

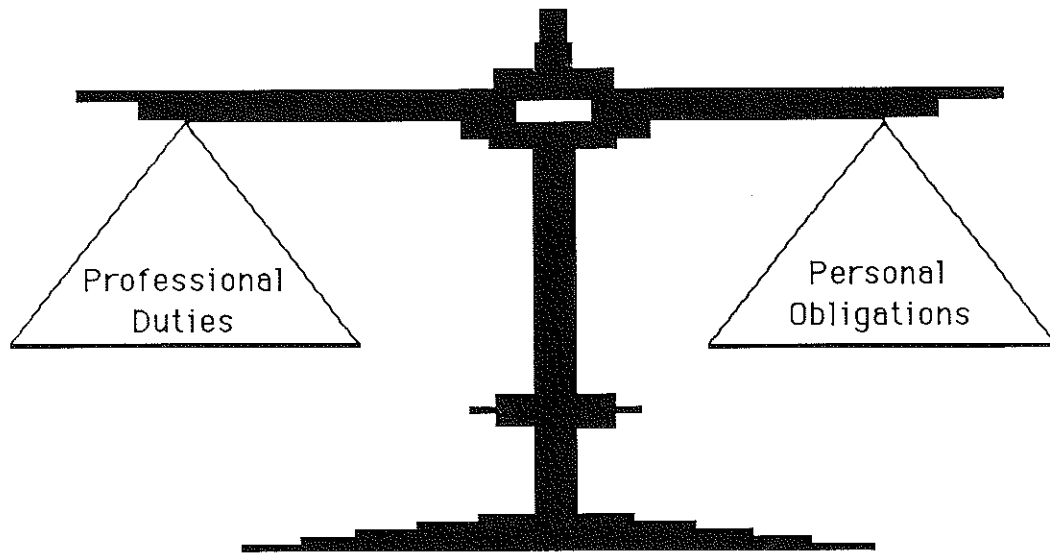
The

Agricultural Education

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Magazine

Seeking the Proper Balance



**THEME: Balancing Your
Professional and Personal Life**

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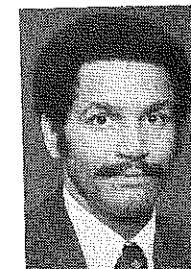
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EDITOR'S PAGE

A Tough Balancing Act



By BLANNIE E. BOWEN, EDITOR
 (Dr. Bowen is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University.)

This issue examines a timely topic very appropriate for a profession that prides itself on long hours, a fast pace, consummate dedication to task, and being all things to all who exhibit an interest in agriculture. This credo is mighty, noble, and of the fabric that mottos ought to be made. However, it deserves an occasional examination from a practical rather than philosophical level because real world assessments usually reveal pictures vastly different from a profession's ideal model.

From a real world perspective, America's work ethic has changed substantially from that needed to perform strenuous manual labor characteristic of heavy industry and an agrarian society. Likewise, an information age filled with complex high technology is leading to social reforms, a new work ethic, and more importantly, a society in search of itself. To help society understand itself, the mass media, and broadcast in particular, are frequently used to show and unfortunately to instill norms, ethics, and mores.

All American images created by television shows such as "Father Knows Best," "Family Ties," and even the immensely popular "The Cosby Show" cannot possibly counteract negative images so pervasive in 1987. Although Cosby and Company are masters at making us laugh while positively portraying a contemporary two career family situation, life in America includes far more choices and demands than can possibly be depicted via 30 minutes (less the commercials) of slick video packaging.

"Dallas", "Miami Vice", "Hill Street Blues", "Falcon Crest" et al. also frequently remind us that divorce rates hover close to 50%; single parent families are increasing in number; teenage pregnancy is an escalating concern; alcohol, drug, and substance abuse is wanton; latch-key kids are found in rural, urban as well as suburban areas; but more importantly, the basic fabric of the American family is being redefined. The dad works while mom cooks, cleans, and cares for the kids scenario is rapidly fading. These role changes have been dramatic, especially for professionals in service-oriented occupations including agricultural education.

Many of the changes have been for the better since they allow women to define their roles while achieving professional status comparable to that of men. As this evolution continues, serious questions must be posed about blending the 8-5 with the after 5 hours to maximize personal satisfaction and professional service.

L.H. Newcomb, the theme editor for this issue, notes that agricultural education has its stressors and our colleagues do burn out. Workaholics are prime candidates and quite a number in agricultural education fit the bill, myself included. Other authors in this issue share solutions to cope with this and other impediments to professional and personal satisfaction. By first experimenting and then adhering to workable strategies being suggested, one

should not only cope but thoroughly enjoy a professional career in agricultural education.

Interestingly enough, early one Saturday morning while editing copy for this issue, I read one author's advice that Saturdays and Sundays should be for personal activities and family. The next day soon after I switched on the microcomputer to experiment with a design for the cover of this issue, my toddler son quickly decided that we should play tackle (his version of Ohio State football) because graphics had become boring. Later that afternoon during a break from her studies and other professional activities, my wife said she certainly plans to read this issue to see what advice I am capable of giving about balancing personal life with a two career family.

Whether professionals in agricultural education are single, single parents, members of a two career family, or from one career families, common solutions are apparent. First, the problem solving approach held as a hallmark in agricultural education must be practiced as well as preached to balance professional and personal life. Second, reality must be observed because all days contain 24 hours. My strategy is to keenly observe and emulate exceedingly successful professionals who have careers and family situations that I desire. This strategy means priorities must be set and implemented, i.e. exceedingly hard choices made because personal excellence in all phases of agricultural education is an impractical goal.

Organization, time management, role modification and sharing, true hobbies, microwaves, high technology, delayed gratification and a burning desire to balance professional and personal life are crucial. My credo says an excellent personal life can be balanced with two super professional careers. A difficult task, yes; an impossible task, no. A tough balancing act, you can bet the ranch.

About the Cover

Professionals in agricultural education should constantly strive to balance their professional duties with their personal obligations. Realistic assessments should be made of what is desired in terms of a personal life that is inseparable from what occurs in a professional career. (Drawing by Gary Straquadine and the Editor).

Burnout: The Plague of the Modern Helping Professional

There is a steady stream of articles about burnout in the daily paper, TIME, U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, and many other places. It is certainly not uncommon to hear colleagues, school children, Sunday school teachers, or anyone else claiming to be burned out. In fact, perhaps some folks think it is fashionable to proclaim they are burned out. Just as likely, many deny the presence of the malady if they suspect it is affecting them.

Unfortunately, the term is used far too casually. What exactly is burnout? According to Freudenberger (1980, page 16), burnout is "to deplete oneself, to exhaust one's physical and mental resources, to wear oneself out by excessively striving to reach some unrealistic expectation imposed by oneself or the value of society." Cherniss (1980, page 3) says burnout is "... a process that begins with extensive and prolonged levels of job stress. The stress produces strain in the worker The process is completed when the worker defensively copes with the job and becomes apathetic, cynical or rigid."

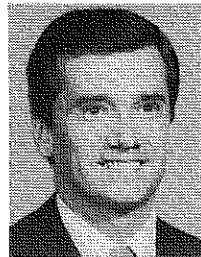
While the above definitions may be helpful, perhaps even more helpful is a model that begins to explain the phenomenon. Each individual is unique in terms of the attributes of personality, self-concept, ideals, goals, and level of commitment and how he or she responds to stress. Hence, individuals face burnout at a different time and for different reasons.

Secondly, the environment both at work and away from work contains potential stressors. At work these stressors may emanate from a cluttered, noisy, distracting physical environment or most certainly from a highly charged, negative, emotional environment. In addition, overload or underload, one's uncertainty about his or her role, and the extent of people contact also are stressors at the work place. Interestingly, if one has strong positive collegial support at work and a good deal of autonomy in the job, stress is less likely to be detrimental.

Furthermore, the environment outside of work also contains stressors. Likewise, supportive individuals outside of work help to counter stress.

Whether at work or away from work, the true goal is to have balanced living. For when there is balance, burnout is stifled.

To the extent that stressors are processed with effective coping skills they are dissipated. Furthermore, stress which is dissipated does not become strain; stress which is not dissipated accumulates as strain and once it crosses an individual's threshold of tolerance, burnout ensues. Coming to understand this model and applying it to one's daily living is central if one wishes to ameliorate the effects of stress in life.



By L.H. NEWCOMB, THEME EDITOR

(Dr. Newcomb is a Professor and Chairman of the Department of Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1099.)

The whole phenomenon of burnout seemingly goes with the business of helping people. Given that teachers of vocational agriculture are clearly in the business of helping students and others, what can one do to avoid burnout?

What Does One Do?

Based on the model discussed earlier, the apparent key for avoiding burnout is to develop and use good coping skills that dissipate stress before it has a chance to trigger the onset of the burnout syndrome. The following ideas may prove useful in this regard.

Draw on Social Support

First and foremost, one needs a good social support system both at work and at home. All of the literature in psychology makes it clear that having individuals in whom you can confide and who care about what is happening to you is of supreme importance. Therefore, teachers of agriculture need to cultivate true friends among their fellow teachers both in school as well as agriculture teachers in adjoining schools. Likewise, it is essential that family or, for single teachers, other friends away from the work place share with the teacher as he or she relays accomplishments and disappointments; hopes and fears; and trials and tribulations that each day brings.

Use Good Self-Care

A sensible program of self-care is vital. This requires only common sense and a measure of self-discipline. Simply put, it means eating properly, getting enough rest, and avoiding bad health habits.

Be a Good Problem Solver

It is important that teachers become good at rational cognitive coping. In essence, be a good problem solver. As felt needs, frustrations, and provocative situations arise, attack them with the good problem solving skills for which agriculture teachers are known.

