



The Michigan FFA

# Creed

September/October 2005

“I believe in the future of agriculture...”

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Sept	6 20 29-30	LEAD/ANF/STEP Conference Scholarship Due Start date for Broilers Fall PDI/LEAD/ANF/STEP Conference
Oct	4 26-30	Start date for Cornish Hens National FFA Convention - Louisville, Kentucky

# I believe in...



## I Believe in the future of the agriculture...

The core of our incredible organization lies within the heart of agriculture. This is the way it has been since its birth and this is how it will remain decades from now.

Our Creed, the statement of beliefs that each FFA member that dons the blue corduroy jacket holds within them, demonstrates our desire to protect the future of agriculture from its first few stirring lines:

*"I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds—achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturalists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years."*

Let us start in the past. For it is from the past that we have learned what we know and use today. It is these past agriculturalists that we look in times of doubt and uncertainty. We strive to follow in their footsteps of character, strength and determination.

George Washington Carver helped rejuvenate the economy of the South after multiple generations

of cotton plants had devastated the land and caused many to think that southern production agriculture had seen its greatest days pass it by. He understood the need for diversification of the crops and developed hundreds of uses for soybeans, sweet potatoes and peanuts, bringing these crops to the forefront of American agriculture.

John Deere is a name that can be found in millions of homes nationwide, his influence still being felt throughout the agricultural community, over one hundred years after his death. Through his hard work and many endeavors, he developed the steel plow, easing the work of millions around the world and allowing the gentle farmer more time to spend with his loved ones.

Jethro Tull is revered as the inventor of the seed drill. Before his invention was accepted into the mainstream of American agriculture, the most commonly used method for planting seeds was known as "broadcasting." This method had farmers simply throwing seeds onto the ground, many of the seeds being scattered by the wind and taken by birds and other animals.

With his seed drill, seeds were safely deposited within the soil, allowing them a better opportunity to grow and be harvested.

With all of the achievements, inventions and discoveries of these men and countless others whose names are remembered in the hallowed halls of history, American farming is what we know it to be.

Now our eyes can begin to look toward the future. Each and every day we are bombarded with new issues that can potentially change the face of American agriculture; biotechnology, Bt corn and the urbanization of agriculture among them. These are the issues that our generation will debate and discuss just as the generations before us debated how plowing could be done with more ease, how planting could be done more efficiently and how a region could be saved for future use.

Yes, we believe in the future of agriculture, knowing full well that that future will not be without its trials and tribulations and that we must continue the work of better days through better ways, just as our forbearers did before us. We will continue the work and we will be better and stronger because of it. <sup>(2)</sup>

# Biotechnology: Science for the Future



By: Nathan Baker  
Past State Officer

Biotechnology. Genetic Engineering. What do you think of when you hear these things? Most people think of something that is not natural and has been altered in some way. When people conceive of something unnatural they assume that it is harmful to the environment and unhealthy to consume. Biotechnology and genetic engineering are actually very beneficial to farmers and consumers.

Although biotechnology is thought of as a relatively new technology it has actually been around for many years. Biotechnology can be as simple cross-breeding different varieties of crops in order to give plants certain characteristics. Biotechnology has become more advanced

over the past ten year to include placing specific genes into plants. For example, a gene from an Alaskan flounder was placed into tomato plants to make them more resistant to cold weather. More common uses of biotechnology are Roundup Ready crops, and Bt crops.

Roundup Ready is a trait that makes crops such as corn, soybeans, and cotton resistant to Glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup. This allows farmers to spray their fields with chemicals that would normally kill all plants to control weeds better. It also helps to reduce the amount to chemicals used since Roundup controls more weeds than ordinary

herbicides. A reduction in chemical use helps the environment by reducing runoff into streams and rivers. Roundup Ready crops were introduced about ten years ago and have rapidly grown in their use. Today in the United States over 80 percent of the soybeans planted are herbicide resistant.

Bt crops are crops that have been genetically engineered to be resistant to insect damage. Bt stands for *Bacillus thuringensis* which is a toxin that occurs naturally in the soil. Scientist put the gene into corn and cotton so that when insects such as European corn bore chew on the stalk they ingest the toxin and die. This helps farmer to reduce the amount of insecticides that are used to control insects, again reducing runoff into streams and rivers. Each year approximately seven percent of the world's corn supply is lost to European corn bores. This is enough corn to feed sixty million people for a year.

Bt cotton is especially helpful in China where technology is not as advanced as in the United States and farmers have sprayed insecticides on their field by hand for years. Exposure to these chemicals results in 400 – 500 deaths per year. Bt cotton is eliminating the need to spray chemicals and saving lives.

