

The Michigan FFA

Creed



Spring 2015



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L to R: Gaige Tucker, Region II State Vice President; Brandon Borke, Region VI State Vice President; Ken VandenBout III, State Secretary; Lance Fowler, Region III State Vice President; Cameron Hayden, Region I State Vice President; 2nd row- Ethan Haywood, State Vice President; Sam Ellison Region V State Vice President; Kim Forbush, State Sentinel; Dalton Hard, State Treasurer, Front Row- Alexandria Schut, State President; Emma Blough, State Reporter; Emily House, Region IV State Vice President

The Numbers Add Up

By: Emma Blough
State Reporter

6,490 members, **101** chapters, countless pairs of nylons, **12** Michigan FFA Association jackets, **5** crazy months, **1** amazing journey and **1** life changing organization. Whether it is a contest, conference, or any other event, state FFA officers become frequent travelers. While our officer team has spent a lot of time traveling across the nation to conferences and conventions, we now find our time being spent learning about the geography of Michigan. This fall we divided our twelve person team into pairs of two, which we lovingly deem our 'traveling partners' we then were assigned a specific region within the state to travel in to present chapter blitz workshops. Our journey as state officers now gives us the opportunity to get to know diverse and unique members that make up the Michigan FFA Association.

The system of traveling partners allows our team to visit every chapter within the state and present workshops about leadership, the FFA and agriculture. Each team outlines their own exclusive content for chapter blitzes. This year our team decided to set up workshops focusing on agricultural careers, facts, service, and leadership fundamentals. Each blitz pair puts their own unique spin on their workshop. While we decided on an overview of topics, we have the freedom to choose ice breakers, and activities to convey our message. Along with chapter visits, we are always 'on call' for numerous other events that we are required for. Our travels allow us to interact with FFA

members on a personal level for the very first time. We are involved in a variety of events throughout the fall and winter. Whether there is a regional recreation night or a winter chapter banquet, the state officers visit schools across the state getting to know members and celebrating all of their accomplishments. These venues offer another opportunity for the team to mingle with the individuals that we have the honor of serving for the year.

In the midst of the madness of traveling across the state, the state officers have begun diligently preparing for convention through practice sessions and retiring addresses. Any moments of down time become quickly filled with many other responsibilities preparing for the 87th Michigan FFA Convention.

The craziness of state office makes us welcome any chance to relax and connect as a team. Consumers Energy graciously hosts the team on a winter retreat in December in South Haven, MI. This is an opportunity to reflect on our journey thus far and to look toward the rest of the year with refreshed minds, energized spirits and ready to continue serving Michigan FFA. While chapter visits begin to wrap up and requested events begin to pile up, the state officers eagerly look forward to convention. We excitedly await the opportunity to share our incredible journey with the members who made it all possible. Every mile traveled and minute passed brought countless memories that will last a lifetime.



Learning to Do



Graduating from high school and going to college is both a terrifying and exciting experience. The only thing I was confident of, was that I wanted to attend Michigan State University and thanks to the FFA I knew I would major in something offered by the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Looking back on this still makes my neck itch where I broke out into hives; moving to the big city from Ravenna, Michigan was enough to petrify me. There would be more people in my freshman class in college than in my entire hometown. All worrying aside, I moved to MSU and started the greatest adventure of my life.

Shortly after arriving at MSU, I realized that I already had a nice package of existing friends that I had met at numerous FFA events I had attended during high school. Now that I had my college support system figured out, it was time to look into what career I wanted for the rest of my life. It may be thought that there are not many careers in the agriculture industry, and until I went to college I can honestly say I had no idea just how many jobs there were. Would I find my passion in animal science, landscape, agronomy, or one of the numerous other options? Luckily I found myself in CCS 101: Introduction to Crop and Soil Sciences and instantly became fascinated by soil and fell in love with the study of crops.

As I soon found out, all the professors and advisors will drill into your head the importance of having multiple internships to ensure your future success. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources hosts a job fair every year in October, which is a prime time to meet industry representatives and secure summer internships. The fall of my junior year I attended this career fair like I had years in the past, but this time was different, I was determined to find a great internship for the summer. I talked to countless people and was happy to leave with some interview appointments to take place the following day. I interviewed with multiple companies, but found myself only desiring to pursue an internship with one company, Helena Chemical (you may have seen them at National Convention). I knew people who had interned with them in the past and after hearing all the wonderful things their company representative had to say, I was hooked.

