starch can vary, Doane says, "but we found cornstarch is generally less expensive. As far as performance, though, there's not much difference among starches from corn, wheat or grain sorghum."

"There's certainly still a market. You can get 30 pounds of starch per bushel of corn, so something that uses three billion pounds of starch would mean a market for an extra 100 million bushels of corn."

Grow Your Own Plastic

A crop called crambe is growing on some 20,000 acres in the United States this year. But if you want to see what comes from crambe, don't watch your local produce section—check out the plastic goods instead.

Crambe is a domestic source of erucic acid. When erucic acid is treated with ammonia, it forms amides, an excellent material for keeping various types of plastic sheets or films from sticking together as they're manufactured and used.

Another outlet for crambe use is Nylon 1313.

"Nylons are all very solvent resistant, tough, and strong," says Kenneth D. Carlson, ARS researcher. "But Nylon 1313 is special because it absorbs the least amount of moisture of any commercial nylon made so far."

This means Nylon 1313 can be molded into items such as automobile parts, gears, and tubing that must not swell or shrink in humid settings. Nylon 1313 absorbs only about 0.7 percent moisture; by comparison, its cousin, Nylon 11, used in parts for autos and trucks, absorbs about 1.5 percent.

Commercialization of Nylon 1313 was hindered by the expense of making it. Now new processes developed at North Dakota State University with state and USDA funding may cut that cost in half.

"Nylon 1313 has also been held back by low supplies of erucic acid, which hasn't been available at sufficiently low cost," says Carlson. "But if crambe production moves along as it is now, that cost could come down."

Source: *Agricultural Research*, September 1992





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My Life In Russia



Photo by Curt Stutzman

Sathers, left, went to Russia at the same time as Kentuckian Heidi Vincent. Both of their travel expenses were paid for through a grant from the United States Information Agency. For information about how you can go to Russia, contact Diane Crow at: National FFA Center, 5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309-0160.

Tara Sathers *knows* travel. She's been to the Netherlands and Japan on FFA's Around The World program. She's used to living in different time zones, soaking in various cultures and being surrounded by foreign languages.

The Santa Fe, New Mexico, native says she went to Russia because, "I've always wondered if what the media told us about Russia and Russian people was true. They were the enemy for so long—why? It is so interesting to be here at this time in history. I've met many other American people in Moscow, but I'm the only one living with a family. Just a year ago it was illegal!

It's so awesome to have a family open their home... lives to me for a few months. In the future, I believe this will be looked at as one of the most incredible

years in world history, and I can say I was in Moscow when it happened."

Here's her account of a typical day.

Friday, December 18, 1992.

Ugh. Too cold. I rolled over for the umpteenth time and tried to focus on the clock. 8:20 a.m. Ach! Late! Forget the cold. I jumped up, turned on the radio and tried to find my toothbrush.

My host mother had gone back to bed after helping my host father on his way to work. The brief radio report in English told me the world was still there...Boris Yeltsin was still in parliament, and the exchange rate was as lopsided as ever. I made up my bed, that served as a couch in the day, and went to get breakfast—a huge cup of tea and bread with butter. After eating I washed my plates with hot water, (no soap), told

"mom" goodbye, and wrapped up well to catch the bus. The New Mexico winter jacket I brought was the joke of Moscow. When it hit 20 degrees Fahrenheit last week, I found out why! My current coat was borrowed from my host family.

My work placement is with an interior design company in Moscow. When I got to work, Tatiana, my boss and friend, was already there. Her English had improved more than my Russian in the last three months.

"Good morning Tara. How is it going?" I smiled and said, "You'll be a professional American speaker in no time."

"What is this 'in no time?'" she asked.

Oh yes, American slang. I could write a book on that subject alone. Try explaining a 'couch potato', 'tossing your cook-

ies' and 'taking a chill pill' to a foreigner sometime.

The remainder of the office day was spent drinking tea, making telephone calls, transplanting ferns and eating lunch.

After work, Tatiana and I went to find a building where we had a meeting Monday morning.

"Right in front of McDonalds," the man had said. "Can't miss it." Twenty minutes later and we'd missed it four times. Finally the address and company name matched, and we headed back to the metro. My feet were cold. My body was cold. If I opened my mouth my teeth froze, and when I would breathe through my nose, my nose hairs iced together.

"Can't even breathe in this place without having problems," I thought. My feet slipped on the icy sidewalk again. Tatiana looped her arm through mine and guided me around a corner. Traffic honked and plunged on. The looming, brown brick buildings seemed to hold the smoggy smell to the street.

"Tara, remember your first day with me in the metro? You said no one here smiles. Now you are here three months and you are no more to smile. Here..." She took off a ring I'd mentioned I liked a few weeks ago. "Take this. And remember, please, not to grieve." I thanked her, took the ring, and thought about it.

I asked Tatiana, "How's your life going?"

"Oh." She shook her head. "I am very tired. Very tired of work. Tired of being married. I work all day and then must go home and make dinner and clean and do dishes. And my husband does not to help. Do you have this problem with men in America?"

We talked for two hours. She decided she wanted to be introduced to some American men! By that time, it was late. I needed to go home.

My host mother was in the kitchen warming soup, potatoes and pork while "dad" hammered away on the third potato

(Continued on Page 33)

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Keeping pace
with the "real"
agricultural
business world
pays off

By Lawinna McGary

High Tech Mechanics

The classroom is full of freshmen and sophomores taking apart small engines. Piece by piece they dismantle them. Later in the semester they'll put them all back together with advisor David Shiflett's help. The shop is stuffed with woodworking, welding and tractor repair equipment and the walls are lined with tools on pegboards. At first glance, this looks like a typical agricultural mechanics program. Come a little closer. Students at Fort Defiance, Virginia, learn traditional skills but they also keep up with the latest technology.

Alongside the old AC/DC (electric) and oxy-acetylene (compressed gas) welders are a plasma welder, computerized arc welder and a welding helmet with a computerized light sensor. Before students get started on a project, they can use a Macintosh LC computer to draw the plans. All of this extra training gets students ready for jobs in the "real" world.

Few full-time repair shops just use AC/DC or oxyacetylene welders anymore. Newer plasma welders cut metal at a much higher temperature resulting in a smoother cut. Advisor Andy Seibel says this welder works so fast it won't bubble paint. And since it works off of electricity and compressed air, you don't have to mess with unstable gasses that can be dangerous. The plasma welder works better and faster on metal than oxy-acetylene cutting machines.