There are many other forms of biotechnology that are not as common but soon could

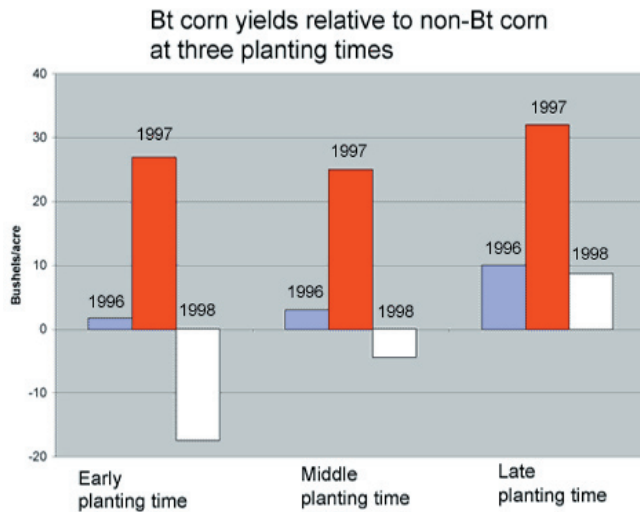
be very popular. Things like virus resistant crops, oil crops modified to have different amounts of certain acids, slow-ripening fruits, and nutrition enhanced crops are all products that are currently being produced and tested. A neat example of a nutrition enhanced crop is Golden Rice. Golden Rice was developed specifically to help people in third world countries that lack beta-carotene in their diets. A gene containing beta-carotene was taken from daffodils and place into rice. The result was rice that had an orange tint due to the elevated levels of beta-carotene.

Biotechnology has the potential to increase the world's food production which can help in reducing hunger. Biotech products such as Roundup Ready and Bt crops are increasing yields for farmers by controlling weeds and insects. With this extra production one would think that third world countries would be eager to accept food aid from other countries. However, Zambia, a poverty stricken country in Africa, has refused to receive any aid from the United States because other the biotechnology in the crops. They had two major reasons of refusing aid. One reason was because they were afraid that the modified crops would harm them when consumed. People have feared biotechnology because the long term affects are not known and it could cause allergic reactions or other harmful side



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affects. Genetically modified crops have been in our food supply for 10 years now and have shown no side affects or ever harmed any humans. The USDA strictly tests and studies all biotech products before they are approved for commercial use.

The other reason that Zambia had for refusing aid is because if they receive that aid and people plant the seeds in order to raise crops to sell, the country's agricultural products would contain genetically modified material. In countries like Zambia the major source of income is exporting grain to Europe, but the European Union will not accept any geneti-

cally engineered grains. This means that Zambia would not be able to sell grain to Europe and would loose it's major source of income.

Genetic engineering is becoming more and more popular with farmers as the benefits are increased and as new products are released. New products still being researched include crops that contain pharmaceuticals and vaccines, and that can withstand droughts. Biotechnology has the potential to save millions of lives through increased food production, but we must be careful with how much we use and it should be properly tested and research.

### For More Information...

To learn more about the premier biotechnology firm in America, visit <http://www.monsanto.com/monsanto/layout/>

Visit your local library and check out *First Food: The Creation of the Flavr Savr Tomato and the Birth of Biotech Foods* by Melinda Martineau

Check out the book *Understanding Biotechnology* by Aluizio Borem, Fabricio R. Santos, and David E. Bowen

An extensive collection of information of biotechnology can be found in *Agricultural Biotechnology: Challenges and Prospects* by Mahesh K. Bhalgat, William P. Ridley, Allan S. Felsot and James N. Seiber

Visit <http://www.usda.gov/agencies/biotech>

Consult with your chapter agriscience and biology teachers

## Ag Skills Winners...

### Senior Results

Ag Communications - Alma (Sam McClintic, Elise Herren, Matt Loomis, Alex Henry)

Ag Mechanics - Corunna (Freeman, Jacob Zdunic, Jordan Pincik, Jason Perkins)

Ag Sales - BACC (Kayla Johnson, Brandon White, Hannah Losinska, Kelly Foote)

Crops - Sanliac (Keith Abend, Marvin Machart, Tim Wilke, Kyle McCarty)

Enviromental Skills - Calhoun (Zach Shippell, Josh Moore, Logan Alderson, Tasha Capella)

Farm Business Management - Corunna (Amanda Smolek, Emily Butcher, Ashley Kingsbury, Justine Fisher, Megan Christensen)

Floriculture - Lapeer (Kari Edgerton, Eric Fisher, Whitney Maxam, Emily Rein-erth, Amanda Smith)

Forestry - Wexford Missaukee (Adam Williams, Brian McKee, Mike Horn)

Greenhouse Crop Production - Lapeer (Kim Durst, Jackie Sutherland, Candac Groomes, Ronald Barnard)

Horse Judging - Lowell (Jenny Humphries, April Wolf, Renee Buist, Maranda Ruegsegger)

Land Conservation - Chesaning (Troy Smith, Matt Martin, Mike Casassa, Aldon Dugalech, Miller Dugalech)

Landscape - Lapeer (Shannon Steensma, Nicolas Wisenbaugh, Justin Dubois, Kyle Corder)

Marketing - Springport

Meats Judging - Bronson (Trent Herman, Lori Gunthorp, Kayla Nearpass, Curtis VanVorst)

Milk Quality - Waldron (Devin Emens, Jessica Kintner, Betty Doucette, Jessica Fether, Byron Leininger)

Poultry - Lakers (Trina Ross, Whitney Parsch, Brittany Armbruster, Erica King, Brent Osantoski)

### Junior Results

Crops - Ubly (Keith Kramer, Bryan Messing, Katie Gentner)

Enviromental Skills - Breckenridge (Brittany Parkhurst, Taylor Packard, Kelsey Cole, James Myers, Trent Hooks)

Floriculture - Webberville (Cassie Benjamin, Jeanne Van Gilder, Jordan Hague)

Forestry - North Adams-Jerome (Jacob Bloomer, Nick Miller, Ted Danner)

Conservation - Alma (Jordan Henry)

Meats Judging - Bronson (Brad Losinski, Shaydon Weaver, Neil Hyska, Katelyn Mercer)

Milk Quality - Waldron (Josh Fellows, Jordon Flotkoetter, Ashley Jagielski, Samuel Lockwood, John Martin)

Poultry - Coopersville (Stephanie Boomgaard, Duke Schaap, Thomas Wieringa)



# Our Motto in Motion

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Office of Career and Technical Preparation

## Learning to Do

By: Caitlin Lorenc  
Region VI State  
Vice President

Nestled in rolling hills, streaming rivers and sparkling lakes in Northern Michigan is Traverse City.