Use Recreation to Dissipate Stress

Recreation and other diversions are also extremely important. This writer's research makes it clear that agricultural educators are making extremely poor use of recreation and other avocational activities and diversions to dissipate stress.

Keep the Load in Balance

Reduce and/or manage the work load. Teachers are always busy, but they need to learn to ask the question, busy doing what? Each person has to make priorities and follow suggestions such as those provided in Dunham's article in this issue.

Take "Time Outs"

Be willing to take "time outs." This is a simple psychological strategy of taking a five minute mental vacation periodically during the day. It could be as simple as propping up one's feet and recalling pleasant scenery or taking a walk around the building before tackling the next task. Psychologists indicate that this procedure increases productivity and efficiency. It provides a measure of "recharging."

Reward Self

Be sure to reward yourself. After all, you are a person of worth and hopefully you believe that God doesn't make junk. So when you have worked hard, be willing to give yourself a small reward, whether it be an ice cream cone, an impromptu trip to the theater, or something else that is meaningful to you. The act of giving to yourself is psychologically important.

Provide Variety in Your Work

It is essential that one builds variety into his or her job.

Introduce change, formulate new program options, burn old lesson plans and start over. Get a teacher educator or supervisor to exchange jobs for a month; or do anything else that brings variety.

Religion — A Resource for Coping

Finally, be sure not to overlook religion as an important coping resource. The literature to date is far too limited in recognizing the contribution that spiritual activities make to coping with stress. Most who pursue spiritual matters find that when stress comes, they are able to receive a great deal of help from meditation, prayer, and the support of fellow believers. Not to draw upon such resources seems foolish. Indeed for many agriculture teachers, drawing upon one's relationship with his or her creator becomes an important way of dissipating the stresses of life. By cultivating spiritual strength, individuals can deter burnout.

Summary

This plague can be controlled and even prevented by knowing the epidemiology, recognizing the contribution factors, and taking appropriate action to dissipate stress and promote balanced living. Planning and carrying out a balanced life that draws on a wide array of coping strategies to dissipate stress before it becomes stress is the true solution. Start your program to cope with stress and avoid burnout today.

" 'On Balance' — A Letter to a Friend"

Dear George:

It was great to see you last month at our class reunion. I've thought a lot about our visit that first evening and later on Saturday. I wish I could have been of more help, for you seemed to be asking for something more than a friendly chat.

I know what you mean about "burnout." And, yes, I've come very close to experiencing what I suppose was a form of burnout on several occasions over the past 25 years or so. There are ways of dealing with stress and pressure in our lives, and maybe I can help in some small way by sharing some thoughts with you through this letter.

You commented that I really seemed to "have it all together" these days. Yes, I suppose it does seem so, because I am more relaxed, more at ease with myself and my life than perhaps at any time in the past decade. Getting there hasn't been a simple thing. And I'm not "there" yet, not by a long way. But progress is being made, and I am living my life differently - and better - than I used to.

We know that some of the most significant events in our lives can be the most stressful. Death in the immediate family, marriage, divorce, a major move, serious illness, birth, a job change, and financial problems are among them. Once in a while, more than one happens at a time, or one leads to another. Those are times of particular stress.



By DANIEL B. DUNHAM

(Dr. Dunham is a Professor and Executive Director of the Oregon Alliance for Program Improvement in the School of Education at Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-1631.)

For example, I've experienced several of those life-jolting stresses: After I left the self-employed status of farming in 1958, I've changed jobs 12 times; moved nearly 20 times; experienced the birth of three children; the deaths of a brother, two parents and a best friend; and earned an ulcer and a heart attack! On the plus side, I've been married once (for 28 years) and haven't had any financial problems that could be called serious. And, it's important to point out right here that the main reason I've survived these stress points and near traumas is a spouse who has always been there to help through each crisis.

Overcoming Workaholicism

I learned early in my career that I was, and am today, a workaholic. I am, too, something of a perfectionist,

(Continued on page 6)

"On Balance" - A Letter to a Friend

(Continued from page 5)

though less so these days than 10 years ago. I am possessed also of a severe case of "Type A" personality . . . another affliction with which I have lived these 50 years, and will, I expect for 50 more.

Work has indeed been central in my life. I've never had a job I did not absolutely enjoy to the fullest, almost all of the time. Each job I've had, successively, has been the best job. I've been very lucky in that aspect of life. But the jobs were tough jobs, and I attacked each one with the vigor and commitment of a true "Type A" workaholic. And I paid the price.

The Price of Workaholism

We pay a price for our overwork in a number of different ways. For our family, my shortcomings in the "quality time" area, caused by my addiction for work were not, fortunately, disastrous. I'm sure my kids would have been better off had I been home more, especially at times when they, too, were experiencing the stress of a move, a new school, and leaving friends to follow my career from coast to coast. They are a resilient lot who made the adjustments to compensate for what I see now as my selfishness about the importance of my job.

Another price paid for my overwork is in damage to our physical and mental health. For me, as you know, this was to manifest most extremely by the heart attack in late 1983. During a nearly six-month recovery period, I had a lot of time to think, read, and consider the facts of my life. I found it very hard to read about heart attacks, recovery, and prevention of future episodes and hard to face a new regimen of diet and exercise. Because, you see, I was scared of seeing myself for what I really am. I resisted learning and changing. And I still do. But as I said before, there is progress.

What all of that amounts to is that I have learned a few things, and am doing quite a few things differently as a result. Maybe this is where I can help you, George, because I am living my life differently today than 15 years ago when I first began experiencing "anxiety attacks", and began, with the help of a couple of good physicians, to make a few course corrections. The progress is slow . . . something like a diet. I've been off and on the wagon so many times I'm at least an expert in getting started again!

So, what have I learned? Mostly about pacing and modifying and balancing.

Pacing

One of the tricks of this business of learning to live with who you are is to begin with very small steps. I found that you can't pace if you don't shorten your stride. That's when I started making lists. I honestly took seriously the notion that, each day, we deal with three sets of things to do. They are the "Got To's", the "Ought To's" and the "Nice To's." There are 3 important actions to take. The first is to, in fact, write down all of the things you think you should do that day. The second is to divide your list into the 3 "To Do" categories, or priority groups. The third step is to NOT do some, or all, of the "Nice To's" that day.

Just don't do them. Each succeeding day, don't do a few more, until you're into the "Ought To" list, and finally, you are NOT DOING SOME "GOT TO'S." What you'll learn is that, for some of the things you honestly feel you must do, that not doing them doesn't make any difference in the way the world works. It's like learning to say "NO" (a word only recently added to my vocabulary!). Once you've done it the first time, it becomes increasingly easier to do. Or, more importantly, NOT TO DO! And don't worry if you progress is slow, and some weeks the lists seem to get longer. If you stick to it, you will learn to set priorities, and get some space in your life. And, you can't change pace without some space. Which brings me to a second trick of the moderating trade.

Do Work at Work

"Work worth doing is worth doing at work." I'm not sure where I first heard that statement. Maybe I made it up. But it's been working for me for nearly 20 years now. For the past six years I have not taken any work home. Before that, very little but with a few "acceptable exceptions."

It is less easy for the mind to leave work at the office or school. Indeed, I do wake up many a morning thinking about work; what's on the agenda for the day; what to do first; what NOT TO DO. But I don't dote on it, or concentrate to the exclusion of everything else. It's natural for a workaholic to think about work. The difference is in not thinking about it all the time. We have to practice NOT THINKING about work.

Take Time for Self

Let me say a few more words about space and pace. I have learned to give myself some time each day for myself. Usually, that's around noon. During the 2 years in Washington, D.C., I rarely went "out to lunch." I just don't like "business lunches" - and, I found, neither does my stomach. I "brown-bagged" lunch about 75% of the time during those years eating by myself in my office. It was my personal time - a break in a schedule which could run to as many as 15 to 20 meetings each day at peak times. Once you create some space in your day, you can think about pace. And, pace has more to do with how many things we do, rather than with how fast or slowly we do them. Again, it has to do with selecting the right "Got To's," and allowing time to do a few things well. Then, we create our own spaces, and find it possible to re-pace to a more reasonable rate.

Learn to Manage Time

You may find it worth your while to take a workshop on time management. There are quite a few more "tricks" for better using the one non-renewable resource we have available - time - to be learned from the time experts. You'll learn, mostly from practice, that your time IS more controllable. But you have to work at it and actually do some of the things the time managers suggest.

You're Not Responsible for Others

A third practice I've made myself become pretty good at is to not believe that I am responsible for the feelings or motives of other people. I've had to learn, often the hard

way, that THEY are responsible for how they feel. I am not. My responsibility is to deal as effectively as I can with the ways in which they play out those feelings, through their work and their relationships with me and with others with whom we jointly work. And there is a big difference between the two. Similarly, I am not responsible for the motives of others, and, more importantly, I have pretty much stopped trying to guess what it is that motivates them. I try not to make assumptions about motives, because when I do, I've found, I'm almost always wrong.

Another major change began for me when I started to take seriously several years of admonishments about diet and exercise. I am now an "exercise walker" and try to walk 10 to 15 miles a week. The diet is harder and not so consistent. The point is that I am aware of the need to make this a regular part of my life, and that I must work to make that happen. And, I feel better, am more relaxed, and more efficient at work when I'm "on the program." I'm also more agreeable, easier to get along with, and like myself better!

A couple of final thoughts. After our visit last month, it occurred to me that you don't have a hobby. Neither do I. I'm working on several, but not too seriously. What is important is that I'm aware of the fact that I ought to have an alternative or two that I enjoy as much as I enjoy my work, but that are not work. We do have several favorite things to do away from the job, but none could probably be called a true hobby. For a while we were quite dedicated square dancers, and we'll probably get back into that again one day. We are also back-road travelers, and our passion (more than a hobby) is the Oregon Coast where we spend many a weekend. I wish my Dad had had a hobby. I know retirement would have been a lot easier on him. He farmed actively until age 77, then "retired" . . . but not easily or happily. And part of that was because he had not really prepared himself to do something other than the work he had always known. Suffice to say that I encourage both of us to get into something that provides a real break - and space - from our work. Maybe it's called a hobby.

