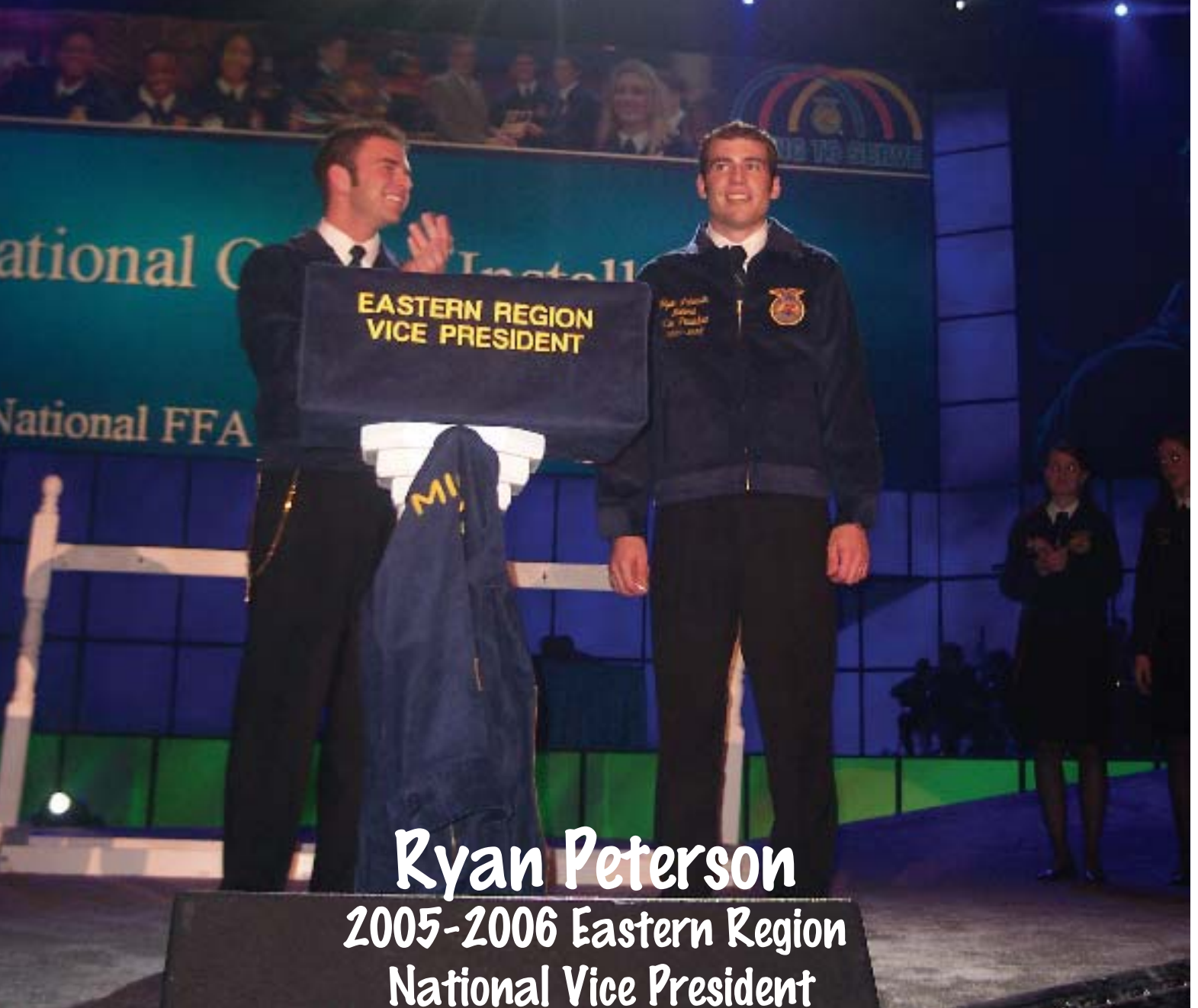


The Michigan FFA Creed

January/February 2006



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I believe in...



Leadership from ourselves...



As members of the 9/11-generation, we have been presented with challenges that our forbearers could never have imagined. What President Franklin Roosevelt said of his time is still applicable of our time. He said, "To some generations much is given. Of other generations, much is expected. This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny." This rendezvous is described to us in the third stanza of our Creed.

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

What do these words really mean: "leadership from ourselves and respect from others?" At first glance, one might merely think that by acting the part of a leader, one should automatically be given the respect of those around them. This couldn't be further from the truth.

Anyone can act the part of a leader. But as is evident

in our organization's motto, *doing* is the true testament of leadership.

Whether it's reading to your little brother or sister, mowing the lawn of an elderly neighbor or helping out in a soup kitchen every other weekend, you are providing a positive example to those around you.

Through these positive examples, whether you know it or not, you will earn the admiration of those around you and be seen as a leader in your family, school or community. The old saying is right: actions speak louder than words.

Thich Nhat Hanh once said that "If you look deeply into the palm of your hand, you will see your parents and all generations of your ancestors. All of them are alive in this moment. Each is present in your body. You are the continuation of each of these people."

We are the products of our parent's generation and the cycle continues. As time goes on and the struggles that come our way are endured, we grow stronger. Whatever obstacles we are given will only result in more chances to lead.