Traverse City is home to many golf courses, cherry orchards and is the vacation destination of thousands of people. This area is also fortunate to have a thriving FFA program, the Traverse Bay Area Career Tech Center (TBA).

TBA has had an FFA chapter for about 19 years under the guidance of Bill Bassett, who retired in 2002. At that time, they were fortunate enough to find their current advisor, Anna Blight.

Last year, Ms. Blight was approached by a group called the Friendly Garden Club of Traverse City. She was asked if her morning and afternoon classes could grow a plant called the Dusty Miller for the Open Space at the annual National Cherry Festival. The FFA classes also grew another plant called Ageratum Blue Hawaii. Ms. Blight's morning and afternoon FFA classes started growing the plants as plugs at the beginning of March. This year, the TBA FFA delivered the plants on June 7th, 2005 which will be used for a decorative garden at the



National Cherry Festival. "This is a great opportunity for the community to see what these kids are able to do," said Ms. Blight.

Two years ago, Ms. Blight attended the Fall Agriscience Teacher Conference, which was also attended by a group called Global Releaf. The environmental group, Global Releaf of Michigan, emphasizes planting trees throughout communities. While keeping in contact with Global Releaf, Ms. Blight was able to get the local Watershed Center to write a grant to help restore Kidd's Creek. Kidd's Creek is a trout stream that runs through Traverse City. The creek also travels through an area where a local buffalo farm was located. The runoff from the farm and current construction projects have ruined the banks of the creek. Global Releaf and the Watershed Center teamed

with the TBA FFA to work together to rebuild these banks. On November 3, 2004, 35 students from Ms. Blight's class and students from the TBA Construction Trades classes reconstructed the creek's banks and planted native trees, which were provided by Global Releaf, to help reduce erosion. The outlook for the creek is terrific! "I am a big environmentalist," said Ms. Blight. "I have always wanted to participate in something like this. For us to be able to be involved was awesome! It's important to me and my classes that we maintain our disappearing environment."

It is apparent to all that with leadership like this, it is easy to see that the TBA FFA will continue to serve their community and prosper for many more years. [P](#)



## Forester

Foresters manage timberlands for many different entities. Some foresters are private consultants who advise landowners on the multiple-use management of their timberlands. Many work in management, administration, or research for public agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service.

Foresters have long-range views on environmental issues. They should be

able to visualize a forest's development over many years. They must understand natural history and forest ecology.

In high school, take four years each of mathematics and English. Also take courses in biology, chemistry, and physics.

For more information, check out: <http://www.for.msu.edu/>

# Doing to Learn

## Building Skills for Life

By Julie Thelen  
State Vice President

Think back. What were you doing when you were nine years old? Playing with friends, enjoying time at home or maybe you were doing something that you absolutely loved to do. For some people, this is a hobby, a skill, or some other thing that is their passion, their dream, and their greatest ability. For Chris Stevens, he thrives on his ability as a craftsman in woodworking.

At sixteen years old, Chris currently attends Belding

High School. He began his woodworking career in his grandfather's workshop when he was only nine years old. Since then, he has advanced by taking a wood shop class to improve his skills and he plans to take the Build-A-Home class this coming year.

Chris began his SAE as a novice by making a simple jigsaw puzzle with only the use of a jigsaw and sandpaper. Since then, Chris has advanced his skills and became more confident in his ability and has advanced to building pool tables, clocks, shelves, and more. Chris's specialty is making collectable wood baskets made of various figures such as eagles. In order to do this, Chris has also mastered the skill of using sanders, band saws, table saws, planers, joiners, and routers.

In addition to his woodworking SAE, another part of Chris's program is breeding and showing Mini-

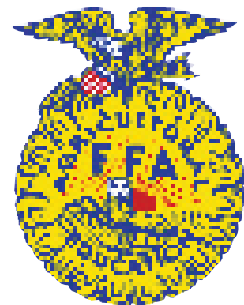


Rex rabbits. Chris currently owns ten rabbits and this past summer, he had the goal of each female producing at least one litter in order to increase the size of his operation. Chris enjoys showing his rabbits at the Ionia Free Fair when he is not busy with woodworking projects.

In his spare time, Chris enjoys swinging a club as a member of the school golf team and doing community service through his church youth group. At this point, Chris is planning a career in home building with the possibility of other careers as a handyman.



Chris has been in the FFA for two years competing at the district level in the Creed Speaking and Prepared Public Speaking leadership contests. He has participated in the majority of the Belding FFA Chapter events including the fundraisers, banquets, and recreational activities.



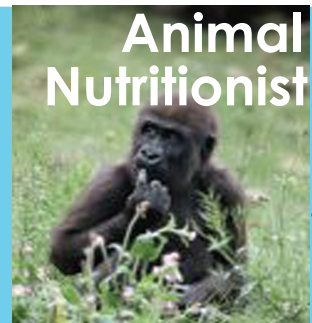
Animal nutritionists formulate diets for food, companion, and zoo animals. They work with mammals, birds, and fish. The diets they create must be nutritionally sound, good tasting, and economical for the ages and types of animals that will use them.

