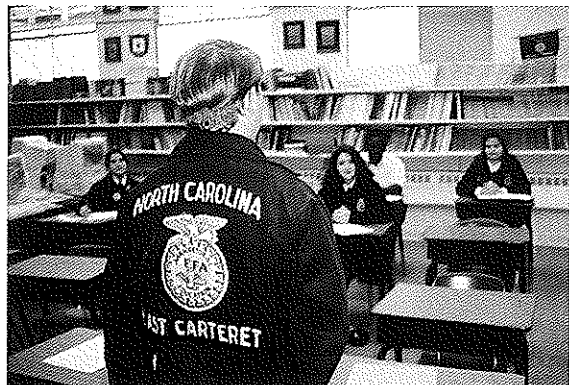


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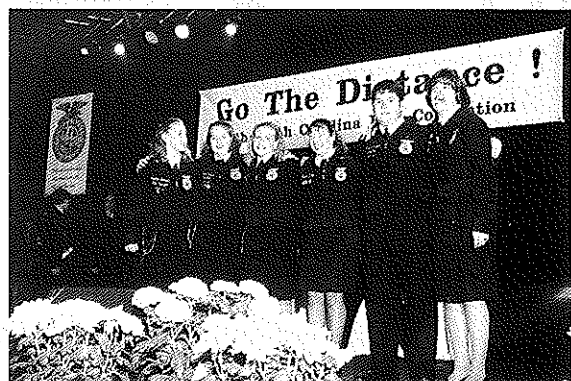
# *The Agricultural* **EDUCATION** M A G A Z I N E



## *Is FFA Needed in the 21st Century?*



*Learning to Do,  
Doing to Learn,  
Earning to Live,  
Living to Serve.*



# Will FFA Be a Part of Agricultural Education in Twenty Years?

By Bill Stagg and Bernie Staller

Agricultural education professionals have long expressed commitment to the philosophy that a complete educational program for students is based on three components: classroom and laboratory instruction, administration of a supervised agricultural experience (SAE); and participation in the student organization of FFA. Yet, out of an estimated 800,000 agriculture students today, only about 450,000 receive educational benefits as members of the FFA. Understandably, some are questioning whether FFA will be part of agricultural education in the future.

It may be more appropriate to ask if agricultural education will still be a part of the public school system in twenty years if it becomes "just another class." Can agricultural education classes compete with state-required courses if they are just another class? How long will school boards continue to fund elective agriculture classes perceived to be of narrow interest and expensive (equipment, space, lower enrollments, teacher salaries) compared to other classes? Why not simply require a semester of agriculture for all public school teachers and let them teach students what little agriculture they need as part of science, math, and history requirements? If agriculture becomes "just another class," its value to parents and school officials will certainly diminish.

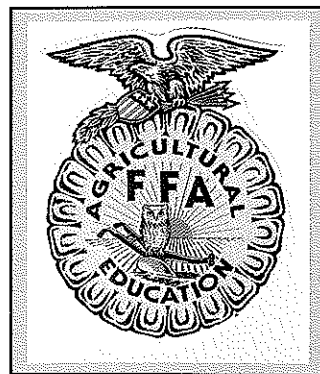
On the other hand, agricultural education can have a significant edge if it can be seen as not just another class, but rather a life changing experience for individuals. If it can remain a quality educational program

integrating SAE and FFA (however they may look in the future), it will continue to garner support from parents, the community, and industry.

Currently over forty percent of agriculture students are enrolled in agricultural education classes, not in agricultural education programs. As a profession, we just haven't been willing to admit it yet. These students have no SAE program and are not participating in FFA. They are merely taking a class like any other in school. Without FFA, however, they have diminished opportunity to develop their leadership skill and growth as individuals. Without SAE, they have diminished opportunity to apply classroom learning in a work-based context. The result is less than a quality educational experience. While there are certainly other youth organizations that can help young people develop leadership or grow personally, none of them are integrated into the agriculture classroom and SAE experience.

Of course, even part-time, unsupervised job experience can allow students to learn about work, and they may even be able to apply some of their classroom training to the job. However, if agriculture students are in some other youth organization and have random part-time jobs, are they receiving an integrated education or merely a series of unrelated experiences? If those experiences are not integral or delivered in context, do we really believe they will have the same impact on the minds and growth of young people? Will others believe so?

Implicit in the term "quality



educational program" is the understanding that it will result in individual student learning. Real learning means actual comprehension by the student. It implies an ability to use and apply information. A quality agricultural education program is more than a series of agriculture classes. Indeed, it is a series of experiences that allows individual learners to comprehend, internalize, and apply in the real world the information they have learned.

Creative teachers can find many different tools to manage the educational process in such a way as to insure individual learning. Two tools used extensively in agricultural education programs to add to the classroom and laboratory instruction are SAE and FFA.

The fact that SAE and FFA have been part of agricultural education for decades, however, does not ensure teachers will use them today or in the future. In fact, the use of these tools continues to evolve in response to new educational settings, situations, pedagogy, technologies, and a changing student population.

Whether or not FFA and SAE remain viable tools and integral parts of future agricultural education programs will be based on their usefulness to teachers and on teachers' perceptions of what constitutes a quality educational program. If teachers value "real learning" in the

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## Editor

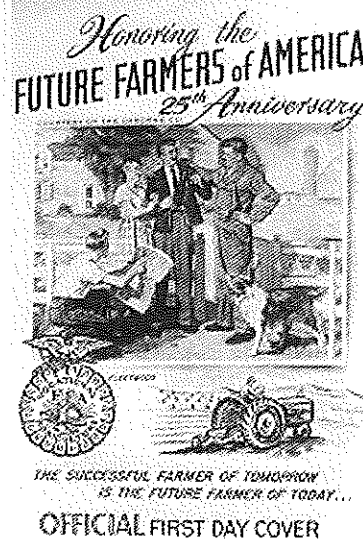
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# The FFA Organization:

## Needed Then & Needed Now

By Paul R. Vaughn, Lance Kieth, and Jacqui Lockaby

As we prepare to enter a new millennium and are thinking of "Reinventing Agricultural Education," it seems appropriate that we examine the value of the FFA organization. Is it still needed? Are students' needs today different than those of students in 1928? Should we consider alternatives to the FFA? A review of the situation in 1928 (then) and today (now) provides us with some interesting comparisons. Let's start by looking at the situation back in the 1920's.

### Why Was the FFA Started?

There were three major reasons why the FFA was started: (1) to save vocational agriculture in the public school systems, (2) to provide competitive activities that would help young people develop self-confidence and enhance their self-worth, and (3) to develop social skills and positive values in young people. To fully understand these reasons, we have to examine the situation that was taking place in the late 1920's when the FFA began. Our best source of information in this regard is Dr. Walter Newman.

Although Henry Groseclose is often called the "Father of the FFA," there is no doubt the primary founder of the organization was Newman. Dr. Newman was the state supervisor of vocational agriculture in Virginia in 1925 and was one of the four men who conceived the idea of the Future Farmers of Virginia (FFV) (Yeatts, 1954). Groseclose wrote many of the ceremonies and helped Newman write the constitution for both the FFA and the FFV. However, it was Newman who was the driving force behind the development of the state association, and later on, the national organization known as Future Farmers of America (Vaughn, Fraze, and Lockaby, 1998a).

### How FFA Saved Agricultural Education

Although there were a number of reasons why the FFA was started, there is reason to believe that had it not been established vocational agriculture would have disappeared from the public schools. In a 1976 interview, Dr. Newman described the events leading to the development of FFV (Vaughn, Fraze, and Lockaby,

1998 b). He noted a number of concerns about vocational agriculture in the late 1920's. Enrollment was not as high as it should have been, and many people were challenging the usefulness of the program. A number of educators had proposed it be dropped as a course offering in high schools. Newman further explained it was a period where people began to look down their noses at those who had remained in the country instead of migrating to the city. The economic outlook for agriculture was also harsh — the Great Depression was about to start. It was probably the bleakest period in the history of agricultural education.

According to Newman, vocational agriculture personnel not only warmly embraced the concept of a youth organization for vocational agriculture programs, they looked upon it as a Godsend! This was especially true of the national and regional staff of the Agricultural Education Service who had noted the popularity of the FFV and its wide acceptance by students, parents, and school administrators. They believed such an organization might help retain vocational agriculture in the schools. It was these staff members who contacted Newman and others for assistance in writing a constitution for a national organization for students of vocational agriculture.

Vocational agriculture, in Newman's opinion, would have never survived the Great Depression era if it had not been for the FFA and its subsequent offspring which began in the mid 1930's, the New Farmers of America (NFA).

### Societal Issues Helped Start the FFA

There was a major reason why the FFV (and the FFA) was so popular and why it was widely accepted by students, parents, and school administrators. It was filling a deep void in educational programs

being offered at that time. Individuals who were involved in agriculture were not highly respected, and students who studied agriculture were considered to be lacking in judgement, intelligence, and social skills. Students enrolled in vocational agriculture programs desperately needed something that would enhance their self-worth and provide them with recognition for their accomplishments. They needed someone to believe in them and to motivate them. They also needed help in developing social skills that would help them become an integral and important part of their communities.

Newman considered the students enrolled in vocational agriculture to be equal — or superior — to any group of students. However, he noted that they seemed to have a feeling of inferiority, especially when compared to their city cousins. He believed the FFA was needed to give these youths an opportunity for self-expression and the development of leadership skills. He wanted the students to develop confidence in their own ability and pride in the fact they were associated with agriculture (Yeatts, 1954).

### Competition Helped Provide Self-Worth and Recognition

Competition was the motivating force that set the stage for the development of a national organization for students of vocational agriculture. In fact, it was the reason the FFA started in Kansas City, Missouri, instead of Chicago. In 1925, Dr. C.H. Lane, Chief of the Agricultural Education Service, and members of his staff developed plans for national judging contests at the Chicago International Livestock Show, but the Chicago officials were not willing to go along with the plans. One year later, Dr. Lane approached the officials of the American Royal Livestock and Horse Show with a similar set of plans. He was wel-

comed enthusiastically, and the American Royal promised "every means at their disposal" to make the judging competition successful. This established the first National Congress of Vocational Agriculture Students, the forerunner of the National FFA Convention (Ross, 1953).

Early leaders of the FFA found competition motivated members to set goals, complete tasks, and strive for excellence. It provided much needed recognition and self-esteem to youngsters in agricultural education and enhanced their social skills through interaction with students from other schools and other states.