A few days passed after my interview and I hadn't heard anything, then a week went by. Nervously, I decided I would call them the following Monday. I have always encouraged all people to go after what they wanted so, I

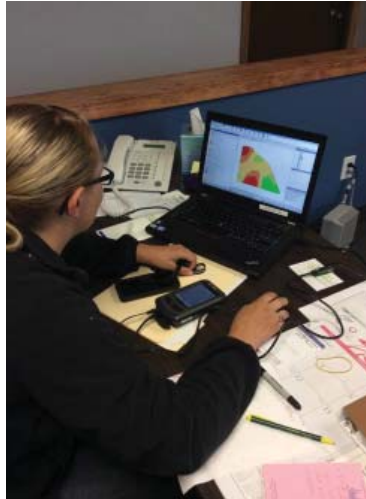


mustered up the courage and made the phone call. That call, although I didn't know it at the time, changed my life forever. By following up and being persistent, offered me an internship with Helena Chemical in Goshen, Indiana

the summer of 2011. This would take me out of my comfort zone even further, by moving to another state. Despite the fact that it was only for a few short months, I was scared. My internship with Helena was wonderful! I learned about agronomy, made industry contacts and best of all got to drive a company truck. They must have liked what I had to offer, as well, because the following October I received a call for a full-time job with the company.

That brings us to where I am today; sitting at my desk writing this article. I am happy to say “I love my job.” Working as the Sales Coordinator at the Shelby, MI location of Helena Chemical, every day, brings new challenges and it gives me the ability to learn something new.

With Michigan being the second most diverse state in crop production, our location has been given the privilege to work with over fifteen different crops including, asparagus, cherries, carrots, apples, pumpkins, blueberries, along with many other fruits and vegetables. Working relationships with our growers is Helena’s main goal. We strive to help farmers achieve higher yields in an effort to combat the world’s need for more food and fuel. Our task is to help farmers feed the world, and it’s a challenge we happily accept.



In high school, I had no idea that I would be working for such a great company, let alone helping farmers feed the world. I never knew that by taking a chance and joining the FFA my freshman year, that it would help

me find my passion for agriculture and guide me towards my future career and life. Taking chances, following my heart, and never giving up no matter how terrifying the situation landed me in my dream job. I encourage all FFA members to take chances; even if you think what you want is not possible. Figure out a way to get where you want to be. People will tell you your whole life that you can’t do something, don’t listen to them. Follow your heart and find your passion, and you can end up landing your dream career.



Keeping the Family Farm



As they left the lawyers office, they could not believe what they just heard.

The family farm would be auctioned off in the spring and the proceeds would be used to pay off the creditors and probate fees. Once a thriving family farm business, now the future of the operation looked bleak.

Dad and mom, both in their late forties, had five children, the oldest three were married, lived off the farm and had their own careers. John, who was just finishing his second year in college, studying agriculture with the hopes of eventually taking over the family farm business, and his younger brother, Bill, who was a junior in high school and was also preparing to eventually work in the family business now realized this was no longer an option. The accident which took both mom and dad came as a complete surprise. John asked if they had any life insurance, but discovered the policy dad had to cover loans, had become too expensive. The farm's value with all the land, equipment, buildings, was around \$1.5 million. They owed about \$700,000 on the new barn and additional equipment. The lawyer fees amounted to 125 hours of work at \$400 per hour. When all was settled, the lawyer felt they might clear \$200,000 to \$300,000 depending on the auction's success. How could this have happened?

What went wrong? How could the family have planned for something like this? This scene, admittedly tragic, but not unrealistic makes you think, could this have been avoided?

The answer is yes. What steps should families take to make sure the family farm remains in the family and that the next generation of future farmers have the opportunity to continue in the family business? Every farm owner needs to be sure they have implemented basic protection planning. Hard work has enabled you to get where you are today, and you need to protect yourself. It is imperative to ensure proper estate planning documents are in place.

These could include wills, trust agreements, durable power of attorney documents, living will, care for minor children provisions, life insurance, health insurance, liability protection, and much more. Even with these plans, you should review your situation on a regular basis, to make sure all is up to date with current laws and that you have adequate funding.

The purpose of this article is to give guidance as to how to start planning for continuing the business and farm's future.

First and foremost, to begin the planning process, discuss your wishes with other family members. Topics of discussion should include, retirement age, the amount of income needed and where it will come from; what the working hours for each person will be, if or when to sell the business, if dependents will be capable or willing to

take over, income needs for expansion, farm worth and what is considered fair for all of those involved. These are just some examples of questions that should be discussed, but the main point is to ensure that every person is on the same page. Set up frequent family meetings to discuss current issues openly and implement an immediate action plan.