Animal nutritionists can teach the science and art of nutrition to students and conduct research in public universities or colleges, or they may work in the private sector.

In high school, take college preparatory courses in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and communications. Leadership skills acquired in extracurricular activities are useful.

To learn more, go to:  
<http://www.ans.msu.edu/>

## Animal Nutritionist



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# Earning to Live

By: Andrea Kerbuski  
State Reporter

"Is it good for the kids?" has been Richard Karelse's philosophy throughout his many dedicated years to the National FFA Organization. His care for this organization has been reflected throughout his various accomplishments and extreme involvement in FFA.

Richard Karelse is a familiar face at state convention, this year he attended his 47th

consecutive convention. Generations of FFA members know Mr. Karelse for his role as state advisor starting in 1972 up until his retirement in 1997. However, his involvement in FFA began much earlier. He started out as an eager member of the Caledonia FFA Chapter from 1962 to 1964. Being involved at his local chapter and having a great agriculture teacher is what encouraged and motivated him to continue his involvement in FFA.

After receiving a degree in agricultural education from Michigan State University, Mr. Karelse became the advisor for the Caro FFA Chapter. Mr. Karelse also worked for the Michigan Department of Education starting in 1966

to 1997. He even served on the National FFA board from 1976 to 1978.

Throughout his involvement in both agricultural education and FFA, he was instrumental with the changing face of agricultural education. Agricultural education began as vocational but now it is referred to as agriscience. Mr. Karelse stated, "Agriculture is not just the production aspect anymore. Agriculture is science based." His understanding of agriculture and its future has made quite an impact on the career and technical programs in Michigan.

Mr. Karelse has received countless awards and honors including The National FFA Outstanding Service award, Honorary State degree, and Honorary American degree.

Current state advisor, Randy Showerman describes Mr. Karelse's impact on FFA when he said, "His sheer presence demands respect from people. He has earned respect from everyone. He stands for his beliefs and values in FFA and has never wavered."

Mr. Karelse has served this organization every way possible. Whether he was serving as an advisor, serving on the national board, judging FFA contests, helping develop new contests or working with teachers across the state to improve agriscience programs, he has made a lasting impression.

Advice Mr. Karelse wants to share with FFA members is, "Get all your education and take advantage of the diverse opportunities FFA provides."




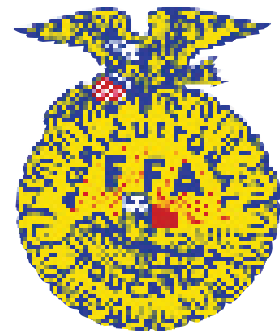
## Michigan FFA Advisors of the Past

E.E. Gallup, 1929-1938  
Harry Nesman, 1938-1966  
Edwin St. John, 1966-1970  
Clifford Haslick, 1970-1971  
Duane Dalglish, 1971-1972  
Richard Karelse, 1972-1997  
Charles Snyder, 1997-1999  
Jeff Hawes, 1999-2002  
Randy Showerman, 2002-

He also urges the members to adapt to the challenges of the future. "We must be able to adapt to change not only in agriculture, but also business and education."

Mr. Richard Karelse has a passion for FFA, unlike anyone else. He has helped evolve both FFA and agricultural education into something more beneficial for the students and members today. His benevolent, selfless character has serviced this organization in so many ways which will never be forgotten.

Thank you Mr. Karelse for being a role model for many generations of FFA members in Michigan. 



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## Fisheries Scientist

Fisheries scientists are dedicated to effective management, use, and conservation of aquatic plants and animals. As researchers, managers, administrators, or educators, they protect and enhance recreational, commercial, and aquacultural fisheries resources.

Fisheries scientists can hold research or management positions. Some work as

disease specialists at federal fish hatcheries, or aquatic resource specialists for environmental consulting firms.

In high school, take courses that emphasize biology, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, writing, and speaking.

For more information, go to:  
<http://www.fw.msu.edu/>



# Living to Serve

By: Sarah McCurley  
Region I State  
Vice President

In the scope of things, we won't be remembered for what kind of clothes we wore, what kind of car we drove or for who we knew. When it's all said and done, our legacy will rest in what we did in the service of others. Keeping this in mind, the members of the Ravenna FFA Chapter are definitely on their way to establishing a strong heritage of service in their school and surrounding community.

The Ravenna FFA Chapter is home to seventy-four incredible members. These students participate in many community service activities through three different classes: Leadership, Communications and Service Learning. Ravenna FFA advisor and Ag Instructor Melanie Block teaches these classes, within which she implements a service project each month. For these projects, she splits her students into groups of three.

In November of last year, she and her students organized a massive canned food drive for their local chapter of the Salvation Army. All in all, with the work and organization of these hardworking FFA members their chapter collected nearly 2000 food items for the less fortunate of Muskegon County.

Katie Wheeler, a junior at Ravenna High School said, "It feel so good to be able to help out the needy of our community because I knew a



few of them and I can totally understand how they feel. It was great to show that we care."

And as if that weren't enough, the members found another way that they could give back to their community. Golden Friends is a group of local senior citizens that meet on a regular monthly basis for the purpose of friendship and camaraderie.

