



NEW

Fall 2018

HORIZONS

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**WEATHER
WOES**

FFA
CHAPTERS RALLY
FOR DISASTER RELIEF

**Alumni &
Supporters**

New name,
same game

**Students
in Nevada
flourish with
pomegranates
and more**

**SWEET
SUCCESS**



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GROW SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

In March of 2017, devastating wildfires swept through Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado, torching countless farms and ranches. Crops, cattle, barns and machinery were lost in the disaster, and members of the Sanilac FFA from the Sanilac Career Center in Peck, Mich., were inspired to help with recovery efforts. So, they put their spring break to good use. They rented a bus and drove to Kansas to help ranchers tear down fences and posts that had been damaged or destroyed. They even turned the burned barbed wire into something beautiful – decorative “tumbleweeds” that are sold to purchase new rolls of barbed wire for the ranchers impacted by the fires.

It's an impactful story that has played out many times by FFA chapters across the country. In “When Disaster Strikes,” page 10, we share a sample of the kindness and courage shown by chapters in the middle of nature's fiercest weather and climate events.

In “The Fruits of Their Labor,” page 16, we share how the Moapa Valley FFA Chapter in Nevada found success with pomegranates grown on the school farm. “This is one of the best places in the world for pomegranates to grow,” says FFA advisor Denise O'Toole. People from all over the western U.S. attend the local Pomegranate Art and Craft Festival each fall, where the chapter sells fresh fruit. “The kids wear their FFA jackets, talk about FFA and sell pomegranates,” O'Toole says. Sweet!

In this issue, you'll also find articles about the new National FFA Alumni and Supporters, common causes of farm injuries and tips for staying safe, a Q&A with professional baseball player and former member Tyler White and more.

Enjoy and have a happy fall!



Justin Davey
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THE FFA VISION

Students whose lives are impacted by FFA and agricultural education will achieve academic and personal growth, strengthen American agriculture and provide leadership to build healthy local communities, a strong nation and a sustainable world.

THE FFA MISSION

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

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MISSION

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resource systems.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

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

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The National FFA Organization is a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise state association, local chapter or individual member activities. Educational materials are developed by FFA in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education as a service to state and local agricultural education agencies.



Quiz: CONVENTION BY THE NUMBERS

The 91st National FFA Convention & Expo is quickly approaching. Test your knowledge about the impact of last year's national convention.

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. How many people attended the 2017 national convention? | A. 85 |
| 2. How many American FFA Degrees were awarded last year? | B. 4,071 |
| 3. How many American Star Awards were given at the 2017 national convention? | C. 2,000 |
| 4. How many volunteers contributed to the success of last year's convention? | D. 67,006 |
| 5. The 2017 national convention attracted the attention of how many media outlets? | E. 4 |
| 6. How many people were reached through social media by stories told about the 2017 national convention? | F. 4 million |

Answers: 1. D; 2. B; 3. E; 4. C; 5. A; 6. F

BLUE Jackets, GOLD Standards

COUNTLESS THINGS MAKE FFA MEMBERS UNIQUE, BUT ONE THING BINDS THEM TO A LEGACY THAT SPANS NEARLY 100 YEARS: THE BLUE JACKET. HERE, A FEW MEMBERS SHARE WHAT IT MEANS TO THEM.



"I hope to inspire people to try new things and to live life to the fullest while I'm in the jacket. I wish to always have

courage and to be kind in this jacket, which might encourage people to join FFA."

— Erin Sterling, Bradford FFA, Starke, Fla.

"The jacket gives me a sense of purpose. I feel honored to wear it and to be a part of a tradition that was started before I was born. Having my own jacket allows me to connect with other people who share a passion not only for FFA but also for animals and agriculture."

— Rachel Reedy, Genesee Career Institute FFA, Flint, Mich.



"My dad and grandpa both have their own jackets. I could show mine to my kids and encourage them to join the world of agriculture and become a helpful part of our community."

— Payton Moe, Deubrook FFA, White, S.D.



CALENDAR

Sept. 5:

SAE GRANT APPLICATION OPENS

Apply for a \$1,000 grant to start or to expand your SAE. Visit FFA.org and to the Grants & Scholarships webpage for information and to apply.

Sept. 7-8:

REGION SIX (B) NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Registration is currently open for this RDC in Middletown, Va. Visit FFA.org/gotorde for more information.

Sept. 20:

NATIONAL TEACH AG DAY

School-based agricultural education is worth celebrating! Share the story of agricultural education's importance and effectiveness with an event. Visit naae.org/teachag/ for ideas from the National Teach Ag Campaign.

Sept. 21-22:

REGION THREE (B) NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Registration is currently open for this RDC in Madison, Wis. Visit FFA.org/gotorde for more information.

Oct. 24-27:

91ST NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION & EXPO

Join tens of thousands of other attendees in Indianapolis to celebrate FFA, take part in competitions, receive world-class education and more. Registration is open. Visit FFA.org/convention for more information.

Nov. 15:

LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR SAE GRANT

The online SAE grant application process closes at 8 p.m. ET. Visit FFA.org and to the Grants & Scholarships webpage for information and to apply.

AG ON THE AIR

If you've ever stayed home while friends and family attended the National FFA Convention & Expo, you've likely noticed – and even actively tuned into – RFD-TV's live broadcasts of the event. RFD-TV brings viewers gavel-to-gavel coverage of the convention, including keynote speakers, musical performances, national officer elections and more. While the coverage is appreciated by FFA, it's the highlight of RFD-TV's year, says Patrick Gottsch, founder and president of RFD-TV.

"Not only does it provide a way for the more than 650,000 FFA members, parents and teachers who do not go to Indianapolis to watch

all sessions live, but also it is a huge step forward in RFD-TV's effort to reconnect city with country again," Gottsch says. "Each year, I receive volumes of email from people all over our country who are absolutely amazed with FFA after watching the convention on RFD-TV. Many had no idea that such an organization exists, and then they want to know how they can get FFA into their own school systems."

What's more, RFD-TV's Rural Radio channel airs the *FFA Today* episodes each Saturday. Rural Radio is the only national radio station devoted exclusively to rural programming, and the *FFA Today* show features stories of service, entrepreneurship and

innovation by our dynamic members, advisors and chapters. The show also features interesting agricultural careers and industries, and it highlights the incredible speaking and musical talents of members from across the country.

TUNE IN!

RFD-TV is on Dish 231 and DirecTV 345, or you can check with your local cable system. The 2018 National FFA Convention & Expo will also be broadcast on The Cowboy Channel (Dish 232 and DirecTV 604). Visit rfdtv.com for complete TV and radio show listings and schedules, and listen to the *FFA Today* radio show on RFD-TV's Rural Radio station on SiriusXM channel 147.

A BLAST FROM ~~THE PAST~~ TODAY.

FFA members from across the country contributed 75 items that define farming and FFA today. A future generation of ag leaders will open the capsule in 2093. See the collection in the Georgia Street Lobby at the 2018 National FFA Convention... before we bury it.



JOHN DEERE



THE feed



Talking Points: CLIMATE CHANGE

TRACTOR *Training*

THIS INDIANA HIGH SCHOOL ACQUIRED A HIGH-TECH TRACTOR FOR \$1. YES, \$1!

Have you ever wanted to sit in the driver's seat of a shiny new tractor? Agriculture students at Seymour High School in Indiana get to do just that.

In June 2018, the school had the opportunity to lease a brand-new Case IH Magnum 220 tractor fully equipped with the latest technology for only \$1. The tractor retails for just under \$300,000 and gives students a hands-on education about operating farm machinery.

The deal was made possible by the tractor's manufacturer and Jacobi Sales Inc., a local Case IH distributor dedicated to supporting the future of agriculture and youth who will one day work in the industry.

"We will be able to train our students to operate the tractor and to utilize the latest auto-steer and GPS technology," says Jeanna Eppey, Seymour High School FFA advisor.

Seymour High School is

also completing a \$2 million ag science and research facility on the school farm, which has 137 tillable acres. With the addition of the tractor, students will have the opportunity to plant in the field and not only gain basic tractor operation skills but also learn the basics of setting up and utilizing the high-tech computer systems.