### Why We Need the FFA Today

If we look at the current situation regarding agricultural education and society, we will find remarkable similarities to the situation in 1928. We believe the FFA is needed today for the same reasons it was needed 70 years ago. Look at the current situation and see if you agree.

### The FFA Is Needed to Maintain Agricultural Education as a Viable Program in Today's Public School Systems

Although we often hear people say that agricultural education could survive without the FFA, the simple truth of the matter is that it cannot. A national study commissioned by the National FFA Organization in 1992 analyzed reasons why students enrolled in agricultural education (Seefeldt, 1992). It was found that students might enroll in agricultural education because of an interest in a particular subject such as horticulture, animal science, or agricultural mechanics. However, the MAJOR reason students enroll in agricultural education — by far — is because they want to join the FFA. Similar studies conducted on the state level have

produced the same finding — most students enroll in agricultural education because of the FFA.

Today, the majority of the American people know little about agriculture, and much of what they "know" is not accurate. There has been tremendous pressure placed on schools to increase math, science, and foreign language requirements. Because of this lack of knowledge about agriculture, and its importance, agricultural education faces the danger of being dropped from many schools and likely would be if it were not for the popularity of the FFA.

Today's FFA program is still extremely popular among students, parents, and administrators — for much the same reasons it was back in 1928.

### Competition Still Important

Recent studies by Kieth, Davis, and others have shown that competition in today's society provides tremendous benefits for not only youth organization members, but also their families (Kieth, 1997; Davis, 1998). Most of the recent studies on youth organization competition conclude that competition has been highly effective for over seven decades and offers rewards in a social atmosphere that allows participants to become "winners."

National FFA Advisor, Dr. Larry Case, and one of his staff members, Kathryn Whitaker, give an example of how competition in today's FFA helps students develop self-worth and self-confidence. In a recent article in the *Agricultural Education Magazine*, Case and Whitaker (1998) speak of how students come into the FFA seeking recognition. They note FFA members begin their FFA experiences by participating in a small public speaking event — recitation of the creed. The students springboard from

(continued on page 11)

## Should FFA Exist in the Twenty-first Century?

By MeeCee Baker

Should FFA exist in the twenty-first century? A resounding yes chorused from the authors of this edition's articles. Evidence from history, research, and personal experience are offered as grounds of support for the 70 year old student organization so many have grown to love. And love so much, that ag teacher after ag teacher still claims to bleed blue and gold. The mere mention of a future without the FFA rings of heresy. Who would dare even imagine the thought? Me, of course. So I have asked to deliver the theme editor's address from the Soapbox.

As we near the millennium, I can imagine the student based FFA Organization becoming unrecognizable if the time honored rules for FFA membership is allowed to erode. If such a corrosion of the FFA were to continue unchecked, maybe FFA should cease to exist in the twenty-first century. It may be more humane to bury a revered friend, then to let it limp on, a ghost of its' former self.

Membership situations unforeseen by the likes of Groseclose and Lane continue to challenge FFA leaders on chapter, state, and national levels. With each passing year, states are making more decisions on membership standards. Conceivably, 50 odd measures of membership could exist. Moreover, many states are

without the leadership structure of day's gone by, which helped assure adherence to the membership guidelines outlined in the constitution. (Historians will recall a much touted visit by the National FFA Advisor to the Attorney General of Massachusetts in order to discuss the potential prosecution of one Rufus Stimson, charged with enrolling women in the FFA by entering the women's names with the first initial - as in M. Baker.). Furthermore, continued disregard of membership-related ethics by some competition-crazed agricultural education professionals casts a darkened cloud on the FFA. A cursory review of a few of the aforementioned problems may shed light on the case at hand. So, let's play Monday Morning Quarterback! You make the call regarding membership. Remember that the future integrity of the FFA membership card may hang in the balance.

Membership today can vary from state to state. Only public school agricultural education students enjoy the benefits of FFA membership in New Jersey. However, cross the Delaware River and one can find Pennsylvania students, enrolled in both religious and private institutions, joining the FFA. Is it fair to afford membership to students in one state while denying those, in similar situations, membership in another? You make the call. Along the same line, should home schooled students desiring FFA participation be considered for membership? You make the

call. What if they are willing to return to the public school for a portion of the day to take agricultural education classes? You make the call. What if they are not? You make the call. Can home schooling groups charter FFA chapters? You make the call.

When I began teaching 17 years ago, Pennsylvania saw numerous individuals working in the state Department of Education on behalf of agricultural education and the FFA. This infrastructure allowed for plenty of fieldwork and the subsequent careful mentoring of this young teacher. Now, only one full time and one three quarter time positions are housed in agricultural education at the state department. Hardly the personnel needed to service our 300 agriculture teachers and 160 FFA Chapters! Other states now lie totally devoid of top level leadership. When debates involving membership are opened in these states, who should make the final verdict? You make the call. Who will enforce the decision? You make the call.

Since serving as past president of NVATA (now NAAE), I received many calls concerning the guidelines set forth for FFA membership. All of these calls questioned the membership status of individuals involved in FFA competitions. Although I explained that I had no authority to make the judgement and passed on names of state and national FFA officials, concerned organizers pressed me for decisions. Just last month, a local livestock fair board again solicited my

opinion concerning FFA membership. After a discussion of who should officially answer their concerns, I suggested FFA exhibitors show a FFA roster, SAE book, and transcript with agricultural education coursework.

Three examples of such situations follow.

1. Two youths, who had recently become too old for 4-H participation, entered livestock at a county fair under the FFA member provision. Both had graduated from schools without agricultural education. Neither youth opted to attend neighboring schools with programs. However, their names were included on a FFA roster from one of those schools. The agriculture teacher claimed a reciprocal agreement was in place when the individuals were of high school age. Should they be members? You make the call!

2. One woman, never a high school FFA member, joined the collegiate FFA. She raised a steer for the county fair. Should she be allowed to exhibit as a FFA member? You make the call!

3. A student indicated he would be participating with a FFA team at an industry sponsored state event. He wondered if my chapter would be attending as well (The answer was no since my husband prepared the questions for the activity.). When I congratulated him on his decision to take agricultural education classes, he told me he hadn't enrolled, but rather just joined the FFA. Should he represent the chapter? You make the call!

The answers to the above questions and many others involving FFA membership will shape the face of the organization in the twenty-first century. The main point of concern follows: If the "student" requirement of our student organization fades, the FFA could indeed become unrecognizable, and then the children of the twenty-first century won't reap the bountiful harvest of our beloved FFA.

What solutions can be offered to ward off the unthinkable, unfortunate, and avoidable demise? Perhaps the National FFA Organization (federally chartered) could send forth detailed

interpretations of the FFA constitution, which address an array of membership issues. Maybe official transcripts showing student agricultural education coursework could be sent along with FFA membership rosters. No doubt, many additional solutions could resolve these membership enigmas.

Should there be FFA in the twenty-first century? Of course, and the membership card should carry all the prestige and pride intended by the founding ancestors of this student based intra-curricular organization. Wait a minute! I am bleeding - blue and gold.

*MeeCee Baker is an agricultural education teacher at Greenwood High School, Millerstown, PA.*



## Letter To the Editor

Dr. John Hillison's article "Agricultural Education: How We Got Started" (January/February 1999) reveals some interesting points about the inception of ag. ed. in the U.S. Another interesting point which I would like to bring to the "table" is the ag. instructor position I currently hold. I began teaching at North Adams - Jerome High School in August 1998. Further research of the historical aspects of the program revealed that we (NA-J) were teaching a formal curriculum in agriscience to students in 1908. From what I understand, this was a pilot program developed by Michigan State University to begin agriscience at schools around the state of Michigan. MSU sent an agriscience professor abroad in 1908 to develop programs around the state and North Adams was the site of his first course.

*Michael Everett  
Agriscience Instructor  
North Adams - Jerome High School  
Michigan*



# IT HAS GONE WITHOUT SAYING TOO LONG ALREADY!

By Carl G. Igo and James D. White

It can go without saying FFA has had a glorious past—seventy years of unprecedented progress. It has been a beacon of hope, joy, and achievement. Every year since 1928, FFA has built on the successes of the past. Thousands of young men and women have benefited from this grand and noble experience.

The FFA was the first youth organization in the world led by young people under the direction of adult supervision. It is still the largest such organization. The organization has gained the support of numerous well-known personalities, government leaders, organizations, business firms, commodity groups, and individuals.

Many of us fondly remember our days as Greenhands. Oh the joy and pain of memorizing those words we still hold dear: "...that I can exert an influence in my home and community, which will stand solid for my part in that inspiring task."

The glorious past is certainly worth celebrating. However, opportunities await us to build on that golden past for the continued success of the organization. Do we shrink from the challenge? We all know the answer: No way! We build on the strong foundation developed by those who have gone before us.

The old adage, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it," applies to the FFA. As we are visioning to reinvent agriculture for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must be willing to admit there are aspects of our program we must change. There are, however, some wildly successful aspects we must commit to continuing.

If FFA is to remain an integral part of the Agricultural Education

program, we must develop the kinds of activities that build and enhance the skills required by the agriculture industry. Let's face it, some of our favorite organizational activities do little to prepare FFA members for employment, careers, or success in today's world, much less tomorrow's world. The 21<sup>st</sup> century FFA must complement the instructional program and SAE's of the future.

Individuals educated and prepared for production agriculture will always be essential. However, we are all aware a small percentage of the total agricultural workforce is employed in production. Increased employment opportunities in agricultural processing, marketing, distribution, regulation, technology, and research and development have been forecast by leading agriculture trend-watchers. The FFA of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be prepared to assist its members in gaining necessary knowledge and skills in those areas, as well as others yet to be identified.

There is already more emphasis toward agribusiness and service-oriented entrepreneurship SAE's. However, below the national level, the competition for the Star Agribusiness Award is not as fierce as for the Production Award, in most cases.

Policy makers and economists tell us the world is getting smaller. Our agriscience instructional program requirements mandate that students develop computer, communications, laboratory, and research skills for working in a global economy. The FFA is already a part of that inspiring task.

Imagine a career development event in International Trade! Sound far-fetched? No, it has been coming for sometime. FFA's Word Experience in Agriculture (WEA) once again allowed U.S. young people to gain a head start toward working in a global community. Young men and women gain the opportunity of a lifetime actually working in agriculture in another nation; doing, learning, earning, and living another culture, language, diet, and customs. That truly is experiencing opportunity and it will become even more important for the FFA members of the future!