This past January, members of the Ravenna FFA Chapter planned an incredibly breakfast for the senior group, cooking and serving the entire meal. The students didn't just cook; they also took time to talk with the seniors. They discussed their future plans and how the FFA has helped them get closer to achieving their career goals. Alicia Williams of the chapter also gave a very special vocal performance to conclude the gathering.

With the work of the Ravenna FFA Chapter, it is impossible for people not to recognize

the amazing work of the FFA and its members and to realize that those members are the future of our great country.

## Ways to Help...

As members of the FFA, the greatest youth organization in the world, we challenge you to help the less fortunate and elderly in your community. Contact your local nursing home and find out if they accept volunteers to read, play games or even just visit with the residents. Also, many churches throughout the country have donation boxes around holiday times where people can drop off lightly worn clothes, non-perishable food and other items. Do your part and lend a helping hand!



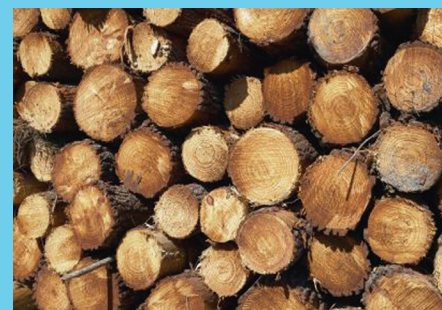
## Logging Engineer

Logging engineers help design timber transportation and harvesting systems, supervise timber harvests, and ensure protection of soil, water, and other natural resources during logging.

Logging engineers can work for private logging and forestry companies or government forestry agencies.

In high school, take mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, and computer science courses. Communication skills are very important. Experience working outdoors and with machines is helpful.

To learn more, check out:  
<http://www.for.msu.edu/>



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# Member Highlights

By: Andrea Kerbuski  
State Reporter

## Region 1: Kalli Zenker Olivet




Kalli Zenker  
Olivet

Kalli Zenker of the Olivet FFA Chapter is involved in volleyball, softball, 4-H, church, basketball, student government, and is the theater student director. Even though Kalli is extremely involved in school, she dedicates most of her time to her SAE, which is dairy and swine production.

When Kalli was fourteen years old, her brothers helped her join FFA and start her SAE. Her daily routine requires her to check the self feeder for the pigs in the morning and at night. In addition to that, Kalli walks her pigs everyday. She feeds her dairy cows hay in the morning and at night along with grain. A couple months prior to a show, Kalli starts to walk her cows about once a week. She shows her animals at the Calhoun County Fair. Kalli has shown swine for five years and dairy for four years.

Kalli has earned numerous awards in FFA including: Star Greenhand, Outstanding Sophomore, and she earned second in the state for Dairy Judging in 2003. She has served as her chapter's historian and this year she is the chapter's secretary. She has attended SLCCO, state convention, and MFE.

After high school, Kalli plans to attend Kalamazoo Community College and then transfer to Western Michigan University to receive a degree in elementary education. 



Adam Brooks  
Jonesville

## Region 2: Adam Brooks Jonesville


Thanks to his father's motivation to join FFA, sophomore Chris Brooks of the Jonesville FFA Chapter should be proud of his many accomplishments. Chris has received the FFA Outstanding Member award and Star Greenhand last year from his chapter. This year, Chris serves at the Jonesville Chapter president!

Chris is very involved with his SAE which involves starting and raising his own beef herd. He also works alongside his father and grandfather on the family owned farm where they grow corn, beans, wheat, and hay on 900 acres.

As a freshman Chris began his SAE, but was involved in 4-H prior to FFA. He has shown steers, hogs, and sheep for eight years at the Hillsdale County Fair. Not only does he show steers in 4-H, but he travels to MSU to show them at the MSU Winter Classic.

The daily routine of Chris' SAE begins with completing morning chores consisting of checking each group of heifers, feeding them, and cleaning stalls if necessary. He pays special attention to the breed heifers because it is an especially important time for them and their calf.

Chris also participates in track and football at his high school.


Upon graduation, Chris plans to attend Michigan State University and major in beef production. He then hopes to own and operate his own beef farm. 

## Region 3: Paige Tuggle Ithaca

As the fourth generation to show beef cattle in her family, Paige Tuggle's SAE began as a way for her family to spend time together. She's a sophomore member in the Ithaca FFA Chapter and has been intensely involved with both her chapter and SAE. Last year she served as her chapter's parliamentarian and she is the treasurer this year. Paige's SAE is Registered Angus Beef Cattle Production and Cross Breed Beef Cattle Production.

Since thirteen years of age, Paige has been raising and showing beef cattle as apart of her SAE. She aids in the selection of the cattle for the upcoming show season and helps break cattle in to prepare them for state shows. A washroom has been installed at Paige's barn with the money earned from her SAE and it has improved the routine of taking care of her cattle. Paige normally shows at four state shows a year and shows her cattle at the Gratiot County Fair, which she has been doing the last eight years.

Besides her involvement in FFA, Paige is involved in JV basketball, JV volleyball, JV softball, varsity track, Highland Livestock 4-H, and she is on the Michigan Junior Angus Directors board.

Following graduation, Paige plans on attending Michigan State University to become a pediatrician. 



Paige Tuggle  
Ithaca

## Region 4: Ryan Byrnes Laingsburg

A junior at Laingsburg High School, Ryan Byrnes once thought that FFA was all about animals and farming. Now he knows better. As his chapter president and the Region IV Reporter, he now says, "It's about the people you meet and the dedication to duty. I've learned everything from interviewing skills and the importance of community service. I've learned that people are willing to share what they have learned with you."