Finally, George, it's probably worth repeating that this

is all a rather slow, one-step-at-a-time, sometimes frustrating process. Achieving balance between work, family and home, leisure and other pursuits is a constant challenge. The balance need not be perfect or even always consistent. To be unsatisfied with where we are in attempting to re-center our lives - through pacing, creating space and moderating - is also part of the challenge. I know I haven't achieved what I want yet - but I am satisfied with the trying.

A short summary might help to highlight and remember a few of the more important ideas in what is otherwise a rather lengthy attempt to share these personal views with a friend:

- Make lists, set daily priorities and learn to NOT DO things that make little difference in the long run.
- Leave work at the workplace
- Make some space for yourself in each day's routine (eat in!).
- Accept responsibility only for your own feelings and motives and not for those of others.
- Exercise regularly (do something you enjoy) and watch what and how much you eat.
- Get involved in a hobby of some kind
- Read, take a workshop, listen to others, seek help from professionals to get started and keep going.
- Take it a step at a time - make them small steps!
- When you fall off the wagon, get up and get on again.

And remember - you have to decide what balance you want among all of the aspects of your life that are important to you. You can achieve that balance through moderate change of a few things you are now doing - to change pace, make space - and understand that it takes time. Don't expect miracles. Just make a few small ones of your own.

I expect that's more than enough said, my friend. Maybe there are just a couple of things here that will partly explain why I seemed to you to "have it all together." I don't, but I'm gaining on it.

My best to you and yours,
Dan

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"What Works For Me"

Balancing your professional commitments with your personal life and family commitments can be a constant challenge. It seems there is never enough time to get the work done at school besides devoting sufficient time to family matters. One must always search for the fine line between overdoing it at work and sacrificing precious family time. It is important to ask the question, how many days out of the year do you leave the house before the kids are even awake, or at best, you say a quick 'good morning' at the breakfast table before leaving, and when you get home that night they are already in bed? Vocational agriculture teachers tend to argue with themselves over these matters and usually justify their long hours at work for the sake of a "successful vocational agriculture program."

An Inherent Conflict

The desire to be successful in one's profession will always be in conflict with the goal of attaining a high quality family life full of activities and time spent together. Vince Lombardi, the legendary coach of the Green Bay Packers, knew and understood that fact. He once said, "Success demands singleness of purpose . . . mental toughness. You decide what price you and your family must pay for success . . . once you've decided on that price, you put it out of your mind and work towards your goal." He knew that whatever success or goals he achieved with his Packers, his family life would pay a price. So each teacher asks, what price must be paid and what can be done to lower the price and still be successful as a teacher?

Some Strategies That Might Work

After teaching vocational agriculture for the past 11 years, some strategies that have worked for me include categorizing your duties and responsibilities, selecting program priorities, communicating with family, encouraging spouse to accept community roles, and a few other ideas.

BY DUANE HOESING

(Mr Hoelsing is Vocational Agriculture Instructor at Hartington High School, Hartington, Nebraska 68739.)

Categorize Duties/Responsibilities

Almost everything done at work and at home can be categorized into one of three areas: the "Must Do" things, the "Should Do" things, and the "Nice To Do" things (See Figure 1).

By categorizing everything, it helps one to make decisions that promote balance in professional and personal aspects of life. The "Must Do's" very seldom compete with each other. That's just a fact of life. If they do, there are substitute teachers and/or personal days leave from school to handle those situations (e.g. birth of child or serious family illness). When the lower category of one area competes with a higher category of another area, the higher category wins out. For example, if your 10th wedding anniversary plans ("Should Do") have been made for several weeks, you'd better not let the FFA members plan a summer fishing trip ("Nice To Do") for that same weekend! Likewise, if chapter members have been working all year on a special BOAC program, the family should understand that you can't take them to the movies ("Nice To Do") on the same Friday night that you and your FFA officers are planning to put together and type the BOAC application ("Should Do").

Of course, this system doesn't always work so perfectly when the "Should Do's" of home compete with the "Should Do's" of the job or when the "Nice to Do's" compete with each other. In those cases, one just has to compromise, giving and taking as equally as possible - not

always one sided (i.e., the job duties always winning out over the duties at home).

Last year, another vocational agriculture teacher with over 30 years in teaching told of one of his decisions that he wished had been different. He had a middle-aged son who was dying of cancer. During the county fair, this teacher had a feeling that he should take some time and visit his son again (who lived in another state). But he couldn't see how he could take the time during the county fair since he had never missed a fair in all of his years in teaching. So, he planned to take the time right after the fair was over. His son died a couple of days later. In retrospect he wished he had decided to see his son. He realized the fair would have gotten along without him. Seeing his son one last time would have meant more to him than any fair or any job for that matter.

Select Program Priorities

When teachers graduate from college and start their first year of teaching, many of them have the impression that they can do all of the duties of a vocational agriculture teacher better than anyone before them. They can be the best classroom and laboratory teacher in the state with the neatest facilities. All of their students will conduct superb SOE programs that the teachers help them develop to the maximum degree and they are all working toward their career goal. They also think they will have time to conduct superb FFA Chapter Programs, including winning the National Chapter Award, BOAC, Safety, Proficiency Awards, judging contests, and all of the rest.

However, after a couple of years of teaching, reality hits most teachers and they realize it's just not humanly possible, unless they are willing to spend about 20 hours a day, seven days a week at it. That doesn't leave any time for the personal life. So, most teachers need to accept the fact that they have to do the best they can in the "Must Do's" of the job and prudently select some of the "Should Do's" and "Nice To Do's."

The Hartington FFA Chapter has received a couple of gold awards at the state level in BOAC, some state recognition in the National Chapter Award Program, and two first place awards in the overall Nebraska Vocational Agriculture contest Sweepstakes award area. The chapter

has also been involved in many community projects during the years. But, the chapter never did all of those things the same year. Each year some of the "Should Do's" and "Nice To Do's" were selected. It seems to work and still leave time for the family life.

Communicate With Family

Good communication is a must. Usually, between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m. after our two boys go to bed, my wife and I have some time to visit about the day. If it has been a busy week where the time in the evenings has not been available, then it's Sunday morning when we take about an hour after breakfast to visit over coffee about the past week's events. I find out what happened at home while I was gone and we look to the week ahead and check the calendar and do some planning. I've gotten into too many conflicts that could have been avoided had I told my wife about upcoming events early rather than inform her the day or evening before.

Spouse Accepts Community Roles

Another idea that has worked for my wife and me is that she has accepted the community responsibilities that have come our way. She has served on our Church Council and is currently serving as President of the school board for our community school. Several advantages to this idea are that she has a chance to work with people in the community and on meeting nights I get to do dishes after supper, help the boys with their lessons, and get them to bed. This gives her a needed break from those responsibilities. Since we've done this, I have found that I really look forward to taking over for her at home. It offers a welcome change of pace.

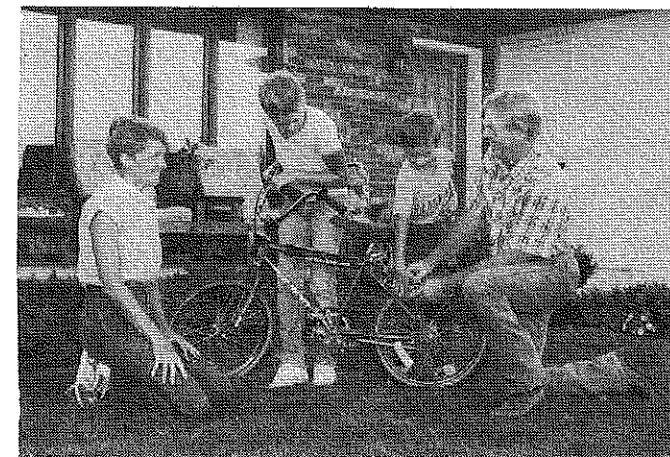
Other Ideas

Early in my teaching career, my wife attended the National FFA Convention, a couple of State FFA Conventions, the state agriculture teachers' summer conference, and other events. This gave her a good idea of what was involved in this profession and why I can get so motivated about being a vocational agriculture teacher. It was also easier for her to leave then, before we had a family, or at least before the boys were in school.

(Continued on page 10)

| | Professional Career | Personal Life |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Must Do | Teach, instruct, and supervise SOE programs. | Provide for our family; supply the basic needs. |
| Should Do | Extra things that improve the quality of the Vo-Ag/FFA program (usually demand extra time-beyond the school/working day). | Those things that really add to the quality of the family life; being there for birthday celebrations, school activities of our children, helping with summer baseball programs, or just spending time together as a family. |
| Nice To Do | Those extra things that really help you develop a special program for your students and community may put real demands on your weekend or summer vacation time. | Those extra things that really enhance the family life; summer special vacation every year, attending a special movie, fishing, and hiking. |

Figure 1: Categories for Professional and Personal Responsibilities by Priority Levels



The Hoelsing's (from left: Judy, Paul, Matthew, and Duane) enjoy a lighter moment as a family (Photo courtesy of the author).



Checking the cows and calves on summer pasture allows Duane Hoelsing to spend more time with his family. (Photo courtesy of the author.)

"What Works For Me"

(Continued from page 9)

Another essential is to use your summer vacation days. During my first three summers, I usually had 3 to 5 days of vacation days that I never used because I couldn't get all of the work done at school. I finally realized I was cheating my family and myself by not spending those days at home with them. The work is never done at school anyway, is it? My dad used to say, "If a farmer can say he's got everything done, he's not really a farmer." That holds true for a vocational agriculture teacher as well.