FFA members are already living the future. They are in every level of government, industry, and education throughout our world. That reality in itself helps us focus on the increased importance of leadership education and skill development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century FFA. Opportunities for speaking and educating diverse audiences, planning agricultural programs, and developing international policy will be just as probable as opportunities for conducting meetings and leading discussions.

Decision-making, critical thinking, and life skill development will be a major focus of the FFA of 2000 and beyond. Positive work ethic, boardroom finesse, positive attitudes, and genuine concern for people will continue to be important aspects of the FFA program. The opportunity to practice those skills in the stable and protected environment of the FFA will always be a premier benefit of the organization.

We can be sure of another thing; future generations of FFA members will increasingly be urban, while the minority will be rural. Few will have a farm background, and even less will have family ties to production agriculture. The next generation of

FFA advisors will also reflect those same characteristics.

Agricultural educators must begin preparing future FFA leaders. We must also increase efforts to ground new teacher/advisors in the organization's rich agricultural heritage, while preparing them to address whatever challenges the future may hold.

In the process of rushing into the next century it is important to pause long enough to celebrate the achievements of this century. It is only in pausing we are able to realize the future is already here, we are living it now! The FFA motto, "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve" will be just as applicable in 2030 as it was when it was adopted in 1930. Our future will continue to be "born not of words, but of deeds!"

Will the FFA be needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? The answer assuredly is an unequivocal YES! What does the future of the organization hold? We must admit we don't really know. But, it will certainly be challenging, interesting, and exciting. It will take wisdom and vision. It will take the best minds available to work through the necessary processes to critically assess existing programs and to incorporate new ideas and programs.

So what is our part "in that inspiring task?" The answer lies in the fact that anyone could even question the need for FFA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. How can that be? Could it be that we as FFA supporters and agricultural educators have already let it go too long without saying? Often, the people in our communities never hear the FFA success stories. School administrators and boards of education don't hear about the importance of FFA to the community until they threaten to cut budgets — or programs.

Likewise, we don't contact our representatives or senators to thank them for their support. It's not a matter of whether you know them; do they know you—on a first name basis?

Instead of asking, "Why are we here?" the more relevant question may be "Where have we been?" It's not a question of whether the FFA is relevant for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but whether we are willing to stand up for the young people we have dedicated our professional lives to, and refuse to forfeit the fabulous opportunity the FFA afforded us. We must be willing to stand together and stand strong in letting everyone know that, yes; the FFA is absolutely necessary in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!

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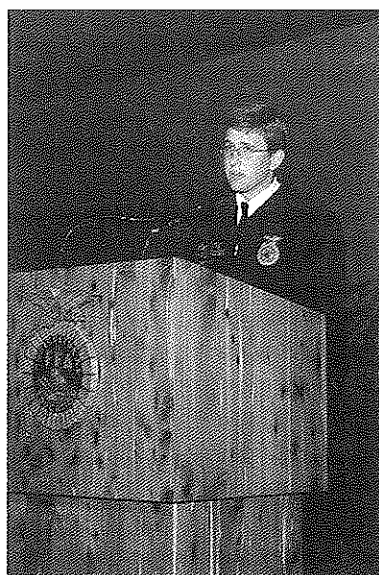


## FFA in Y2K=Success

By Bill Leib

I have been asked to discuss the question — Should there be FFA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? To me, this question is very simple to answer. The obvious choice is yes. As in anything, there will be those who would have to say no. So let's break it down. FFA is one of the largest student organizations in the world. With 449,000 members there has to be something worthwhile in it. If there would be no FFA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where would our leaders come from? FFA is the premier student organization that promotes growth and develops leadership qualities that all good citizens need.

I have been a member of the FFA for five years now and have learned many things. Any group or organization you are involved in has perks. The FFA benefits all, but the more you put into it, the more you will get out of it. Through active involvement within your chapter, you will meet new people and make new friends. With the year 2000 around the corner, it is imperative that the FFA become a big part of the new century. With today's technological advancements, agriculture is becoming less labor intensive. This means that you must have the ability to take a leadership role in modern society, and the FFA teaches that. In addition to what the FFA teaches you, you are able to participate in various activities that benefit you later in life.



These include speaking contests, interview contests, and leadership training seminars. If there is still any doubt that FFA should continue into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, ask any FFA member. I have been fortunate enough to be able to get a lot out of the FFA. In addition to the leadership skills I have gained, I have made many friendships that will last a lifetime. By participating in some of these contests, FFA members can win trips so that they can meet new people in other parts of the state, sometimes even the country.

I hope if you did not think that students need FFA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, now you have changed your mind! Just think what would happen if 449,000 young people did not have this common bond—the FFA.

*Bill Leib is a senior at Cumberland Valley High School and CDP Area FFA President. (no photo)*

### The FFA Organization

(continued from page 5)

that into "winning awards and participating in large scale events that produce an open mind and a union with peers." It is interesting to note that today's national FFA advisor sees many of the same benefits of FFA competition as did the first national FFA advisor, Dr. C. H. Lane, in 1928.

Both research and common sense tells us that competition is needed to stimulate interest in agricultural education. It was needed in 1928 and it is still needed as we prepare to enter the 21st century.

### Today's Societal Issues Are Similar to Those in 1928

The 1996 Carnegie Report speaks to the need in today's society for teaching values to our students (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1996). Although it was written nearly 70 years later, the report sounds as though Walter Newman wrote it when he was speaking of the needs of farm youth in 1928:

- ◆ All adolescents have basic human needs that must be met if they are to grow up into decent, caring, informed citizens.

- ◆ They must find ways to earn respect, establish a sense of belonging in a valued group, and build a sense of personal worth based on mastery of useful skills, including social skills.

- ◆ They must learn the peaceful management of conflict, the elements of ethical behavior, and how to use the social support systems available to them.

Lockaby, in her 1997 national study on teaching values in agricultural education, found that many of the societal issues identified by the Carnegie Report were being ad-

ressed in the agricultural education program. More importantly, she found that of the four components of agricultural education (Classroom Instruction, Laboratory Instruction, SAE, and FFA), the most appropriate component for teaching attitudes and values was the FFA.

The Carnegie Report clearly shows the need for teaching attitudes and values is just as important today as it was in 1928. Lockaby's study clearly indicates the FFA is the best method we have in agricultural education for teaching these needed attitudes and values.

### Summary

Solving societal problems, developing self-confidence and self-esteem, and keeping agricultural education as a viable program in the public school system. These were the reasons the FFA was started. It was needed in 1928. It will be needed in the year 2,000—and beyond.

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## Drivers Wanted for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

By Jay Morgan and Stacy Vincent

The Volkswagen Company says, "On the road of life, there are two types of people: drivers and passengers. DRIVERS WANTED." I believe that this should be agriculture education and each FFA chapter's mission for the 21st century. Since this is "not our father's FFA anymore," it is time that we place our chapters in gear and begin driving in the right direction for the future of our organization in the new millennium.

As I think of "Drivers Wanted," my mind often goes back eight years ago when I was sitting in my freshman agriculture class stumbling on a challenging creed. Each day our class was graded on how well we presented one paragraph. Throughout the week, I had butchered each paragraph by skipping sentences, stumbling on words, and not pausing after commas. However, my agriculture teacher, Mr. Randy Graham, noticed something that I had not. He saw potential in a boy to lead, speak, and strive for goals. Therefore, he took advantage of the opportunity and asked me to enter the Creed Speaking contest. After accepting the nomination, I hurried home and began reciting the creed over and over in my head. The next day I competed in the Chapter Creed contest, and for the first time in my life I was announced as a first place winner. Little did I know where this small act of encouragement was going to take me.

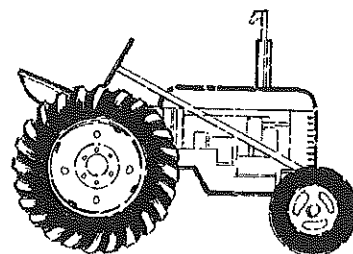
Throughout high school, I had

never planned on going to college. I had my mind set that farming was for me and there was no one that was going to stop me. However, through the FFA activities and the encouragement given by my advisors and family, my perception had changed. For once in my life I had a desire to pursue a college degree and for the first time, I knew that I could do it.

Today, four years after high school graduation, I am majoring in agricultural education and student teaching at Murray State University. To look at the success in my life jump started by that Creed Speaking contest, it is clear to see that the FFA is now and can continue to be a thriving organization in the 21st century.

All of this brings me to my title: "Drivers Wanted for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." We (America) need FFA more now than ever before in the past. You are never going wrong when you "jump start" a student. Furthermore, a high school and community are never going wrong when they promote organizations that give students the incentive to meet the challenges of today, as well as those of the future.

It upsets me to see a school system not actively promoting agricultural education in their school system or when they cannot say FFA without saying Future FARMERS of America. We have to prove critics wrong by developing all FFA chapters



into respected, successful, and seamless organizations that are going to prepare "Drivers."

With that in mind, let me propose a new paradigm. After visiting many high school FFA chapters as a state officer, I have come up with a small diagram that I use to explain to students what I believe a successful chapter in the 21st century should be composed of. I refer to it as the "FFA Wheel." The hub of the wheel is the key mechanism that fuels the organization; that being FFA and the advisors. Extending from the hub are four spokes, each connected to the tire. With three spokes, the wheel will roll uneven and with only one or two there is no success in the organization at all. Therefore, all four spokes are vital to the movement of the wheel and its success. I believe that the four essential spokes needed for a FFA chapter in the 21st century will encompass:

- √ Leadership success out of all the students.
- √ Expanded community service.
- √ Advantages through increased opportunities.
- √ Diversity within the organization.

With all four spokes supporting the wheel, I believe a FFA chapter would be on their way to having more Drivers than a Driver Education Program. Furthermore, if all of the

four spokes have equal representation, then how could an administrator, board member, or others not allow an officer team to go to a leadership conference? The four spokes, supporting the tire, roll along the road of life allowing the wheel to turn smoothly as each chapter and member passes into the 21st century. Through a leadership program, expanded community service, increased opportunities, and chapter diversity the potential for growth in the next century is endless. Now, if you are still not convinced with the four spokes then allow me to explain!