Ryan began his SAE of landscape management when he was in the seventh grade. His older brother had been meticulous when caring for their parents and neighbor's lawns and Ryan followed in his footsteps. Fast forward four years later and Ryan is such a successful young entrepreneur that he has become an employer.

He says, "It's important to hire good people that share the same values, ideas and goals. I like discussing and sharing ideas with the people I'm working for as well as the people that are working for me. I am selling a service and I need to make sure that others feel comfortable with me and will be as straightforward with me as I am with them. I have learned that keeping a good sense of humor and a good outlook are very important in my success."

After finishing high school, Ryan wants to attend Central Michigan University and would like to focus on becoming an Agriscience teacher. 📍

## Region 5: Anna Timmerman Coopersville

As a junior, Anna Timmerman from the Coopersville FFA Chapter has many responsibilities when it comes to FFA. She serves as the secretary of her chapter and has an extensive SAE. Her SAE's include Diversified Crops and Livestock and she also handles rabbits, poultry, sheep, and swine.

At 6 a.m., Anna's SAE responsibilities begin, starting with feeding her chickens and letting the ducks loose. She also waters and checks on her rabbits while feeding her sheeps and hogs. In the afternoon, she feeds and waters all of her livestock. If necessary, Anna cleans out all the pens, cages, and updates her records. In the evening, Anna trains her animals for showmanship and judging competitions. She has been showing at the Ottawa County Berlin Fair with sheep for five years, swine for four years, and both poultry and rabbits for eight years.

Anna has received the Star Chapter Farmer in 2003 and this year, she won the State Cornish Hen contest. Anna also traveled to the Horticulture Nationals to represent FFA and won the public speaking division. She has attended both national convention and multiple state conventions.

Michigan State is Anna's college of choice where she plans on pursuing a career in crop and soil sciences. 📍

## Region 6: Jeff Thomas Alpena

Jeff Thomas, a senior at Alpena High School, originally joined the FFA and began his unique SAE because of one thing: boredom. Since making those fateful decisions, he has grown and prospered in the organization.

Joining the FFA in ninth grade, Jeff really didn't become active in the FFA until his former advisor Wade Morton came along. "Whenever he talked about the FFA, his eyes would light up like something I had never seen before. He really inspired me try things I never would have done on my own," he remembered. Since that time, Jeff has served his chapter as both chaplain and parliamentarian and his region as president and vice president.

Jeff's unique SAE consists of working with and training his horses for use in competitive barrel racing. He has been racing for the last three years and takes part in events all over his county and sometimes state. A money prize is sometimes awarded.

After graduation from high school, Jeff plans on attending Alpena Community College for two years and then transferring to Michigan State University to pursue a degree in Agriscience Education. 📍



Ryan Byrnes  
Laingsburg



Anna Timmerman  
Coopersville



Jeff Thomas  
Alpena

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

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

Sept/Oct 2005

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# Back Where I Come From

By: Michelle Longhi  
Connecticut FFA  
State Reporter

For the past eleven months, I have been honored to serve the Connecticut FFA Association as its State Reporter. Throughout my term, I have learned a great deal about the Connecticut FFA and our state's agricultural industry. Although Connecticut is no longer known for agriculture, it still has strong roots in that field. We are home to 21 chapters with around 2,300 incredible members.

Throughout the year, FFA members are presented with many opportunities to get involved in our association. The most popular events are the Leadership Conferences and Career Development Events (CDEs). Most of the CDEs we hold are on two field days held at the University of Connecticut.

Along with all of the competitions offered through the National FFA Organization,

Connecticut offers other CDEs. In the Veterinary Technology Skills contest, participants are required to identify various animal breeds, tools and equipment along with different parasites. There is also a dog physical examination portion of the CDE. The Aquaculture contest includes equipment identification, aquatic organism identification, a water quality analysis and tank volume calculations. Non-agriculturally related events are available as well, including an Opening and Closing Ceremonies CDE for ninth and tenth graders to demonstrate their abilities to conduct our official ceremonies and a Quiz Bowl CDE for freshmen on general FFA knowledge.

In addition to FFA events, many of our members participate in various fairs in and near the state such as the Goshen Fair and the Eastern States Exposition. The state also holds an Agriculture Day at the Capital, which is where all of the agricultural associations and organizations bring



booths to inform legislators of how important the agricultural industry is. This year, the Connecticut FFA State Officers were able to escort our governor to the stage for her speech. FFA and agriculture gained the support of many legislators on Ag Day.

Another exciting event is Farm City. This is an activity that brings elementary students from the cities out to a Connecticut farm to familiarize them with the farming process. Hundreds of young students go on the farm tours during this three-day event. It is a very successful way to

bring agriculture to young students that live in the city.

And while agriculture is no longer the primary industry in Connecticut like it was in the seventeenth century, we still have a large agricultural base. More than half of Connecticut's land is farmland, open space or forest with more than 4,200 operating farms. I myself enjoy living on a small farm specializing in greenhouse production. I am very proud to be a farmer and an FFA member in such a supportive state such as Connecticut.



FFA NEW HORIZONS

## Some State Statistics...

Connecticut is home to over 360,000 acres of farmland. Despite the state's small size, it lays claim to some awesome accomplishments. Connecticut ranks 1st in density of egg laying poultry and 1st in density of horses. The state comes in 5th in nationwide mushroom production and 10th in maple syrup production. Amongst its New England neighbors, Connecticut ranks first in net farm income, peach and pear production combined, tobacco acreage and production and bedding and garden plant production.