Another industry standard is the computerized arc or metal and inert gas (MIG) welder. By

entering information into the computer such as metal thickness and type of metal, the machine will make sure you don't burn through thin metal. Instead of using the stick welding rods (also called electrodes) that you have to keep replacing as you go, the MIG uses a continuous-feed wire rod.

The MIG can make very precise cuts. In fact, manufacturers are confident the weld will be perfect just about every time. This



Photos by Author

"It's exciting to learn how to weld," says freshman Kim Moats, (second from right). "You've got to learn to have concentration and to not get frustrated." Vanessa Lam, right, practices gas welding.

is usually the type of equipment they use with computerized arms on assembly lines.

"I like the newer ones a whole lot better," says senior O.J. Crickenberger. "It's more advanced and a whole lot faster." He is one of 22 students who leave school every day to work on farms and businesses. "I used to fiddle around at home on dad's welder, but I never thought I could really weld with it. After three years of welding in class I can turn out a pretty good bead."

There are plenty of chances for students to perfect the art of welding by working on their own projects as well as tractors

On some welding work...a mistake could cost \$1,000 or more.



Woodworking is part of the agricultural mechanics course all freshmen must take. Next year Daniel Howdysell can take both agricultural mechanics and agricultural business.

community members bring in. (Seibel says students overhaul five to six tractors a year and do minor repairs on many more.)

On some of the welding work, such as fixing the cast iron shield that protects internal parts of a tractor, a mistake could cost \$1,000 or more.

Jobs like this call for students to use the welding helmet with a computerized light sensor inside. Unlike most helmets that are pitch dark all of the time, you can see through the eyepiece in this

new version until you strike the arc. This means there's less chance of making a mistake because you see exactly where you need to place your welding rod.

Students who take time to use the equipment in the Fort Defiance agricultural shop say they will benefit when high school is over. "When I apply for a job, I know this will help," says senior Wayne Marshall. Knowing how to make technology work for you, he says, makes life easier. ...

Welding Terms

Bead—continuous and uniform line of filler material

Electrode—a metal welding rod coated with flux and used with an electric welder

Flux—material that removes tarnish or corrosion, prevents corrosion from developing, and acts as an agent to help solder spread over metal

Alternating current (AC)—current that reverses its direction 60 times per second

Direct Current (DC)—current that flows in one direction continuously

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A CHANCE FOR THE BETTER.

Catch the Wave

Looking for a career with travel and excitement? Marketing agricultural products to foreign countries could be for you

By Carol Elder

Career Watch

International markets are the wave of the future—the new frontier for business,” says former Pink Hill, North Carolina, FFA

member Ken Maxwell, who learned how to speak in front of people during parliamentary procedure and judging contests.

Understanding the “rules” of other cultures is another essential part of international business. Maxwell gives the example of a North Carolina company representative who traveled to Japan to meet with a potential buyer. After ordering dinner, the representative got right down to business and asked how much the Japanese firm would be willing to buy. Suddenly, the tone of the meeting became chilly, as if the air had been let out of a balloon. The representative was not able to sign an agreement during that trip. Maxwell explains, “The Japanese want to get to know

you before they start doing business, so you have to be patient. It’s best to let them dictate whether or not to discuss business during a meal. If you don’t, they think you have no respect for their culture or their ways. No matter how good your product is, you can’t sell it unless you can relate to the buyer.”

Maxwell’s interest in international work was sparked by his travel to Europe on FFA’s Greenweek tour. “It was the first time I had been out of the country, and it was an eye-opener for me. It’s one thing to read and see pictures of another place, but it’s another thing to stand there and see it for yourself.”

He believes international trade and business job opportunities will increase

as nations sign agreements, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that has been proposed between the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and as trade barriers are removed in negotiations for the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT).

If you’re interested in this field, Maxwell recommends you study a foreign language, do as much reading as possible on international trade, and gain practical experience—even if you must volunteer—in a company that does international business, in your state department of agriculture or commerce, or in a world trade center or association.

In college, you can major in either an agricultural field or in business (Maxwell studied agricultural education), but make sure you have a solid background of courses with an international focus.

Finally, “take advantage of FFA’s international programs!” says Maxwell. “The experience of traveling internationally allows you to understand and appreciate differences. This is a real benefit in any job because you’ll always have to work with people.”

Breaking In To the International Scene

The starting salary for entry level government positions is \$20,000 to \$30,000. For more information on international agricultural careers contact your state department of agriculture or commerce. Most have a department that deals with international trade. They can also give you a list of firms in your state that work internationally.

FFA offers a variety of international exchange programs, from 10-day agricultural tours in Europe to year-long stays in Australia. More information and an application for 1993 programs are in the February issue of FFA Advisors...Making a Difference. Be sure to have your advisor watch for it!



Maxwell travels two to three months each year. This is a food show in Manama, Bahrain, near Saudi Arabia.

member Ken Maxwell. Now a Senior International Trade Specialist for the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, Maxwell points out that only five percent of the world’s people live in the United States. The other 95 percent—more than three billion people—represent a huge potential market. Each year, he spends two or three months traveling mostly to East Asia—Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Singapore—to promote North Carolina agricultural products at trade shows.

“A lot of what I do is related to sales. You have to be convincing in what you say. FFA gave me the confidence to do

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IT WAS A BIG

FFA has 12 record-breaking months

By Lawinna McGary

It was the year of a BIG anniversary: a record 29,541 people showed up for the 65th year celebration of FFA at the national convention in Kansas City, Missouri. There's plenty for FFA members to feel good about: already more than 382,000 strong in 1991, the organization grew by about 18,000 members in 1992. That's the first time membership went up in 11 years. And it's all happening while the total population of teenagers is decreasing.

A presidential campaign monopolized conversation for much of the year. Former president George Bush, Ross Perot and Bill Clinton (who promised BIG changes) battled it out. Young voters turned out in droves.

There were BIG victories. About 1,350 FFA members developed their leadership skills at the Washington Conference Program this summer. Those who attended

State President's Conference met President Bush. Bonnie Blair became the first United States athlete to win a medal at the Winter Olympics in Albertville, France, by striking gold in the women's 500-meter speed skating competition. Americans won 108 medals at the summer Olympics in Barcelona. Adding to the pile of gold medals was the men's basketball "dream team."