Assemble a team of succession planning advisors to work together. Include an attorney, accountant, independent insurance specialist, lender and if possible a financial or retirement advisor. Research their service charges to eliminate surprises later. Find a “quarterback” to serve as the lead advisor who has legal, insurance, taxes and business agreement experience to help facilitate the process in order to limit controversy. Craft a plan which meets your current needs, as well as your future needs, but allow flexibility to accommodate changes.

What should you expect to get from the advisors? You should get their ideas to determine the best way to proceed with the plan. They should be able to help with valuing what the farm is worth and how much money you will need to make the plan work. How will this be accomplished and over what time period? You may need to “restructure” your business by possibly incorporating, setting up licensing (L.L.C.) or maybe a partnership or lease agreements.

Many times the “young farmer future” will not yet possess the necessary skills and management expertise to run the business. Make sure to allow time and take time

yourself to properly develop these skills. Most likely, you have made mistakes and learned from them, who better to teach them than you. Allow them to make a transition into the day to day management decisions, so they are ready to take over when that day comes. You do not need to rush things along, work on your timetable, but be time conscience. The success or failure of the operation depends on everyone working together towards the same goals. Realize the talents each individual has and cultivate those strengths. Try to delegate responsibilities for everyone, without getting into situations where conflicts arise. Many times it comes down to “someone needs to be in charge”, as not all decisions will satisfy everyone.

I hope that this has enabled you to at least start thinking about how you would like your future to look like. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, and I am appreciative of the FFA for allowing me to share this with you.



Mike McNeil is President of MIS of Michigan and as an advisor who has experience working with farm families for over 25 years. He is a licensed insurance agent, who has specialized in business continuation strategies. He can be reached at: 616 676-1618, or e-mail at: mike.mis@sbcglobal.net

The Many Faces of Leadership

A unique component of the FFA organization is the vast array of opportunity for members. You are encouraged to discover personal talents while gaining access to leadership, academic and career skills development.

Leaders are discovered and realized through outreach efforts and service to others. Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) is proud to support FFA members with leadership and personal development resources and opportunities. With a shared vision, MFB and FFA work together to strengthen the state's agriculture industry by helping young people acquire the skills necessary to become the next generation of ag leaders.

You are part of that next generation, and part of the future of Michigan's agriculture. Alongside other FFA members, you will one day help lead our nation's food and farm sector.



Agriscience tools and resources

MFB has numerous educational resources for your FFA chapter's outreach endeavors, including:

- Agriculture trivia and facts
- Brochures, books, magazines and guides
- Career resources
- Educational project kits
- Lesson plans for grades K-6
- Safety resources

A great way to utilize these resources is through the National FFA Organization's Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS) mentoring program. PALS has been matching FFA members with elementary and/or middle school students for decades to teach students about the science and business of agriculture, while also serving as positive role models. FFA chapters may also find these resources useful for agriculture-based presentations for both young people and adults. Visit the Ag Education & Leadership section of MFB's website, www.michfb.com, for a full list of resources or contact your county Farm Bureau office.



<http://tinyurl.com/MFBagriscience>



Utilize Farm Bureau

Did you know your local Farm Bureau is packed with former FFA members? Not only do you have former, experienced members, you also have top-notch industry professionals waiting for you to reach out.

As you prepare for the Agriculture Skills Contests in April, remember to utilize your county Farm Bureau volunteers. Work with them to arrange practice and feedback sessions for you and fellow FFA members. The volunteers involved with your local Farm Bureau are knowledgeable, experienced farmers and agribusiness professionals. They work hard to share the story of agriculture with the public and advocate for important

issues facing the industry. They want to see you and your chapter succeed! Visit the counties page of the MFB website for contact information: <http://tinyurl.com/MFBcounties>.



<http://tinyurl.com/MFBcounties>

Build relationships



Have you thought about where your FFA path may lead once you retire the blue corduroy jacket? Once the leadership contests, proficiency awards, chapter banquets and conventions are fading in the rear-view mirror, where will you be headed? MFB's Young Farmer program is focused on members ages 18-35, helping them inform, educate, lead and serve the agriculture industry. They host educational conferences as well as networking and professional development opportunities, all focused on young farmers' needs and interests. As an FFA member, you are encouraged to become involved with your county Farm Bureau's Young Farmer program.

Reach out and build relationships with Farm Bureau leaders in your area that may help guide your professional development in the future. Want to learn more? Immerse yourself in one of the state's most popular activities—the Young Farmer Discussion Meet. Similar to the FFA Discussion Meet, this is where members discuss timely agricultural issues while utilizing their public speaking and analytical skills to share ideas, identify problems and compare alternative solutions. Visit MFB's Young Farmer Discussion Meet page (<http://tinyurl.com/MFBYfdm>) for dates and locations of upcoming events, or contact

your county Farm Bureau for details.