"Our hope is to ignite an interest in students to pursue further training or education in agriculture," Eppey says. "From engineering and technology to being a skilled employee for local farmers, the opportunities are there. We just need to introduce students to these opportunities and motivate them to pursue education and careers in these areas."

Seymour High School will use the tractor for 150 hours, and then it will be sold. The school will be able to order a new tractor for as long as Case IH continues to offer the program to secondary schools.

THE WORLD IS FULL OF CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS. IN FACT, SOMETIMES THE ONLY THING PEOPLE CAN AGREE ON IS THAT THEY DISAGREE. CLIMATE CHANGE FALLS SOLIDLY INTO THIS CATEGORY. WHILE THE REALITIES AND EFFECTS ARE HEAVILY DEBATED, THOSE WHO AGREE SAY IT LEADS TO A NUMBER OF EFFECTS ON THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY. BE PREPARED FOR A FEW COMMON QUESTIONS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOW IT IMPACTS AGRICULTURE.

Q: ARE CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL WARMING THE SAME THING?

A: Most people don't realize there is a big difference between these two buzz phrases. *Global warming* is the current and predicted increase in the Earth's air temperature, which is thought to be caused by greenhouse gases. *Climate change* describes the shift in long-term weather patterns, such as precipitation. Climate change is the more appropriate term for describing climate trends.

Q: IS CLIMATE CHANGE NORMAL?

A: Yes and no. Climate change is shaped by humans and by nature. People impact the climate through the use of fossil fuels and by converting ecosystems for human use. Occurrences such as continental drift and changes in the Earth's position relative to the sun are natural factors that impact climate change.

Q: HOW DOES CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT AGRICULTURE?

A: Droughts and floods have changed in frequency and severity, which can pose challenges for farmers and ranchers. It may become more difficult to grow crops, raise livestock, and catch fish in the same places by using the same methods that have been relied upon in the past.



I HEAR THE *Train* a Comin’

For 75 years, gold-level FFA sponsor CSX – a major transportation company – has brought Christmas joy to thousands of children and families in rural Appalachia. Every year, on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, CSX’s Santa Train chugs along 110 miles of track through the mountains of Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee.

A holiday tradition since 1943, the Santa Train stops at 14 locations between Pikeville, Ky., and Kingsport, Tenn. The train’s passenger cars are loaded with more than 15 tons and over \$200,000 worth of gifts, including toys, books, backpacks, fresh fruit, candy, coats and meal vouchers, which are distributed at each stop. The gifts and meal vouchers are donated by CSX, Food City, the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce, Soles4Souls and Appalachian Power.

“CSX and its predecessor railroads have been part of this community for many years,” says Leslie Higgins, manager, stakeholder events and crisis planning. “The Santa Train connects CSX, its partners and employees with the local citizens in a special way during this annual season of giving.”

FFA members have been among the many volunteers to help make the Santa Train possible. At each stop, volunteers carry bags of gifts off the train, and Santa and his elves distribute toys from the back of the train to the enthusiastic crowd. In addition to volunteers from CSX, FFA and local communities, country music stars, including Wynonna Judd, Amy Grant and Ricky Skaggs, have also passed out gifts along the way.

The Santa Train has become one of Appalachia’s most anticipated holiday traditions.

“The reaction from people is genuine surprise and appreciation,” Higgins says.

– By Jessica Mozo



HOW TOMORROW PROVIDES

Whether it ends up in your cupboard today or your driveway tomorrow, CSX moves the essentials of life every hour of every day.

HOW TOMORROW MOVES



NATIONAL FFA OFFICER Q&A



YOUR LEGACY PLATFORM IS CENTERED ON HONORING OUR FOUNDATION AS AN AGRICULTURAL YOUTH ORGANIZATION. WHICH NATIONAL FFA PROGRAMS HAVE PROVIDED YOU WITH STRONG AGRICULTURAL FOUNDATIONS?



Breanna Holbert



NATIONAL FFA PRESIDENT

My supervised agricultural experience (SAE)! By experiencing mistakes when learning to raise poultry at home, researching

organic farming practices when teaching young campers, talking to industry professionals while investigating which practices are most efficient for growing geraniums, I was able to take a risk, apply what I learned, and try again. For me, that's where true growth happened.



Erica Baier



NATIONAL FFA SECRETARY

Career development events (CDEs) definitely gave me a new perspective on agriculture and how I could

continue to be involved past our family cow-calf operation. Specifically, in the ag sales CDE, it blew my mind to see industry professionals taking the time to both coach and judge our competition. Sharing the same passion with them helped me realize how big, yet personal, agriculture truly is.



Ian Bennett



SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

The National Agriscience Fair gave me a strong foundation in agriculture because it allowed me to research, develop and create solutions for problems facing agriculture today.

We must improve agriculture going forward, and the agriscience fair allows students to become involved in that process. We must be able to think critically about the way we operate today and find better solutions moving forward. Doing this in the agriscience fair made my life better and my future brighter.



Gracie Furnish



EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

My involvement in the prepared public speaking leadership development event and agriscience fair has broadened my agricultural knowledge. I had to be able to accurately and confidently speak about my topics and answer tough questions. These experiences helped to broaden my perspective and helped me

learn how to be an effective advocate. Also, every time I go to a conference or national convention, I love learning from people about agriculture in their state and community!



Piper Merritt



CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

From the advice I received from my advisors and mentors to the life skills I learned in every aspect of creating my business, my SAE created my strongest tie to agriculture. As we have traveled the country this year, we have seen such unique SAEs that allow students to personalize what agriculture means

to them. I'm excited to see how our legacy platform shapes FFA members who take ownership of the industry through their SAE projects.



Bryce Cluff



WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

As the national officers selected our legacy platform centered on highlighting the importance of agriculture within our organization, I reflected on the areas of FFA that connected me to the industry. The most prevalent was my active involvement in career development events. It was there that I gained a better understanding of the scope

of our organization and the industry we represent. From veterinary science, ag sales, marketing plans, agronomy and livestock evaluation, my knowledge about the opportunities for me within agriculture greatly improved.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL FFA TEE



ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION!

ORDER YOURS TODAY
AT ShopFFA.org

In celebration of our revered history and the countdown to our 100-year anniversary in 2028, FFA has created the LEARN, LEAD, SUCCEED 2018-2019 Annual Tee.

Add to your collection with this year's tee! It honors the values of our organization and the members who rise to the challenge of Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live and Living to Serve.



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

Safety

While farming and ranching are noble and important professions, the reality is that some tools common to the industry have potential to cause harm. Farming is one of the most dangerous occupations in the nation, and young people are not immune to harm. According to the National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC), one youth dies in an agriculture-related incident every three days, and incidents among youth ages 10 to 19 are on the rise.

“Because farming is a dangerous environment, you need to take a few precautions,” says Marsha Salzwedel, youth agricultural safety specialist for the NFMC and the National Children’s Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (NCCRAHS).

Salzwedel shares the top five causes of farm injuries and tips for staying safe. - By Jodi Helmer



TRACTORS:

Youths should be at least 14 years old to drive a tractor. Even then, Salzwedel notes that teens should never take the controls after dark or in bad weather, and no passengers should be allowed. The use of cell phones should be banned, and equipment should be shut down before calling for help.



LIVESTOCK:

“Farm animals can be unpredictable,” says Salzwedel. In addition to wearing proper attire (including steel-toe boots with gripping soles) when working with livestock, plan an escape route before getting into a pasture or pen – and be prepared to use it if an animal charges.

ATVs:

Riders under 16 years of age are often too small to manage corners and turns on full-size ATVs. All riders should wear helmets, long pants and closed-toe shoes, and they need to maintain a safe speed. Salzwedel also suggests retrofitting machines with crush-protection devices.



