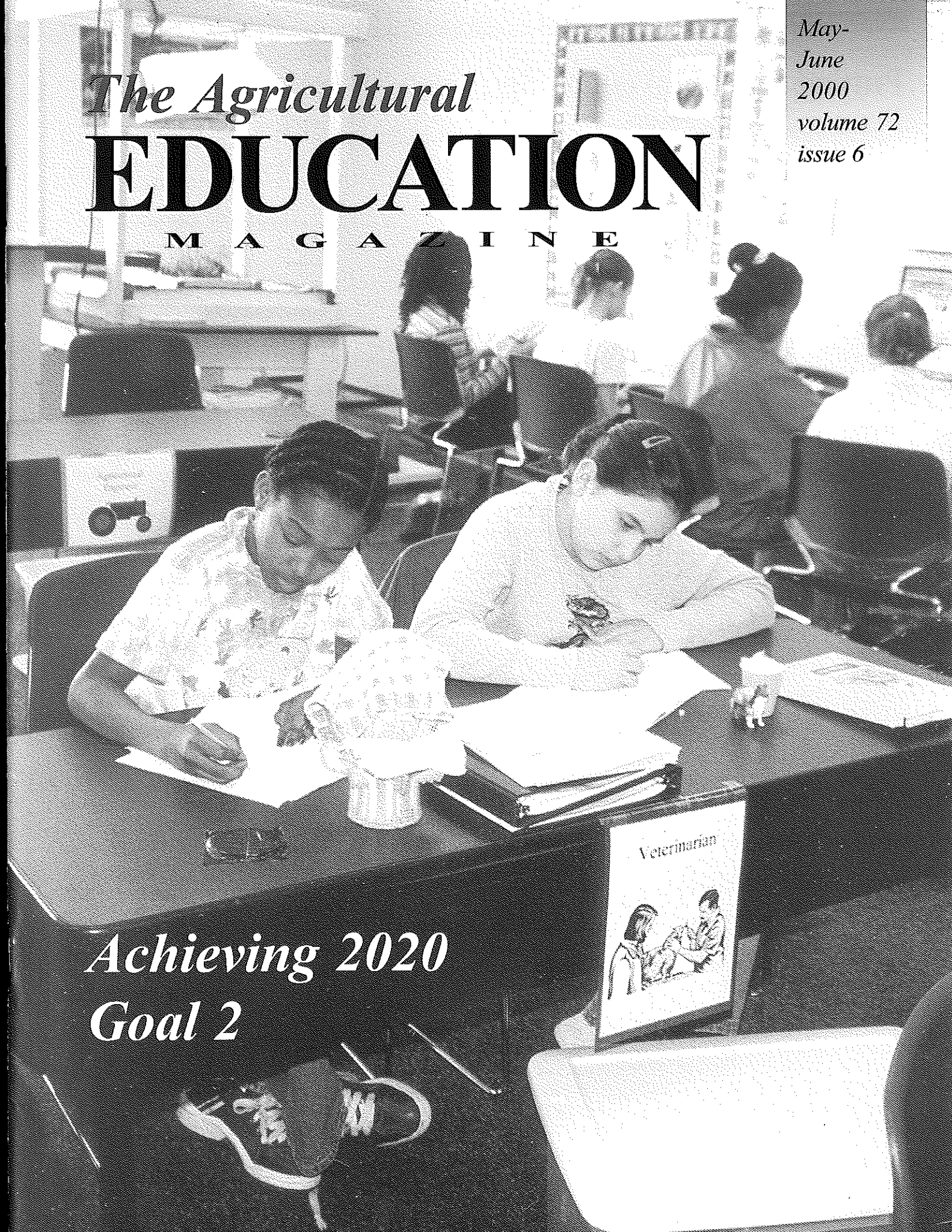


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*Achieving 2020
Goal 2*

Putting this Reinvention Stuff in Proper Perspective

By Rob Terry

G.T. and I were having lunch together as we try to do every now and then. In what now almost seems like a lifetime ago, he and I taught vocational agriculture together. Today, we still work in the profession, he as an agriculture program specialist at the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education and I as a teacher educator at Oklahoma State University. I consider G.T. one of my most valued friends and it's always special to be able to spend some time with him. For the most part, we tend to visit about things we're into now – OSU Cowboy sports, our families, and work. But on this day, G.T. had the past on his mind.