### Leadership

Can you imagine what your high school principal would say about leadership if he/she were to attend the National FFA Convention? I think they would return with a renewed sense of the need for leadership in every classroom. Students need to be influenced to run for an office in the FFA or in other organizations like Student Government. Give students the responsibility of planning an event or give them control of a program. With this encouragement, students will begin to develop professional, organizational, and public speaking skills. If a student has developed this, then you will not have to worry with small events or programs. Plus, you are also preparing the students for college and for the world of work.

In 1995, my high school's chapter reporter, Jason, worked with a committee he organized and they planned thoroughly a float for the county's parade that won first place. Now, nearly four years later, Jason manages and operates his own concrete company and is an outstanding member in the FFA alumni. Jason is a fine example of why we, as educators and future educators, should push for continued leadership and the FFA in the 21st century.

### Expanded Community Service

Recently, I read an article in *US News & World Report* of a FFA chapter in Daleville, Alabama. They are truly living up to the FFA mission statement which states: FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. This chapter lives off of community service (which is listed as one of the strategies on the inside cover of every Official FFA Manual). The Daleville FFA sponsors CPR training, fingerprints for elementary students, drug-prevention programs, and barbecues. As a result, the principal believes that the town, "is a little better, cleaner, nicer, and more friendly" because his school's FFA members are actively serving in the community (U.S. News 1989).

Community Service is an important spoke in the turning of the "FFA Wheel." When an organization does community activities, everyone feels that they belong, there is a sense of community and shared values, productivity was achieved through people, and the whole workforce feels close to the customer. (Lessen 1996).

Furthermore, I am constantly reminded of an old business adage, "If you don't take care of your customers, someone else will."

### Advantages Through Increased Opportunities

When I travel to schools teaching workshops to FFA members, I always tell them to "take advantage of the opportunities that are available." Zig Ziglar said that the saddest day in sports is to watch a baseball game and see someone strike out without even taking a swing. As agriculture educators, we must create synergy among FFA members by serving as a constant reminder of the opportunities that are available, as well as give them the encouragement to swing at

the good ones (Ziglar 1987). Additionally, we should support students who take these swings, as well as show them their place in "The Wheel."

### Diversity

As a future teacher, I desire a very diversified class and plan to market my chapter to a host of students who hold talent in various areas, not just cows, plows, and sows. One marketing strong point will be a FFA chapter that will allow students to set goals and then to achieve them by learning from each other. In the 21st century each chapter will need to continue to target not only rural students, but urban students as well. However, we always say that the FFA has something for everyone, therefore the FFA can make a positive difference on the "road of life" for all students.

This brings me to the *ultimate* question! Is the FFA needed in the 21st century? Is it? You decide? However, I personally think that the FFA will be what **we**, as advisors, members, alumni, and community leaders will make... no more or no less! Almost every organization or business wonders whether they will be needed in the new millennium, but I think that the real question for us is Do we want the FFA to be needed...not whether it should be or not!

Robert Kennedy once remarked that, "Some people look at things and say why? I look at things and say why not." So as people begin to question if we need the FFA in the 21st century... I simply say why not! (And then use my FFA Wheel to explain).

As agriculture teachers, FFA advisors, and role models, we cannot allow ourselves to rely on "our

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## Is FFA needed in the 21st Century? Students Soundoff

### Michigan

I have been an FFA member for the past five years. I don't even want to think about where I would be if it weren't for the FFA. I have learned countless skills that will help me throughout my life. Beyond those skills, I now have a greater appreciation and respect for the agriculture industry. I honestly feel that the two most important things the FFA has to offer are valuable life skills and a greater understanding of the agriculture industry. Our great nation depends upon agriculture. Our nation would not be as strong if the agricultural industry had not been working to feed and develop it. FFA helps students understand the importance of this. I have enjoyed my years in the FFA and would not trade the memories, experiences, or knowledge for anything. I would like to thank everyone who supports the FFA and makes a difference in the lives of so many students.

Liz Confer  
FFA State Reporter

### Arkansas

I believe FFA is needed in the 21st century. My chapter is trying to join FFA with science classes and create an agriscience class at our high school. FFA is not just about farming, there is so much more to it. I have learned skills, parliamentary procedure, and so much about floriculture through my years in FFA.

Elizabeth Nelson  
Palmer FFA

### Texas

I strongly believe the FFA is a needed organization. Not only does a member learn about agricultural skills that could be used later in life, they also learn about leadership, responsibility, and above all, friendship. From a personal aspect, the FFA has helped me to overcome many things that would have been stumbling blocks towards success. I have overcome incredible shyness, difficulty speaking to a crowd, and so much more. Also, many friendships have been created due to the FFA. Getting rid of the FFA would mean losing a valuable resource in teaching about these aspects of life.

Amy Smith  
Cedar Hill FFA

### Montana

This isn't even questionable! FFA is one of the best - if not THE best youth organization in the nation. FFA has provided so many opportunities for me and thousands of other kids across the nation. As times change, we must change, and we need organizations that will help us make the best future possible. If FFA isn't necessary for the development of our future generations and the perpetuation of our agricultural heritage, then it is a sad day indeed for the future of America.

Morgan Majors  
FFA Vice President

### West Virginia

I have been a FFA member for 5 years and I would like to tell you why FFA is important to so many of today's youth. Many members stumble into "FFA class" so to speak and they finally decide to get involved in an activity. This is their gateway to the future. I have personally seen so many students lives turned around by simply being a part of this organization. Members form a type of family away from home and for some students in today's busy world that is their only family. We support each other, we encourage each other to try that public speaking contest or to run for an office, we recognize each persons own unique personality and individuality. You ask if FFA is needed in the 21st century and every single FFA member will tell you YES! Without a doubt, we realize the importance of our organization. Just like our motto "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve," we learn, we teach, we help the community not only on a first hand basis but also by helping ourselves become productive citizens. We live to serve the FFA and ourselves by being involved. I have been deeply moved by stories about fellow FFA members. We are a unique group who will work hard to achieve our goals. We earn every little thing that we receive. I know this is an emotional response but my county cut back our high school Agricultural program so I know there are people who do not see the need for FFA.

Shannon Boswell

### Florida

Yes, I believe it is needed, I think FFA is a good experience for all youth, and looking at some of my generation, a "good experience" is what we need more than anything! Not only is it a journey back to our past in agriculture, but it also gives leadership and self-confidence for the future, without those, we are useless.

Tiffany Hudson  
Ponce de Leon Jr. Chapter

### New Mexico

In my opinion, there's no question about FFA being needed in the 21st century. It is the largest youth organization in the world and, in my opinion, the greatest. It's impact on society and its members will be forever needed. FFA has always played such an important role in developing tomorrow's leaders and we must continue the tradition of greatness. It has not only given its members the opportunity to learn skills from public speaking to managing a farm or ranch that will benefit them for a lifetime, but it has given its students something to believe in. It is this organization that has instilled a set of values, or code of ethics, in America's youth that the nation is in such desperate need of. The United States needs future leaders with these skills and values to lead the nation into the 21st century — and what better place to find them than the FFA! Worried about the future?? If FFA is anywhere in it, we're in good hands!

Britt Carter

### Indiana

FFA is more than a national agricultural organization. Now being in college, I entered high school without a clue as to what I wanted to go to college for. I took an agriculture class my freshman year, and little did I know what I was getting myself into. I didn't live on a farm and knew very little about our country's agricultural background and economics. I was clueless . . . I joined FFA thinking maybe it wasn't for me, but soon I realized that what I gained from the FFA opened up a whole new spectrum of life for me. I learned communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills that will benefit me for the rest of my life. The once shy girl I used to be was no longer there. I was inspired by my high school ag teacher to become a chapter officer, to run for district officer, to get involved with CDEs and to do the best I could. I went to state crops and livestock CDE multiple times, and received my Hoosier Degree this past year. The agricultural experience I received through the FFA and ag classes is priceless. The memories that I shared and the friends I made could never be replaced. Being out of high school now, I miss my FFA days, but I look back to the memories that I do have. I am now attending Purdue University majoring in animal science with a minor in agricultural education. So looking towards the future, I hope FFA sticks around for a very long time because its an experience that NO ONE should miss.

Khara Memmer  
Hamilton Southeastern FFA

### Washington

I am currently an active member of the FFA. Personally, I can tell you it is needed.

Last year I didn't want anything to do with the FFA because it was not cool in my school. But I went to the State Convention. That totally turned me around. Now I participate as much as I can. Last night I was in our local Leadership Contest. I gave a prepared speech and won 1st place. I participated in the Extemporaneous Speaking contest and I won 2nd place. I was on a Parliamentary Procedure team and we won 1st place. Last year, I wouldn't get up and speak in front of anyone.

My point is this, FFA has helped to make me more confident in myself and my abilities to overcome the challenges I am faced with. It's completely changed my life. And I know FFA has helped many others like me.

FFA is needed in the 21st century more than ever. FFA is our future in agriculture. And if you don't have agriculture, you don't have anything.

Theresa Paul  
Colton High FFA



## FFA in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

By Nancy J. Trivette and Randy Trivette

Should FFA exist in the 21st century? After asking dozens of people this simple question, the resounding answer was "Of course, why not?" For most of us, it is easy to agree with those responses. Because, after all, Agricultural Education, with FFA as an inseparable partner, has provided leadership, inspiration, experience, and opportunity to thousands of young men and women for decades. Since 1928, FFA has been an outstanding tool to help teachers teach and students learn. So, if an organization has meant so much to so many for so long, how could we even think of saying that FFA should NOT exist? The question, however, deserves a deeper consideration than that. Perhaps the real question is "What will FFA offer the next generation of students that will make it worth keeping?"

First of all, let's establish a level field. Since the 21st century is just around the corner, let's set the year 2020 as the bookmark. This is a convenient year, since the national initiative, Reinventing Agricultural Education for the Year 2020, unveiled the national goals and objectives in December. The question becomes "Should FFA exist in the year 2020?" Based on our observations in New Jersey and nationwide, it appears that most people who are familiar with FFA believe it should exist in 2020.