FFA members, our rendezvous has barely been breached. And as the months, years and decades come and go; we will be given innumerable chances to prove our true leadership capabilities. These chances will test and shape our generation, as the circumstances of the 1970s and 1980s shaped our parents and tested *their* leadership. We will have our own trials and tribulations and it is up to us to continue the legacy of humanity.

FFA members, the leadership of the coming half decade is in your hands. o

**EXPERIENCE
SUCCESS** 

Conventional vs. Organic

A Great Debate

By: Alyn Kiel
Agriscience

Imagine a stroll down the produce aisle of your local supermarket—you're in search of the "perfect" snack. Your eyes light upon two displays of Red Delicious apples, one labeled "certified organic," the other conventionally grown. You've heard rumors that organic foods are better, safer, and more nutritious than their cheaper, conventionally grown counterparts – but are they really "perfect?" Many key differences between organic and conventionally grown foods exist that may influence your decision to buy, or not buy, these products.

Conventional and organic producers use differing methods to grow food. Conventional animal producers are allowed to give

animals antibiotics, growth hormones, and medications to encourage growth and prevent disease. According to USDA standards, organic meat, dairy, eggs, and poultry products must come from animals that were fed organic feed, given access to the outdoors, and not fed growth hormones or antibiotics. Both organic and conventional farmers may use preventive measures—such as rotational grazing, balanced diets, vaccinations, and clean housing—to help minimize disease. Conventional crop producers can use chemical herbicides to manage weeds, synthetic fertilizers to promote plant growth, and synthetic pesticides to reduce pests and disease. Organic crops must be produced without using

most conventional pesticides, petroleum-, sewage sludge- or synthetic-based fertilizers, bioengineering, or ionizing radiation. Organic farmers use beneficial insects and birds, traps, or beneficial insects to reduce pests and disease. Organic producers are allowed to use a natural pesticide or other substance from an approved government list. Organic and conventional farmers can both utilize crop rotation, tilling, hand-weeding, and mulching to manage weeds and promote plant growth.

The Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 requires the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop national standards for organic food production. A government approved inspector certifies each organic farm, and ensures that the farmer is following all USDA organic standards. Any companies that handle or process organic food must also be certified by the USDA. Organic products that are 95-100% organic may be labeled with the USDA organic seal. Products containing between 70 and 95% organic ingredients may label "organic" on the front of their package, but do not have the USDA seal. Any product containing less than 70% organic ingredients may list specific organic ingredients on the side panel of the package, but may not label "organic" on the front of the package.

The cost of organic food is higher than that of conventional food. Organic foods generally see lower production yields, because they do not use artificial fertilizers and pesticides.

Organic production involves greater manual labor input, and many organic farms are smaller than conventional farms. Also, organic foods must meet stricter regulations governing growing, harvesting, transportation, and storage. The combination of labor and intensive management practices used in organic production are usually, but not always, more expensive than chemicals used by conventional farms. According to the Organic Farming Research Foundation, there is mounting evidence that if all the indirect costs of conventional production were factored into the price of food, organic foods would cost about the same as conventional foods.

Organic production methods result in less environmental pollution, and preserve soil fertility. However, they require a greater mechanical energy input. Many scientists believe that zero-till production methods, which involve the use of herbicides, may be more environmentally friendly than mechanical weed control.

Any agricultural system, be it conventional or organic, must be well-managed. Methods such as crop rotation, fallowing and organic amendment, strict pollution management, and integration of the farming system into the local environment help to maintain soil fertility. Most believe that the future of agriculture lies in a combination of organic and conventional farming methods. Producers can create a system with low environmental disruption, which provides adequate and sustainable food production



Magnificent Michigan

Highlights of the 78th National FFA Convention

By: Andrea Kerbuski
State Reporter

Blue Corduroy jackets and an infinite amount of enthusiasm flooded Louisville, Kentucky for its seventh and final year as the 78th National FFA Convention took place once again. The world's largest youth gathering included over 51,000 people in attendance with approximately 1,300 representing Michigan.

This year was an especially memorable one for many Michigan FFA members. Some highlights include 77 FFA members receiving their American Degrees, Braidie Butters winning Equine Placement proficiency, TJ Ross competing as a National Finalist for Star in Agriscience, and of course, the election of a national officer from Michigan, our very own Ryan Peterson!

The American FFA Degree is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon an FFA member and 77 members from Michigan proudly received theirs.

Ted Goodno, originally from the Ravenna FFA Chapter declared, "It feels great to

receive this award. I am the first person in my family to receive the American Degree!"

"I've always wanted to receive this award. It's so prestigious and not everyone gets it", Tom Butcher, originally from the Corunna FFA Chapter proudly stated. He also offers advice for those who are planning on receiving their American degree, "keep track of your records, it's so much easier to fill out the application!"

For someone who worked at a large animal clinic since the age of 12 years old, it was no surprise that Braidie Butters was the National Winner for Equine Science Placement. Some of her tasks during her seven years include: doing blood work, scanning x-rays, and assisting veterinarians with race horses.

Braidie says, "It's a great plus to see my hard work and dedication be rewarded!" Congratulations to Braidie!

T.J. Ross was one of the four chosen from the 3,000 American Degree recipients



for the National Finalists for Star in Agriscience.