How about working on Saturday and Sunday? I used to spend quite a few Saturdays and some Sundays on vocational agriculture/FFA activities. That has also changed. I work on only 4 to 6 Saturdays per year on vocational agriculture/FFA activities and have eliminated all vocational agriculture/FFA activities on Sunday. That day is our family day. The programs at school have not been hampered by those changes. The weekend is a special time for family. If I don't have to work at the Friday night football game, then we might attend the game as a family or pay a visit to friends or relatives. Saturday is our day of working together.

Like many other teachers, I'm involved in farming and we make it a family affair as much as possible. A typical Saturday may find all four of us scooping the manure off of the concrete floors around the farrowing barn, grinding feed for the cattle, or just driving out to the pasture to check the cows and their calves.

On a typical Sunday, we attend church services, enjoy a big breakfast, 'mom and dad' have their 'coffee hour', and later we'll all go outside for a game of baseball or football. In the afternoon, we'll visit relatives or friends, go fishing or hunting, play a family game together, or just watch the football or baseball game on T.V. After enjoying a few years of these kinds of weekends, I'd never go back to working weekends at school. Another thing vocational agriculture teachers should remember is that our students also need their weekends at home, away from school activities.

My wife and I probably don't do as much socially as other couples our age do. But maybe that's typical of a vocational agriculture teacher's life. We quit golfing a couple of years ago because we knew we could be home doing something as a family rather than being on the golf course. We don't bowl or belong to any community groups right now either. We've decided that there will be more time for those activities after our boys are older and away from home. They are only home for a short time in our lives, and we'll make the most of it while they are here.

What price does one's family pay for the sake of success

in this profession? That's the constant question vocational agriculture teachers face. Remember the words of Lombardi. He knew that the degree of success was in direct relationship with the price paid by the family. The teacher whose son died of cancer retired last year. When asked what one thing he would do differently if he had to do it over, he said, without a doubt, he would spend more time with his family.

My dad and my supervising teacher both told me at different times that my family was more important than my job. Their words seem more meaningful as each year goes by. When you think about it, given our education and our experience, all of us are capable of doing a job other than teaching vocational agriculture. Therefore, it seems logical that we are replaceable even though we may not think so.

But we are not replaceable in our role in our family. Imagine yourself, 10, 20, or more years from now, at retirement age and asking yourself this question: "Comparing my students, their parents, my administrators, and fellow teachers with my family, who is most important to me and who will remember me best for what I have or have not done in this life?" How one answers that question is a matter of choice. A family understands that a certain degree of success is essential and important, but they also know that there is a limit to the price paid. It's up to each individual to keep things in perspective.

All of the successes, all of the awards, and all of the satisfactions of teaching linger only in the memory. The family unit, the joys and hardships experienced together, the growing up and growing old together, the teaching of life and life's values to your children — these are the things that endure and are the qualities of life so much more important than any job or profession.



Hartington FFA Chapter with 1st place trophy in overall State Vo-Ag Contest competition. Some degree of success can be achieved while maintaining a quality family life. (Photo courtesy of Duane Hoelsing.)

Coming in February . . .

Smith-Hughes at 70

THEME

Why Administrators Want Teachers To Lead A Balanced Life

A balanced life — whatever that may mean — is a goal of most persons involved in the educational field. Too often I am afraid that some teachers do not reflect upon this goal as a personal endeavor. Achieving a properly balanced life is an important asset to an individual in the teaching profession.

There are five reasons why I, as an administrator, would want teachers to achieve a balance with their professional and personal lives: (1) to hold teachers in the profession, thus reducing the amount of resources needed to provide for quality teachers, (2) to build stronger relationships between teachers and administrators, (3) to have teachers who are good managers of time, (4) to have teachers who are accountable for their own actions, and (5) to have effective teachers.

Fosters Longevity

It is essential to have teachers who live a life that will bring forth many years of effective teaching. Much is lost when a teacher leaves the profession after being a successful teacher. Experiences, insights, understandings, and skills are lost. Efforts and energies put forth to get a teacher to a level of performance that provides effective instruction must be restarted on another individual. This may become a frustrating experience to an administrator, which may lower that person's level of performance.

Enhances Professional Relationships

Dedicated people are a source of joy to an administrator. It is a pleasure to work with people who have a positive attitude toward the teaching profession. Teachers who possess both dedication and a positive attitude have found a proper balance in life. Getting satisfaction from the job and enjoying a quality personal life provide the means of building relationships which give stability to staff performance.

Improves Efficiency

Individuals who have achieved a balanced life in their professional and personal lives have mastered being organized. Someone has described life as a smorgasbord. There is more to do than anyone has time to do. Selections and choices are in abundant supply. The question then is how to select quality. Teachers who have discovered how to manage time properly, both in the professional and personal arenas of life, are wise indeed. These are persons who are effective, thus gaining a personal satisfaction that far exceeds what many consider to be essential in life such as economic gain or praise. Teachers who gain satisfaction



By RICHARD B. CARTER, SR.

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from their professional and personal lives are in a position to be effective and contribute to the mission of the educational system.

Aids Accountability

There are teachers who for various reasons make excuses for why they are not happy in teaching. These are generally teachers who do not understand their accountability as individuals. If they do devote too much time to the profession it is because someone is demanding too much. If they devote too much time to their personal life it is also because someone else is demanding too much of their time. Neither of these situations take into consideration one's accountability for providing for effectiveness in both aspects of life. A sense of guilt may develop in such circumstances, thus contributing to a low level of performance. A balanced individual feels responsible for one's actions and does not tend to blame others.

Leads to Effective Instruction

Last, and for the most important reason, administrators are looking for individuals who will be effective teachers. This will contribute to high morale and strong teamwork. Building quality programs is a goal of any institution which seeks to serve people. Attitudes of a teacher are important and tend to be passed on to their students. Good teachers have positive attitudes, thus becoming extremely important contributors to the educational process. No amount of competency will overcome a poor attitude. There is no substitute for effective instruction. As an administrator I may do a great deal to support a teacher, but I cannot compensate for poor instruction. Effective teachers get the job done. Excellence in education is becoming a national theme. To meet this challenge it is going to take effective teachers. Teachers who have achieved a balanced life and who stay in the profession are our greatest resource for achieving true excellence in education.

Professional and Personal Balance In A Two Career Family

Maintaining professional and personal balance in a two-career family can be accomplished, though it won't always be easy. Striving for advances in the careers of wife and husband requires commitment — commitment to each other and commitment by each to their profession. Add children, and there is a three-way commitment.

Is there a challenge? You bet there is. In fact, there are many of them. The purpose of this article is to describe some of the approaches the authors have used in their personal and professional lives.

Background

One of the authors is the chief financial officer and a professor of business at a university; the other is a vocational agriculture teacher educator and department head at a different university. Together, they have experienced the challenges, rewards, and joys of a two-career marriage. Plus, there are two children — one a high school senior and the other a 10th grader.

Dual careers have always been a part of the marriage. He started as a vocational agriculture teacher; she as a business education and English teacher. Sharing professional and personal time began after graduation from college and marriage. Then there was graduate school — she taught school while he completed doctoral study at the University of Illinois, and he was a beginning assistant professor while she earned her doctorate at Mississippi State University. And children — they were born during the time of graduate study for her.

It was our belief that we would not just carry on day-to-day routines in our careers. We wanted to be professionally active and make professional contributions. Books, articles, research, leadership positions, and, hopefully, professional contributions have been a result.

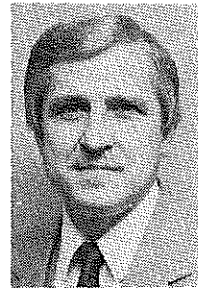
And the children — we wanted to be involved in their growth and education. We knew we couldn't be with them all the time but we could be involved in quality ways in their development. Serving on the school board, as president of band boosters, by being active in school events, and other ways could help them grow educationally. Family outings to the mountains, cities, beaches, and other activities would provide time together. And, of course, daily support and involvement are essential.

Strategies for Coping

Through the years certain strategies have been useful in our two-career marriage. These strategies have helped give professional and personal balance in a two-career marriage with strong career commitments.

Respect for the Other's Professional Pursuits Is Essential

We respect the career pursuits of each other. We find joy in each other's accomplishments. We support each other in



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times of career stress. The support may involve discussion of job situations, the trying out of courses of action, giving a little extra effort in daily routine when the job demands of the other are greater, and making it possible for each other to be professionally active. This has helped us understand each other's career.

Budget Time for Professional and Personal Life

Scheduling of activities is important. Using a calendar to keep each other informed of professional, social, and other events is very important. Regularly reviewing schedules together and recording these on a calendar at home, help in avoiding conflicts.

There are times when priorities must be set. Events may conflict. Personal leave time must often be scheduled just as other events. And, planning well ahead of time is essential.

Have a Division of Labor

Maintenance of a home is a dual responsibility. An understanding of this from the beginning has been essential. Each has certain duties. For example, one cooks and the other does the dishes. One shops for groceries and the other tends to automobile maintenance. One may wash certain clothes and the other may fold and iron. And, with some duties, working together is best.

Each person must be flexible. When job demands mean trips away from home, the other picks up the slack. Also children can assist with responsibilities.

Professional Activities Can Become Personal Time

Separation of professional and personal life is difficult. Professional involvement can be a time of enhancing personal life. Attending a meal function (such as a student organization or faculty awards banquet) is time together

away from the kitchen. When one has a professional meeting or conference, the other may take vacation leave from work and go along. This gives personal time together as well as helps one better understand career demands of the other. Plus, children may go on trips and have valuable experiences. For example, our daughter recently accompanied us when we attended a reception at a meeting of the board of trustees for all universities in Mississippi. Our daughter met five university presidents during one evening. What other 10th grader can say she has done that?