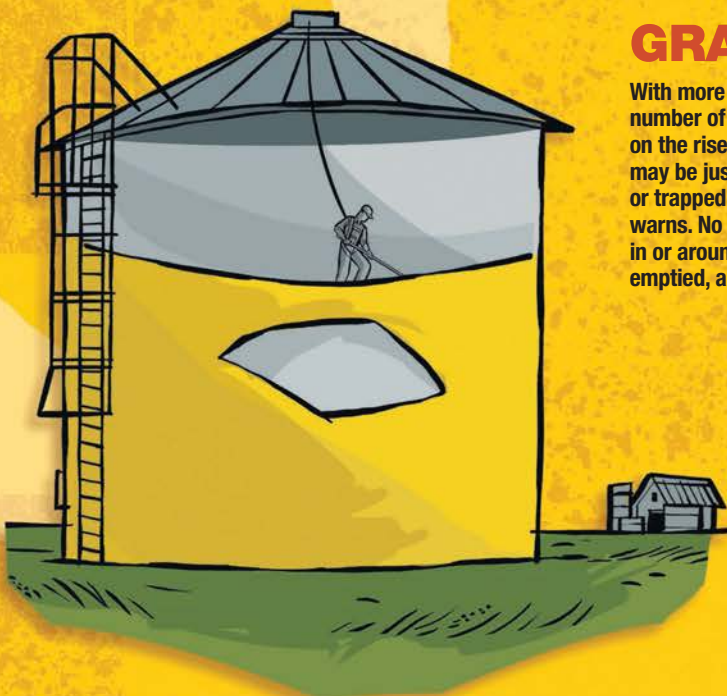
MANURE PITS:

Manure pits are drowning hazards. When working near pits, equipment can slide in and be swallowed up before operators can get free. Fencing a pit is the safest option, according to Salzwedel, and will help prevent younger siblings from accidentally drowning. She also suggests adding a cement bump that will stop equipment from sliding into a pit.



GRAIN BINS:

With more small farms adding grain bins, the number of reported injuries and fatalities is on the rise. Even when grain looks settled, it may be just a crust. "You can end up engulfed or trapped in a matter of seconds," Salzwedel warns. No one under the age of 18 should be in or around the bin when it's being filled or emptied, and lifelines should always be worn.



STAY SAFE!

Fortunately, many guidelines and programs help make agriculture safer so that those in the industry can continue working hard to help feed and clothe the world. For comprehensive ag safety checklists, visit [CultivateSafety.org/Resources](https://www.cultivate-safety.org/resources).

AMID SOME OF THE FIERCEST WEATHER EVENTS IN U.S.
HISTORY, FFA CHAPTERS LEND A HELPING HAND TO THOSE
IN NEED – AND DISCOVER THEMSELVES IN THE PROCESS.

STORY BY JESSICA WALKER BOEHM

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

KANSAS

A full-page background image showing a vibrant sky with a rainbow arching over a dense forest of evergreen trees on a hillside. The clouds are thick and white, with the rainbow's colors clearly visible. The forest is lush green, and the overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

It is said that the best predictor of the future is the past. Unfortunately, weather and climate disasters have occurred all along, and they show no signs of stopping. In fact, the U.S. experienced a historic year of such disasters in 2017. In total, the U.S. was impacted by 16 separate billion-dollar disaster events, according to Climate.

gov, including three tropical cyclones, eight severe storms, two inland floods, a crop freeze, drought and wildfire.

When disaster strikes, though, it's not uncommon to find FFA members across the country at the center of relief efforts in their local communities and beyond. They often take the skills and lessons they've learned through the organization and use these talents to serve those in need.

In addition to helping others, many FFA members change their lives and perspectives through these unforgettable experiences, as well.

They discover the value of community service and learn just how supportive the U.S. agriculture community is.

BEAUTY FROM ASHES

After devastating wildfires swept through states including Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado the week of March 5, 2017, the Sanilac FFA from the Sanilac Career Center in Peck, Mich., sprang into action.

Members were inspired by an initial convoy that headed to farms on the High Plains with supplies on March 17, led by a group of volunteers now known as Ag Community Relief, a Michigan-based nonprofit organization that helps farmers and ranchers devastated by wildfires, drought and floods across the U.S. On April 7, during spring break, a team of Sanilac FFA and Sanilac County 4-H members followed suit, renting a bus and driving to Kansas to help ranchers tear down fences and posts that had been damaged or destroyed in the fires.

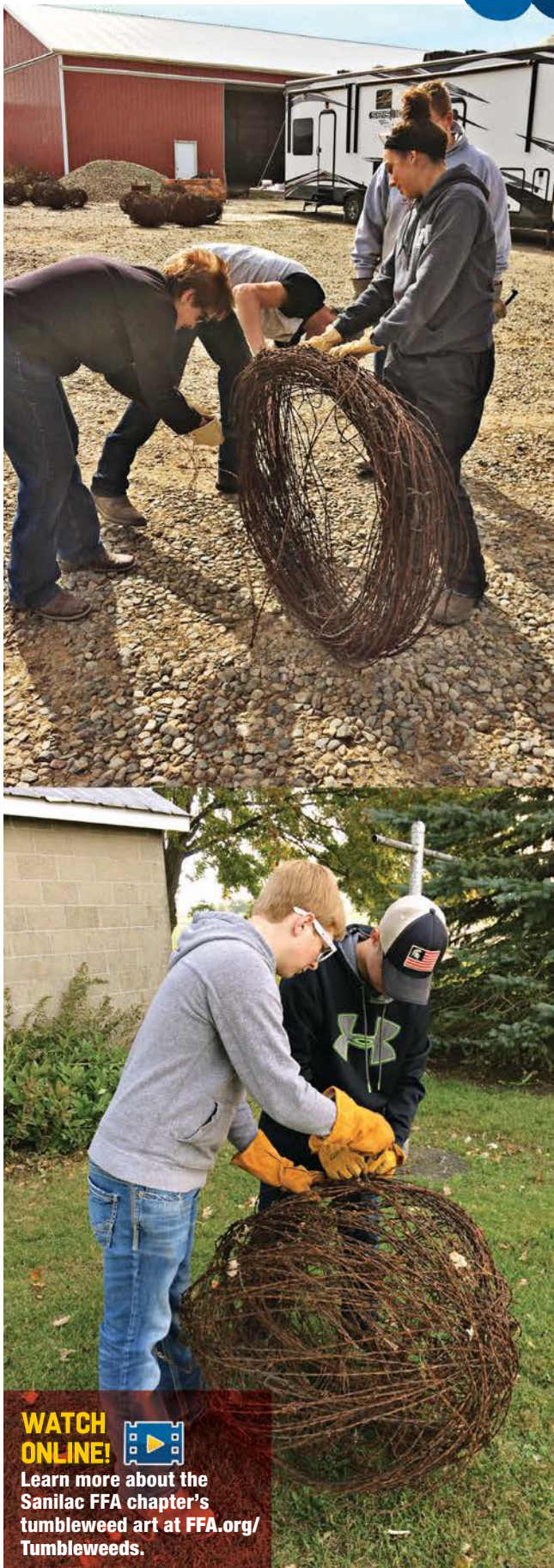
"The ranchers were so grateful for these kids, who volunteered their time, because it gave them hope and showed them that they were not forgotten," says Christy Gordon, who serves as secretary of the Ag Community Relief organization's board. "They were reminded that people truly care. There were some great relationships formed during this difficult time, and it was a life-changing experience for many of those young people."

After returning home on April 10, Sanilac FFA members rolled the burned barbed wire into balls to create decorative tumbleweeds and other crafts, which they sold to support Ag Community Relief's efforts and to purchase new rolls of barbed wire for the ranchers impacted by the fires. To date, hundreds of rolls have been donated, and more will be on the way soon.

"The students were excited about the tumbleweed project, and they made each creation very personal," says Robert Sollman, Sanilac FFA advisor. "Each tumbleweed included a tag that identified the fire and ranch the barbed wire came from, so the people buying them could feel a connection to those affected by the devastation. The project is ongoing; we still have barbed wire left over, and the students plan to create new tumbleweeds and decorations so they can continue raising funds for those in need."

As a way of thanking young volunteers for their selfless-

CALIFORNIA



**WATCH
ONLINE!**



Learn more about the Sanilac FFA chapter's tumbleweed art at FFA.org/Tumbleweeds.

These students could have sat at home and waited it out, but they chose to show up and help.” Emmalee Casillas says.

ness, as well as encouraging them to continue donating their time and participating in community service, Ag Community Relief has established a scholarship fund for FFA and 4-H students, clubs and chapters in Michigan and other states.

“We want to keep this wonderful relationship going between FFA, 4-H and Ag Community Relief, and we want to support these kids as much as we can,” Gordon says.