BIG natural disasters took the spotlight at times: Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki, volcano eruptions in Sicily's Mount Etna, an earthquake in California, and starvation in Somalia. FFA members across the country (Indiana, Virginia, Wisconsin, South Carolina and Ohio to name a few) helped ease the pain of the August hurricanes by sending supplies and money to the FFA chapters in Florida, Louisiana and Hawaii that were paralyzed. Members from Gallatin, Tennessee, decided sending goods wasn't good enough. They organized a relief trip to one of the hardest hit areas of Louisiana, St. Mary's Parish. Also in August, President Bush ordered a shipment of food to Somalia, where, according to Red Cross estimates, 1.5 million people were starving. A couple of weeks before Christmas,

Bush sent troops into the country to make sure food got to the people who needed it.

Bringing in BIG dollars was tough for many families in 1992. There weren't really any noticeable gains in the recession. Despite a sluggish economy, the National FFA Foundation brought in more dollars than ever before (\$4.75 million) to support FFA and agricultural education programs.

The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) negotiations brought about riots in France. If GATT passes, it could mean BIG changes for American farmers.

There were rising stars and retiring stars. The "Cyrus Virus" swept the nation. Billy Ray Cyrus' first single, "Achy Breaky Heart", made the Billboard charts before it was released. It then soared to number one on both the country and pop charts, and was awarded "Single of the Year" by the Country Music Association. Magic Johnson, who continued playing pro basketball after he announced he was HIV positive, finally called it quits on November 2.

Change is the only thing you could count on to be constant in 1992. At the National FFA Convention, November 12-14, delegates passed a recommendation to modify the four regional FFA boundaries. The change would mainly affect selection of national officers. Delegates will vote on whether to approve regional realignment at next year's convention.



After 12 years of Republican rule, Bill Clinton won rights to the White House.

YEAR...



More than 100 state officers and the national officer team met with President Bush this summer.

The delegates also recommended an honorary FFA jacket, similar to the advisor's jacket, be available for people who will use the jacket in a positive way for FFA, and that the FFA stop selling chapter sweet-heart items. The National FFA Board of Directors will vote on these issues.

BIG name speakers: Mary Lou Retton; Zig Ziglar; Joe Diffie, country music entertainer; and Miss America Leanza Cornett captured the attention of FFA members at the national convention. And the Kentucky HeadHunters (a band that includes three former FFA members) gave a festive convention kick-off performance.

To better meet the information needs of FFA Advisors, the publication *FFA Advisors...Making A Difference* was launched.

For the first time ever the Ventures Supply Service Marketing Group did two BIGtime nationwide surveys. They con-

tacted more than 2,000 members to find out what kind of casual clothes they wanted FFA to sell. See if you agree with what these FFA members said.

What To Wear

Most members surveyed wanted their dress to meet the approval of peers—both those in agricultural education as well as those who don't enroll. Comfort and casual appearance were important.

Jeans and tee shirts were most popular. Cotton-polyester blends and all-cotton fabrics were preferred. Wool and corduroy were the least preferred fabrics.

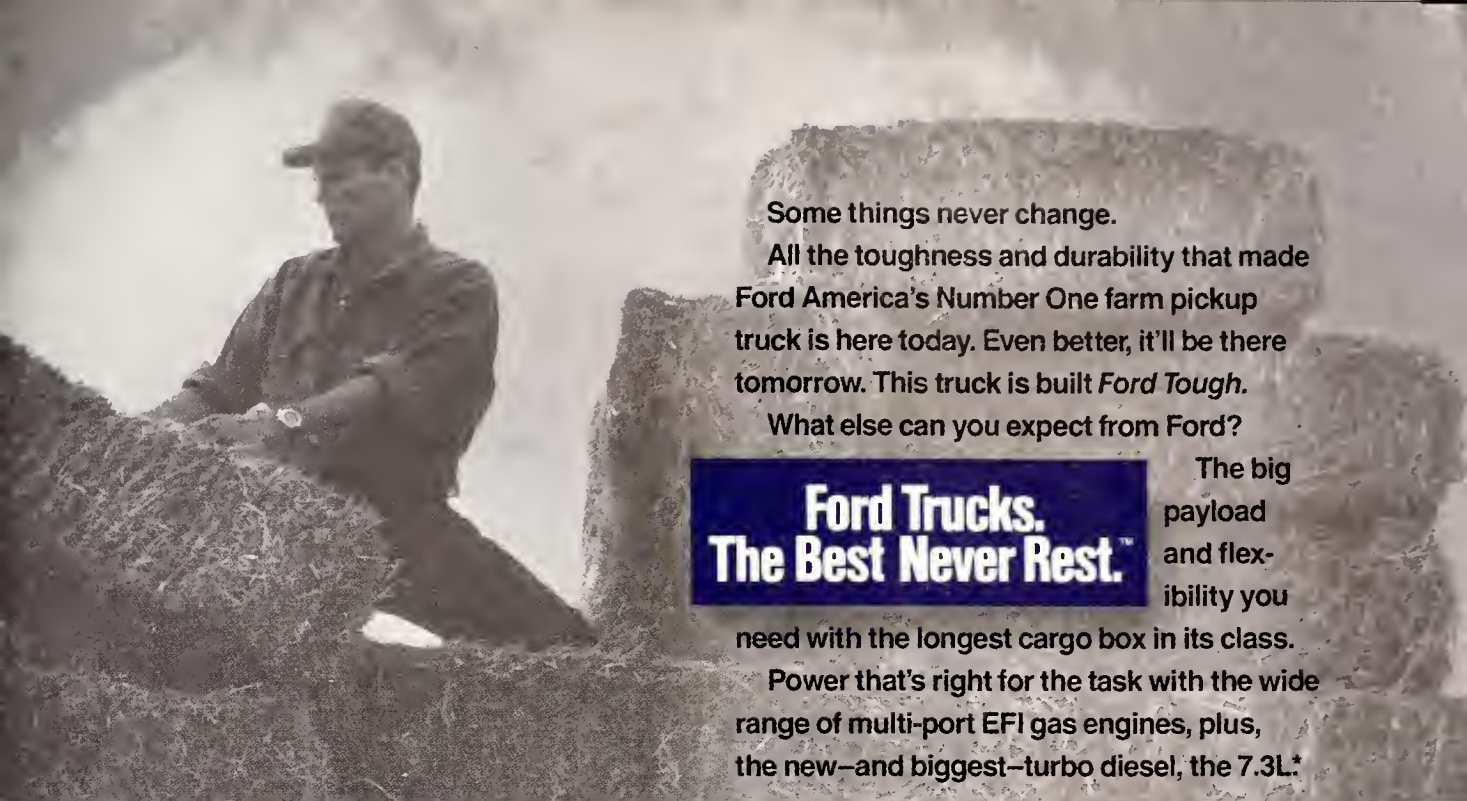
Official FFA Jacket

More than 2,700 members were asked about the official jacket. Both members and advisors want to change the jacket but keep the same general "look." They also wanted to change from corduroy material and preferred one jacket for year-round wear. •••



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Mushroom Marketing Mania

By Lynn Hamilton

Agriscience at the Sumner, Washington, FFA Chapter has been getting cultured—in mushroom culture, that is.