So, let's assume that FFA should exist in 2020. Will it be the same FFA in 2020 that we know today? Probably not, just as today's FFA is different than it was twenty years ago. If it is the same in 2020, it will have failed to meet the needs and challenges of the first two decades of

***A proactive approach is necessary if FFA is to evolve and meet the needs of future students and the future leaders of our country!***

the new century. Will it serve the same types of students in the same types of programs, in the same types of courses? Unlikely. The demographic shifts of the past twenty years will most likely continue, and today's minorities will be tomorrow's majorities. As the demographics shift, the need to update FFA will be strong. If it remains stagnant, it will die. What will it be like? That's what the current generation of students will decide, and decide they must. A proactive approach is necessary if FFA is to evolve and meet the needs of future students and the future leaders of our country.

Based on New Jersey's 14 local consortia meetings and the statewide Reinvent Ag Ed for 2020 meetings, stakeholders throughout New Jersey (and probably nationwide), said (among other things):

- Agricultural Education/FFA must change to meet the needs of a changing agricultural industry.
- Agricultural Education/FFA must be offered to a broader based student population.
- Agricultural awareness must reach every student and adult.

As we move into the 21st century, we must be prepared to meet at least those three challenges. We must offer Agricultural Education in a variety of facilities, classrooms, methods, and technologies to a variety of ages. What will be the impact of the movement toward Career Majors (or Career Themes,

or Career Pathways)? Maybe there should be a "rethinking" about what constitutes a course or program in agriculture. Maybe there should be a "rethinking" about what constitutes a student of agriculture. Suppose, for example, a student chooses to pursue an agricultural career major and selects courses in high school that will prepare her/him for employment or further education. Some of those courses may not be in agriculture. The student may take a basic course in agriculture in the ninth grade, take an advanced science course in the tenth grade, another agriculture course in the eleventh grade, and then take a research or college prep class in the senior year. During all four years, the student is preparing for a career in agriculture. Are we prepared to officially offer continuous full FFA membership to students who may not be enrolled in all available years of Agricultural Education, if their career goal is in the industry of agriculture? How will the national FFA constitution be interpreted or changed? Should we even offer this premier leadership organization opportunity to these students who do not want to (or cannot) spend two to five continuous years in our courses?

Many teachers have students who will take one or two courses in agriculture and then move on to other studies. Most of us know former students who thought they wanted nothing to do with agriculture, but then find a career in an agriculturally

related field. Are we serving the needs of students who are not taking an Agricultural Education course each year in high school? If we don't offer continuous membership, are we denying opportunities to a student who wants to be a Weed Scientist and takes college prep Biology, Chemistry, and Physics and only one year of Agricultural Education in high school. Does this student who may eventually obtain a doctorate have the same opportunities in FFA as the student who wants to be a landscaper, and spends three or more years enrolled in Agricultural Education? While both students are preparing for a career in agriculture, obtaining degrees and proficiency awards in FFA may be more difficult for the college prep student. And you can forget a state or national leadership office. The future weed scientist was not a member of FFA for twenty-four months, or thirty-six months, or whatever. A lot of people (maybe even you) would say, "The student should have planned better," or "Well, that's one more student that would have achieved great things in FFA if we had gotten them sooner or had them longer." Maybe in the 21st century, we will recognize there is more than one way to deliver education in agriculture. Serving only the students we have traditionally served will inhibit our ability to grow as an instructional program, and as a student organization.

More and more of our students come to our classrooms without the "traditional" agriculture background. What was once the exception has become the norm. We sometimes hear teachers say that fewer and fewer students are able to develop their Supervised Agricultural Experience programs to the level of a state or national award. It almost seems that if a student does not have a production-based background, a proficiency award isn't even a

possibility. Fortunately, FFA has recognized some of these changes in students. There are proficiencies available that do not require an agricultural production SAE. It is time that more teachers recognize the variety of Supervised Agricultural Experiences, and the variety of student awards that are possible.

It is widely accepted that FFA provides skills necessary in the workforce. In response to the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) report, National FFA published a document outlining how FFA activities help students accomplish the SCANS competencies. Those skills and the measurement of those skills must continue to be updated if they are to remain useful.

Therefore, why not expand our thinking and provide FFA to ALL students preparing to enter the vast industry of agriculture. It should include students in charter schools, private schools, home schools, and even the adult students who attend regular day classes with high school students in an effort to gain new employment skills or prepare to enter post secondary education. How education is delivered to students is about to undergo a radical change. We have already seen it start. An agriculture teacher in a classroom in North Dakota provides distance learning instruction to students in four other schools, many miles apart. The students in the distant schools are all part of one instructional program and one FFA chapter. Other states have similar programs. To accommodate the changes in instructional delivery, FFA may be forced to address changes in Public Law 81-740 so that FFA can serve a broader band of students.

In the 21st century, students will have the option of taking courses in a manner of their choosing. The New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)

has already developed "wearable" computerized instructional packages that will deliver the desired instruction or information on demand, without a "live" teacher. The goal is to make educational programming available on demand - any time, any place, to anybody. How can students who receive their Agricultural Education courses "on demand" be offered FFA membership, with its attendant rewards and responsibilities? Must students be enrolled in "traditional" classes or courses to be eligible for FFA membership?

In the next century, FFA membership could also include students in lower grades. The delegates at the 1998 National FFA Convention refused to pass a constitutional change that would allow younger students to join FFA. Many delegates extolled the virtues and positive benefits of FFA membership, then urged their fellow delegates to vote against allowing membership for younger students. In the future, students will begin to select their career interests in earlier grades. Think of the services FFA could offer to help your students develop an awareness and appreciation for agriculture and to consider agriculture as a career choice.

Two resounding themes emerged in the Reinvent Ag Ed 2020 project. One included providing Agricultural Education for all students. The second obvious theme was that FFA provides students with a type of education that is premier. It is one that many other areas of education cannot duplicate. We have an outstanding teaching and learning tool in FFA. It makes sense to those of us who know the importance of a strong three component program - classroom instruction, SAE, and FFA - that it continue in the 21st century and that it

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# Should There Be FFA in the Next Century

By Bryan Daniel

We have seen recently in the popular media several lists of the "Top 100" books, movies, etc., of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As we gear up for the new millennium, I suspect we will see many more lists of items both past and future.

I suppose if someone asked me to create a list of the best inventions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, I would include some of the same items many others would: penicillin, television, computers, high-yield farming, and air transportation. My list would probably also include one invention the others might not — the FFA.

The FFA may be the most important entry on my list. This program is responsible for much of my personal and career success, and I'm sure I'm not alone in that assessment. However, as we approach the 21<sup>st</sup> century, I have some concerns that my beloved FFA may have its own unique "Y2K" bug. Just as the world's computers may lag a bit at the beginning of the Year 2000, the FFA may experience a slow start on addressing the next century's agricultural opportunities.

Three areas concern me most: (1) School populations are increasing — but FFA enrollments remain virtually static; (2) We are experiencing a teacher shortage in this country; and (3) The pace of change in agriculture continues to increase.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, public and private school enrollment will rise to 52.7 million in 1998. Grades 9-12 will see the greatest number of additional students during the next decade and public high school enrollment will increase by 11 percent. Despite the

trend toward more high school students, FFA membership has remained fairly constant for the past few years.

We can all list any number of reasons for this membership trend, but it still remains a reality. Regardless of the number of students in school, all of them face increasing demands for their time and attention. The "hard sell" may be convincing students to enroll in agriculture to get the benefits of FFA, but it may be equally as difficult to encourage students to join the FFA to keep them enrolled in agriculture. It takes all three components of a successful program for students to receive all the benefits — classroom and laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience, and the FFA.

Couple that fact with the teacher shortage we are currently experiencing in agricultural education, and one could paint a gloomy picture. Much of the anecdotal evidence says the challenge of putting additional teachers in the classroom is growing more difficult in light of the many opportunities available in the agriculture sector. About 40 percent of the college and university students studying agricultural education take jobs outside of teaching every year. Agricultural education must grow the teaching capacity of the profession to meet the challenge of the new influx of students we hope to create.

Each year, it becomes a little more challenging for agricultural educators to deliver cutting-edge instruction and experiential learning opportunities for students. The challenge lies in the speed with which modern agriculturists continue to add new knowledge and inventions to agricultural production and processing. Knowledge in this country continues to double every 14-18 months and that interval continues to shorten. To keep up with the pace of change, agricultural educators must

use a variety of instructional delivery methods. This generation of students receives information from various sources. We must capitalize on this trend to capture these students' attention or run the risk of turning them away from what we have to offer.

Agricultural education and the FFA have made many changes over the years to improve the program for future generations of students. Sometimes when people change a program with a lot of tradition, they only change the cover of the book, without ever attempting to change the text. In the case of agricultural education and the FFA, the exact opposite took place: the words written within the book were changed without so much as changing the jacket on the cover.

The new edition reads very different, but only those new to the saga truly see that. Many still see the cover as the same national blue and corn gold that it was when they learned E.M. Tiffany's words at age 14. For many people, the time of their high school experience stands frozen just as it existed graduation night. However, the reality is — the cars, classes, and camaraderie of high school are soon replaced with the kids, careers, and commutes of the real world. And our focus changes to meet these new challenges. Unless you are one of the few who make their life's work in education you often don't have the opportunity to see what today's high school agricultural education program is like, so you revert to memories of past experiences. You think of it, as being exactly as it was when you left it.

That is not to say that everyone outside of agricultural education remains unenlightened. At least 20 percent of the nation understands the importance of agriculture and agricultural education to this country. They work there everyday. There are

others who know and understand, but many do not. With a little more education, who really knows where future alliances and experiences lie? For FFA to exist in the next century, we must work to address the challenges to meet our needs, or someone will certainly do it for us. The world continues to change so fast that only the most vocal or the most broken programs receive the public's attention. In agricultural education, we're neither broken nor particularly vocal — but we have an opportunity to reach out to a diversity of students, teachers, partners, and others to ensure a bright future for the FFA. The choice is ours.

*Bryan Daniel is a professional staff member for the Committee on Agriculture, U.S. House of Representatives (no photo).*

## Will FFA be a part of Agricultural Education in 20 Years?

(continued from page 2)

students, then tools beyond the classroom and laboratory will be needed. Alternatively, if teaching becomes simply a matter of sharing information with learners, filling up the sixty-minute block of time scheduled for class or keeping kids under control, then little else may be needed.

One thing is clear: FFA and SAE will be part of an integrated education program if that program's goal is to deliver high quality "real learning" to students. The form of FFA and SAE may change dramatically, but the substance and the impact will remain.