Use Children's Activities as Personal Time

There are many activities available to children and parents. Attending band concerts, dramas and musicals, awards programs, athletic events, and other school activities is a quality, satisfying use of personal time. Also, attending such events shows children that there is parental support for their activities.

Involvement in school and educational projects can pay good dividends. Family outings to help children collect specimens for school science projects is a learning experience for children and parents. Parents become an extension of the school and thereby enhance educational achievement. The few frustrations involved are minor compared to the satisfaction we have received when we see our children excel.

Maintain an Extent of Independence

In two-career marriages, each person must ultimately make it on his or her own. Both individuals can't go and do everything together. We have found that each spouse must be sufficiently independent of the other. Traveling alone, being away overnight, making early morning trips, and other non-routine activities must be readily accepted by the other. Even attending meal functions singly is needed when both have activities at the same time. Separate checking accounts, credit cards, and ownership have certain advantages. Of course, it is very important that both individuals are aware of each other's schedule and personal financial details.

Support Each Other

Each of us finds joy and celebration in the other's ac-



Foreign travel allows professionals in a two career family to combine business and pleasure. The above group visits a pork processing plant in France that purchases its pork carcasses from Denmark. (Photo courtesy of Chris Townsend.)

complishments. Each of us is hurt when the other experiences a setback or faces a career crisis. Mutual support and understanding are critical factors in dual careers.

Have Quality Activities for Children

Individuals don't perform as efficiently and effectively in their work when they are preoccupied with their children. Arrangements need to be made for the proper care of small children, scheduled after school events, and establishing study routines in the home in the evening. Quality summer and holiday activities need to be scheduled. Summer camps often offer excellent opportunities for learning and development. It is important to carefully evaluate camps and other child care services — use those that focus on academics rather than athletics. Cultivating friendships of children with other children is preferred to allowing them freedom to roam the neighborhood to find friends on their own.

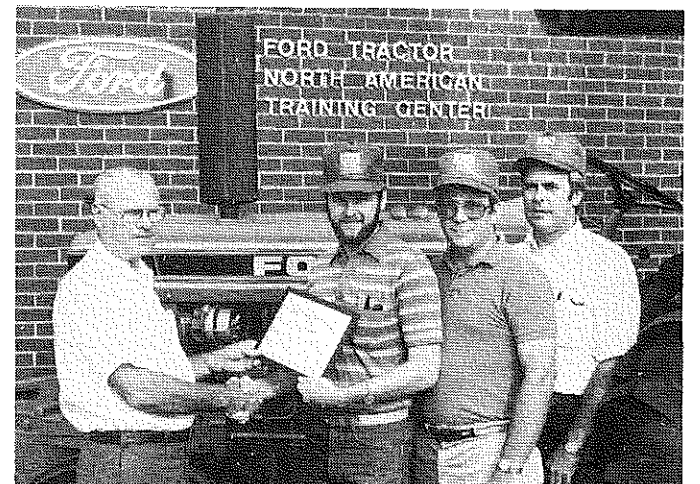
Have Quality Escape Activities

Everyone needs time to escape from the rigors of career demands, the way the time is used, i.e., kind of escape, and impacts on the professional stature of the individual. Quality use of personal time builds energy for career success. Professional renewal may be found in many ways. We have found that changing routines and environments for a few days is refreshing. A quiet weekend at home may be just as renewing as traveling to some distant location. We have found a mix of the two to be most beneficial.

Conclusion: Time Is Limited

There is just so much time available in a work day. It is important to use it well personally and professionally. We have always found time to do what we have wanted to do. Two-career families can find the appropriate balance, even when both individuals have strong career commitment and demanding careers.

Nobody ever said that a dual-career marriage was easy. There is no free lunch. Sacrifice and compromises are a daily parts of our lives. With hard work, love, and dedication, however, an appropriate balance can be reached to satisfactorily combine careers and personal lives.



Agricultural education faculty and vocational agriculture teachers frequently attend inservice activities such as this one in Memphis, TN. Two career families require careful scheduling so both professionals in the family can be as active as desired. (Photo courtesy of Glen Shinn.)

Burnout: Fact or Fallacy?

While the populace in general talks a lot about the idea of burnout, very little is actually known about the extent to which vocational agriculture teachers are burned out. Newcomb's article in this issue of *THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE* defines what burnout is, but the question remains: Does it affect vocational agriculture teachers, and, if so, is it enough to cause concern?

Potential Sources of Burnout

Diverse Challenges in the Classroom

What is it about the nature of vocational agriculture teachers' jobs that makes them susceptible to burnout? Vocational agriculture teachers need to be able to identify the source or sources of undue stress which may ultimately lead to burnout.

Because vocational agriculture teachers are constantly making decisions that affect the lives of the students, the students could be one source of stress. Additionally, teachers of vocational agriculture usually have students of varied needs within the classroom which causes the teacher to prepare more varied lessons to reach all students. This is difficult and exhausting work. Another challenge for the vocational agriculture teacher is being able to maintain discipline within the classroom and laboratory. From personal experience, this author knows that discipline is a potentially depleting task, thus adding emotional pressure. Teachers of vocational agriculture are also constantly in close contact with people in the agricultural community, many of whom look-up to the vocational agriculture teacher as an "expert" in all fields of agriculture, thus causing additional stress. These sources of stress will lead to burnout.

Workload

In addition to the teaching responsibilities, several other components are included in the total vocational agriculture program. The FFA organization requires a substantial amount of time as does supervising the students' SOE programs. In some areas of the country, vocational agriculture teachers are also responsible for instruction and supervision of the adult education program and the young farmers' organization. Fitting all these responsibilities into a "normal" workday is not easy. It's not unusual to hear vocational agriculture teachers complain about working long hours and having more work to complete than is humanly possible. But, all this work must be done! It's, therefore, not unusual to find the work load of the vocational agriculture teachers as a potential source of burnout.

Time Pressures

Because of the rigorous nature of the program in vocational agriculture, time pressures could be cited as a cause of additional stress. Also, all states have forms which must be completed and forwarded to the state office by a given



By JAMIE CANO

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date. Individuals are also a source of pressure for vocational agriculture teachers. Some of these individuals are administrators, the parents, and other teachers in the school district. It seems that all parties concerned expect nothing but the best from the vocational agriculture program, thus adding pressure.

Measuring Burnout

How is the phenomenon of burnout measured? Basically teachers are asked to respond to statements that measure their psychological conditions in a number of areas. One accepted way of measuring burnout is to see how emotionally exhausted, depersonalized and effective teachers



Tree climbing instruction adds extra pressures for forestry teachers even when students properly use spurs, hard hats, and safety ropes. (Photo courtesy of Owen Sabin Occupational Skill Center, Milwaukee, Oregon.)

feel they are. This is accomplished by using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). Emotional exhaustion measures feelings of being overextended and exhausted by one's work. Depersonalization measures feelings of impersonal responses and responses without feeling toward one's students. Personal accomplishment measures feelings of competence and successful achievement as related to working with students.

The subscales of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment are measured on two dimensions: frequency and intensity. Frequency measures the number of occurrences and intensity measures how strong the feelings are when they are experienced.

If vocational agriculture teachers score too high on the emotional exhaustion subscale, they are agreeing with statements such as: "I feel emotionally drained from my work," "I feel used up at the end of the work day," and "I feel like I'm at the end of my rope." By scoring high on the depersonalization subscale, it indicates that the vocational agriculture teachers are saying, "I don't really care what happens to some of my students," "I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally," and "I feel I treat some of my students as if they were impersonal objects."

In contrast to the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization subscales, scores that are low on both the frequency and intensity dimensions of the personal accomplishment subscale correspond to higher levels of burnout. On a personal accomplishment subscale then, by



Urban horticulture students and adults provide diverse clientele groups to be served. (Photo courtesy of Bob Birkenholz.)

scoring low, it means that vocational agriculture teachers do not feel that they are "very energetic," do not feel they "deal very effectively with the problems of their students," and feel they are not "positively influencing other people's lives through their work."

One study measured the extent of burnout among vocational agriculture teachers using the three subscales identified above. The results of the study are sufficient to cause concern for those in the profession.

Burnout Among Vocational Agriculture Teachers

Ohio vocational agriculture teachers are experiencing considerable burnout (Newcomb, Betts, & Cano, in press). In the area of emotional exhaustion, between 17% and 23% of the teachers were in the high burnout category. Scores on the depersonalization subscale indicated that between 27% and 39% of the scores fell in the area indicating high burnout. Approximately 30% of the vocational agriculture teachers were found to experience a high level of burnout as measured by the personal accomplishment subscale.

Hence, a sufficient number of Ohio teachers of vocational agriculture are experiencing high levels of burnout. Earlier, the following question was asked: Does burnout affect vocational agriculture teachers, and, if so, is it enough to cause concern? It appears to this author that the answer to the question is a definite yes. However, a new question arises: Are the teachers of vocational agriculture doing anything to cope with these levels of burnout?

Using Coping Skills

Based on the model explained in the Newcomb article, it is known that burnout is influenced by how well teachers of vocational agriculture use coping skills to dissipate stress. These skills are divided into four sets of coping behaviors: recreational resources, which reflects the use of recreational activities as a distractor from stressful events; self care/personal coping, which reflects the ability to

(Continued on page 16)



Early morning FFA activities extend the day for both FFA members and advisors. (Photo courtesy of Doug Rinker.)

Burnout: Fact or Fallacy?

(Continued from page 15)

utilize healthful habits; social support, which emphasizes family, friends, and social groups; and rational/cognitive coping, which measures the effective management of one's time, effort, and reactions to reduce stress.