ANIMAL INSTINCTS

When wildfires broke out in Napa County, Calif., on the night of Oct. 8, 2017, Napa FFA advisor Emmalee Casillas made the decision to open up Vintage Farm at Vintage High School (VHS), where her FFA members regularly took care of animals, to livestock and pets in the area that were in danger. She quickly posted on Facebook to let her followers know that their animals were welcome at the farm, and she almost immediately began getting text messages from FFA members asking if they could help.

“Seven kids came out that very first night,” Casillas says. “We scrambled to empty out all of our pens at the farm and filled as many buckets with water as we could. Then we got a call to go help someone, which was

never the plan. We thought people would bring their livestock to us. That’s when we started traveling around with our truck and trailer to rescue animals.”

For the next 70 hours, Casillas and that seven-member FFA crew worked around the clock. Stephen Cole, a 16-year-old sophomore at VHS and a member of the Napa FFA, was part of that group. His primary jobs were preparing the pens to accommodate the animals and treating them when they arrived.

“I stayed at the farm and handled the vet tech tasks,” Cole says. “I knew the animals were going to be coming in with respiratory issues from smoke inhalation, and I was prepared with medication. Thanks to my teachers, I knew what to do and what it would take to make sure every animal was taken care of.”

Vintage Farm housed more than 200 animals, including horses, cows, alpacas and llamas, and Cole continued to help care for them in the days following the fires. He remembers working alongside the head veterinarian from the University of California, Davis, which, he says, was an unforgettable experience that reinforced his dream of becoming a large animal veterinarian in the future.

“We took care of the

This page, top: Sanilac FFA members and volunteers prepare to turn charred barbed wire into “tumbleweed” lawn art. Below: Zac Molesworth and Logan Leen finish a tumbleweed masterpiece. Opposite, top: Napa FFA advisor Emmalee Casillas (left) pauses with member Jack Odell (center) and alumni and supporter Johnny Albers (right). Opposite, middle and bottom: Vintage Farm hosted more than 200 animals, including horses, cows, alpacas and llamas. Here, members provide care.

animals like they were our own,” Cole says. “It was challenging, but we all came together as a chapter and a community and got the job done. It was definitely a life-changing experience, and it’s something that will stick with me forever.”

The experience changed Casillas’ life, too, and she says she was impressed with how her students rose to the occasion and worked together as a team. She says more than 40 Napa FFA members helped care for animals during a

two-week period, even developing a system to ensure each animal was fed, hydrated and accounted for.

“These students could have sat at home and waited it out, but they chose to show up and help,” Casillas says. “Napa FFA is part of a four-year animal science pathway at VHS, and I’m proud to say that our members took what they learned in the classroom and applied it beautifully. Their leadership skills were put to the test, as well. They truly amazed me.” •

A WAY OF LIFE

Service to others is fundamental for FFA members nationwide. From wildfire recovery to hurricane cleanup, several other chapters, including alumni and supporters, have taken part in natural disaster relief efforts. Here’s a roundup of some of their stories.

Members of the **Stover FFA** in Stover, Mo., acquired supplies for those affected by the 2017 wildfires in Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas. According to Bryan Rumans, the chapter’s advisor, the effort was led by chapter President Caysi Knierim and Vice President Blayne Murry. Members collected 180 bales of hay, 13,000 pounds of feed, 30 pallets of bottled water, \$850 in fencing supplies and \$1,600 in cash donations, which were used to purchase milk replacer and fencing supplies and to cover transportation costs.

Following the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey in August 2017, the Illinois-based **Mount Vernon FFA** and **Mount Vernon FFA Alumni and Supporters** raised and donated \$2,212 to the Texas Agricultural Education Disaster Relief Fund, which helps FFA

chapters and agricultural education programs rebuild after natural disasters.

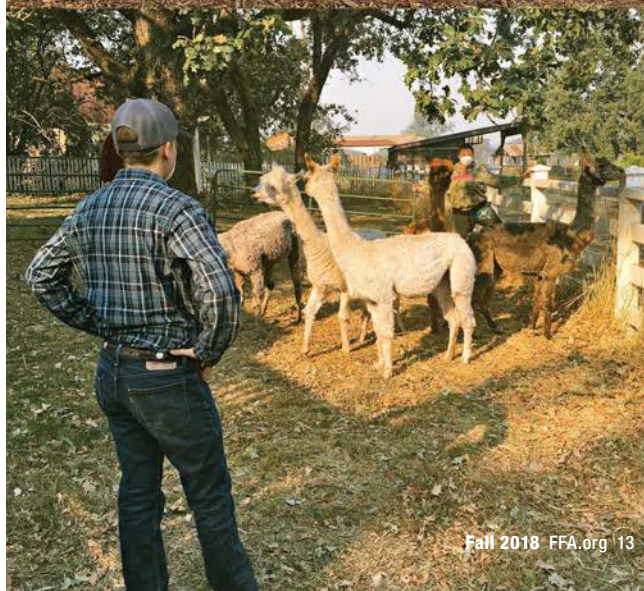
Culver’s of Kingwood, Culver’s of Atascocita and another Culver’s restaurant in Texas donated \$1,000 to help the **Kingwood FFA** renovate an agricultural education barn and replace tools and equipment damaged during Hurricane Harvey.

After wildfires swept through Lipscomb County, Texas, and burned more than 300,000 acres of ranchland in 2017, a group of **Raymond Central Alumni and Supporters** from Nebraska collected donations from other alumni and supporters, local businesses and chapters, and drove more than 1,000 miles to deliver the supplies to the community’s ranchers. **Raymond Central FFA** President Miranda Hornung also helped by creating and distributing fliers about the donations and collecting donations from area FFA chapters.

Following the 2017 Kansas wildfires, 15 students and advisors from the **Chaparral FFA** helped an Ashland rancher pick up the remains of a destroyed barn and helped tear down and repair burned fence lines.

PARTNER PROJECT

In 2016, Red Brand created an FFA service project challenge called “The Red Brand Wildfire Relief Program.” The project helps with wildfire recovery efforts by leveraging the support of FFA chapters from around the country. Groups are encouraged to seek out neighbors who need help with fence tear-out or rebuilding. In return, Red Brand will donate up to \$500 to the FFA chapters that coordinate the efforts. To learn more, visit redbrand.com/wildfire.aspx.





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



A Comprehensive FFA CHAPTER

FFA Alumni and Supporters work together to raise funds for three local chapters, thanks to an FFA Alumni Legacy Grant.

Between the Tuscarora State Forest and the Susquehanna River, Perry County, Pa., is home to hundreds of hidden fishing holes, the rolling hills of the Appalachian Mountains and members of the Greenwood FFA Chapter.

Since 1939, the Greenwood FFA Chapter has developed premier leadership, personal growth and career success for its members. Despite many challenges over the past few decades, the chapter has grown in number, success and recognition. Navigating these ups and downs was possible through the support of active alumni.

“Alumni members are not only great sources of support but also a wealth of information,” says Heather Brummer, a member of the Greenwood FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter. “Members of our alumni are active in the Greenwood FFA Advisory Committee that meets each year to review the program of activities (POA) and to offer suggestions.”

Advising on the POA allows alumni members to support the chapter year-round by judging contests, preparing members for state and national competitions, giving presentations in the classrooms and hosting field trips to local farms.

Executing these activities often takes a significant investment, as chapters nationwide can attest. The FFA Alumni Legacy Grant, made possible by Tractor Supply Company, was the perfect opportunity for various Perry County organizations to work together to plan a Farm to Fork Dinner to raise funds for the alumni and supporters and FFA chapters in the area.

LIVES ARE CHANGED

FFA Alumni Legacy Grants can be used to create an FFA Alumni and Supporters chapter, improve the quality of existing chapters or, like the grant the Greenwood FFA Chapter received in 2017, provide more opportunities for partnership between FFA chapters and alumni and supporters chapters.

“The application process for the FFA Alumni Legacy Grant was easy,” Brummer says. “We were planning our second Farm to Fork Dinner fundraiser at the time. The alumni had some ideas to make the evening more financially successful and to collect contact information from potential supporters.”

Local businesses offered financial donations, goods for a silent and live auction, and food for the dinner. Through the FFA Alumni Legacy Grant, the chapter developed a new database to gather contact information for the nearly 300 people who attended the event. More than \$2,000 was donated to the three FFA chapters and alumni programs within the county, and countless connections were made for potential FFA Alumni and Supporters projects in the future.