How, then, can we ensure that agricultural education programs of tomorrow will deliver complete educational experiences for all students? Any efforts must begin with a reaffirmation of our commitment to the integrated model of

classroom instruction, SAE, and FFA. This must be instilled effectively in upcoming teachers through our university teacher education programs. It must be bolstered through the inservice training and resources available through the Local Program Success joint initiative of The Council for Agricultural Education and the U.S. Department of Education. Most importantly, it can only be achieved when local teachers make the decision to extend SAE and FFA to each and every student enrolled in agriculture.

The authors believe that if some form of SAE and FFA are not part of agricultural education in the next twenty years, then the demise of agricultural education instruction in public schools is inevitable. The ultimate question, then, is not whether FFA will be a part of agricultural education in the future, but can we afford for it not to be?

*Bill Stagg is team leader for the Communication Resources Team of the National FFA Organization at the National FFA Center in Indianapolis, IN. (no photo)*

*Bernie Staller is chief operating officer of the National FFA Organization and the National FFA Foundation at the National FFA Center in Indianapolis, IN.*



## Drivers Wanted for the 21st Century...

(continued from page 13)

father's FFA." However, we should use it as a foundation and look into the future with an iron fist ready to create and market the future of agriculture and the FFA for all.

Conclusively, let's create a positive difference by getting involved in our community, enrolling diverse students, encouraging leadership, and helping our students swing at the opportunities that are flying by. Additionally, we as agriculture educators and FFA advisors must be DRIVERS and not passengers, therefore let's all work together and put our "FFA Wheels" in gear for the 21st century.

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*Stacy Vincent is a former state FFA officer and is a graduate student in Agricultural Education at Murray State University, Murray, KY where he is currently student teaching. (no photo)*

## Past vs. Future: Is There a Pattern?

By Tiffany M. Roberson

It is said, "history repeats itself." What if history did repeat itself with no changes, no improvements and no advancements? Where would the FFA be?

First we should look to where we have been. The FFA has a proud heritage of 33 young farm boys, state supervisors, and agricultural educators who gathered in Kansas City, Missouri for the first National FFA Convention in 1928. The official name of their new organization was the "Future Farmers of America." It was a traditional organization of white farm boys enrolled in vocational agriculture courses who paid 10-cent dues for membership rights.

Within two years of the first convention, Carlton Patton of Arkansas was selected as the first Star Farmer of America. Carlton's degree reflected young man involved in traditional agriculture. The FFA Creed and National FFA colors were established by the membership. The five paragraphs that created the FFA Creed began with these seven words, "I believe in the future of farming..."

Take this history and see if it would work in today's times. Remember that we are looking at history that has no changes, improvements, or advancements; it just repeats itself.

The FFA would still be an organization enriched in traditional agriculture, but it would lack diversity and expansion. Thank goodness history repeats itself with both improvements and sometimes disappointments.

Due to the foresight of the initial leaders, the FFA Organization has evolved in many diverse areas. The first three years of the FFA history provided a sturdy foundation for the

internal and external changes, improvements, and advancements that contributed to the organization's 70 years of existence.

In 1939, the FFA purchased 28.5 acres of land. This land was a part of the George Washington estate and was turned into the National FFA Center. The center served as a source of resource materials and a central hub for FFA activities. During that same year, the first International exchange program began. FFA members finally had the opportunity to travel to other countries to learn about agriculture. Students could share information about practices performed in their hometowns with their foreign host families. These families also shared their cultural events and beliefs with the students.

A merger occurred between the New Farmers of America, the organization for black agricultural students, and the FFA. The merger took place in 1965 and allowed for the ethnic expansion of the organization and an increase in total membership. The membership continued to increase in 1969 when girls were permitted to become members. Females and males of all races and backgrounds were given the opportunity to develop leadership, citizenship, cooperation, communication, and thriftiness skills through FFA events.

The next three decades provided improvements to already established events and direction for newly developed programs to fulfill the demands of the every evolving membership. In 1970, the Building our American Communities was developed to assist members in creating and completing community

programs. These programs developed the students' citizenship skills. To compliment this program, National FFA Organization generated materials for the chapter to conduct a mentoring program based on partnering FFA members with younger students to build trust and self-esteem by working together. This program was entitled Partners in Active Learning Support (PALS).

In the area of leadership skills, the 1970s, 80s, and 90s provided chapters with the materials in the areas of Food for America, student handbook, and scholarship applications. The Food for America program assisted members in developing their public speaking, planning, and presenting skills to teach children the importance of agriculture and where food comes from. The first FFA Student Handbook was available in 1976. The handbook provided members with information about the FFA and membership responsibilities, provided examples of proper parliamentary procedure, meeting agendas, and minutes. Members could also determine what events were available for the further development of their skills.

In 1983 the scholarship program was established. By the early 1990's there were more than a million dollars worth of scholarships available to members each year.

Another significant piece of history was the changing of the organization's name in 1988. The Organization known as the "Future Farmers of America" acquired the new title of the "National FFA Organization." This name change was chosen to reflect the changing face of the FFA. The new name

represented both traditional and non-traditional agricultural education students, and reflected the technology advancements within the organization, such as computer networks and international travel.

Within the past five years, the FFA Organization has been on the move. The National FFA Center moved to Indianapolis, Indiana during 1998. In conjunction with the FFA's ideals of youth development, members throughout the country were encouraged to submit a landscape proposal to the new site. Several of the members' ideas were selected and incorporated in the overall plan. This shows that students are developing skills for the agricultural industry. The National FFA Convention, which has had a history of 70 years in Kansas City, Missouri, will hold its 71st convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

Peter L. Drucker states, "The future will not just happen if one wishes hard enough. It requires decision-now. It imposes risk-now. It requires action-now. It demands allocation of resources, and above all, of human resources-now. It requires work-now."

And so the challenge is handed down to current agricultural educators, FFA members, and supporters to retain the history and heritage of the prestigious National FFA Organization, while expanding and developing new avenues of opportunities. This allows history to not just repeat itself, but will allow the FFA to expand and evolve for the century to come.

The National Council for Agricultural Education, along with the W. B. Kellogg Foundation has provided agricultural education stakeholders with a process to develop a plan to ensure the existence of the organization in the next century. This process is entitled "Reinventing Agricultural Education for the year

2020." The process allows local, state, and national leaders to develop a futuristic plan of where and how they would like agricultural education to be in the next century.

Stakeholders throughout the country have been conducting workshops and conferences since 1996. Because the National FFA Organization is one of the three components of agricultural education, stakeholders have been working on a plan for the future of the organization. By increasing the amount of activities and events available to students to travel across seas and to compete in career development events that are based on agriscience and environmental issues, today's leaders hope to challenge students to incorporate all skills learned throughout their years of public education. This helps foster the belief that every person should incorporate agriculture education in their early childhood and throughout their life.

However, these are only steps toward the next century for the FFA Organization. As history has shown, the organization has embarked on years of internal and external changes and improvements. I believe that the dream of those 33 farm boys will still provide the foundation of the organization, but its image will be very unique.

I believe that the FFA will be comprised of an International membership. The members will generate an International name that reflects all aspects of the agricultural industry along with the diversity of the members. The members will still hold true the values of a premier youth organization, originally known as the "Future Farmers of America." Students will have the opportunity to do outer space travel and conduct environmental and food science experiments on the space station.

Yes, history does repeat itself, but it is our obligation and purpose as

responsible individuals to ensure that history repeats itself in positive, outreaching ways so that we can guarantee the organization's existence for the next century.

Tiffany M. Roberson is a Graduate Student at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA.



### FFA in the 21st Century

(continued from page 17)

be expanded to meet the needs of more students from a variety of backgrounds. FFA should serve more students, communities, and programs to provide premier leadership, personal growth, and career success and, consequently, better employees for our industry and citizens for our society.

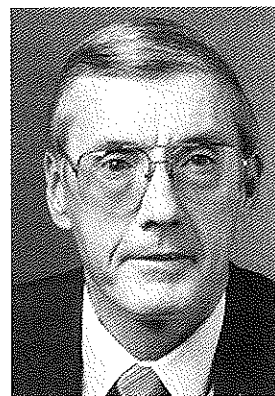
Should FFA exist in the 21st century? There will be many things to address. If FFA continues to evolve to meet the needs of students of all races, background, ages, and career goals in a flexible, dynamic system; then the answer is a resounding, "YES!" If FFA decides that its role is only for those who are enrolled in specific classes or preparing only for certain careers, and then perhaps the answer is not so positive.

Nancy J. Trivette is an Education Program Development Specialist/State FFA Advisor at New Jersey Department of Agriculture.(no photo)

Randy Trivette is an Education Program Development Specialist at New Jersey Department of Education. (no photo)



## Bob Terry: A Leader in Agricultural Education



By Jim Key

Bob Terry has taught leadership, demonstrated leadership, but most of all has been recognized as an outstanding leader in Agricultural Education in Oklahoma and in the nation. He has taught a leadership course at the graduate level at Oklahoma State University for over 25 years. He has demonstrated leadership in Agricultural Education at the local, state, and national levels for over 40 years. He has been Director of the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program and Regents Professor for the past four years. Previous to that he was Head of the Agricultural Education Department at Oklahoma State University for 18 years.

Bob graduated from high school in Mountain View, Oklahoma in 1955. Following graduation from Oklahoma State University with a B.S. Degree in Agricultural Education in 1958, he began teaching Vocational Agriculture at Perry and Sumner, Oklahoma concurrently. He taught at Perry in the mornings and Sumner in the afternoons for four years, during which time he completed the Master's Degree in Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University. In 1963 he moved to Lone Wolf, Oklahoma, where he taught Vocational Agriculture for another four

years. From there his leadership was recognized by the awarding of the John Deere Foundation Research Fellow position with the National Center for Vocational-Technical Education at the Ohio State University. After graduating from Ohio State with the Ph.D. in 1969, he started as an Assistant Professor at Oklahoma State University, where he has remained in various positions to the present time.

Bob Terry has always been a facilitator type leader rather than an up-front, take-charge type. His quiet leadership by example and behind-the-scenes approach has been very effective in Agricultural Education over the years. For example, it produced many Junior Master Farmers (now the State FFA Degree) and three American Farmers (now the American FFA Degree) during his high school teaching years. It also produced at least three students who went on into Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University and one who is the superintendent of schools for a major school system in Texas. The effectiveness of his approach to leadership is also supported by the over 3000 undergraduate Agricultural Education students he has advised in the going-on 30 years at Oklahoma State University, most of which went on to become Agricultural Education teachers. The thoroughness of his leadership approach is borne out by the fact that he personally did the graduation checks on all of the students graduating from the Department.