The Ohio vocational agriculture teachers make excellent use of social support and rational/cognitive coping resources. For social support, approximately 93% of the vocational agriculture teacher scores fell in the category indicating high usage of these resources. Likewise, about 87% scored in the high-usage category on the rational/cognitive coping subscale.

In the case of recreational resources and self-care/personal coping resources, these teachers hardly use these coping skills. Approximately 85% of the vocational agriculture teachers' scores fell in the category indicating that they were not utilizing recreational activities as a coping mechanism. On the self-care/personal coping subscale, approximately 85% of the teachers fell in the low usage category indicating that the resources leading to healthful habits were not being used. Hence, there is much room for Ohio vocational agriculture teachers to increase their use of recreational activities and self-care skills as a way of dissipating stress, thus reducing the level of burnout.

Avoiding Burnout

Teachers who want to avoid burnout need to find avenues to dissipate the stress encountered on the job. Several alternatives could lead to reducing the level of stress, including the use of recreational activities. According to the Ohio vocational agriculture teachers study, it is

evident that they are not fully utilizing the recreational resources.

If at all possible, teachers should try to free themselves from school work on weekends. This is not always possible, but with careful planning, some free weekends could be worked in. A relaxed weekend helps the vocational agriculture teacher come in on Monday with renewed enthusiasm and energy. Play tennis, jog, dance, swim, ride a bicycle, go camping, take a hike, read your favorite novel, or go to the movies. The point is that vocational agriculture teachers need to enjoy some rest and relaxation on a regular basis.

Another way to avoid burnout is to limit the number of work hours. Realistically, three hours after the close of school per day should be enough time to conduct some SOEP visits and prepare a lesson plan for the following day. By limiting the number of working hours, the vocational agriculture teacher can have more time to take care of many of those details related to one's well-being and good health.

Summary

When 17% to 39% of the vocational agriculture teachers are in the high burnout category, it becomes imperative that action be taken to educate teachers about burnout and coping with stress. Vocational agriculture teachers seem to make good use of selected coping skills to reduce stress. However, more recreational activities and better self-care skills need to be utilized to control stress and avoid burnout.

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ARTICLE

Take The Time To Smell The Roses

"Take the time to smell the roses" is the advice often given to us by our elders. The problem is that most of us never find the time to even plant the rose bushes!

Does lack of "time" to really do the things you want to do sound all too familiar? Do you feel you are spending too much time in the professional sphere of your life and not enough time in the personal sphere? If so, we suggest you first assess how your time is being spent and then set out to work on the area that appears out of balance.

Activity/Time Identification

To help determine the balance between your professional and personal life, we have developed an "Activity/Time Chart" for you to complete. To begin, you need to identify your activities in both the professional and personal sphere of your life and the amount of daily time you devote to each. The third category utilized in the chart is the amount of time you spend sleeping.

In reviewing your professional sphere, include the following types of activities:



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Professional Life Activities:

Work activities include time spent on teaching; routine functions; short and long term projects; meetings with colleagues, supervisor and students; extra curricular functions, etc. Related activities include time spent in par-

ticipating in organizations and events that are directly or indirectly related to your job, etc.

In reviewing your personal sphere, include the following types of activities:

Personal Life Activities:

Family activities include time spent on recreation, maintenance and housekeeping tasks, socializing, meal preparation, shopping, etc. Self activities include time spent on hobbies, personal care, recreation, private time, time with friends, church or synagogue activities, community organizations, political involvement, club involvement, etc.

Now that you identified your professional and personal activities, convert these activities into hours spent per day by utilizing the "Activity/Time Chart" provided.

Activity/Time Chart

The purpose of recording the time spent in the professional and personal spheres of your life and the time spent rejuvenating yourself through sleep is to aid you in determining if you are living your life in balance. Your personal life will also be divided between time spent in family activities and self activities to further assist you in analyzing the balance in your life.

Using the color code below, color in the appropriate amount of time you spend in each category listed.

To determine if your life is adequately balanced, add the number of hours you sleep a week. Based on an average of eight hours of sleep per night, the number of hours you sleep a week should be approximately 56 hours.

Now continue by adding the number of hours you spend working. This sphere of your life should be approximately 56 hours or less.

Follow with adding the number of hours spent in your personal sphere. This should again be approximately one-third of your week's hours. To further assess the time you spend in this sphere, count the number of hours devoted to your family and then to yourself. A comparison of these hours will help you further assess the balance in your life. Remember, self time is very important to your growth and development as well as in your relationships to those around you in both your personal and professional life.

If after completing this exercise, you determine that in a week's time you spend approximately equal hours in the three major areas recorded, your life appears to be in balance. CONGRATULATIONS!

If not, recognize we can all live unbalanced for short periods of time, but extended unbalance can lead to a variety of problems and general dissatisfaction with your life. We are all too aware of people who are so work-oriented that health and family problems often result. Understand that most often the unbalance is caused not from too much to do, but a failure to organize what we have to do and would like to do according to our values and commitments.

Achieving Balance

For those of you who would like to live a more balanced and satisfying life, these suggestions may help you achieve this goal. Look closely at that portion of your life in which

(Continued on page 18)

ACTIVITY/TIME CHART

| | AM | | NOON | | PM | | MIDNIGHT | | AM | | | |
|-----------|----|---|------|---|----|----|----------|----|----|---|---|---|
| | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| MONDAY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TUESDAY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WEDNESDAY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| THURSDAY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FRIDAY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SATURDAY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SUNDAY | | | | | | | | | | | | |

COLOR CODE

Professional Activity Hours - Red
 Personal Family Activity Hours - Yellow
 Personal Self Activity Hours - Green
 Sleep Hours - Blue

Take The Time To Smell The Roses

(Continued from page 17)

you are spending too much time at the sacrifice of the others. This is the area that will need to be set back into balance. To resolve the unbalance, set out to work through the four action steps listed below.

1. **Planning/Organizing** — Some portion of everyday should be spent planning and organizing your day's activities so that the time you spend in these three major areas is more equal. To facilitate this task, ask yourself the following questions:

a) What are the factors that are causing me to spend too much time in this category?

b) How can I plan, organize and streamline the unbalanced part of my life?

c) Which factors can I control? If you can control them, you may choose to eliminate, delegate, or short cut them (handle more efficiently) which may involve adapting your standards to accommodate achieving balance.

2. **Priorities** — Determine which activities in your area of unbalance are most important to you. Make sure those are given your immediate attention and adequate time is allotted. Place the others in lower priority. Con-

tinue to work through your priority list making sure you delegate more time to the areas being slighted. This step is important to do in both your professional and personal spheres.

3. **Communication** — It is important to communicate your priorities, and the plan you have devised in dealing with them to those people it will affect. In communicating, you may find a need to compromise with others involved or solicit help.

4. **Attitude** — None of these suggestions will help if your attitude is negative. To approach the unbalance, you must have a positive attitude toward the idea that a balanced life can be a reality and is achievable. A good attitude can make a difference so take the effort to adjust your attitude if needed.

Conclusion

We hope after completing the ACTIVITY/TIME CHART, you were able to determine if you are spending the time in your life in a balanced way. For those of you who discovered areas needing work, we hope our suggestions were helpful in directing you in making changes. So, the next time someone suggests you take time to smell the roses, just smile and say, "I think I will. I've got the bushes planted this year."

ARTICLE

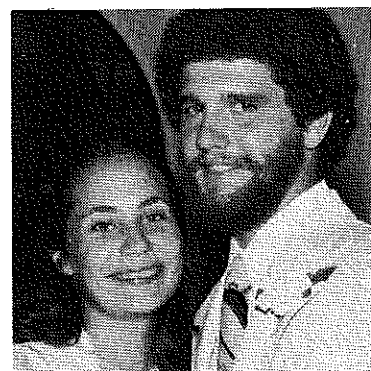
Your Marriage and The Profession

There are probably many people in your community who at one time or another harbored the belief that the vocational agriculture teacher lived at the school, slept in the shop, and ate all meals in the school cafeteria. Honest, dedicated, articulate, resourceful, and most of all, hard working. These are but a few of the words often used in describing the vocational agriculture teacher. From the school administrator to students, many recognize the time and effort the vocational agriculture teacher puts forth in providing a quality educational experience for all.

Yet, do students, parents and administrators realize vocational agriculture teachers have a spouse, children, homes, pets and troubles of their own? It is difficult for many to understand that a teacher's life is not bound by the time and space of the school. Vocational agriculture teachers must coordinate many roles (e.g. teacher, FFA advisor, spouse, community participant). However, in doing so, vocational agriculture teachers must cope with the many demands of their multiple roles, especially the demands placed upon them by marriage. These demands have been acknowledged many times over, but rarely have they been subject to study.

Do We Have A Problem?

Marital relationships have been identified as a major factor causing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession. Several independent studies of teacher turnover in vocational agriculture throughout the U.S. have



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uncovered the role of marital relationships in job satisfaction (Cole, 1981; Cooper and Nelson, 1981; Mattox, 1974). A number of qualified graduates of agricultural education programs choose not to teach due to the job demands associated with the profession and their influence on marital satisfaction. Prospective vocational agriculture teachers are aware of the demands the job may place upon

a marriage (Cooper and Nelson, 1981; Peters, 1981). Finally, just as the demands of the job seem to have a relationship to marital satisfaction, marital satisfaction seems to also have a relationship to the quality of the vocational agriculture program. When a school activity is disruptive and nonconducive to favorable spouse relations, school related activity will be terminated or neglected (Gehrke, 1979).

Marital Satisfaction and Vocational Agriculture

In the spring of 1985, a study was conducted in New Mexico to identify the spouse's perception of selected job demands upon marital satisfaction and to determine the relationship between specific employment characteristics and marital satisfaction as perceived by the spouse.