T.J. has developed his SAE by working in the Weed Science Program at MSU and assisting in greenhouse studies and laboratory work. He's also had the opportunity to intern at Syngenta this past summer.

"It was a pretty cool honor to represent my chapter, community, and state at the national level." T.J. stated.

Congratulations T.J.!

A dream for thousands of FFA members is to one day become a National FFA Officer. Unfortunately, this dream only comes true for 6 individuals each year. Each state association can submit a national officer candidate where they undergo an extensive, weeklong interviewing process.

This dream came true for a former Michigan FFA State President. After spending two years preparing for this, Ryan ended the 44 year streak that Michigan has had no national officer. Ryan Peterson was elected to be

the National FFA Eastern Region Vice President. Being one of six to represent over 490,000 members, it is quite an honor. With a gigantic grin and lit up eyes, Ryan Peterson accepted his newly elected position as Michigan FFA members cheered on.

Ryan will serve as a national officer for an entire year where he will travel around the nation meeting with FFA members.

Ryan's advice to the Michigan FFA membership is, "...Never pass on an opportunity in the FFA. Take advantage of the FFA program anyway you can because it will change your life in ways you never thought possible." He also adds, "...Some of the most powerful, life changing experiences are the ones you have to search out and sometimes fight for in order to have." o



Our Motto in Motion

Supported by the State of Michigan
Office of Career and Technical Preparation

Learning to Do

By: Jessica Bunke and
Chad Goebel
USA FFA Members

In the little town of Sebewaing, Michigan the Unionville-Sebewaing Area High School Environmental Conservation class along with FFA members from the high school's USA FFA Chapter participated in a benthic study of the Sebewaing River on a fine spring day in mid May.

With the direction of Lindsay Abraham, the Tuscola County

Soil Conservation District Water Quality Specialist, twenty-six students took a field trip to a local stream.

Students collected benthic or non-vertebrate water species to study in class. Depending on the quantity and diversity of the species, the study will tell you the quality of the water in the stream. Each of the students had their own task to do. Some went into the water and did kicks in the water to stir up insects out from under the stones and dirt. Others gathered the small aquatic creatures and debris into screen nets. Next students placed the gathered species onto white sheets to sort through the mud and dirt and picked out specimens to be placed into ice trays for further sorting. The actual cataloging and

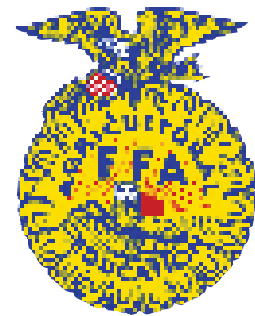


identifying process of the water specimens would be done at USA High School on the next day.

At the high school, students studied each specimen individually and compared them to pictures of known benthic or non-vertebrate water specimens to properly identify the specimens found. Also at the selected site, a group of three students took water samples and tested the water for the amount of dissolved oxygen in it.

Yvette Wisner who was in charge of sorting the specimens said, "I was surprised by all the different varieties of aquatic critters, especially the blood suckers." Also, participating in this activity was Greg

Renn and Brent Larsen; who work for Huron County Soil Conservation District, and Joyce Muz, Director of Tuscola County Soil Conservation District, along with Dean Smith of Huron County Drain Commission and Sarah Pistro of Tuscola County Drain Commission, who supported this event. o



Advisor's Most Embarrassing Moments

Asking the front desk of a hotel, "Do you have any Duct tape?" I need to make sure the kids don't escape tonight." This question was returned with a blank stare followed by, "Excuse me?" They probably thought that I was a kidnapper on my way out of state!

---Heather Dombroski,
Wexford-Missaukee FFA Chapter Advisor



Doing to Learn

Building Skills for Life

By Julie Thelen
State Vice President

A business owner at age fourteen, Katelyn LaTendresse of the Chippewa Hills FFA Chapter has come a long way in three years.

From the age of three, Katelyn, now a senior in high school, developed an interest in gardening and agriculture. She grew up around her family's business, a farm market, and by the age of five was working the cash register and checking out customers. At 12 years

old, Katelyn was managing the family market.

Her love for the family work led her to establish her own business: Kate's Veggie Garden. Katelyn's biggest goal was to produce a high quality product for the city farm market. Before starting her business, Kate had many aspects that she needed to consider including planting dates, variety selection, pest management, fertilization, irrigation, proper harvesting, as well as disease and weed management.

In order to successfully start her own business, Katelyn obtained her DBA (Doing Business As) in 2004, which allowed her to properly conduct business under her own name. The land that Kate uses for her vegetable production is given to her via exchange for produce use at home. The seeds, plants, fertilizers, and supplies are purchased through her parent's farm market



cost. Katelyn personally acquired her own rotor tiller, 4-wheeler, 3' x 5' foot trailer and fertilizer spreader with the profit she made on her dairy steers and hogs at the county fair. The wages she earned by working on the family farm were also a contributing factor. As her first year in FFA came to a close, Katelyn had made enough from her earnings to purchase and construct a 16' x 96' greenhouse for tomato production. As the spring of 2005 rolled around, Kate secured a loan to purchase a 5' x 10' enclosed trailer for hauling purposes.