When we taught together at Owasso, Oklahoma, we had what most of our peers and leaders considered a "solid program." We had a large number of students, a strong support group, and a sound approach with emphasis on the instructional program. During our lunch, we reminisced about "the good old days." Mostly, we laughed about the strange and challenging things that only ag teachers can find funny. Then, unexpectedly, my old friend said, "We could have done so much more." He explained that if we would have known then what we know now, we could have had so much more of a positive influence on our students. He said that if we had really "made a difference" we would still, even after 10 years out of high school, have students calling us to make us a part of their lives. He was probably right. But, you just never know. Teaching is one of those

professions where you may never know the extent of your influence.

Ironically, no more than two weeks later, one of our former students did call. Trisha called to let us know that Tabitha, another one of our former students, was dying. My mind quickly went into reverse. Tabitha and Trisha were in the very first class that I taught – Ag I, first hour. What a special group of kids they were. What a special time that was. During the four years that she was in the program, Tabitha showed her intelligence, enthusiasm, leadership skill, and work ethic in so many different ways. I thought back and remembered a beautiful young lady with a bright smile and a quick wit who was well liked by her peers. I remembered a Greenhand who struggled to stand in front of her classmates to recite the FFA Creed and then a senior who confidently presided over chapter meetings and a banquet hall of more than 350 people. It was from Tabitha that I got my lesson on the importance for a teacher to adjust to students' needs. Even though she knew I knew nothing about horses, she insisted that we should have a horse judging team. Through her skill as a teacher of her peers, that team won the state contest and she was the top individual at the national contest. I know teachers aren't supposed to have favorites. But, I couldn't help but consider Tabitha a "favorite."

A few days later, I retraveled the roads of a school district I used to crisscross in a white, four-door school pick-up on SAE project visits. Only

this time, my destination wasn't a home with a pen of animals and a student seeking my advice. On this day, I pulled off the road into what I remembered as an open pasture. Now, it was the place where Tabitha's body would be laid to rest. It was one of the most heart wrenching experiences I've ever had.

It was the first funeral I had attended in years. There was a large crowd, among them a husband and a two-year-old daughter who would be without a wife and mother. There were so many familiar faces. At the front were Tabitha's parents and sisters whom I knew well because they had been so involved in all of Tabitha's FFA and horse showing activities. And there were a handful of young people who had taken my classes a decade ago.

Any time a person dies before her time, the funeral is especially sad. After the words had been said and the tears had been cried, I was joined in the receiving line by the young adults who I once called "my kids." It was here that the teacher was taken to school. After we caught up on where we were now, I listened as they laughed about the good times and pondered the lessons learned during their experiences in class and in FFA activities. Trisha, now a mother of three, talked about how ag was her favorite class. Jerry, mentioned how he used what he learned in ag mechanics everyday. Joe, now a corporate purchasing agent for a large food processing company, said his career interests were developed through the leadership opportunities he gained in the FFA. Scott, who operates a backhoe and drives a truck looked at me and said, "I hated you for making me write and give that speech." He continued with a smile,

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Theme: Achieving 2020 Goal 2: All students have access to seamless, lifelong instruction in agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems through a wide variety of delivery systems and educational settings.

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Accomplishing Goal II Through Learning Networks