# The Rest of the Story...



**Tony McCaul**  
State Treasurer

The words "no more Mr. Nice Guy" have never once been uttered by State Treasurer Tony McCaul. Described as everybody's best friend, Tony is currently a sophomore at Michigan State University, majoring in Agriculture Education.

Tony began his FFA career in the tenth grade, much under the urging of past state officer Melissa Smith. Since that time, he has grown and prospered as a result, serving the Lakewood FFA Chapter as its secretary and president, Region V as its treasurer and winning countless awards because of his dedication and hard work.

Tony's SAE includes the raising of beef cattle, pigs and goats. He has beef steers that he shows each year at the Ionia Free Fair. He breeds his sows each year and sells the piglets to local 4-H members. He also has goats that he uses at petting zoos for small children.

As far as his future is concerned, Tony is certain as to what he wants to accomplish. He dreams of becoming an Agriscience teacher and FFA advisor and farming in a small Michigan town with his wife and four children.

Tony is eager to work with his fellow eleven officers. He says, "I want my state officer team to bond and become a family. I want us to work together to better the FFA; traveling around the state and listening to new ideas from members so we will be able to change and leave an impact on the Michigan FFA."

When asked if he has any advice for the members of the Michigan FFA, Tony replies that he wants them to "Never give in when something you want and love is concerned. Having faith and determination will let you achieve any goal you can set." [🔗](#)

## Tony's Tidbits...

Tony enjoys sitting around the bonfire and talking about life as he listens to any and all country music. He likes homemade chicken lasagna, attending Michigan Farm Bureau conferences and watching *Dodge Ball*, MSU basketball or the television show *Medium*.



**Ashley Stickler**  
Region V State  
Vice President

For Ashley Stickler, FFA is a family tradition. Since the days of her grandfather, nearly everyone in her family had worn one of our patented jackets of blue corduroy.

Joining the Chippewa Hills FFA in her freshman year of high school, Ashley has competed in numerous leadership contests and this past year received proficiency awards in Equine Science, Diversified Livestock Production and Beef Production.

But her high school career was not limited to her successes in the FFA. She served as secretary for her National Honor Society chapter, was an active member of the Student Council, the Equestrian and Cheerleading teams and even served as the queen of the Michigan High School Rodeo Association.

For her year of service to the Michigan FFA, Ashley has set some incredible goals. She said, "I want to serve the Michigan FFA with heart, integrity and I want to form relationships with the members of our association. I want to represent the Michigan FFA the best I can and be able to look back on the year and have no regrets."

After serving as a state officer, Ashley will work to pursue her personal goals. She will continue her college education, majoring in agriscience. Eventually, she hopes to move to Colorado and become an agriscience teacher, owning a western store and a horse-beef farm.

To the members of Michigan FFA, Ashley would like to leave this message: "Follow your dreams and do not let anything stand in your way...and have a lot of fun on the way." [🔗](#)

## Ashley's Admirations...

Ashley's favorites include homemade lasagna, the book *The Giver*, the television show *Joan of Arcadia*, Snickers bars, Kenny Chesney and her favorite song is *Who I Am* by Jessica Andrews. Her favorite quote is "We need time to remember, time to dream, time to reach the infinite, time to be."

# The Cornerstone

## Michigan FFA Foundation News

By: Tim Rogers  
Michigan Farm News

For the price of a \$5 raffle ticket, one Ag Expo visitor took home a 1938 McCormick-Deering Farmall Model F-14 tractor. Everyone else who donated a fin for a ticket can feel good about contributing to a good cause - the Michigan FFA Foundation.

"Early this year," said Tim Rogers, ad sales manager with Michigan Farm Bureau, "I confronted my good friend Alan Awalt about restoring an old tractor with the idea of raffling it off during Ag Expo and giving the proceeds back to the Michigan FFA Foundation."

A sod grower from Mason, Awalt said he spends plenty of his nights and weekends restoring old tractors and farm equipment. So he agreed to help with the project by providing leadership and a place on his farm to work on the tractor.

"I knew from helping Alan with other projects that restoring

a tractor would be no easy task," Rogers said, "so I called for help from past Michigan FFA State Officers Nathan Baker of Waldron and Matthew Jakubik of Whittemore-Prescott. But we had one small problem," he said. "Who would donate a tractor? The answer came from Ron House, owner of Moore's Farm Repair in Webberville. House was gracious enough to donate a 1938 McCormick-Deering Farmall Model F-14 tractor that was in great working condition and only need a tune-up and some cosmetic repairs," Rogers said.

After picking up the tractor in Webberville, the group went to work restoring the tractor in time for Ag Expo. Hours of sand blasting old paint and repairing dented sheet metal were on the top of the list.

"Both of our former State FFA Officers volunteered to help because they knew it was for a good cause. Nathan drove an hour and half several times just to restore the tractor," Rogers said.



The fully restored Farmall F-14 tractor was on display at Ag Expo inside the FFA Foundation toy tractor and craft tent during Ag Expo show hours. Raffle tickets went for \$5 a piece and were sold prior to and at Ag Expo and at local Case IH dealers.

The raffle was held on Thursday, July 21st and the winning ticket was picked by Ron House, the man who donated the tractor. When all was said and done, the lucky winner was Cliff Fether, farmer and

the husband of the Waldron FFA chapter advisor, Mrs. Margo Fether.