Kate believes that her first goal, of producing a high quality product has been achieved. "This can be measured by the number of repeat customers I have and the demand for my produce, especially my tomatoes," she said. Katelyn was also able to reach another goal: to increase her SAE scope. Her business now includes

1 acre, greenhouse, 1600 tomato plants, 600 pepper plants, beets, squash, and radishes, among several other vegetable products. Not only does Katelyn concentrate on the healthier side of life by producing vegetables, she is also concerned about the aesthetic value. She grows teddy bear sunflowers, gladiolas, and lilies as well.

Katelyn contributes much of her success to her parents. She said, "I started selling at markets before I was able to drive, my parents were always willing to haul my produce, help unload and come back six hours later and pick me up." Kate plans on continuing to expand her business to include four city markets. When asked about Kate's Veggie Garden Katelyn replied, "The knowledge and skills that I have learned through my SAE and FFA, have been a vital part of my life and will continue to be." o



At my first National FFA Convention as an advisor I was hypnotized. This led to numerous embarrassing moments, but the highlight was when I sang backup for Tim McGraw (another hypnotized Ag teacher), playing the bass guitar and then proceeded to give "Tim" a handshake and hug!

---Rebel Smith,
Fremont FFA Chapter Advisor



Earning to Live

By: Katie Eldred
Agriscience Education

Growing up on a cash crop and purebred hog farm in Cassopolis, Dan Wyant's first real job was picking ripe cucumbers on a neighboring farm. This 1977-1978 Region I State Vice President and former Director of the

Michigan Department of Agriculture has come a long way from his pickle-picking days in Cass County. Raised in a rural area with a very active FFA chapter, Wyant decided to join FFA because he felt it was the natural thing to do; it wasn't until after he had joined, that Wyant discovered the benefits and values of the organization.

As a freshman, Mr. Wyant competed in the demonstration contest making it all the way to the state finals. His first experience at state convention made a lasting impression, giving him the drive to become more

involved in the FFA. He then went on to serve as chapter president, regional vice president, and Region I State Vice President. As a member of the state officer team, Wyant was able to create lasting memories while learning a great deal about leadership, how to be proactive, and how to think and speak on his feet.

After his year of service as a state officer, Mr. Wyant attended Michigan State University where he earned a degree in food systems management. He became a regional sales manager at the Ralston Purina Company and interned at Lowes, where he was responsible for helping market livestock equipment in foreign countries. In 1996, Dan Wyant was appointed Director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture by Governor John Engler.

"I had a great opportunity to serve a very significant industry in Michigan, the second most diverse state in agriculture economics [however, this diversity creates] many issues in the state...such as food safety, stewardship, plant and animal health, and consumer protection".

During his time as director, Wyant was able to accomplish split state status for tuberculosis, increased food safety and security, and create new opportunities for value-added agriculture, including the support of ethanol production, a turkey processing plant, and increased numbers of wineries and farm markets in the state.

"The best part of my job was working with farmers; farmers are the best people in the world."

This summer, after 9 years as the MDA director, Wyant resigned from his post to pursue a position as president of the Edward Lowe Foundation, a company based in Cass County that supports small businesses and entrepreneurs.

He currently serves as a board member of the Council of Michigan Foundation, which supports foundations and non-profit organizations and is also very involved in community rotaries, service clubs, soccer, running, and his family. Mr. Wyant is married, with a daughter in college and a son who is a senior in high school.

In the future, he plans to continue his support of the FFA, local food banks, and entrepreneurs and small business owners, believing they are fundamental in job creation and key in creating further opportunities for others.

Mr. Wyant can attribute much of his success to his membership in the FFA. "FFA is the best organization in the country at developing leaders and it takes leaders to solve the issues [affecting agriculture today]."

He offers this advice to the Michigan FFA, "Get involved, be active, and voice your concerns, it's important for the future of agriculture. The world is run by those who show up". o



This year at National Convention, I bet my national floral team if they placed in the top ten, I would do the pollination dance on the bus on the way back home. I lost and ended up standing on the seats on the charter bus performing the pollination dance with over 50 students, advisors and chaperones watching.

---Tammy Hyatt,
Lapeer FFA Chapter Advisor

Living to Serve

By: Caitlin Lorenc
Region VI State
Vice President

As the sounds of "Jingle Bells," "White Christmas," and "Hark, the Herald" filled the air, the Hopkins FFA chapter and Alumni prepared their Christmas baskets for delivery.

Since the founding of the Hopkins FFA Alumni in 1984 they and the Hopkins FFA Chapter have helped members in their community celebrate Christmas. That Christmas, the alumni started their first community service

project, filling Christmas baskets every year with canned food, fruit and medicinal items.

Comer Skinner, one of the founding fathers and the current president of the alumni chapter, started the project. For this extraordinary piece of community service, Mr. Skinner drew on his experiences from his 4-H club in Monterey Township, which at one time had a similar endeavor. However, the 4-H club was only able to assist 12 homes with their baskets. Mr. Skinner wanted to expand the project to include the entire Hopkins community.

In order to start the project, Hopkins collected canned goods by holding a canned food drive, which took place earlier in the year. This past year, they collected nearly 2,000 items! Perrigo, a local company of Allegan, makes generic medicinal items and donates some of their



Ways to Help...