Their project, in its third year, involves both scientific skills and marketing savvy on the part of the students. Shiitake (pronounced shi-ta'-kay) mushrooms are an important element in the Japanese diet, and the Sumner community has a broad base of Japanese Americans. Since a pound of fresh Shiitakes sells for about \$10, and there is a ready market in the community, the Sumner students set out to learn how to get part of the market.

The chapter has an international exchange program set up with Japan. Several students each year travel overseas to learn more about the Japanese culture. "One thing we've learned from our international trade program with the Japanese is that to do business with the Japanese, they really want to know who they're buying from," says Greg Pile, Sumner FFA advisor. "First of all you have to win their trust and convince them that you're good people."

The idea for a survey came out of their Marketing Plan Project. "The first thing we learn is to identify a target market," Pile says. The students canvassed the community for current Shiitake consumers to learn about consumption patterns, acceptable price levels and local demand. A Japanese American member of the chapter's advisory council helped them contact key Japanese Americans to survey. From the results, they concluded there was a demand for the mushrooms they could meet. They just needed to find the best way to grow them.

In Japan, Shiitake mushrooms are grown in logs, with oak being the preferred species. The Sumner students found a way to simulate this, and helped out the local furniture factory that had tons of waste sawdust and oak shavings. Chapter members turned this waste into a "synthetic log" to culture the mushrooms.

Since the particle size of the sawdust varied greatly depending on what the factory was making on any given day, several students began researching the effects of the sawdust particle size on mushroom growth.

Michelle Hagfors, a senior in 1991, took on a special interest. She entered the Agriscience Student Recognition program.

Hagfors and her classmates bagged more than 30 bags of sawdust. They used a benchtop autoclave, which sterilizes materials by

heat and pressure, to sterilize the bags of sawdust one at a time. "I spent a lot of time with the project," Hagfors says. But the sawdust became contaminated. She had to repeat the process using a commercial size autoclave.

Mushroom spawn, grown from mushroom tissue, was then injected into the sawdust bags, and the bags were sealed so no air could get in or out. Mushrooms take from 30 to 60 days to grow in the synthetic logs. Their size depends on the amount of carbon dioxide and oxygen exchange that takes place. Hagfors' hypothesis was that smaller particles would foster smaller mushrooms, since there would be less room for the gases to exchange.

Through their agriscience project, this FFA chapter is growing and selling mushrooms



Michelle Hagfors was a national finalist in the Agriscience Student Recognition Program. She won \$3,500 in college scholarships.

As the mushroom spawn starts to grow, the sawdust turns into a firm block. Hagfors found that the fine particles did produce smaller mushrooms. Since price structure of Shiitakes depends on their size and quality, this was an important finding for the chapter.

These days, a new 2000-square foot agriscience facility is under construction, with a preparation room, sterile room and growth chamber all designed to accommodate Shiitake cultivation. Hagfors is happy to see the improvements. "Everything was held together with string and rope when I went through," she says.

But no more. With the new facility, the chapter hopes to have enough capacity to grow mushroom blocks they can sell directly to consumers. The blocks would weigh four or five pounds and yield two to three pounds of mushrooms. They are also exploring a market for Shiitake blocks to be used for educational activities in other science and agricultural programs.

Pile notes that the students' skills are now in demand by local biotechnology firms that need technicians skilled in sterile technique. Those who go on to college find the lessons learned through experiments and marketing strategies invaluable. Hagfors says, "It really got me ready for college and gave me a lot of self-confidence."

•••



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Mailbag

Send us a letter, poem, drawing or photo. We want to put more than letters in mailbag. Do you have a favorite photo or drawing of you and your show animal or another FFA project? Whatever the topic, we want to know what's on your mind.

With everything you send in, be sure to include your name, age, address, chapter name and phone number. Write to: *FFA New Horizons*, 5632 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309.

Q: What do you call a cow that just had a calf?

A: De-calf-inated

*Meghan Mueseler
Powhattan, Kansas*

Q: Why do cows wear bells?

A: Their horns don't work!

*Pamela S. Lortie
Woodburn, Indiana*

Q: What's the difference between a fish and a piano?

A: You can't tuna fish.

*Audrey Taylor
Oakhill, Ohio*

Mom: "Son, why are your grades so low? Are the questions too hard?"

Son: "No, the questions are fine, it's the answers that are so hard!"

*Chonda Hendricks
Bowling Green, Kentucky*

Q: Where can you find the Red Sea?

A: On Bob's report card.

*Anne C. Fisher
Durham, North Carolina*

Q: Why did the oak tree have to eat its ice cream in a bowl?

A: The pine tree wouldn't give it a cone.

*Allen Dixon
Hillsville, Virginia*

Joe: "Hey Tom, did you know Jim had to quit riding Quarter Horses?"

Tom: "No, why?"

Joe: The store manager came out and unplugged the machine!"