“In working with other alumni chapters, it is evident that members come in with some level of excitement for projects and for bringing new ideas,” Brummer says. “It is easy to get burned out by funding, planning and implementing projects. The FFA Alumni Legacy Grant alleviated that stress by providing initial funding, which provided more direct support to the FFA chapters at the completion of the project.”

— By Bev Flatt



Participants join in the opening ceremonies of the Farm to Fork Dinner in Perry County, Pa.

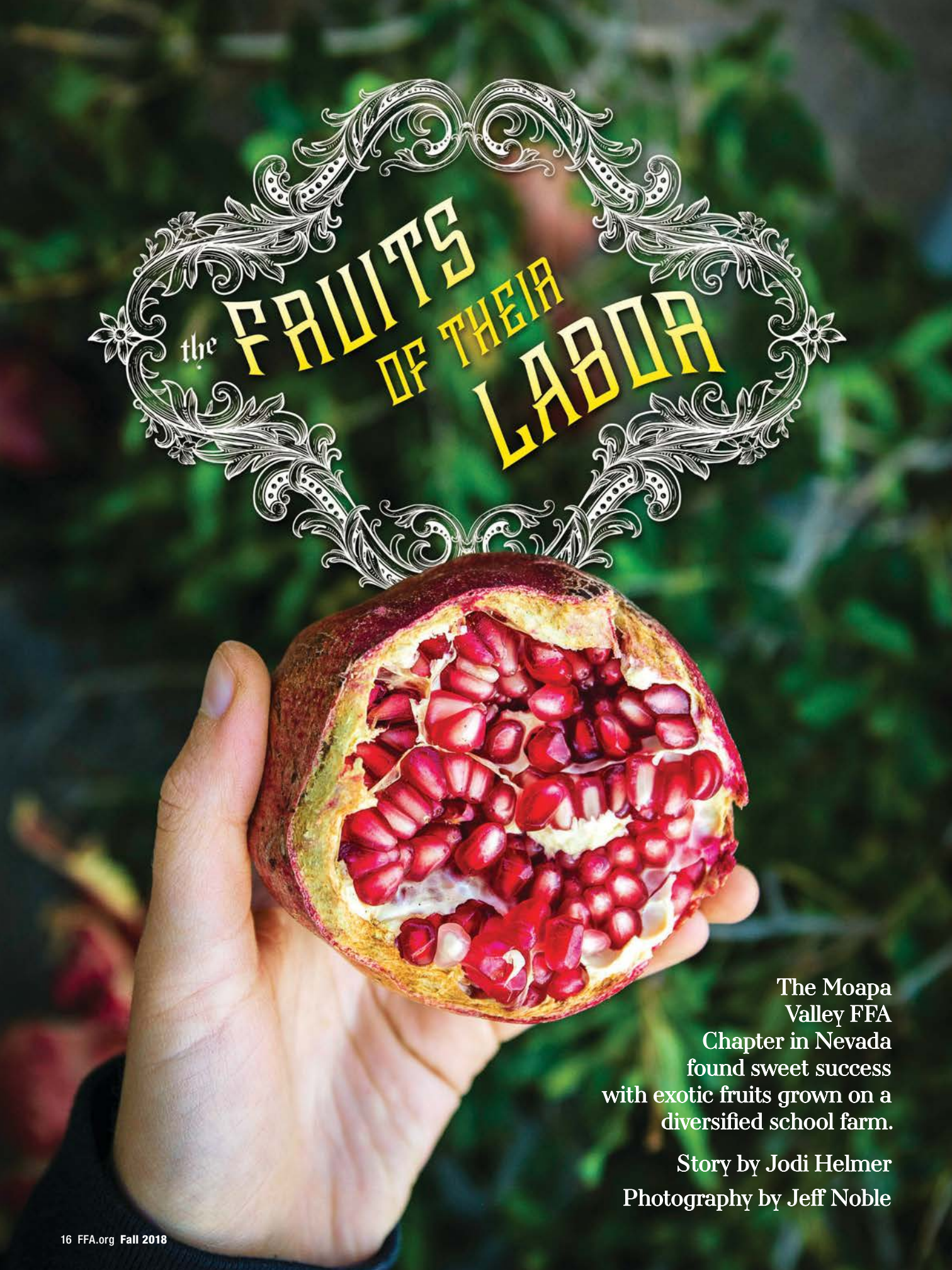


Alumni and supporter Sam Loy (right) presents an award to dinner sponsor James Osborne.



A display of materials and mementos shows Perry County's rich FFA history.

To learn more about the FFA Alumni Legacy Grant and other opportunities to develop an FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter, visit FFA.org/AlumniGrants.



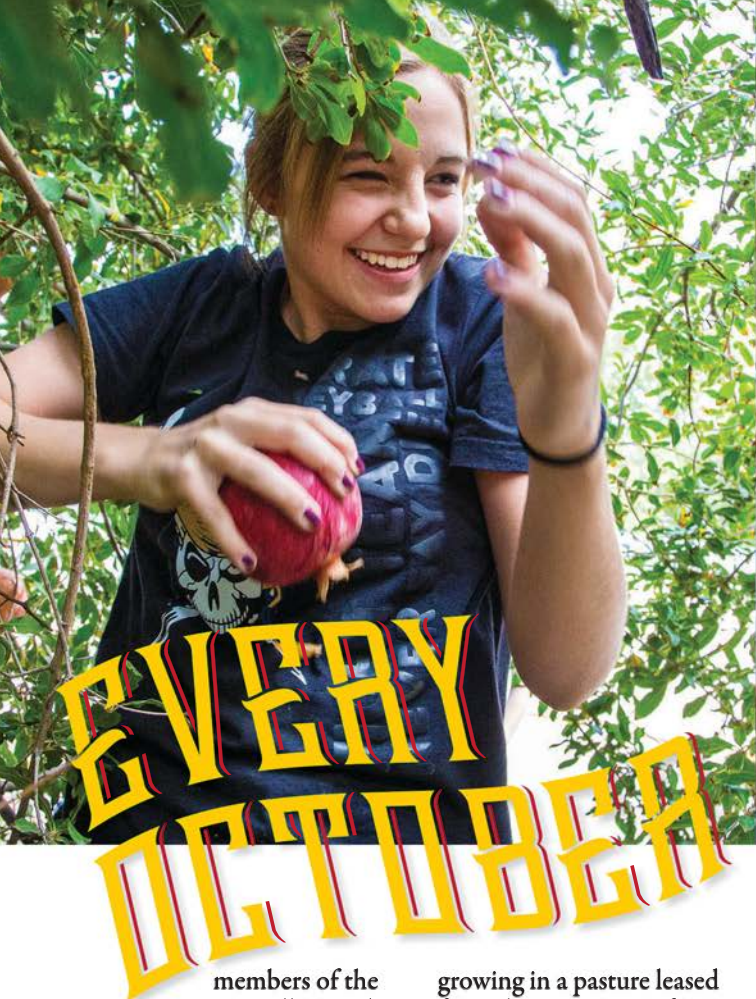
the FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR

The Moapa
Valley FFA
Chapter in Nevada
found sweet success
with exotic fruits grown on a
diversified school farm.

Story by Jodi Helmer
Photography by Jeff Noble



Advisor Denise O'Toole
with members of the
Moapa Valley FFA Chapter
in Overton, Nev.



Left: Kayla Walters picks hidden pomegranates. Right: Chapter treasurer Logan O'Toole empties washed pomegranates into a juicer.

members of the Moapa Valley High School FFA Chapter in Nevada spend a few weeks picking pomegranates. The crimson fruit, native to the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East, also thrives in the desert Southwest.

“This is one of the best places in the world for pomegranates to grow,” notes Denise O’Toole, Moapa Valley High School agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor. “We have to work pretty hard to grow other things in this climate, but we don’t have to give the pomegranates much care, and we get a great crop.”

The ease of cultivating the exotic fruits led Moapa Valley High School in Overton, Nev., to plant a small – but growing – pomegranate orchard. In addition to 1.5 acres of trees planted on campus, students also harvest fruit

growing in a pasture leased from the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. O’Toole believes her FFA chapter is the only one in the nation with a pomegranate orchard.