There are always way that the members of the Michigan FFA can lend a helping hand in their communities. We hope to highlight some of these possibilities to you. Here are just a few:

- *Big Brothers, Big Sisters* cultivates relationships that provide children with skills to manage everyday challenges. Through simple friendship, Big Brothers, Big Sisters experience the joy of helping children discover a world of possibilities and opportunities. For more information, visit www.bbbsa.org.
- The work to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina continues. The National FFA's *Seeds of Hope* hopes to help FFA chapter and Agricultural Education programs do just that. For more information, please visit: www.ffagive.org.

products to the chapter for the Christmas baskets. The Hopkins FFA Chapter and Alumni also fill the baskets with fruit that they supply. All other non-perishable items are donated to the cause. After filling the gift baskets, students go to work to decorate them.

When the project first started in 1984, only 20 homes were able to benefit from them. The project has continued to grow every year. Currently, the baskets are distributed to 60-70 homes throughout the community.

"We deliver them to about 70 senior citizen's homes. These people are alone or cannot get out of their homes," said chapter advisor Jessica Couch. "We also give them to the less fortunate families in the community."

"Everyone is touched by the experience, both the families and the FFA members," says Mrs. Couch.

"Some of the elderly can't wait for us to come every year."

As the members deliver their Christmas baskets, they sing carols to the seniors and other families. Henry Reinhart, Hopkins FFA President has participated in the Christmas basket project for the past four years. "It's a lot of fun 'trying' to sing while passing out the baskets," he says. "It makes me feel good to know that I am helping others."

"As an alumni member, I always see that the young people give the baskets to the elderly," said Mr. Skinner. "It brings a glow to their eyes and even tears when they see that the young people of today care about them. It makes you feel warm inside to know you are brightening their holiday. Students feel good about it too and they want to come back to help every year." ◦

When I was walking out to our school bus after Regional Leadership Contests, it had just snowed. I slipped and fell right in front of about four buses and my students will never let me forget it!

---Mark Forbush,
Corunna FFA Chapter Advisor



Member Highlights

By: Andrea Kerbuski
State Reporter

Region 1: Amber Hassinger Cassopolis

Overcoming her shyness was the toughest part about being in FFA for Amber Hassinger. Amber, now a freshman at Michigan State University has overcome that obstacle in her life through her extensive involvement in FFA.

While in high school, Amber served as Cassopolis' FFA chapter reporter and as Region 1 reporter.

Amber's SAE consists of both small and large animal production. She began her SAE when she was 15 years old. Amber showed lambs for six years and rabbits for 8 years at the Cass County Fair. She also showed rabbits at state shows and the Michigan Rabbit Breeders Association.

Everyday Amber has to feed and water her 12 rabbits. During the spring, she buys her lambs for fair and she must feed them once in the morning and in the afternoon along with supplying fresh water throughout the day.

Her SAE has taught her to be much more responsible and helped her establish long term goals. It also helped her make her career choice and she has definitely learned that you must love what you do. Amber says, "If you love what you do, you are bound to accomplish any tasks set before you."

Besides FFA, Amber took part in a number of activities in her high school including Spanish club, serving as the secretary for National Honors Society, and she was the drum major in her high school band. ○

Region 2: Austin M. Gust Lenawee Vo-Tech

Austin Gust, a senior in high school and member of the Lenawee Vo-Tech FFA Chapter, is always up for a new endeavor. And just a little over four months ago, he showed this by beginning a brand new SAE.

In August of 2005, he added to his fruit and vegetable production projects by starting a dairy production undertaking. Since then, he has learned proper milking techniques, how to properly scrape the cow lot and the importance of thorough sanitation.

When it comes to the FFA, Austin does nothing but sing the organization's praises. He said, "Through the FFA, I have learned the nothing is impossible. Hard work and dedication are rewarded and proper education will allow me to do anything."

When Austin isn't busy at work, school or his FFA chapter, he is active as the president of his 4-H club and works with the bulls at the local rodeo company on weekends. He also partakes in numerous acts of community service by delivering commodities to the elderly and disabled in his community.

Austin isn't 100% sure of what he wants to do after graduating from high school. However, he is considering training in Agricultural Mechanics or another field of agriculture. ○

Region 3: Kat Thoms Harbor Beach

As the Region III President, Kat Thoms of the Harbor Beach FFA Chapter, has learned to "dream big and accomplish what I dream." The FFA, she says inspires her because "I never dreamed that I would be more than just a girl that went to a community college and wasn't important...because of the FFA, I know that I can be anything that I want to be if I put my mind to it."

In her SAE, Kat has shown the kind of determination and hard work that she says that she learned from her dad and grandpa. In the area of Forest Management and Production, she is involved in all practical aspects: she cuts down the trees with a chainsaw and hauls them away with the assistance of a tractor.

Kat uses her dried wood to make crafts, decorations and other items, selling some of them for a profit. Instead of using books and pre-made designs for these crafts, she has begun creating her own designs.

Besides the FFA, she is a member of the Bits & Spurs Shooting Sport 4-H club and is active in the Harbor Beach High School Drama Club.