*Brad Stitt
Dover, Oklahoma*



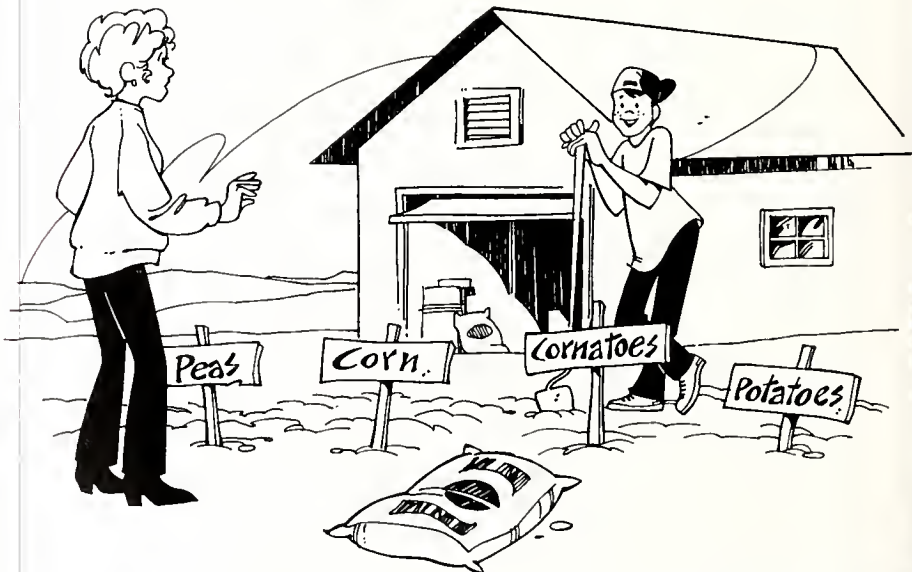
"Dad suspected it might be a case of puppy love when Eddy started chewing slippers and nipping at strangers."

Q: Why don't bears eat clowns?

A: Because they taste funny!

*Doug Jones
Sublette, Illinois*

Charlie, the Greenhand



"I'm hoping they'll cross-pollinate."

NOTICE:

FFA NEW HORIZONS will pay \$5.00 for each joke selected for this page. Jokes must be addressed to FFA NEW HORIZONS, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309, or via Starline to the Ag Ed Network to FF100A. In case of duplication, payment will be for the first one received. Contributions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

FFA Recruitment...

We Can Do It Together



FFA is growing! Nationwide 401,574 students chose to be FFA members in 1992. Better than anyone, you know how FFA's blend of leadership, personal and career development translates into exciting opportunities for students. So how can more young people benefit from FFA? It's simple—working together, we can spread the word and open up FFA's opportunities to more students!

Here's what works for some of the top recruiting chapters in the nation...

"We have a junior FFA for 8 to 11-year olds and require parents of interested students to join FFA alumni. This strengthens alumni support and builds our future chapter."
Dan Fuchs, Columbus High School - Columbus, Texas
77 NEW CHAPTER MEMBERS IN 1992!

"FFA members are our best recruiters. Every 8th grader is invited to our spring recruitment presentation. Seeing older students having fun makes a big impact."
Gary Jones, Peabody High School - Peabody, Kansas
67 PERCENT MEMBERSHIP INCREASE IN 1992!

"A modern curriculum made a big difference in recruiting. New students can see the wide range of opportunities in agriculture. We even offer science credit in some agriculture classes."
Earl Wineinger, Hillsboro High School - Hillsboro, Kansas
FROM 16 TO 122 MEMBERS IN TWO YEARS!

"Visibility is crucial. Other students must see FFA as a fun activity. We take puppies and kittens to nursing homes or landscape the school grounds."
Elizabeth Foote, Hartford Central High School - Hartford, New York
29 NEW CHAPTER MEMBERS IN 1992!

Effective FFA recruitment begins with cooperation. FFA members, advisors, and supporters must join together in the effort. We've seen this partnership begin through Project Growth. The Monsanto Agricultural Company supports this National FFA Organization program by funding the development of recruitment posters, videos, brochures, training and incentives. For more information contact your FFA advisor.

Monsanto

Project Growth is sponsored by Monsanto Agricultural Company as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.





A rare moment in the Wright family: everyone is still. Front row, left to right, Jacob, 11; Amber, 14; dog, Twinkie; Ashley, 10; cat, Cookie; B.J., 12 and Autumn, 17. Middle row, left to right, Dusty, 19; Shay, 20; Kathy; Bill; Seth, 8 and Charity, 22. Josh, 15, is in the back row.

True Blue And Gold

For this family with ten children, FFA is a tradition

*By Jennifer West
FFA member at Hesperia High School,
Hesperia, California*

Photo by L. J. Martin

While the morning sun slowly appears over the quiet town of Elberta, Utah, the Wright household is already abuzz with the motion of sleepy children rising from a sound slumber. It is 6 a.m., and Kathy Wright, having deposited two of her sons at wrestling practice, begins to rouse Autumn, 17, Josh 15, and Amber, 14, in time to make the 20-mile journey to Payson High School, where the youngsters are members of the Payson FFA chapter. Before leaving, the three begin feeding the 300 head of dairy cattle on the 800-acre farm the Wrights call home.

Autumn, Josh and Amber sandwich FFA between afternoon feedings, work at the family store, and homework, as well as

basketball, wrestling and cheerleading practice. They're three of the ten Wright children now in high school, who find time to continue a family tradition as FFA members.

"In our house, you are almost expected to become active in three things: church activities, choir and the FFA," says Josh.

Autumn agrees. "We all have the same point of view about activities. Church is important to us. It's something we enjoy, and we like singing in the choir. We all think it's important to develop leadership skills, and we do that through FFA."

The younger Wright's interest in FFA was cultivated by their father, a Utah state legislator who received the American FFA Degree nearly 25 years ago. "I enjoyed my experience in FFA, and I'm glad the kids have been so involved in it. What I learned in FFA about agriculture and leadership has helped me in my career in politics, and I wanted the children to gain that same knowledge. To me, nothing prepares them for life in the real world more than FFA."

Involvement in FFA began with the oldest daughter, Charity. She was a state winner in dairy proficiency, received her American FFA degree and competed in meats judging, parliamentary procedure and prepared public speaking contests.

The success of her older sister impressed Shay, 20, now an agribusiness major at Brigham Young University. Following a stint as Utah state FFA secretary, Shay ran for national office this year and in 1991.

Dairy judging and proficiency contests are specialties of the Wrights. Charity, Shay and their sister Dusty, 19, won dairy judging on the state level on 1990. The tradition has carried on to the younger set, with the help of their father, the coach.

"I'm working on building my judging skills, and my father works with us," says Autumn. "He understands how each of us learns differently, and how some things come easier than others. He also understands that each of us looks at a cow differently."

While his sisters maintained separate dairy heifer projects for supervised agricultural experience projects, Josh also grows potatoes and appears in more than 60 parades a year with the family draft horses. He contracts with businesses such as Fron-

tier Pies to exhibit the horses in advertisements. "I like having different projects so I can develop new skills and responsibilities," says the high school sophomore.