The local community clamors for the tangy fruits, purchasing bags of fresh pomegranates from the FFA-run Moapa Valley High School farm market (operated on an honor system) and a booth set up at the annual Pomegranate Art and Craft Festival held in Overton each November.

“People travel from all over the state and all across the western United States to come to the festival,” says O’Toole. “We sell fresh fruit, and the kids wear their FFA jackets and talk about FFA and sell pomegranates.”

Last year, students sold out of pomegranates on the first day of the Pomegranate Art and Craft Festival. The funds raised through

festival and farmers market sales help purchase seed, feed and supplies for the Moapa Valley High School farm and support FFA programming.

Although the pomegranate orchard is unique, it’s just one element of a standout school farm.

FAR MORE THAN FRUIT

The Clark County School District purchased the 40-acre farm in 1958 to complement the classroom experience. With the support of a farm manager, agriculture educators and students, the farm at Moapa Valley High School rivals some of the most successful small-scale diversified farms in the nation. The operation includes 20 Angus-cross cattle, laying hens, alfalfa hay, vegetable gardens and, of course, the pomegranate orchard.

O’Toole oversees the agricultural education program while her husband,

Kevin O’Toole, works as a full-time farm manager, supervising FFA students on the farm.

FFA members are engaged in all aspects of running the operation – from planting and harvesting to assisting with artificial insemination of the heifers and selling crops. The sheer size of the farm and the opportunities for hands-on learning that it provides set the agricultural curriculum apart from other FFA chapters, according to O’Toole.

“Our farm makes our program special,” she says. “We might not spend as much time in the classroom as other chapters, and sometimes I might not cover as much curriculum, but the students learn a lot about plant science and gardening, and they get a lot of practical skills. So, we might not cover in detail a lot of

the bookwork that some programs are able to, but we provide a lot of hands-on, practical experience that others can't simulate."

REGIONAL REALITIES

The weather also makes the FFA chapter distinct.

Thanks to the scorching desert temperatures, the farm at Moapa Valley High School is almost dormant during the summer months when other school farms experience their peak seasons.

The heat forces the school to close the greenhouses from June to September, but a small group of students helps with tasks like growing alfalfa and managing the cow/calf operation.

In a region with a limited number of farms and few students growing up in farm families, the school farm provides opportunities to learn about agriculture.

"It's not much of an agricultural community like it was 50 years ago. A lot of our water has been sold to Las Vegas, which is about 60 miles away," O'Toole says. "There are still some fields around and people grow hay, but the school farm gives these kids the opportunity to be able to work on a farm in a town that's not agricultural anymore. The kids take the class because they know they get to spend half their time working on the farm."

SHARE THE STORY

O'Toole wants to do more than teach FFA members about agriculture; she also wants those students to share their knowledge – and the school farm is at the heart of that mission. Students have led tours for distinguished guests from the school district and local

and state governments, but school groups are their favorite visitors.

Thousands of students have toured the Moapa Valley High School farm. FFA members lead school children through the pumpkin patch, greenhouse and chicken coops. The school also partners with local organizations, such as Farm Bureau and Young Farmers and Ranchers, to teach children about dairy farming through activities like milking a demonstration cow and churning butter.

"One of their favorite things is to be able to show off the farm and what they do and to teach kids about agriculture," says O'Toole. "There are a lot of opportunities for leadership."

Since taking over as ag educator at Moapa Valley High School in 2012, O'Toole has worked to take a thriving program and expand it to offer even more opportunities to students. The farm now has a hydroponic greenhouse and straw bale classroom as well as practical upgrades such as a new cattle chute and irrigation system.

"I want to keep expanding and bringing in more people to advocate for agriculture and do ag literacy projects," O'Toole says. "We have a lot of plans!"

One of the most exciting plans involves combining food science and agricultural education. In the past, FFA members have turned the fresh pomegranate harvest to make pomegranate juices and jellies. Students often feature the fruit in their supervised agricultural experiences, leading O'Toole to explore more opportunities to incorporate pomegranates into the curriculum.

Whether the FFA chapter focuses on cows, alfalfa, eggs or pomegranates, O'Toole believes that having a thriving school farm to complement classroom learning fulfills an important piece of the ag education puzzle, noting, "Even though our community is changing and growing and becoming less agricultural, we still, through the farm, can convey the message of the importance of agriculture to our students." •

1. Students show off their fall gardens. 2. Fruit is sold at the local farmers market. 3. Chapter vice president Makae Pulsipher enjoys a pomegranate. 4. Haley Bush (left) and chapter vice president Olivia Williams (right) transplant buttercrunch lettuce.



POMEGRANATES: BY THE NUMBERS

Moapa Valley High School might be the only school in the country growing pomegranates on its campus. Here are some surprising stats about its orchard.

1.5 acres

60 trees

1,800 pounds harvested each year

\$1.50 per pound on average

\$650 grown in 2017



ALUMNI

For All

FFA Alumni has a new name – National FFA Alumni and Supporters – but the same objective persists: Assist adults in keeping agricultural education and FFA programs in local schools.

Story by Abbey Nickel • Illustrations by Matt Wood

The college students who make up the University of Arkansas Collegiate FFA Chapter are passionate about paying it forward.

Most of these students wore the blue jacket in high school. Now in college, they give back by mentoring FFA members through workshops and by judging both state and national career and leadership development events.

Theirs is just one of many collegiate success stories, and the National FFA Organization hopes even more college-age students and local volunteers become involved, regardless of whether they were members in high school or not. In fact, the National FFA Alumni Association was recently renamed the National FFA Alumni and Supporters to reflect this broad reality.

“FFA Alumni membership has been open to anyone who supports agriculture since shortly after its beginning in 1971, but the name hasn’t really reflected that,” says Joshua Rusk, executive director of National FFA Alumni and Supporters. “The organization has been struggling with it for decades because it’s not clear that we’re a very inclusive organization. You don’t have to be a former FFA member to be active with FFA as an adult.”

COLLEGES, TAKE NOTE

Delegates at last year’s national convention voted to remove the Collegiate FFA membership form and move those members into the

new National FFA Alumni and Supporters.

“I think a huge advantage here is that there won’t be a barrier,” Rusk says. “It opens the eyes of individuals to see the inclusiveness and to know that anyone interested in supporting the organization can join.”

Under the realigned format, any college, university or tech school can charter its own National FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter. Current collegiate chapters will convert to the new format beginning with the 2018-19 FFA membership year.

Hailey Gates, graduate advisor of the University of Arkansas FFA, has been overseeing the 25-member chapter for the last two years. She also hopes more college students charter new chapters and take advantage of alumni and supporter activities.

“National FFA Alumni and Supporters is an awesome opportunity to take a closer look at agricultural education and to be a part of something bigger than yourself, which is something college students really crave,” Gates says. “It’s also a great networking opportunity and provides an opportunity to grow FFA advocacy. I think that will only continue to grow as more students who might not have been in FFA continue to join.”

The University of Arkansas FFA was also one of the first collegiate chapters to receive an FFA Alumni Legacy Grant through the National FFA Organization, which helped fund opportunities for college students to travel to judge FFA events at both the local and national levels.

“The opportunities for college students to stay

“This **realignment** conveys exactly what the name says. This is for anyone who supports agricultural education, FFA and the field of agriculture.”

— Joshua Rusk, executive director of National FFA Alumni and Supporters

involved are out there,” Gates says. “I think it’s great when students see the organization from another perspective as they become passionate about their own individual careers.”

Members of the Virginia Tech Collegiate FFA Chapter are also strong believers in helping the next generation. With about 20 active members, including a few who were not previous FFA members, community outreach and mentoring are things the chapter focuses on heavily.

“Being involved at the collegiate level allows us to go beyond our campus borders and reach people outside of our college network and to help them achieve,” says Virginia Tech student advisor Chandler Vaughan. “It gives us a way to impact the lives of others through something that we’re all passionate about.”

The chapter recently partnered with a local high school to help it implement an aquaponics system, something that Vaughan said was an educational experience for both the college students and the high school.

“We know the importance of those hands-on activities,” Vaughan says. “It gives college students an opportunity to see agricultural education from another perspective, and it gives the high school students the opportunity to see how they can stay involved with FFA after high school.”