Upon graduation from high school, Kat hopes to attend Michigan State University to obtain a bachelor's degree in Animal Science and would like to be a veterinarian. ○



Amber Hassinger
Cassopolis



Austin M. Gust
Lenawee Vo-Tech



Kat Thoms
Harbor Beach

Region 4: Jeff Fromm

Corunna

"Thanks Dad" is probably what Jeff Fromm, a senior member of the Corunna FFA Chapter, would like to say. His dad has been his biggest inspiration and has helped him the most with FFA and especially his SAEs.

Jeff is the president of the Corunna FFA Chapter and is serving as the Region IV Secretary. He also serves as the Shiawassee Pork Masters Club President and the Caledonia Livestock Club Vice President. If he's not busy with any of his FFA responsibilities or other clubs, you can find Jeff working hard on his family farm. He has been showing steers at the Shiawassee County Fair for eight years and been showing swine for nine years.

With ten acres of corn and soybeans, four sows with litters, and three show calves, Jeff has a busy day, everyday. He rolls out of bed early each morning with his main responsibilities on mind. He must grain, water, and bed his sows, pigs, and steers. Jeff walk-exercises his steers and pigs every other day for almost an entire year. After he takes care of his animals, Jeff must also plant, spray, fertilize, harvest, and truck all the seed for the ten acres of land his family owns. Jeff also deals with all the paperwork for buying and selling seed and maintains all records.

Upon graduation, Jeff plans on attending Northwestern Auto-Diesel college in Lima, Ohio. ○

Region 5: Wade Shields

Saranac

Wade Shields, a senior member of the Saranac FFA chapter, is always the life of the party at FFA events. Whether he's attending state or national convention, discussion meets, or any of the other numerous FFA conferences, Wade is the one you can count on for a friendly smile and an upbeat attitude.

Wade first got involved with his SAEs at the age of 15. His first SAE involves Wade working at Saranac Family Market where he completes many tasks ranging from preparing produce to pricing goods. He also raises and shows pigs at the Ionia Free Fair. Wade says, "I like to look at my first SAE as the kind of SAE that someone can have that may not have grown up on a family farm."

His SAE has taught him that a person does not have to live on a farm to have a very successful SAE. Wade has progressively learned the important practices of time management and hard work. He has also learned how to tabulate rate of gain and learned the important measures that need to be taken when raising an animal in a commercial market setting.

After graduation, Wade intends on attending North Park University in Chicago to major in elementary education and minor in youth ministry. ○

Region 6: Beth Wenkel

Standish-Sterling

FFA and dairy production are embedded in the heart and soul of Beth Wenkel, a senior member and vice president of the Standish-Sterling FFA Chapter. This is her second year as vice president, having also served one year as chapter treasurer.

Beth's SAE is dairy production – an endeavor that once belonged to her grandfather and is now owned by her father and uncle. She began working around the milking parlors at the age of ten and today works in all facets of the operation.

When asked what the FFA has done for her, Beth replies that "The FFA has taught me how to work on a successful team and how to work independently toward goals that are important to me. It has changed my life for the better."

When not busy with the running of the FFA chapter, Beth likes to take part in her school's Power Lifting team and her local 4-H swine group.

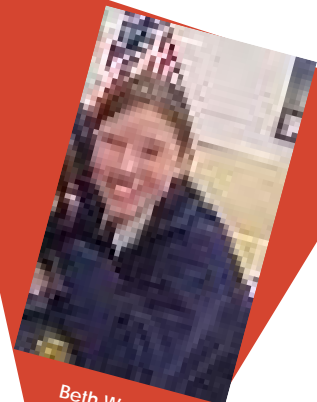
Beth will be attending college after she graduates from high school and hopes to major in the field of Agribusiness. ○



Jeff Fromm
Corunna



Wade Shields
Saranac



Beth Wenkel
Standish-Sterling

Submit your SAE or one of your student's SAEs!

Email [Dustin Petty at petty@carrs.msu.edu](mailto:Dustin.Petty@carrs.msu.edu)



Back Where I Come From

By: Kara Jackson
Idaho FFA State Reporter

Over twelve hundred miles away from Michigan, there is a place where potatoes seem to be abundant and diversity is a key component to agriculture. This state has drastic changes of landscape – from the dry, hot desert to the evergreen forests that cover the snowy mountain tops that seem to touch the sky. Beautiful as it is, this state also is just as differing in agriculture, with the southeastern's portion of sandy soil that produces ideal russet potatoes, to the panhandle's forestry and seed industry, where much of the produced yield is transferred by barge to the Pacific Ocean. This state, so different yet so uniform, is the place I am proud to call home: Idaho.

Idaho is definitely a very different place from Michigan. We have no great lakes or professional sports

teams, but Idaho has some pretty impressive statistics and agriculture as well. As most people know, Idaho is the top producer in Russet potatoes, producing over 123 million potatoes annually. These tubers are certainly a key industry in our state's agriculture and Idaho is known around the world for the large, seemingly perfect potatoes. Yet, not every parcel of land and not every farmer dedicates their life to the producing of potatoes.

Two other key components of Idaho agriculture are both dairy and livestock. In fact, Idaho is fifth in the nation in milk production. Dairies are abundant across the state, producing over 8.7 million pounds of milk in 2003. Livestock are also tremendously valuable for Idaho's economy, bringing in 2.18 billion dollars a year to Idaho.