His leadership was further recognized through many awards (too numerous to mention all) at the local, state, and national levels. Alpha Zeta (Honorary Agriculture Fraternity)

recognized him as Outstanding Professor for his outstanding work with the Collegiate FFA, exemplary teaching and exceptional advising. He was awarded the Honorary State and National Farmer and the VIP Citations by the Oklahoma and the National FFA Associations. The Distinguished Service Citation and the Gold Teacher of Teacher Awards were presented to him by the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association. In addition to the Distinguished Service Citation from the Southern Region Agricultural Education Conference, he also received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Council for Agricultural Education and selected to deliver the Distinguished Lecture at the annual meeting of the American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE).

At the national level his leadership has been most recognized through his service on the National FFA Alumni Council, as Vice President of the American Association of Teachers of Agriculture (AATEA, now AAAE) from the Southern Region, and as AATEA representative on the National Council for Agriculture Education. He was on the board of the National Council during a particularly trying period in its development and his cool leadership helped it weather the storms that beset it during this period.

Noteworthy of most great leaders are their families and their faith. Bob's wife Barbara is very service oriented, and is retired from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, where she did an outstanding job of serving those citizens in need. It is most notable that his children, Rob and Val have followed his footsteps into the Department of

Agricultural Education, Communication, and 4-H Youth Development at Oklahoma State University and are emulating his leadership. Rob is an Associate Professor and has established his leadership in technology and evaluation. Val has established hers through activities as State 4-H Events Coordinator.

Bob has exhibited his faith in his quiet way through his actions and through his service to his church. For example he served as chair of the administrative board through troubled times of pastor change and other problems.

True leadership earns its spurs through the day-to-day actions and relationships among peers. Bob Terry, Jack Pritchard, and I all started at Oklahoma State University together in the Agricultural Education Department under the leadership of Dr. Bob Price in 1969. We worked together side-by-side until 1975 when Bob Terry took over as Department Head. Since then we have added other faculty members to the Department, and in 1993 merged with Agricultural Communications and 4-H Youth Development. Bob continued as Program Leader for Agricultural Education and added the role of Director of the Oklahoma Agriculture Leadership Program. Through all of this, to quote Bob, "We may have had our disagreements, but we worked them out agreeably." I personally have always enjoyed and admired Bob Terry's leadership.

To me he really fits the mold of the true leader in Agricultural Education!

*Jim Key is a retired professor in the Department of Agricultural Education, Communication and 4-H Youth Development, Oklahoma State University*

### Joe Scatterscrew

(continued from back cover)

Mr. Jackson got up shaking his head. Just as he was about to speak the table saw came on with a loud whir. Two greenhands catapulted off the saw as a group of seniors doubled over in laughter. Joe scolded, "If you smart-alecks don't want a detail you'd better simmer down and pay attention!" Joe waved his paddle, "Go ahead Mr. Jackson."

Mr. Jackson started speaking about the importance of keeping good records. Hollis Holt and Buckeye Dugger grinned at each other. They had already convinced Mr. Scatterscrew the best way to keep records was to fill out all of the records at the end of the project. That way you would have all of your bills and receipts available.

The banker explained the procedure to go through in borrowing money. Mr. Jackson was trying to explain what collateral was to the students. He mentioned that often livestock could be used as collateral. Lonnie Sams held up his hand and wanted to know if he could use his coon dog for collateral for a loan. Mr. Jackson rolled his eyes and looked at the ceiling. Mr. Jackson spoke for several more minutes then sat down shaking his head.

Clem stood up, "We have about five minutes before activity period is over, is there any business we should conduct?"

PeeWee Page stood up and said, "We ain't had no hayride in a year. I think it would be a good idea to have a hayride, therefore, I make a motion we have a hayride."

Wilma Scrabanek seconded the motion. "Dill Pickle" Beamer jumped to his feet, "Mr. President, I rise to point of order. 'Ain't ain't good English." The president agreed and

told PeeWee he should practice his English. The president then proceeded to call for a vote on the motion and it passed.

The bell rang to end the period. All of the students stormed out. As they rushed out of the room, Joe scratched his head and wondered what to do with all of the chairs from the lunchroom as they would be needed for lunch. Maybe he could get some kids out of study hall or out of P.E. to help carry them back.

As Joe was walking to the study hall, he began to muse over the meeting. "You know," he said, "that was a pretty good meeting, them kids learned a lot about credit and banking. They did pretty good on their parts and they got a chance to practice parliamentary procedure. I guess this FFA is really good for them. It really does help develop leadership. You know, I might have another FFA meeting come next spring."

### Go To The Head of The Class

(continued from page 26)

Answers:

1. B. Three of the FFA founders were Masons.
2. D.
3. A. A photograph of this wood carving can be found in the North Carolina FFA museum.
4. A.
5. B.
6. C. Look at the graphic on page 4.
7. C.
8. D.
9. B.
10. D. These pins still exist today and can be purchased from some of the on-line web auction sites. There is no eagle on top.





## webmaster@agedmag.edu

By Matt Raven

### sites on the web

Today's youth feel as comfortable with the Web as agricultural educators of yesteryear feel with a welder. This is clearly evident by the three examples of FFA Chapter Web sites reviewed in this issue in keeping with the theme, "Do We Need the FFA in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?". These three Web sites easily answer that question with a resounding YES. All three of these sites as well as other FFA Web sites across the country are a great way to showcase the need for FFA. This month's [webmaster@agedmag.edu](mailto:webmaster@agedmag.edu) concentrates on seven Web sites that focus on youth as well as some of their needs. Also, three other useful sites were reviewed. Each Web site review provides the location, a description, and a rating of 1 to 5 stars (with 5 being the best). Be sure to email me ([raven@ra.msstate.edu](mailto:raven@ra.msstate.edu)) the URL of a Web site that you feel should be included in a future installment. Please place Ag Ed Web Site in the subject header of the message.

#### Ag Youth Information Network (<http://www.texasonline.net/agyouth/>)

The Ag Youth Information Network maintained by the Plainview FFA Chapter (Texas) is an excellent example of how a FFA chapter can provide a service for a city or region through the use of a Web site. The Ag Youth Information Network is a student-operated service dedicated to reporting news and information concerning FFA and 4-H activities from across the Texas panhandle. This is accomplished through weekly radio and television broadcasts as well as the Web site. A great idea! ☆☆☆☆

#### Paso Robles FFA Chapter (<http://www.destinydesign.com/pasoroblesffa/index.html>)

The Paso Robles FFA Chapter Web site (California) is an extremely well designed site with very professional appearing graphics and layout. This site is a prime example of how the Web can be used as a great public relations tool for your chapter without a large investment in hardware and software. The site is housed on a commercial server that minimizes start-up costs while aiding in download time. However, using a commercial service also sometimes limits student involvement in the design, development, and/or maintenance of the site. Good job! ☆☆☆☆

#### Oregon-Clay FFA Chapter (<http://members.tripod.com/~agman/index.html>)

The Oregon-Clay FFA Chapter Web site (Ohio) is a good example of a chapter Web site while housed on a commercial server still allows for student involvement in development and maintenance. The site is easy to navigate and provides a visitor a detailed look at the Oregon-Clay FFA Chapter. This site is developed and maintained by students and provides an excellent framework to build upon. Keep up the good work! ☆☆☆☆

#### iCONNECT (<http://www.aces.uiuc.edu/~iconnect/>)

The iCONNECT Web site provides resources for children of divorced parents. The answers and advice provided on the site are from experts who deal with families and divorce. The live chat rooms are a good place for kids to discuss what they are going through with others experiencing similar life events. A good site to have bookmarked if you need to advise a student that has parents going through a divorce or are already divorced. ☆☆☆☆

#### National 4-H (<http://www.4-h.org/>)

The National 4-H Web site is a well designed and attractive site developed and maintained by the National 4-H Technology Corps (a great concept!). The site is full of useful information for 4-H members. A great example is the online registration for the National 4-H Conference. A great model for a youth organization Web site. ☆☆☆☆ 1/2

#### World Surfari (<http://www.supersurf.com/>)

World Surfari is a Web site originally developed by 10-year-old Brian Giacoppo (now 13). World Surfari takes a "cyber trip" to a different country every month. For example Greenland was the featured country when this review was done. Each "trip" provides the history of the country, a description of the society and the people, and links related to the feature country. The site is well designed and a great illustration of how the development of a Web site can be used as an educational tool. ☆☆☆☆

#### My Future (<http://www.myfuture.com>)

The My Future web site focuses on teens, particularly in regards to career and college information. Some of the sections include an area to build a resume online, research college finance options, and investigate the military as a career option. Of special note is the interactive Interest Finder Quiz that helps students identify possible career areas. This site could be improved by providing links to related sites. Overall a good site to include in any unit on careers. ☆☆☆☆ 1/2

#### University of Minnesota Extension Service (<http://www.extension.umn.edu/>)

The University of Minnesota Extension Service Web site is another good example of the great job that Cooperative Extension as a whole is doing in using the Web to fulfill its mission. There is a on-site search engine as well as icons designating the file format of the publications. Agricultural educators should have a folder in their bookmarks for Extension Service Web sites and the University of Minnesota should be included. ☆☆☆☆ 1/2

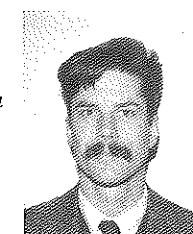
#### Woodnet (<http://www.augusthome.com/woodnet.htm>)

Woodnet bills itself as the woodworkers' online resource and the site lives up to the claim. This professionally done Web site provides a plethora of information focused on woodworking. Some of the sections include tool reviews, 101 woodworking tips, and a volume index for Woodsmith magazine. Over 100 woodworking plans are offered for a nominal price ranging from \$4 to \$10. ☆☆☆☆ 1/2

#### Popular Mechanics (<http://popularmechanics.com/>)

The Web site for Popular Mechanics is filled with full text articles from this well-known magazine. The site is organized around the sections of the magazine, those being automotive, home improvement, science, technology, and outdoors. A great resource and must for your bookmark list. ☆☆☆☆

*Matt Raven is a Director of User Services in the Department of Agricultural Information Science and Education at Mississippi State University*



## How Much Do You Know About FFA Rituals and Traditions?

The FFA has certain rituals such as the opening and closing ceremony that have remained pretty much the same over the years. Also there are certain traditions that have emerged over the years. Go to the head of the class if you can answer the following questions about FFA rituals and traditions.