Although FFA is important to them, the Wright children also work part-time at the convenience store and gas station the family partly owns. Mrs. Wright and a neighbor tend to the store while the kids are at school, and the kids share work duties after school and on Saturdays.

"Being the oldest, I had a lot of responsibilities," says 22-year-old Charity. "Shay, Dusty and I always got to go with my dad to shows and fairs and things because we were the oldest ones. It was fun, but...we'd have to help him tend the cattle and things like that."

"It was great growing up surrounded by brothers and sisters," she adds. "We were each other's best friends. It's kind of nice to see my brothers and sisters do things I did when I was their age, like cheerleading and FFA, but I also like to see them break away and try new things."

"We really enjoy being with each other," says Autumn. "and we liked doing things together, like going to the movies. We still do, but it's different without the older ones. We miss them a lot. Around the holidays, it's great having everybody back, and we sit and talk until we

drive our mom crazy."

Amber agrees. "It's always been fun growing up with all my brothers and sisters around. Everyone would play together and go places together, but now that everyone's getting older and leaving home, it's kind of sad because we don't get to see each other as often as we used to. But they're still there for us, and if we need help with something like dairy judging, they can help because they know what it's about."

With such a large family, are there any competitions among siblings for FFA awards? "There really isn't any serious competition," says Amber. "It feels good when you can do better than your older sister, but we all want to do better in competition. We all try to just do the best we can."

•••

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“Getting in front of the students and seeing the little kids faces light up made me want to be a teacher,” says junior Anjanette Bundy. Here, Mary Russel, left, and Julie Smalley teach kids about the environment.

It's Elementary

FFA members teach others about agriculture

By Lawinna McGary

Eleven elementary students with painted faces are fidgeting on a log...waiting for their chance to belt out these words: “We are the pollution solution! We want to save our earth! We want it healthy and beautiful! We know how much it’s worth!” They’d heard others let loose and use their lungs all morning, now it was their turn. After FFA member Mary Russell talks about reducing, reusing and recycling waste, she leads the group in a gut-busting rendition of the environmental chant.

Before the day is over the kids will plant seeds, learn about vegetables and animals—and the products that come from them—and listen to all kinds of stories about living on a farm.

“They’re having so much fun, I don’t even think the kids know they’re learn-

ing,” says junior Jill Bentley.

In the last six years, more than 4,000 kids (preschoolers through eighth graders) have been enthralled with agricultural quiz games, coloring worksheets and all sorts of other activities at Highland High School’s Agricultural Appreciation Day in Bakersfield, California.

FFA members have reached another 1,200 students through Agriculture In The Classroom (a program where FFA members go to elementary schools and teach them about agriculture), and still more with their fall festival.

Advisor Ric Lemucchi began these programs to show young students and their parents that agriculture is more than production farming. When he first started teaching at Highland many parents didn’t want their students in his classes. They

were afraid agriculture and FFA wouldn’t help prepare their children for college.

After years of educating elementary children, both parents and students realized the value of agricultural courses. Lemucchi says he doesn’t hear negative comments from parents anymore although more than 90 percent of his agricultural students are urban.

Where is milk grown?

Some students ask surprising questions, but the FFA members say they’re more often caught off guard by how much the kids know than by what they don’t know. “Second and third graders really shock you. They already know the parts of plants,” says Bentley, “the pre-schoolers are like a sponge. They remember everything we teach them. It’s like building blocks, they keep learning and learning every time they come out. After the eighth graders are done with you, you go look up answers to some of their questions.”

Members make sure they show eighth graders the agricultural classroom and let them know all about courses they can take when they get to high school. It’s an effective way to recruit. About a fourth of the current FFA members went to agricultural appreciation day. “We have no doubt the day is a big influence on getting students in the program,” says Lemucchi.

Brian Josephsen, sophomore FFA member, says before agricultural appreciation day, “I wasn’t planning on getting involved in FFA. I thought it was a stupid program for nerds. When I found out agriculture had a lot to do with science, it gave me interest.”

“My eighth grade year everyone had so much fun at agricultural appreciation day, half of the people I knew signed up for agriculture,” says Bentley.

Of course, these new FFA recruits get to keep going back to the agricultural appreciation days, agriculture in the classroom and fall festivals, only this time they’re the teachers.

Amy Core plans to teach agriculture, so she says being in front of a group of kids gave her experience she’ll need. “You learn to deal with students in a proper way when they act up. It teaches you to be patient.” Karen Hins says she’s learned more respect for her high school teachers. “It shows us what they go through every day.” ●●●

Do You Have Star Potential?

The Star Farmer and Star In Agribusiness tell their success stories

By Lynn Hamilton

Here's how Star Farmer Kelby Paske and Star In Agribusiness Chad Wells succeeded with their supervised agricultural experience programs (SAE).

Wells, of McMinnville, Tennessee, began helping out in his neighbor's nursery at age 12. When he joined the Warren County FFA Chapter, he turned his love of plants into his SAE, and started landscaping and growing his own nursery stock.

By the time he graduated from high school, Wells' part-time business had grown into a full-time job, and Middle Tennessee Landscaping and Nursery was born. As word got around about the quality of his work, his customer list grew.

Sales have nearly doubled each year. Wells now has six greenhouses, with plans

to build about ten more.

The love of farming runs deep in Kelby Paske's family. Three generations of this Arlington, Wisconsin, FFA member's family have made their livelihood from the soil, and Kelby made up his mind to do the same at an early age.

While he was an eighth grader, Paske rented 30 acres of land. When he joined the DeForest FFA Chapter the next year, he expanded to 200 acres. Custom combining and field work rounded out his SAE.

He continued to expand, and last year planted more than 1,600 acres of corn, soybeans and peas.

Even after the crops are harvested, Paske keeps busy with a trucking operation he started with his father in 1987.

Now at age 22, Paske plans to continue



Winners Kelby Paske, left, and Chad Wells.

on his successful path in farming, and hopes to start buying his own land soon. His goal is to farm 2,000 acres, where he says, "I think I will be content." ...

Tips for Success

1. Find an SAE you love, and would like to work in as a career.
2. Believe in your project and your abilities. "If you don't believe in it, don't even do it," advises Wells.
3. Get as much experience in your chosen area as possible.
4. Keep accurate and up-to-date records.
5. Stress quality in whatever you do.