Idaho also has some rather unique agricultural products that are not regular crops across the nation. These include sugar beets, mint, mink and trout. Approximately 74% of the number of food size trout and 68% of the live weight produced in the nation came from Idaho producers. It's hard to imagine all of this can be found in one state, but it can and is.

In addition to our agricultural endeavors, our state is also home to a great FFA association! Encompassing over 3,600 members from 80 chapters, the Idaho FFA Association's members are extremely active and compete in the 21 CDEs that Idaho has to offer. There are many events throughout the year, including the State CDEs, which is held in Moscow, Idaho at the University of Idaho, and State Soils and Range held in Burley, Idaho. Another unique

event that Idaho FFA holds is the Cenarrussa Day on the Hill, where FFA members from across the state travel to Boise to have a breakfast with the State Senators and Representatives. Despite all these events that keep Idaho FFA members busy throughout the year, the Idaho FFA Association Officer Team, composed of Bradley Hale, President; Shawna Orthel, Vice President; Jill Dalton, Secretary; Marie Fabricius, Treasurer; myself as Reporter; and Ben Robertson, Sentinel, is already preparing for the upcoming 75th Convention this next April.

Although Idaho is obviously quite different from Michigan, there are still quite a few things in common. No matter what our differences and miles setting us FFA members apart, I hope we can all hold true to this year's Idaho FFA theme, and live the "FFA Blue Jacket Legacy!"



The Rest of the Story...



Andrea Kerbuski
State Reporter

As the most employed person on the state officer team, when Andrea isn't doing the work of the FFA or attending classes at MSU, she can either be found working as the CARRS website specialist or at the Breslin Center working the Spartan Basketball games. You might also look at the local Abercrombie and Fitch where she will be happy to tell you about their latest form-fitting jeans.

Andrea hails from the Ravenna FFA Chapter where she served as its president, reporter and historian as well as serving as the Region V Treasurer her senior year. Outside of the FFA, she was kept busy as her class president for three years, 4-H president, secretary and treasurer, Equestrian team captain, cheerleading captain and her National Honor Society.

A sophomore at Michigan State University majoring in both Agriculture and Natural Resource Communications, Andrea would like to become a news anchor.

During her officer year, Andrea said that, "I don't just want to meet members across the state, but to get to know them and be a mentor to them. My team will all strive for the same goal: to represent our state and maintain our enthusiasm."

Andrea goes on to say that "My primary responsibility is to strive for the members across the state and to be someone that they can trust."

To the members of the Michigan FFA, Andrea has this message: "Get as involved as you can! The more involved you are, the more you get out of our wonderful organization. So go do something!" o

All About Andrea...

Andrea can usually be found doing her favorite thing: shopping. But once her credit card has worn out, she might be found watching *Anchorman* or *The Lord of the Rings* movies. Her favorite book is *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* and she likes the music of Brand New, Copeland and the Postal Service.



Caitlin Lorenc
Region VI State
Vice President

With a personal motto of "Well behaved women rarely make history," Region VI State Vice President Caitlin Lorenc is a leader to watch. An MSU freshman majoring in Horticulture and Landscape Design, she comes from the Benzie Central FFA Chapter.

Caitlin's SAE programs are interestingly interweaved. Beginning in spring of 2004, she began raising bees in an apiary on her home property and harvesting the produced honey. On the other end of the spectrum, she also manages many flower and vegetable gardens that directly benefit from the pollinating bees.

In high school Caitlin was heavily involved with the varsity choir, dubbed the Madrigals. She was also a member of the school Key Club, National Honor Society and an editor of the high school yearbook.

When asked who she looked to most, she replied, "God is the very first person whom I seek and talk to when I need help. Next would be my family. Family is so important in life and everything that we do. No matter what decisions I make, they will stand by me."

For her year as a state officer, she hopes to serve the members of the Michigan FFA to the best of her abilities. She understands the wonderful opportunity that has been given to her and refuses to let it go to waste.

To those members that she serves, she would like to say, "Whatever you do, NEVER give up on your hopes and dreams. Even though at some points in your life, it may feel like you will never achieve them, take a deep breath and remember to focus. Everything is in reach." o

Caitlin's Cantation...

Music is an important part of Caitlin's life; her favorite musicians being Jewell, Green Day, Norah Jones and Pin Monkey. When not jamming out under the headphones, she enjoys *CSI* and *Law and Order: SVU*. Her favorite books are *The Secret Life of Bees* and the *Holy Bible*. And her mom makes the best scalloped potatoes ever!



Alumni in Action

Administrator's Trip

Ten administrators, school board members and counselors took part in the 78th National FFA Convention held in Louisville, Kentucky this year. Starting out on Thursday morning, our first stop was the Branch Area Career Center Agriscience program in Coldwater. There, Carrie Preston, Ag teacher and FFA advisor, gave the group a tour of the facilities and spoke on the background of the development of said facilities to fit the curriculum taught at the center. After lunch, it was back on the bus and off to Louisville!

The group was able to take part in the Michigan FFA Foundation's reception and they also observed the evening convention session. The following morning the group attended the morning session, meeting afterwards with members from their

respective chapters that were attending the convention. Many took in the career show and participated in sight-seeing tours with their home chapters. In the evening, a group dinner was held at a local restaurant followed by a return to the convention.