The Virginia Tech chapter also does its fair share of judging career and leadership development events. It also has a jacket scholarship program, where the chapter sponsors five FFA jackets every year for local students.

Mako

Age: 41

I’m an FFA mom! My son is in FFA and I love to support his local chapter.

Susan

Age: 58

I was a member when the first female was elected to a national office. I’m still involved.

John

Age: 45

I bleed blue and gold! Always have and always will.



FFA FOR EVERYONE

“We hope this realignment conveys exactly what the name says,” Rusk said. “This is for anyone who supports agricultural education, FFA and the field of agriculture.”

The former name often carried a stigma, Rusk adds, which deterred college students from joining collegiate chapters if they weren’t former FFA members.

“There are plenty of students who never had the opportunity to be in FFA but want to get involved somehow later in life, and this is the perfect opportunity,” Rusk says. “We also see parents who want to be involved and support FFA, but they feel like they can’t because they are not former FFA members themselves. We hope this new name and format cure that.”

The change in membership format also comes with a few other slight changes, including replacing the alumni emblem with the traditional FFA emblem. Rusk hopes the changes help align FFA Alumni and Supporters more closely to the mission and vision of FFA.

“I think more people will look at this as all one organization now,” Rusk says. “FFA doesn’t stop at the end of high school when you take off the jacket; there is another step you can be a part of. Yes, FFA is something you can start in seventh grade, but it’s a lifelong organization, and this is the perfect way to start that lifelong commitment.” •

How to Charter an FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter

Looking for a way to grow your involvement with FFA after high school? Consider starting an FFA Alumni and Supporters chapter. Follow these requirements to charter or reactivate a local chapter.

- Have at least 10 annual/life alumni members at the state and national levels (if applicable).
- Have a constitution and bylaws that align with the National FFA Bylaws.
- Have a council of elected officers.
- Complete the Application for Alumni and Supporters Chapter Chartering/Reactivating.
- Submit the completed application to your State FFA Alumni and Supporters Association.
- Once the state has completed the process, you will have 30 days to submit your initial roster using the Manage My FFA tool on **FFA.org**. Your membership dues invoice will need to be paid within 30 days of your membership submission.
- After your dues have been paid, you can apply to be a part of the National FFA 501c3 status.
- To learn more, visit **FFA.org/alumni**.

Carlos

Age: 39

It’s fun to watch my daughter grow through FFA. I’m new, but proud!



Tina

Age: 20

I’m a collegiate member. I love helping the next generation of members.



Walt

Age: 65

My first year of membership, President Richard Nixon attended national convention.



NEW!

ALUMNI AND SUPPORTERS GRANTS

Give Back to Your Roots Grants and Legacy Grants

Thousands of dollars available
thanks to Crop Production Services
and Tractor Supply Company.

How can you use these grants to grow your alumni and supporters chapter?

- Create a chapter.
- Improve an existing chapter.
- Partner with a student chapter and work together on a project.
- Help cover student chapter affiliation fees, assist with supervised agricultural experiences and more.

Apply at FFA.org/alumnigrants by Sept. 4, 2018.

For details on 2019 Alumni and Supporters Grants, visit FFA.org/alumnigrants.



TRANSFORMATIVE *Training*

**Former member
Kate Lambert,
director of
education at
FCS Financial
and a Missouri
farmer, on the
beauty of FFA:
It can change
the lives of
all members,
regardless
of status.**

I have a confession to make. I wasn't actually very good at FFA. I wasn't necessarily bad at FFA, but I wasn't particularly good, either.

A while back, as I was helping a student prepare for a speaking competition, she remarked about how easy it must have been for me, back in my day (which, I will add, was not THAT long ago). That's a fair comment given the fact that people actually pay me to talk now. But it wasn't true.

Public speaking was my passion in FFA, but I was never great at it. I never even made it to our state competition. Obviously, I never got to deliver that keynote on stage at convention like I dreamed about.

Another time, a student asked me about being an FFA officer. I surprised him when I said I was an officer, but only at the chapter level. "President then, I assume?" he responded.

Nope, not even president.

In all reality, my four years of FFA were rather unremarkable compared with many. And that is the single greatest secret of the organization that changed my life.

LIVES ARE CHANGED

Any organization has the power to change the lives of the top few. FFA is amazing at that, and I see it every time I have the privilege of working with its members. But FFA has something beyond that – something deeper.

For every one of those top kids you see delivering a keynote, walking across a stage or giving an interview, there are a dozen more back home who are quietly going about their FFA experience, most of which will be like mine – rather unremarkable. Still, their lives will be changed.

FFA supplies a skill set, a knowledge base and an experience to make students strong and world-ready, for the top, the middle and even the bottom.

FFA prepares kids for success, whether they travel the country in their corduroy jackets or never leave their high school shops. Along with the advisors who selflessly lead it, FFA has the ability to reach down to the bottom and indiscriminately pull kids up. It's an ability unmatched by any other organization.

FFA is life changing for the most successful. But FFA is life changing for the rest of us, too.

– By Kate Lambert



“FFA SUPPLIES A SKILL SET, A KNOWLEDGE BASE AND AN EXPERIENCE TO MAKE STUDENTS STRONG AND WORLD-READY, FOR THE TOP, THE MIDDLE AND EVEN THE BOTTOM.”

– KATE LAMBERT

FFA *in the USA*

THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION HAS STATE ASSOCIATIONS AND LOCAL CHAPTERS IN ALL 50 STATES, PUERTO RICO AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS. HERE ARE SOME OF THE IMPORTANT AND EXCITING THINGS HAPPENING IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. — Compiled by Julie Woodard

ALABAMA

State officers challenged chapters to a statewide Penny War Challenge, a service project that benefited St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

ALASKA

Alaska FFA joined the Alaska Division of Agriculture and area farmers and ranchers to celebrate the signing of a proclamation recognizing Alaska's Agriculture Day on May 1.

ARIZONA

Chapter officers across the state participated in a state-wide Ben's Bells service project, which focuses on spreading kindness in the community.

ARKANSAS

County Line FFA restarted its school's recycling program to educate students about the importance of recycling and reduce the amount of recyclables that end up in landfills.



CALIFORNIA

This April, more than 7,300 members and guests flocked to Anaheim to ACTIVATE their passions for FFA and agriculture at the 90th annual California State FFA Leadership Conference.

COLORADO

FFA chapters serve meals and provide encouragement to bikers from across the nation during Pedal the Plains, a bike ride

highlighting the eastern plains of Colorado.

CONNECTICUT

Saddle up! Wamogo FFA made its official debut in the show ring as the state's first public high school with a competitive equestrian team.

DELAWARE

During their state convention, Delaware FFA members packed 500 blessing bags with donated supplies and food for the Bears Brown Bags program, which helps those in need.

FLORIDA

Mulrennan Middle FFA recently welcomed two Weathered Nigerian Dwarf goats to its chapter. The students hope to train them as therapy animals.

GEORGIA

Newton College and Career Academy FFA led cleanup efforts at its school and local areas, including a Civil War cemetery. FFA members researched the people buried in the cemetery and shared that with the community.

HAWAII

More than 20 FFA members from several chapters worked with former homeless families to plant a community teaching garden in Kalihi. The members also installed two hydroponic beds for a remote-control irrigation system and a small windmill.

IDAHO

Fall in Idaho means it's spud harvest time! In eastern

Idaho, schools are released for one to two weeks so students have the opportunity to help local farmers with the potato harvest.



ILLINOIS

Sherrard FFA sold sweet corn at football games to raise money to repair ag programs in Texas following Hurricane Harvey.

INDIANA

The Indiana FFA, in partnership with Kroger Co., is creating canned food displays in Pay-Less supermarkets. After a week, the cans will be donated to local food banks.

IOWA

Members of the West Liberty FFA made tie blankets that were donated to the Muscatine Center for Social Action Shelter for low-income children and families, and the Ronald McDonald House.

KANSAS

Through the BLAST-Off chapter development program, state officers are fueling 14 new chapters chartered at the Kansas FFA Convention for career success.

KENTUCKY

Each summer, the Kentucky FFA Leadership Training Center hosts six weeks of FFA camp, with about 300 to 400 members from across the state attending each week.

LOUISIANA

Springfield FFA had a blast putting education into

action as the chapter, along with Erath FFA and others, worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to plant more than 5,000 marsh grass plants.