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Tractors for Nigeria

FFA members help solve Africa's hunger problems

By Karen Lafferty Lunny

Why should people go hungry in a world where technology can prevent it?" asks Chris Akhimien, who witnessed starvation in his native Nigeria. This question haunted him until 1990 when, during his graduate studies in agricultural economics at Kansas State University, he began a program called Tractors For Our Daily Bread to give modern equipment to Nigeria.

He says his program is different than many African relief efforts because it provides a long-term solution for Nigeria's food needs. He began collecting 8-N Fords and the accompanying equipment because these tractors are small, easy to operate, and simple to maintain. Kansas farmers, church groups, and organizations like Concordia High School's FFA chapter

helped Akhimien gather and repair the farm equipment.

Where is Nigeria?

Nigeria, in Western Africa, covers about 650 miles north to south and 700 miles east to west, (roughly the size of Oklahoma and Texas combined). Its soils vary from sandy, swamp types along the Atlantic coast to well-drained, iron-rich soils in the uplands. Fertility is low, particularly in the south, where Nigerians get more than 120 inches of rain per year. Crops can only be grown in one-third of Nigeria, while about one-fifth of the land

is suitable for pasture. Akhimien says, since the land is limited, improved technology is the best way to increase Nigeria's food production.

After learning about Nigerian agriculture, Concordia FFA members decided to restore machinery for Akhimien. "The students were excited to get into the shop and work with their hands," says Mike Womochil, FFA advisor. Womochil says this project increased his students' mechanical skills and their international agricultural awareness. They also worked on their public relations abilities when they advertised for community donations.

"Restoring the equipment has been a great learning experience. We've learned that a strong agricultural basis is needed in Nigeria so their country can succeed in other areas," says Ryan Cairns, a junior at Concordia. Cairns says he would jump at the chance to travel to Nigeria and help train the farmers to use and maintain the tractors.

Sixteen-year-old Jeff Kindel, also from Concordia, is proud that his chapter is helping another country. "In a way we are bringing the whole world closer together."

How can you help?

"Gathering, restoring and shipping the tractors is the first step. What we really need now is money to get the farms in Nigeria started," says Akhimien. To send donations or receive more information on Tractors for Our Daily Bread, phone Chris Akhimien at (913)776-7902 or write Tractors For Our Daily Bread, Inc., 2711 Amherst, Manhattan, Kansas, 66502.



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Ryan Cairns, left, Chris Akhimien, Ty Braun, Jeff Kindel and Shawn Parker are shown with a tractor that can cultivate several small farms and mean the average farmer can feed himself and 15 other people.

FFA IN ACTION

California, Florida, Ohio, Texas

Blue and Gold Halloween

The Sutter, California, FFA held their annual pet parade and invited children to dress themselves and their pets in costumes.

.....

As a fund raiser, Wheatland, California, operated a haunted house for students and community members.

.....

The Fullerton, California, Chapter hosted a safe recreational night for members and their friends at the school farm. Activities included a dance, costume contest and a pumpkin carving contest. Prizes were donated by local businesses.

.....

Genoa, Ohio, members presented a program about Halloween safety for kindergarten through third grade students. FFA speakers addressed how to pick a safe neighborhood and how to make sure your candy is safe. After the program, FFA members took the children through a haunted house they created. People had to donate a food item to the FFA-sponsored holiday food drive to get into the event.



The Ysleta, Texas, FFA, below, coordinated a BOAC project with a Halloween theme. Members gave food and educational literature to 50 needy elementary children. McDonald's helped in the effort.



Missouri

Sand in Their Shoes

The Carthage, Missouri, Chapter has a sand volleyball tournament to attract members to winter meetings. They set it up in the shop and members organize teams to play after meetings. (Angel Dunkle)

(Continued on Page 30)



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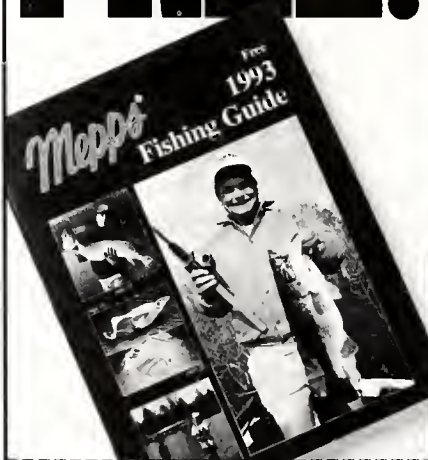


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FFA

FFA IN ACTION

(Continued from Page 29)

Ohio

Toss A Ringer

The New Lexington, Ohio, FFA held a horseshoe tournament. Sixteen members attended. Winners were Denise and Danny Kunkler, front row left. They received their plaque from Jim Knisley, four-time horseshoe champion, who came to the event to help the members learn how to toss a horseshoe and understand the rules of the game. (Kelly Snider)



California

Arm Your Way Into the Spotlight

The annual arm wrestling tournament is a major event during FFA Week in Red Bluff, California. The three-day contest, which is open to both women and men, attracts a standing room only crowd. During the final day of competition, arm wrestlers are escorted into the gym with

spotlights and Rocky music playing. Local media cover the fun event according to reporter, Brent Hiebert. Winners of each weight class get hooded sweat shirts emblazoned with bulging arms and declaring them FFA Arm Wrestling Champs. ...

Kentucky

Pride Demonstration



The Garrard County FFA in Lancaster, Kentucky, has established a color guard to present the American flag at home football games. The event has created greater citizenship awareness in the community and has brought positive recognition for the FFA members.



New Mexico

Lights, Camera, Safety Action

The Goddard Chapter of Roswell, New Mexico, created a major media blitz for National Farm Safety Week. FFA members gathered statistics, wrote scripts, had filming done on some of their farms, and helped host five 30-minute television broadcasts on a local station's farm news program.

The final show featured bloopers created by the members during production of their safety spots. ...

FFA IN ACTION

Florida
Meet With the Stars



Members of the Graceville, Florida, Chapter met Tracy Lawrence at the 1992 National Peanut Festival in Dothan, Alabama. Members were given photo passes before the concert and presented him with an FFA plaque. He autographed the article about him that appeared in a recent issue of *FFA New Horizons*. Pictured left to right with Lawrence are Amber Baumgardner, Shannon Smith and Susan Shiver.