- A number of the ceremonies and procedures used in the FFA are closely modeled after those of which organization?
  - Grange
  - Masons
  - Farm Bureau
  - Lions Club
- The opening and closing ceremony in the FFA:
  - Was approved at the first convention in 1928.
  - Was approved at the second convention in 1929.
  - Was approved at the third convention in 1930.
  - Has never officially been adopted by the FFA.
- The FFA emblem is modeled after:
  - A Scandinavian wood carving
  - A logo used in *The Cultivator* magazine
  - An advertisement used by the John Deere company
  - A painting by Grant Wood
- The FFA motto first appeared in print about 10 years prior to the establishment of the FFA. It first appeared in:
  - The Vocational Summary, a publication of the Federal Board for Vocational Education
  - A Boys Life Magazine article titled "Living to Serve"
  - A 4-H bulletin titled "Organizing the Local Club"
  - The book *Experience and Education* by John Dewey
- The FFA creed closely resembles:
  - The Farmer's Creed
  - The Country Boys Creed
  - The Creed of the Patrons of Husbandry
  - Psalm 56
- The official FFA slogan (which is rarely used) is:
  - Forward FFA
  - To Make the Best Better
  - The Successful Farmer of Tomorrow is the Future Farmer of Today
  - FFA Boys: True Blue and Good as Gold
- The national agricultural education officials first approached a city other than Kansas City about hosting the national congress of vocational agricultural students. This city said no. If the city had said yes, the FFA would have had a long history with:
  - Denver
  - St. Louis
  - Chicago
  - Nashville
- In the early days of the national FFA convention, members were given an article of clothing when they checked in at the convention. This item was:
  - An official FFA tie
  - A FFA handkerchief
  - A FFA t-shirt
  - An "ice-cream vendor type" FFA cap
- Everyone knows the official FFA colors are National Blue and Corn Gold. However, at the 1929 national convention a different colored gold was adopted. That decision was reversed the following year. The original gold was:
  - Fools Gold
  - Old Gold
  - Antique Gold
  - FFA Gold
- Prior to 1938 the greenhand, chapter, and state degree pin was missing something found on degree pins today (the American degree pin had the missing item). What was missing?
  - The words "Vocational Agriculture"
  - The owl
  - The rising sun
  - The eagle

(Answers on page 23)

## Through Rose Colored Glasses

By A Caring Critic

My first involvement with the FFA started in 1961 when I enrolled in high school agriculture. I have been actively involved with the organization ever since. While I think the FFA is a worthwhile organization, I am afraid we often look at the organization through rose colored glasses; perhaps even blinders.

Behavioral psychologists tell us if we say something over and over, we begin to believe it is true. This may be the case with certain "beliefs" about the FFA. We assert that the FFA develops "premier leadership, personal growth, and career success." But does it really? Just because we say it does, doesn't necessarily mean it really does.

Space limitations prevent me from an in-depth examination of all three FFA outcomes stated above; so let's just focus on the first one - premier leadership.

### Does the FFA develop premier leadership?

If there is one thing FFA supporters are adamant about, it is that FFA develops leadership. State supervisors, teacher educators, agriculture teachers, and FFA members believe this. The question I raise is, "what proof can be offered to support this view?" There is little valid evidence to support this view.

Those who maintain the FFA develops leadership offer as proof what is known as "selective sampling." They point to a few prominent persons who were in the FFA who are now leaders, such as Jimmy Carter. For every "prominent" former FFA member, there are an equal (if not greater) number of former FFA

members whom we would rather not acknowledge. Roger Drollinger, murdered four people in Indiana, on Valentine's Day some years ago.

Roger was a FFA member. How many other former FFA members sit in prisons? In order to prove FFA develops leadership (as evidenced by individuals in leadership positions) we would need to study a random sample of FFA members and non-FFA members. Selective sampling doesn't prove a thing.

A second error made by the pro-FFA leadership faction is the cause-effect error. They maintain because a person was in the FFA he/she is now a leader. The simple fact is that many of these individuals possess certain traits or qualities that are associated with leadership. Regardless of whether or not this person was in the FFA, these leadership qualities would emerge. Yet, we in the FFA are quick to claim credit.

An example of the cause-effect error can be seen in research conducted by Dr. Herron of the University of Georgia. He studied national FFA proficiency award winners in the early 1980s. Dr. Herron's research found that a large majority of the national winners already had the farming or experience program (livestock, crops, etc.) well established before they first enrolled in agricultural education. While the FFA would like to claim the credit for these students' success, the fact is the students were a long way down the road to success before becoming FFA members.

Martin McMillion of Virginia Tech conducted a study 30 years ago on leadership in vocational agriculture students and discovered leadership was associated with socioeconomic status. Dr. McMillion studied 94 students and found no differences between 10th, 11th, and 12th graders on leadership style or leadership ability. If FFA does increase leader-

ship skills, then there should have been a difference in leadership ability in the higher level students.

On the other side of the coin, there have been a couple of studies that purport to show the FFA develops leadership skills. In 1981 Dr. Chris Townsend had 426 Iowa vocational agriculture seniors rate their FFA participation and personal development. Dr. Townsend concluded that FFA activities assisted in the leadership and personal development of the members. I would question whether a student's own self-rating is the best way to measure leadership.

Dr. Clifton Ricketts conducted a study in 1983 on leadership abilities of FFA members and non-members. He used a 66 item multiple choice test designed to measure leadership and personal development abilities. Data were collected from 258 students. Dr. Ricketts found that FFA members scored significantly higher than non-FFA members on the test. My question is does the ability to answer questions about parliamentary procedure, conducting meetings, managing financial resources, etc. on a paper and pencil test really measure leadership? I think not.

One of Dr. Rickett's conclusions was very interesting, "The extent to which students that have been enrolled in vocational agriculture/FFA for four years, possess leadership and personal development abilities is much less than this writer feels that the profession should be willing to accept." Even though the FFA members scored higher on the test, Dr. Ricketts thought the scores were too low.

### Conclusion

It pains me to admit there is virtually no solid evidence to support the contention that FFA develops leadership. If this is what we claim to be about, then this needs our attention during the 21st century.



# JOE SCATTERSCREW AND THE FFA MEETING

By Gary Moore

Joe sighed as he looked at his watch. It was 15 minutes before the shop class was over and then the thing he had been dreading for months would happen... the next FFA meeting. The FFA had not had a meeting since last May. It was difficult to get the students together over the summer and in the rush of getting school started it was hard to schedule a meeting. Now that November was here, the kids had been asking, "When will the next FFA meeting be?" So Joe had scheduled a meeting for the school's monthly activity period.

Joe was a little worried about the program for the FFA meeting. When he got to school this morning he had called Mr. Jackson, the local banker, to ask him to come down at 10:30 to speak to the FFA group. However, the bank wasn't open at 8:30 so at 9:00 he called back. Mr. Jackson wasn't in so the bank secretary took the message, but Joe hadn't heard from Mr. Jackson yet and was beginning to worry if the banker would be there to speak at the meeting.

Ten minutes before the bell Joe stopped the shop class by shouting, "Clean up time! Let's get the shop set up for the FFA meeting."

Wilma, you, PeeWee, Clem and Red, run up to the cafeteria to borrow some chairs for the meeting. The rest of you get the chairs in the classroom and bring them out here."

Clem Montgomery, the FFA president and Adolph Jackson, the sentinel interrupted Joe, "Mr. Scatterscrew, we can't find the FFA paraphernalia!"

Joe dashed into his office, looked in the filing cabinets and on top of the storage cabinet, trying to remember where the FFA paraphernalia was

stored. "Now where in tarnation could that stuff be?" Joe moaned in real mental anguish.

Just then Adolph Jackson remembered, "I think it might still be in the cafeteria storage closet. I don't know if we ever brought all the stuff back from our FFA banquet last spring." Joe sent another detail of kids up to the cafeteria to look for the paraphernalia.

A minute before the end of the class period the students came back. They had found the box of FFA materials. However, the gavel and sounding block for the gavel were missing. Joe sent Clem back to the welding area and told him to grab a chipping hammer and get a piece of 1 x 4 out of the scrap pile to use as a gavel and sounding block.

The bell rang to dismiss the class and start the activity period. All the FFA members came rushing into the ag complex shouting, whooping, and hollering. Finally Joe got them all quieted down to discover there weren't enough chairs for everyone. "Some of you greenhands sit on the work bench and table saw but be careful!"

Just then, Mr. Jackson came rushing through the door. He asked Joe what he wanted him to speak on during the FFA meeting. Joe replied, "Just anything you want to, anything about credit, or banking, anything you think the kids need to know." With this simple explanation Joe grabbed his officers and rushed them into his office.

"Boys, the banker is here. We want to do a good job in the opening ceremony today. So ya'll get the FFA manuals out and read over your parts so you can read them off real good."

After hastily reading over the

parts in the only three manuals that could be found it was time to start the meeting.

Clem Montgomery, the president, picked up the chipping hammer and brought it down on the scrap piece of 1 x 4 to start the meeting, but hit it with a glancing blow which sent it sailing through the air. The flying missile hit the banker in the head. All of the students started giggling and laughing.

"Order! Order!", Clem hollered as he brought the chipping hammer down on the desk. Joe stood up and glared at the big gash in the desk, glared at Clem and at the students. Finally, everyone quieted down.

The officers then went through the opening ceremony. The opening ceremony went relatively unmarred, each officer did a decent job of reading his part out of the three manuals that were passed around. The only problem was when the vice-president called on the advisor. Joe stood up and said, "Here by the owl." About half of the kids in the class started going, "Hoot, hoot, hoot." Several glares from Joe got them tamed down.

The rest of the opening ceremony went off without any problems. However, Clem forgot to call for the roll of members, the minutes of the last meeting or for the treasurer's report. He called upon Jakey Payne, the vice-president to introduce the guest speaker. Jakey stood up, scratched his head and said, "I ain't supposed to introduce him."

Joe rushed to the front of the class, "Our speaker today is Mr. Jackson, president of the bank. He is going to speak about banking.

*(continued on page 23)*