MAINE

Each fall, Easton FFA embarks on an educational excursion that highlights Maine's most popular sites and activities, including a blueberry research farm, a whale-watching cruise and a mustard mill.

MARYLAND

Eleven FFA members testified on behalf of House Bill 870 and Senate Bill 1065, hoping to make agricultural education available to all students in the state's public high schools.

MASSACHUSETTS

Each September, Norfolk FFA hosts an Agricultural Expo, which features a farmers market, apple picking and more to engage the community in agriculture and FFA.

MICHIGAN

Corunna FFA members work tirelessly to plan a yearly food-drive competition with surrounding schools.

MINNESOTA

Pierz FFA joined a town celebration to raise money to purchase school supplies for families in need. Members also showcased live farm animals and promoted opportunities to future FFA members.

MISSISSIPPI

In the Mississippi FFA and FFA Alumni Chapter Basket Contest, members and alumni vie for bragging rights on the best basket creations. The baskets are sold in an auction after judging.

MISSOURI

Missouri FFA wrapped up

the HYPE and HYMAX Academies this past June. Members are HYPE'd to HYMAX'imize their potential to advocate!

MONTANA

Every summer, the state's Alumni Leadership Camp gives members the opportunity to grow and develop as leaders alongside their peers, while enjoying the great outdoors.

NEBRASKA

Senior members of Omaha Bryan FFA are using capstone projects to connect their career aspirations to agriculture.

NEVADA

Chapter officers enjoyed some beach time at South Lake Tahoe and learned how to serve their members during Chapter Officer Leadership Training.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Seacoast School of Technology FFA recently attended a Peace Greeters event where they wished the best to troops heading off to defend our country.

NEW JERSEY

Cape May Tech FFA will host its annual Harvest Festival. Community members will have opportunities to paint pumpkins, buy fall flowers and win raffle baskets.

NEW MEXICO

Melrose FFA coordinated a Turkey Gobble community food drive and encouraged students in kindergarten through 12th grade to participate.

NEW YORK

Hamilton FFA hosted a dinner to fundraise for local agricultural charities and organizations. The chapter also collected food donations for the local food bank.

NORTH CAROLINA

FFA members created and implemented projects to aid victims of Hurricane Matthew and to help impacted communities near and far recover and rebuild.

NORTH DAKOTA

Center FFA raised money to pair a puppy from a local breeder with U.S. Army veteran and Purple Heart recipient Sergio Cuevas of New Mexico.

OHIO

The Ohio FFA Alumni Association partnered with the Miami County Farm Bureau to host the state's first Agriculture Awareness and Leadership Day.

OKLAHOMA

The Oklahoma FFA Foundation partnered with Eskimo Joe's restaurant to create the first Eskimo Joe's FFA T-shirt. More than 2,500 shirts were sold in the first week.

OREGON

With the help of a local veterinarian, Brookings-Harbor FFA rescued, rehabilitated and rehomed abandoned or unwanted animals in the community and surrounding area.

PENNSYLVANIA

The Fall Leadership Conference is hosted each October in Altoona. Nearly 400 chapter officers and first-year members learn about their roles in the chapter and opportunities through FFA.

PUERTO RICO

After Hurricane María, Puerto Rico FFA experienced what "Living to Serve" truly means. Several mainland chapters sent donations to help the island's chapters rebuild. Thank you for your kindness!

RHODE ISLAND

Each chapter and our state officers recently took turns running the FFA Barn at the Washington County Fair. Cotton candy was made, "ducklings" rode the Duck Slide, and we saw chicks hatch.

SOUTH CAROLINA

During the South Carolina FFA Plant Presentation Day, members donate over 300 flats of flowers and plants grown throughout the season for use on the grounds of the state house.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Redfield FFA checked off its chapter service project by making bean bag boards for local Shriners, who hosted bean bag tournaments to raise funds for scholarships.

TENNESSEE

This summer, 60 FFA members participated in the 69th Annual Tennessee FFA Forestry Camp at Fall Creek Falls State Park. It's the longest consecutive-running camp of its kind in the nation.

TEXAS

Members showed off their BBQ chops during the annual State of Texas High School Barbecue Cook Off. This year, 40 teams competed in 12 categories, from best sauce to best dressed.

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Still rebuilding from last year's damaging hurricanes, FFA members recently visited the island of Puerto Rico to learn about the island's agriculture and meet fellow FFA members.

UTAH

Orem FFA planted a fruit tree demonstration garden at its urban high school with a goal of reminding future generations of its deep agricultural roots.

VERMONT

The hunt is on for the largest pike, walleye and panfish during the annual Enosburg FFA Ice Fishing Derby at Lake Carmi State Park this winter.

VIRGINIA

Broadway FFA purchased planters, potting soil and seeds, and hosted classes for community members to learn how to grow a garden.

WASHINGTON

Washington FFA dedicates Saturday night of its state convention to breast cancer awareness by wearing pink and sharing the slogan, "Watch Me Wear Pink."

WISCONSIN

At the 89th Wisconsin FFA Convention in June, a Native American drum group from Ashland FFA performed during the opening session, highlighting the importance of diversity and inclusion within FFA.

WYOMING

Community service projects from around the state were recognized at state convention with the Community Service of the Year award.

98 PERCENT

WEST VIRGINIA 
Members are proud of the fact that West Virginia leads the nation in the percentage of family-owned farms – 98 percent.

On the RECORD

Tyler WHITE

Tyler White was once regarded as a low-level minor leaguer for up-and-coming pitchers to strike out. But that scouting report would prove to be wrong. White played through all seven levels of the minor leagues before making the Astros roster, and through it all, he learned to hit good pitching – often and with power. His amazing rise to the roster of the World Series Champion Houston Astros defines what we love about baseball and FFA.

Q: HOW DID FFA HELP YOU PREPARE FOR A LIFE IN PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL?

A: I liked the leadership and discipline that I learned from being part of FFA.

Q: IS THERE A SINGLE FFA EXPERIENCE THAT STICKS IN YOUR MIND AS SOMETHING THAT CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS AS A BASEBALL PLAYER?

A: I loved going to FFA camp. Though I was only able to go during my freshman and sophomore years because of baseball, it was a very memorable experience for me.

Q: ANY WORDS OF ADVICE FOR FFA MEMBERS SEEKING TO SUCCEED IN THEIR LIVES AND CAREERS?

A: I would say to never give up on what drives you. That is what you're willing to sacrifice for and what you'll put the most effort into. It is easy to put extra work into something you love.

Q: WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE PLAYER OF ALL TIME?

A: Chipper Jones. I grew up a huge Atlanta Braves fan.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE POSITION TO PLAY? (WHITE IS CONSIDERED A UTILITY PLAYER, CAPABLE OF HANDLING SEVERAL POSITIONS.)

A: I most like playing second base.

Q: WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL CAREER SO FAR?

A: Being with the team during the playoffs and getting to experience winning a World Series.

– By John Walter



“I WOULD SAY TO NEVER GIVE UP ON WHAT DRIVES YOU. IT IS EASY TO PUT EXTRA WORK INTO SOMETHING YOU LOVE.”

– TYLER WHITE

Ag Angle

OLIVIA HOENIG

LOCATION: Oakville, Iowa

FFA CHAPTER: Fort Madison FFA

INSTAGRAM: @olivia_hoenig

FACEBOOK: Olivia Hoenig

WEBSITE: OliviaHoenigAuctions.com

This photo was taken in Oakville, Iowa. My college classmate, Austin Lanz, approved of me stopping by to photograph his corn harvest. I took this photo to show the public a different perspective of what farming is. I wanted to show the precision it takes to harvest. My favorite part of the photo is the way it captures Austin's pure focus in the tractor cab. May the corn stand tall and the farmers stand taller.



* **SHARE YOUR AG ANGLE WITH US!** It's as simple as completing the submission form at [FFA.org/Submit-Your-Story](https://www.ffa.org/Submit-Your-Story). The editors will review all entries and publish one in each issue of *FFA New Horizons*. All material submitted becomes the property of the National FFA Organization. If your idea is used, you give FFA the right to use it in any manner.

THE Blue Room



Join us in **The Blue Room**
91st National FFA Convention & Expo

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