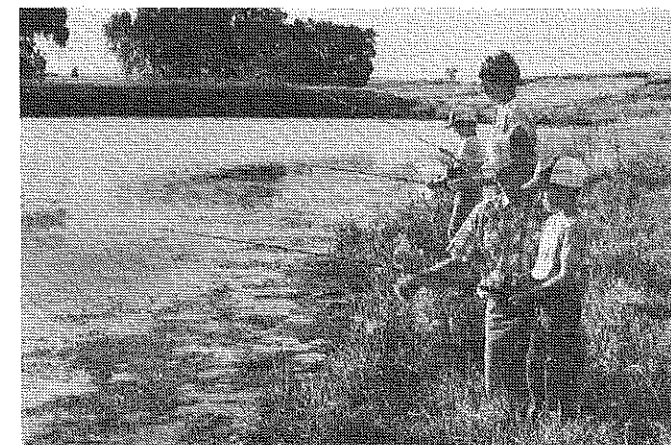
This study sought to answer how the spouse perceived selected job demands associated with teaching vocational agriculture influenced satisfaction. The job demands included long hours, evening and weekend activities, teacher's annual salary in relation to the amount of effort, employment status of the spouse, size of community employed, size of family, and age of children. This study also considered the relationship between marital satisfaction as perceived by the spouse and job satisfaction, salary, job status, career advancement, and job stability.

What The Spouse Has To Say

Fifty-seven teachers were married at the time of the study, 54 male teachers and three female teachers. Because of the small size of the target population, all of these teachers were included in the study. Forty-six wives (85.2%) responded to the mailed questionnaire while two of the three husbands responded. Forty-eight questionnaires were returned for a total of 84.2%.

The average member of this sample had been married for slightly more than 12 years and had a spouse who had taught approximately 11 years. The teacher was employed in a community of 19,000, had two children, and earned between \$23,000 and \$26,000 per year.

Slightly less than 57% of the spouses of the vocational agriculture teachers indicated that marital satisfaction would increase if salary would increase and job responsibilities remained the same. More than half of the spouses



Fishing is an excellent past-time for vocational agriculture teachers and their families. (Photo courtesy of Duane Hoising).

indicated that marital satisfaction would remain unchanged regardless of the spouse having to work outside of the home, be it voluntary or involuntary. If another occupational choice was possible, slightly less than 50% of the spouses indicated that a career as farmer/rancher would increase marital satisfaction. Slightly more than 55% of the respondents indicated that a career as a police officer, truck driver, and career officer in the military would decrease marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction would remain the same for more than 50% of the respondents for the occupational areas of manager of a retail clothing store, doctor, auto mechanic, loan representative at a bank, lawyer, and technical engineer.

More than three-quarters of the spouses felt that community size had no effect upon marital satisfaction. Slightly more than 55% of the spouses in the sample indicated that the amount of time the vocational agriculture teacher is involved in the job does affect marital satisfaction and additional activities decrease marital satisfaction.

In terms of children in the relationship, 55% of the respondents indicated that job responsibilities do not prevent vocational agriculture teachers from spending time with their children. Similarly, close to three-quarters of the respondents did not feel that the demands of the job prevented the vocational agriculture teacher from spending time with the younger children or the older children.

The respondents indicated that generally they find their husband's/wife's career rewarding in terms of job satisfaction (73%), salary (53%), job status (79%), and job stability (81%).

The respondents were asked to rate their marital satisfaction on a ten point index with 10 as high and 1 as low. The respondent's average marital satisfaction was 7.59. In correlating marital satisfaction with the employment characteristics of job satisfaction, salary, job status, and career advancement, no significant relationship was found. A moderate relationship was found between marital satisfaction and job stability ($r = .34 p < .02$). The better the spouse's satisfaction with job stability, the higher the marital satisfaction index.

(Continued on page 20)



Professional organizations in agricultural education hold annual meetings near major metropolitan centers such as Los Angeles. Individuals who travel to such meetings should schedule time to "take in" the cultural, educational, and entertainment options that are readily available. (Photo courtesy of Richard Hylton).

Your Marriage and The Profession

(Continued from page 19)

What This Suggests

The following conclusions and recommendations are based on interpretations of the data presented in this study and are limited to the group used in study.

1. The spouse indicates that the amount of time a vocational agriculture teacher is involved in professional activities has a negative influence on marital satisfaction. **How are you spending your time as a vocational agriculture teacher?**

2. An increase in activities related to the profession will have a negative influence on marital satisfaction as perceived by the spouse. **Is the additional activity really going to benefit your program if done at the expense of marital satisfaction?**

3. Although a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and actual salary was not found, the spouse of the vocational agriculture teacher feels that the salary of the vocational agriculture teacher influences marital satisfaction. **The spouse perceives an increase in salary would increase marital satisfaction while a decrease in salary would have a similar direct effect.**

4. The most rewarding attributes of a career in vocational agriculture, as expressed by the spouse, are the opportunity to work with young people and that the vocational agriculture teacher finds the job satisfying. **The spouse recognizes and supports certain attributes of**

teaching vocational agriculture. Capitalize on these attributes.

5. The spouses felt that the least rewarding attributes of a career in vocational agriculture include time away from home for various professional activities, low salary, and the lack of administrative support. **Time and money can combine with poor administrative support to produce the most stress in marital relationship.**

You Didn't Marry Your Job!!

Examine your job as a vocational agriculture teacher and marital satisfaction. It is like the childhood question of "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" You can't really begin to say what should come first. Place one before the other and troubles may abound. To recognize the relationship of marital satisfaction and your career in vocational agriculture is an important first step. It is a step to professional stability and personal worth.

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BOOK REVIEW

DAIRY CATTLE JUDGING TECHNIQUES, By George W. Trimberger and William M. Etgen, Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632

This book is designed for students developing a systematic method of properly judging dairy cattle. The book gives a written explanation of ideal characteristics of dairy cattle including bulls, dairy cows, dry cows, and dairy heifers. Each chapter is clearly written including sharp, clear picture examples of ideal dairy characteristics and deviations from the ideal.

The book contains 25 indepth chapters about judging dairy cattle. The major areas covered include an excellent chapter of organizing and presenting oral reasons, specific chapters explaining udder shape and attachment, top lines, shoulder confirmation, head and neck characteristics, judging of fitting and showmanship

contests, and fitting and showing dairy cattle. Each chapter contains a wide variety of pictures illustrating points mentioned in the chapter.

A great deal of new information including recent revisions of the PDCA scorecard which places increased emphasis on the mammary system, illustrations of a linear directional classification system, and recent developments on the association of various components of type with production and longevity are included in the book. The association of type and cattle sale values and milking Short-horns have been included.

It is well written for the beginner to grasp the sometimes difficult techniques of judging dairy cattle. Other highlights contained in the book are a type appraisal chart, a list of comparative terms used in presenting oral reasons, and a special chapter on show-

ring techniques and procedures.

The book would be an excellent resource for a unit in dairy cattle judging or helping prepare a dairy cattle judging team. The photographs of ideal dairy characteristics and dairy cattle with problem dairy characteristics which are difficult for teachers to find in live examples and slide presentations of dairy classes will be useful to students.

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ARTICLE

Is My Job Too Big For Me?



By ROY A. EUBANKS AND DAVID L. MOORING

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Do you have a tendency to complain or feel that you are becoming less effective? Do you feel that your job is too big for you? Do you wish you could "catch up" with your work? Are you often discouraged? Do you wonder if age has taken its toll because you cannot do as much work as you could when you were younger? Do you think inexperience is your problem?

If any of those questions apply, perhaps you should be complimenting yourself rather than feeling guilty or discouraged. Let us look at some factors that affect our responsibilities and opportunities as vocational agriculture teachers. In no way are the authors suggesting that we go back to the "way it used to be" nor are we complaining about the present conditions. The purpose of this article is to take a realistic look at our job today and to feel good about ourselves and the job we are doing.

Although most vocational agriculture teachers are no longer the community veterinarian, the only shop teacher, and the only twelve-month employee at the school, he or she has many other additional time and energy consuming responsibilities. Certainly, equipment and modern technology make some teaching duties easier than they were 20 years ago.

Most of our examples are from North Carolina, but similar situations occur in other states. We ask you to consider these changes and feel good about what you are doing.

Teaching Load and Courses

In 1966 most vocational agriculture teachers had four classes per day. Now many have five or more classes plus homeroom, study hall, or other extra teaching duties. The number of courses offered has increased from four — Agriculture I, II, III, and IV — to 17 plus Agriculture Coop. These include Introduction to Agriculture/Natural Resources, Homestead and Gardening Skills, and Levels I, II, and III in each of these: Agricultural Production, Agricultural Machinery/Equipment/Structures, Ornamental Horticulture, Forestry, and Natural Resources/Environmental Protection. In addition, we have 20 more years of knowledge and technical advancements. Does the abundance of agricultural chemicals and governmental regulations confuse you? How many new agricultural machines have you learned to use?

Administration and Organization

We have consolidated, integrated, assessed, justified, followed up, licensed, accredited, and reaccredited. We now deal with sex equity, civil rights, disadvantaged, handicapped, mainstreaming, competencies, and complex funding and purchasing policies.

School districts now cover from one-fourth to a whole county, making us travel further to visit students and making both high school and adult students have to travel

more for after school events. They also feel less a part of the school, making support more difficult to get.

Combining students of different sexes, races, urban and rural, and agricultural and nonagricultural backgrounds has given us a more diverse group to teach. Mainstreaming of disadvantaged and handicapped students has provided us students with a broader range of abilities. It takes more time and resources to teach such heterogeneous classes.

Forms and paperwork continue to multiply. A form is required for everything from students' going to the restroom to justifying your summer employment. Individual education plans for each student with a handicap or learning disability have to be written to explain the methods used to teach and the mastery percentage required to pass the course. How many in each class period are in each grade; are of what age, sex, or race; are handicapped and how; and are disadvantaged and how? Sometimes we spend more time identifying and categorizing than we do teaching the students.