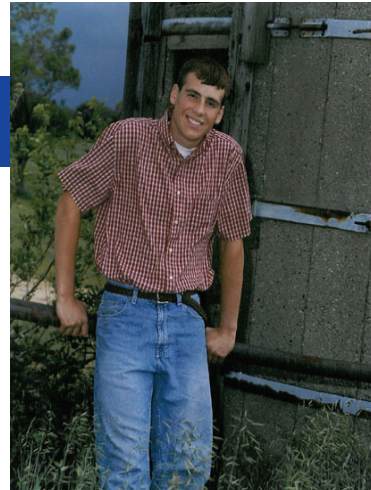
The Michigan FFA Foundation would like to thank everyone who helped make the tractor raffle successful - from the donor of the tractor to those who worked on its restoration to the people who helped sell all the raffle tickets. Together, we raised nearly \$5000 to advance our endeavors and those of the Michigan FFA Association and its members. [Q](#)

## What's Happening in YOUR Alumni Chapter...

The Homer FFA Alumni hosted their annual Pancake Brunch on Memorial Day and it was their largest fundraising project for the year. The brunch helps fund over \$2500 in college scholarships as well as scholarships for the Washington Leadership Conference and other events. This year, the Homer FFA Alumni served over 800 people in just five short hours. In this picture, the former advisor of the Homer FFA Chapter, Rod Evan, works on making pancakes for the hungry attendees. Does your alumni chapter have an exciting event or fundraiser that you would like to highlight in the Creed and share with the rest of the state? If so, please email details to: [pettyd@carrs.msu.edu](mailto:pettyd@carrs.msu.edu).



# Rendezvous With Destiny



By: Dustin Petty  
Past State Officer

In just a matter of weeks, thousands of students from all walks of life and points on the map will be come together in Louisville, Kentucky in the name of the 78th National FFA Convention. Some will come to compete, some to be delegates and many others will come just to have fun and meet new, interesting people. But one member from the Cassopolis FFA Chapter will be making the trip for one more chance to serve the National FFA Organization.

Ryan Peterson, the 2003-2004 Michigan FFA President, will be making his second run in hopes of becoming a member of the National Officer team that will be elected in October.

And while the average member will be touring the hall of states, enjoying live concerts and rodeos and enjoying the exhilarating sessions, Ryan will go through a slew of interviews, testing him on personal qualities and experiences, knowledge of the FFA, agricultural education, and agricultural issues, and how well he interacts and works together with the other national officer candidates.

At the end of the week of the national convention the nominating committee

(comprised of nine state officers) submits their slate of six officers and the delegates approve the slate. It is here that the next year of Ryan's life will be decided.

Some 270 miles away, on the farmland of Niles, Michigan, is where Ryan's story began and where he first learned the principles of life and the FFA. His greatest teachers and supporters, Ryan says, are his parents, Rick and Nancy. He said, "My parents...have always supported me and my decisions in the FFA and helped me in anyway they could. Whether I was convincing them that I needed to miss my senior year high school awards assembly for a state officer training, or meeting me half way across the state with a clean set of clothes to wear for the rest of the state officer work week, or simply being at every major FFA event...they never missed a thing."

Joining the FFA as a seventh grader was no easy task for Ryan. As a student of the Brandywine Schools where no agriscience classes were offered, anyone who wished to be an FFA member had to travel twenty minutes to and from Ross Beatty High School where they could join the Cassopolis FFA. It is here that he grew as a leader.

Over the next six years, Ryan earned the usual degrees

offered in the FFA and competed in four separate leadership competitions at the State Level: Junior High and Greenhand Conduct of Meetings, Agricultural Issues and Parliamentary Procedure. His teams took first place in each contest.

As a senior in high school, Ryan was serving as the president of his chapter and Region I. It was also this year that he ran for, and went on to become, the 2003-2004 Michigan FFA State President. It was during this term of service that he first got an inkling that he would like to try for one of the highest elective FFA offices in the nation. Where does this drive come from?

For Ryan, much of his inspiration comes from the members he hopes to serve again. He said, "I love how positive members are and the level of self-confidence that I see in so many of them is something I don't think I ever had as a high school student in the FFA. It's contagious, all of it. From a member's attitude to their passion and enthusiasm – inspiration for me stems from the simple interactions I have with FFA members and witnessing the growth and changes that the FFA makes in their lives – even if they have not even seen it yet."

And as a National Officer, Ryan hopes to give the mem-

bers he encounters the same kind of optimistic confidence that has been bestowed to him. From all walks of life and all races, ethnicities and backgrounds, he will work to "instill in every member that they have the power to influence and make an impact on the lives of the people around them; just as their role models do to them."

Ryan remarked, "The power to make a difference in another person's life is not reserved for specific people or those with special titles or positions. It can be achieved in the simplest forms and is an obligation we should hold ourselves to as positive leaders in the FFA everyday. It is my wish that each FFA member embrace their life as their own unique adventure that is theirs to set themselves to, and live to the fullest at every chance they can."

And at the end of the day on Saturday, October 29th, as the convention hall empties, the spotlights are turned off and the floors are swept, Ryan will know in which direction the next year of his life will go. But no matter what the outcome of that day's events, the Michigan FFA will take pride in our homegrown boy who served his community, family and state with such dignity that he set an example for all that followed him. In the end, our respect for him can only grow. 