Oh the places you will go...

As Dr. Seuss put so eloquently, "You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose."



<http://tinyurl.com/MFBYfdm>

MFB wants to help you plot that course toward a future in the agriculture industry with career exploration resources. It's estimated there are more than 54,000 agriculture-related job openings annually for individuals with four-year and higher college degrees—not including the high demand for skilled trade professionals—but only 55 percent of those openings will be filled by graduates with degrees in agriculture, life science, natural resources and veterinary medicine. That means there aren't enough ag-trained, ag-educated individuals to meet the needs of today's employers! Visit MFB's Career Exploration website (<http://tinyurl.com/MFBcareers>) for insights into a number of career options, and hear directly from Farm Bureau members working in the ag industry today.



<http://tinyurl.com/MFBYfdm>

Remember: MFB supports you and your FFA chapter. Reach out to your county Farm Bureau for support, guidance and resources. Better yet, get involved and learn how you can make a difference.

Good luck!

Privilege or Right?

By: Haley Schulz
Michigan FFA Association
Administrative Assistant



I can remember my sixteenth birthday as though it was yesterday. My closest family and friends gathered to share a feast of all my favorite foods: grilled chicken, boiled red skins, green beans

and for dessert a decadent three tier German chocolate cake. What was different this year was that there would be a second round of dessert, my “new” car. I barely ate any of my food and breezed through the first round of dessert to get to opening presents. At last it was time for what I had waited years for; my mom covered my eyes as she led me outside and to the front yard. Everyone around me began counting down, “3...2...1... OPEN!” Once my guests had left the party, my mother sat me down for a much needed first time driver chat which was followed with the ultimate line, “Haley, driving is a privilege, not a right. Don’t make me take away this privilege.”

Privilege:(n) an immunity, or exemption granted to persons in authority or office to free them from certain obligations or liabilities.

Have you ever thought about the food you eat every day? Just for dinner the other day, I had a medium cooked steak, mashed potatoes and green beans – is it my right to eat this food, or should it be treated as a privilege that few get to enjoy? Sometimes our parents bribe us with treats (candy, cake, ect...) in order to get us to clean our rooms or a special occasion with friends, but what if they treated every meal you ate like this? If you didn’t follow a set of rules set by either your parents or the government, you would be revoked of your eating privileges.

Right: (n) fitting or appropriate; suitable

It’s hard to imagine not being able to eat whatever, whenever you decide to. As agriculturalists, we see food as our right. Think about it, our industry tills the soil, plants the crops, tends to the crops regardless of the conditions and harvests it to provide for our nation and world. Of course, we have a right to eat what we so choose. What about the rest of the world, do they have this right too? Who gets to decide if food is a right or a privilege?

With the hunger crisis at an all time high and the predicted population growth of nine billion people on Earth by 2050, with fewer resources, can



we afford to make food a privilege? Thousands of people see food as a privilege because a hard day’s work simply pays for dinner that evening, while here in the U.S., if a child goes to bed without food, “That’s just not right.” Food needs to be an equal rights movement and as FFA leaders and agriculturalists, we can make this happen. Ask your FFA advisor to start a community garden to teach others how to grow their own food or start up a food drive to ensure local food security. With over 6,000 members in the Michigan FFA, we have the means to put a stop to the hunger crisis and make food a right.

The Greatest Man You Never Knew

By: Dustin DuFort Petty
Michigan FFA Alumni President



Every once in a while an individual comes along that changes the game. Someone who takes a look at the world and says, “No, we can do better.”

Someone who doesn't strive to achieve unachievable goals because they want their names to go down in the history books, but simply because it's the right thing to do.

Norman Borlaug is one of those individuals and there's a good chance you haven't even heard his name. A humble man with simple agricultural roots would be hailed as the man who saved a billion lives and be named a Nobel laureate.

Born in 1914 on his grandparent's Iowa farm, he came of age during the Great Depression. Borlaug failed his college entrance exam but would go on to earn a bachelor's degree in forestry and a PhD in plant pathology and genetics, both from the University of Minnesota.

Beginning in 1941, Borlaug worked as a research scientist in Mexico, tasked with improving wheat production.

With booming populations, particularly in developing nations like India and throughout Latin America, poorer nations would have an increasingly hard time feeding themselves. Through Borlaug's many years of work, he developed solutions to problems that were facing wheat production. He created generations of wheat varieties that resisted disease and increased yield. With a dwarf wheat that wasn't top heavy and instead had a thicker stalk and a larger yield.

Before Borlaug's research was published, many thought that despite the best efforts

and charity of the United Nations and developed nations, starvation would be rampant throughout the developing world.