State and district supervisor and consultant numbers in vocational agriculture have diminished from 12 to three in North Carolina. That reduction has severely limited available assistance for individual teachers because most of the work is done with large groups of teachers. We are doing more with less help from "up the line."

Competition

To have an adult education program, we have to compete with the Extension Service, the local community college, and commercial agricultural supply dealers. To get high school students, we have to recruit because we are not only in competition with academic courses, but also with many elective courses. For after school FFA events, there is competition with many other clubs, an expanded sports program, part-time or full-time jobs, and more community

(Continued on page 22)

Is My Job Too Big For Me?

(Continued from page 21)

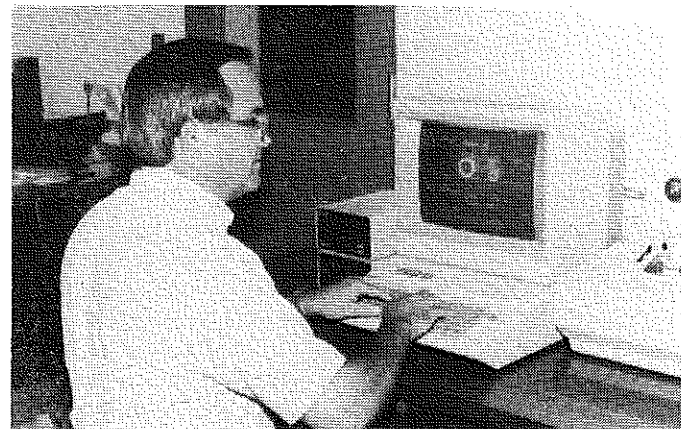
activities. There is also a struggle for funds because vocational dollars are not allotted from the state by program areas. Others want a share of local funds. All these things take more time.

Facilities

Most departments have more equipment and additional shops and laboratories to maintain and operate or they have to share facilities and equipment with other vocational programs. No longer do we have only a classroom, an office, a shop, and perhaps a school farm. Add one or more greenhouses, a nursery, a forestry or natural resources laboratory, and a much more complex school farm if one is still available. How much longer does it take just to do the inventory? Now count the maintenance, repair, and planning time necessary to use these facilities for our students to learn by doing.

The FFA

Is more really better? Face to face contests on the state level have increased from six to 17 with some districts holding extra ones. In addition to more contests, four of the other six contests have added events or increased the difficulty of the existing contests. On the national level, several contests have been expanded and made more difficult. Proficiency award areas have increased from about 12 to 29 plus the forms have become increasingly more comprehensive. Chapter awards have increased in number and in length. Conventions are longer and more detailed, FFA Alumni affiliates have been organized, and the Washington Conference Program has been added. Providing our students FFA opportunities takes more time and



Vocational agriculture teachers have to constantly learn how to use new machinery and teaching aids. (Photo courtesy of the authors.)



Community and technical colleges, agri-supply dealers, and Extension now offer adult education such as this tour of agribusiness. (Photo courtesy of the authors.)

skills. For many teachers, these activities now require written permission from administrators and parents.

Supervised Occupational Experience Programs

A farming project — it is not that simple any more. The diversity of students makes the SOEP more of an individual plan than it has ever been. Most students no longer live and work on their parents' farm. Farm work is often on someone else's farm. They may be working in an off-farm agricultural business. Many have part-time jobs in non-agricultural businesses. Making SOEP visits often requires visiting two locations — the home and the job site — sometimes over 20 miles apart plus the distance from school. Both parents usually work away from home. If the student lives on a farm, getting a share of ownership is more complex because of contracts and legal obligations. Records are harder to grade because of the wide variety of programs. This component of the total vocational agriculture program also takes more time.

Summary

Doctors have not cured all diseases. Ministers have not won all to the Lord. Farmers have not fed all the hungry. Vocational agriculture teachers have not taught everyone everything about agriculture. Most people think doctors, ministers, and farmers are doing a good job, and most people think vocational agriculture teachers are doing a good job, too.

We probably will not accomplish everything we had planned or desired to do. We can feel good about every achievement, the job we are doing, and most of all ourselves, "Mr./Ms. Vocational Agriculture Teacher, 1987."

ARTICLE

Duties and Compensation of Virginia Agriculture Teachers in 1977 and 1986

Agriculture teacher salaries in 1986 were nearly double what they were in 1977. That varied over the teaching experience range, but most teachers had caught up with inflation over the period by 1986. (See note on reference page.) This was true despite the reduction in length of teacher contracts. Salaries by years of teaching experience are presented in Table 1.

Survey information was obtained from agriculture teachers in Virginia at the area meetings in 1976-77 and again in 1985-86. Absentees were followed up by mail. The final return rate was above 90 percent both times. A drop from 363 respondents to 300 was an indication of the reduction in teacher numbers over the period.

A more experienced work force came with the reduction in teacher numbers. The average years of teaching experience was up two years to 12.6 since 1977. The median years of experience was up from 7 years to 10.

Accompanying the reduction in teacher numbers was an increase in the teachers who teach in a one-teacher department — 41 percent versus 22 percent in 1977. Teachers in 1986 were teaching a greater variety of agriculture courses. Teachers still did not teach many non-agriculture periods. Non-agriculture periods taught per teacher per day were .43 in 1986 and .2 in 1977. Also, this is inflated by the fact that 22.6 percent of the teachers taught in schools having 7-period days. (The seven-period day was begun because of limited time for electives.)

The number of extra duties per teacher had not increased during the period. The five most frequently performed extra duties in order were: hall duty (53%), school maintenance (52%), homeroom (45%), take tickets at ball games (45%), lunch room duty (33%), and drive bus for agriculture trips (28%).

Health and life insurance benefits had increased. Nearly half (48.6%) of the teachers received free health insurance. The percentage was 25 in 1977. Free life insurance was reported by 57 percent of the teachers.

Travel allowance, more of a program benefit than a teacher benefit, had suffered a serious erosion. The average travel allowance in 1986 was \$515, spent at 20 cents a mile. The allowance in 1977 was \$437, spent at 12



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cents per mile. That is a 29 percent reduction in terms of miles available for travel.

Although the amount of adult work was still impressive, there had been slippage there as well. Two-thirds of the teachers received adult teaching supplements for an average of 102 hours of instruction. (These supplements are part of the salary reported in both the 1977 and 1986 studies). The use of lay instructors to teach adult classes was down substantially since 1977, yet 44 teachers reported making use of them. School-community canneries continued to decline in number such that 6.7 percent of teachers were involved with canneries in 1986 versus 11.3 percent of a larger work force in 1977. Young Farmer advisors numbered 113 or 38 percent, down from 44.6 percent of the larger work force in 1977. Multiple advisorship was down. (The YF program in Virginia is virtually unchanged).

Summary

After a nine-year period ending in 1986, salaries of agriculture teachers in Virginia had about caught up with inflation over the period. Though diminished in numbers and working on somewhat reduced contracts, the Virginia program had not suffered as much as might be expected. However, nine more years like the last are unpleasant to contemplate.

References

Note — A 1967 dollar which was worth \$.551 in 1977 was down to \$.308 in 1986. Stated in terms of the Consumer Price Index, the index went from 181.5 in 1977 to 325 in 1986.

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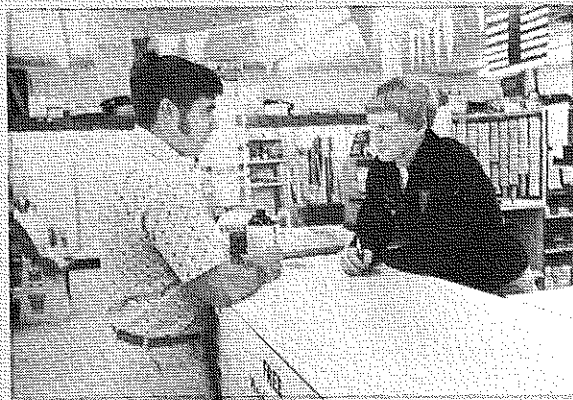
NUMBER OF TEACHERS BY SALARY CATEGORY AND YEARS TEACHING

| Years Teaching | SALARY CATEGORIES (Thousand \$) | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| | 14-15 | 16-18 | 18-20 | 20-22 | 22-24 | 24-26 | 26-28 | 28-30 | 30-32 | 32-34 | 34 + |
| 1-5 | 7 | 15 | 30 | 12 | | | | | | | |
| 6-10 | | 10 | 26 | 27 | 11 | 5 | | 1 | | | |
| 11-15 | 1 | | 8 | 12 | 15 | 18 | 1 | | | | |
| 16-20 | | | 1 | 4 | 8 | 11 | 4 | 6 | 2 | | 1 |
| 20-25 | | | | 3 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| 26-30 | | | | | 2 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 31+ | | | | | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | |

Number of teachers = 292

Stories in Pictures

After The Bell Sounds



Vocational agriculture students acquire numerous benefits from being placed in an agribusiness. Teachers must schedule the hours needed to adequately supervise them if the best learning is to occur. (Photo courtesy of Mike Rush.)



Teachers must practice to safely operate power equipment in the laboratory. Pressures created from teaching with such equipment should be reduced with proper practice and close following of safety precautions. (Photo courtesy of Ken Bruewelheide.)



Fund raising consumes quite a few hours in the life of a state supervisor and FFA Executive Secretary. A representative of Freeport-McMoran, Inc., presents a check to J.C. Simmons (right), a state supervisor in Louisiana, while Robert Simmons (left), the LA Executive Secretary, looks on.



Students who compete in FFA judging contests have spent countless hours being instructed by their vocational agriculture teacher in a variety of laboratory settings. (Photo courtesy of Stacy Gartin.)