Arizona
Record Breaking Percentages

The chapter in Antelope, Arizona, averages about 53 members and usually has about seven or eight seniors in agriculture. Since 1983, there have been 27 members receive the American FFA Degree. However, of the 16 seniors who have graduated in 1991 and 1992, 15 have earned the degree and one is a candidate in 1993.

The chapter is also proud of it's 100 percent participation in Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs. Recent graduates have enterprises in cabbage and lettuce production; alfalfa production; sheep, cattle and swine production. ...



"Eighty-five years of spitwads had finally closed the old study hall."

(Continued on Page 32)



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FFA IN ACTION

(Continued from Page 31)

California and Idaho Seeds for Other Parts of the World

More than a ton of seeds have been shipped to high schools in Costa Rica and Panama so students there can learn about agriculture and support their families. The Gonzales, California, Chapter and the Nampa, Idaho, Chapter packaged the seeds for international shipment to the two countries.

The seeds were contributed through the National FFA Foundation by Asgrow Seed Company and delivered to the chapters for packaging. This is the second year for such a project.

Seeds sent to Costa Rica included broccoli, carrots, lettuce, radish, tomato and squash. Seeds to Panama included beans, sweet corn, beets, cabbage, celery, cauliflower, cucumbers and dill. ...



Lawrence Velasquez, left, and Riocardo Villacorta of the Gonzales FFA boxed seeds for shipment to other countries.

Washington Hole-In-One Fund Raiser



The Odessa, Washington, Chapter sponsors hole-in-one golf tournaments during the town's annual German festival.

The first year a lucky entrant hit a hole-in-one and walked away with \$10,000 cash. The chapter made \$800. The chapter purchased an insurance policy through the National Hole-In One Association to cover the grand prize.

Since there was a winner the first year, the second contest attracted big crowds. The FFA worked cooperatively with the local golf course and Ford dealer and offered a 1992 Explorer worth \$20,000 as the prize. No one won the big one this year but it was a \$1,500 financial success for the chapter. (*Jeff Fantz, Reporter*) ...

The grand prize was displayed at the golf course by members, left to right, Phillip McClanahan; Brian Schorzman, vice president; and Ryan Mansfield, president.

MARKETPLACE

Oklahoma Team Victory



Team members, left to right, are Jeff Able, Russell Fent, Brent Hopkins, Mike Mayfield and advisor Phillip Hofschulte.

The Wyandotte, Oklahoma, livestock judging team brought home the championship from the National Western Stock Show in Denver. They represented their state in the competition with 27 other teams. Brent Hopkins took first place individual honors in the contest, Jeff Able took third and Russell Fent, fifth. (*Becky Hill, Reporter*)

My Life in Russia

(Continued from Page 10)

storage box for the balcony. They also had cabbage, carrots, apples, tea, vodka, beans and oil stored up. The philosophy was... "Buy while it's here. You may not see it again for a while."

Mom put a dish of chicken soup on the table and sat across from me. She spoke in slow, easy Russian so I could understand.

"Today I went to the store. We need milk, bread, sugar, butter. This morning only bread. So I go back in the afternoon to get milk. They had sugar too, but I can't pay that!" she shrugged. "We look in the window, and go home."

Tuesday and Friday nights are special. My bath nights! I was used to the traditional American shower-a-day scene. One night, the first week I was here, my host mom said, "You wash your hair too often. It's not healthy." OK I can adapt. That's what this program is for, right? ...

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GET TO KNOW



Travis Park

Travis D. Park

Busted! As the son of two teachers, Travis Park didn't get away with much in school. The Trafalgar, Indiana, grapevine was too fast. "You couldn't step out of line at school at all. Mom and Dad would find out before we (Travis and his two younger brothers, Aaron and Jeremy) would find out anything was wrong."

Always under the microscope of teacher scrutiny, Travis preformed well. "The teachers expected you to know and follow all the rules because you were the teachers' son. You've got to try to come up with all of the answers. When they ask for a 10-page paper you do 12. It conditions you. I didn't raise my hand unless I knew what the answer was. If I said something that was just a little bit ridiculous they'd get a big laugh, and dad would carry it home."

Even before he started school, Travis had responsibilities at home such as washing dishes, burning trash, keeping the wood burning stove going, and feeding livestock. He already knew how to work. Making the transition to keeping up with school duties wasn't so tough.

"If I didn't get A plusses, I was severely disappointed," he says. "I remember staying up until 2 or 3 a.m. working on papers. I'd go home, do chores, then go straight to my room and study." It was no surprise when Travis graduated with a 4.17 grade point average—on a 4.0 scale.

Having both parents teach was a big benefit says Travis. "I feel like I grew up with them trying to form me into a model student and person. Their values from the teaching profession came through." Of course, the perks didn't hurt either.

"Getting a hall pass at school was not a problem. Other teachers would get me out

of class, too."

There were rough spots though. "In other students' eyes good things happen to you in school only because your parents are teachers. Anytime I did anything right or above and beyond normal, I always gave an explanation of why I did it and how I got there."



Play time! From left to right, Travis, 8; Jeremy, 4; and Aaron, 6.

School pressure was intense at times. "In middle school, teachers wanted me to do algebra. Finally mom and dad said don't worry about it." He adds, "My parents wanted me to take the SAT [college entrance exam] as a seventh grader. I was so discouraged I remember crying for nights."

"There were times when I got uptight about my grades—especially in math. I dropped a math class in high school. At the time I was so incredibly lost, and I wasn't getting an A. But I wish I had finished."

Travis' social life was also affected. "I didn't go cruising at all, because all of the

teachers talked about the students who cruised. Looking back I wish I'd gone. It looked like fun."

"I can remember sitting in pep sessions at school. I wouldn't get as crazy as others because it wasn't expected.

"In high school, most of my emotions were kept inside. It's a lot healthier to let some of your emotions show and to let other people know what you're feeling. It's getting easier now. I'm not scrutinized as much. Travis Park can be a little bit more of himself instead of what people expect him to be."

Now, says Travis, he goes "all decked out in black and gold" to ball games at Purdue with high school friends. "They probably recognize me as one of the most changed people from our class."

Although image is still important to Travis, he's more confident in doing what he believes is right, no matter what others think. "I know what's expected. If I see value to it I conform to that expectation. If I don't see the value, I don't conform. I don't try to be anything I'm not." •••

•21-year-old Travis plans to teach agriculture after he finishes his degree at Purdue University.

•His brother Aaron is 19, and a FFA state officer. Jeremy, 17, is chapter FFA president.



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