However, due to Borlaug's work, countries like Pakistan doubled their production of wheat and became self-sufficient. These countries that were expecting tragedy could again feed themselves.

Because of his efforts, he was selected as the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970. When his wife initially told him of the honor, he had to be convinced that she wasn't pulling a prank.

Accepting his award from the King of Sweden, Borlaug said, “When the Nobel Peace Prize Committee designated me the recipient... for my contribution to the green revolution, they were... selecting an individual to symbolize the vital role of agriculture and food production in a world that is hungry, both for bread and for peace.”

After winning the Nobel Peace Prize he was lauded with awards and honors during the remaining forty years of his life, Borlaug remained modest, but never stopped advocating for the world of feeding the world.

“Food is the moral right of all who are born into this world,” he said.

Dr. Norman Borlaug died in 2009 at the age of 95. And because of his work, an untold millions – possibly one billion – humans didn't starve.



Thank you, Dr. Borlaug.

impact ^{advocate} service
le ^{community} mentore ^{education}
e ^{agriculture} Invest F F A ^{support} youth
Q ^{volunteer} development
s u c c e s s
A L U M N I



Michigan
FFA
Alumni

In communities across the state, FFA alumni members are coaching, mentoring, fundraising and preparing the next generation of leaders and agriculturalists.

Join them. No jacket required.

For more information on creating your own alumni affiliate or to join one already established, contact alumni@michiganffa.org.

**Michigan FFA Foundation 16th Annual
FFA MASTERS GOLF OUTING**



**Thursday, June 18
8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**(9:30 Shotgun Start)
Eldorado Golf Course
3750 W. Howell Rd., Mason, MI | 989-676-2854**

- Register by June 12th, 2015/www.michiganffa.org
 - Registration includes: 18-hole round, cart, putting contest, driving range before the gun, light breakfast, lunch & dinner
 - \$100/person or \$400/team of four
 - "5th" Auction -Bid on an extra FFA-member teammate (with mulligans)
 - Skins/Mulligans Value Packs available
- All proceeds benefit the 6,281 Michigan FFA members**

For more information and sponsorship opportunities, visit www.michiganffa.org or contact the FFA Foundation, 517-432-2482

Pre-Register Your team and send this page to the Michigan FFA Foundation, 446 West Circle Drive, East Lansing, MI 48824 and secure your spot at the 16th Annual FFA Masters Golf Scramble

Team Captain _____
 Organization _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Player #2: _____
 Organization _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Player #3: _____
 Organization _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Player #4: _____
 Organization _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Individual Golfer(s).....	_____ @ \$100	= \$ _____
Team of Four Golfers.....	_____ @ \$400	= \$ _____
Skins/Mulligans (\$50 in advance, \$60 at the event).....	_____ @ \$100	= \$ _____
Dinner only (No Golf)	_____ @ \$100	= \$ _____

The Michigan FFA Masters Golf Outing is Sponsored by:



State Officer Stats



Lance A. Fowler

Region III State Vice President

Chapter: St.Louis

College: Central Michigan University

SAE: Sheep Production

Theme song: "Unwritten"

Favorites:

Sport: Volleyball

Musician: One Direction

T.V. show: *Once Upon A Time*

Movie: *Harry Potter Series*

Candy: Reese's Peanut Butter Cup



Emma Blough

State Reporter

Chapter: Lowell

College: Michigan State University

SAE: Food Science

Theme song: "Life's a Dance"

Favorites:

Sport: Football

Movie: *The Avengers*

T.V. show: *Psych*

Homemade meal: Tacos

Candy: Twizzlers



Gage Tucker

Region II State Vice President

Chapter: Milan

College: Washtenaw Community

SAE: Ag business

Theme song: "I Hold On"

Favorites:

Sport: Basketball

Musician: Metallica

T.V. show: *Scooby Doo*

Meal: Spaghetti

Candy: Gummy Bears



She wants to be a seed salesperson or crop scout.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Institute of
Agricultural Technology

He wants to be an electrical technician.

They'll both do it at Michigan State University's Institute of Agricultural Technology.

**Find out how at
www.iat.msu.edu**



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

**College of Agriculture
and Natural Resources**



In the classroom

and on the field



The MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) offers academic options that range from four-year bachelor degrees to two-year certificate programs.

Students apply their interests in the classroom and in the field to gain experience and education for rewarding careers.

Contact the CANR Office of Academic and Student Affairs at 517-355-0234 to schedule your visit to campus to learn what MSU has to offer.

Learn more by visiting www.canr.msu.edu.

MSU is an equal opportunity employer.