After Saturday morning breakfast, a short session was held by Dr. Eddie Moore, MSU Professor and a group of FFA members gave inspiring testimonials to what the FFA has done for them.

The group was escorted by Lori Chamberlain, Alumni Executive Director; Tom Nugent, Michigan Farm Bureau Field Operations Director; Dr. Eddie Moore; Floyd Beneker, State FFA Alumni President and Charlie Snyder, Region VI Alumni Vice President. Next year's National FFA Convention will be in Indianapolis, Indiana. Make plans to send an

administrator, school board member or counselor from your school!

New Executive Director

A new face to the Michigan FFA Alumni Council is that of Lori Chamberlain, the new Executive Director.

A former member of the Webberville FFA Chapter, Lori served in the capacity of her chapter president and treasurer, regional treasurer and as the 1994-1995 Michigan FFA State Treasurer. Earning an MSU bachelor's degree in Ag Extension and Education, she student taught for one year at the Laker FFA Chapter before joining the Michigan Farm Bureau this year.

Her duties are to provide administrative support for FFA Alumni meeting and conference planning, manage FFA Alumni member



rosters and provide detailed financial reports for the Michigan FFA Alumni Board.

In the coming months and years, Lori hopes to complete her master's degree program by Spring 2006. For the Michigan FFA Alumni, she hopes to see the organization grow in number of chapters throughout the state. Good luck Lori and welcome!

Annual Meeting

What: Michigan FFA Alumni Annual Meeting

When: Saturday, February 11th at 6pm

Where: Springport High School, just west of M99 in Springport

Why Attend: Have a voice in your State organization. Meet supporters from all over the state. Elect officers to represent you. Have fun. Participate in silent and live auction to support WLC scholarships.

Cost: \$20 with reservations in advance, \$25 at the door. Please call (517) 323-7000 Ext. 3243 with your firm reservations.



The Cornerstone

Michigan FFA Foundation

As a former FFA member herself, the new Michigan FFA Foundation Director, Megan Hirschman, knows the importance of a sound support system for members of the FFA.

Hailing from the Ithaca FFA Chapter, Hirschman was the State Winner in the 2000 Prepared Public Speaking Contest and placed as the Reserve State Winner in the

Greenhand Public Speaking Contest.

With these priceless experiences behind her, she attended Michigan State University. In 2003, she graduated with a degree in Agriculture and Natural Resource Communications and Public Relations.

In her new post as Foundation Director, Hirschman's number

one goal is to not only meet, but to exceed fundraising efforts in the state. She wants to connect the foundation, association and alumni to better suit the needs of the Michigan FFA members.

If you'd like to contact Megan Hirschman, she can be reached at mhirsch@michffb.com or (517) 323-6569.



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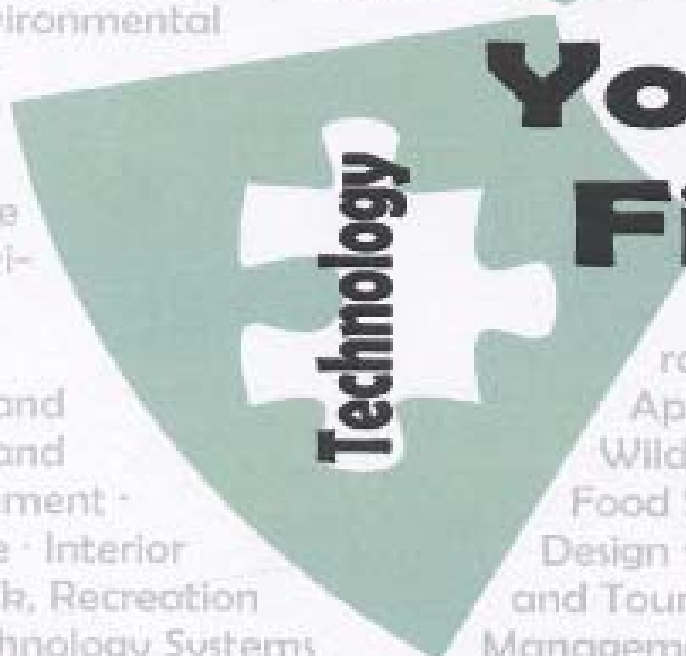
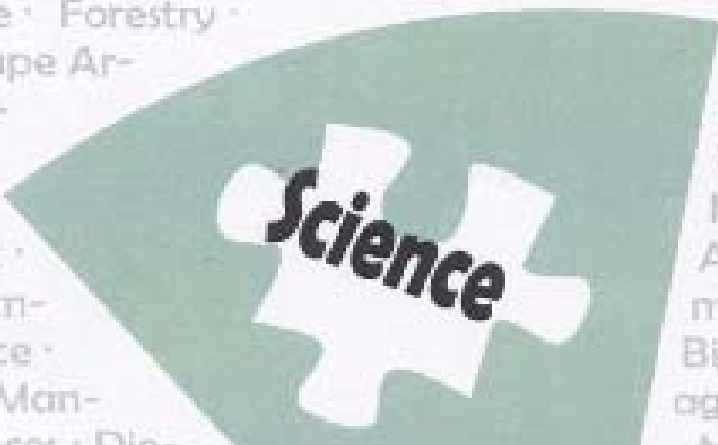
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