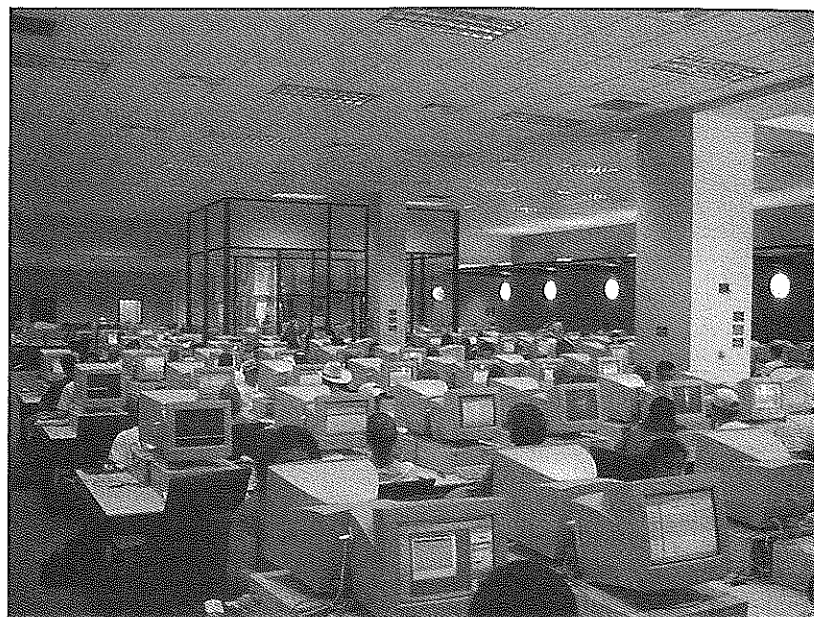
By Tim Murphy

It's a beautiful morning. Today would be a great day to be out on the lake chasing bass. I used to take my dog fishing. He loved it. He would stand in the back of the boat and bark at the fish as I took them off the hook. You could just tell that he thought he was helping direct the process. He was of course completely unaware of the complexity of the task. He had not planned the trip. He hadn't selected the day to go based on local catch and weather reports. He didn't select the fishing site; he couldn't read the topographical map, the depth finder, or the GPS. He wasn't even involved in the selection of the bait to be used, and he certainly couldn't drive the boat. His participation didn't affect the outcome of the fishing trip in any way, but we were old friends and I was glad he was along for the ride.

"All people are going to have access to seamless, lifelong instruction in agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems through a wide variety of delivery systems and educational settings."

Dr. H. Rob Terry, Jr. called and asked me to write an article addressing Goal II from the Reinventing Agricultural Education (RAE) report. My first thought was, Goal II reminds me of that dog's barking.

I absolutely believe that all people are going to "have access to seamless, lifelong instruction in agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems through a wide variety of delivery systems and educational settings." I believe that those of us in the business of agricultural education have some choices to make. We can



lead, follow, or get out of the way. There are those among us who fail to realize our place in this system; they actually think their barking can influence the outcome.

As a group, we tend to overemphasize our role in the overall system of transferring knowledge in and about agriculture to our clients, current and potential consumers, and producers. We also tend to ignore

information that suggests this already small role is shrinking at an alarming rate. Whether or not the formal educational institutions in agricultural education are able to remain relevant to the overall process of transferring agricultural knowledge will be determined by the choices we make in the next few years.

In 1994, Stan Davis and Jim Botkin wrote a book called *The Monster Under the Bed*. In it they predicted several things, almost all of which are slowly coming true. One of these was, "A new generation of smart and

humanized technologies will revolutionize learning by employees and customers in business before it affects students and teachers in schools" (p.17). I see this happening every day.

The largest providers of education and training, both on- and off-line, have been corporations for several years. Some of their efforts are very apparent. Authur Anderson has their main campus in St. Charles, IL.

Anderson's annual budget, at nearly \$350 million, is larger than the budgets of schools like Purdue and Syracuse Universities, and they don't even have a football team. Motorola University spends over \$200 million a year addressing the company's training needs, and is considered among the finest institutions of its type in the world. Others may not be quite as respected, but are just as large, like the Wal-Mart school in Anna, IL, and the McDonalds University just outside of Chicago. These types of programs are extremely visible; and they are the tip of the iceberg. Like an iceberg, this visible part looks harmless. You have to look a little harder to see the part that can sink the ship.

There are two new terms gaining widespread acceptance in the popular

media. The terms are "e-learning" and "EduCommerce." E-learning describes all activities that provide potential learners with specific, focused educational experiences that exactly meet their current learning needs.

EduCommerce is a term pioneered at the online learning portal notharvard.com (www.notharvard.com). It means delivering free online education as a method to transform buyers and sellers into learners and teachers. Free online education is being used as a sales and marketing device to increase customer intimacy and generate higher brand loyalty. It's a business model for e-learning, a way to find profit in education and training. The premise is simple: customers have a need to know, and businesses have information and knowledge that they need to teach. The company that sells a product is the logical source of education and training about that product. Customers will purchase products that they know how to use effectively. The quality of the training will soon become as important as the quality of the product.

Briggs & Stratton have a very informative web site (www.briggsandstratton.com). There are free safety materials available as well as product information. I wondered how long it would take for me

to find the appropriate spark plug gap for my Quantum engine. It took me 90 seconds. Because I already know how to set a plug gap, the site meets my needs, but I may not be the typical consumer. I was not able to find instructions, a picture, an animation, or even a video clip showing me how to adjust a spark plug gap. How long do you think it'll be before it's there?

UNext.com, a self-described Internet education company, is outspending every competitor. They've spent about \$100 million, and will begin offering classes this summer. With a team of experts in cognition and distance learning spending up to \$1 million per course to develop not just a made-for-online curriculum, but an entirely new way of teaching over the Net they should have some impressive courses. Five elite schools have signed on to participate in this new University—Columbia, Stanford, Chicago, Carnegie Mellon, and the London School of Economics. With three Nobel laureates on the faculty, and investors such as Michael Milken and Oracle's Larry Ellison, the project is the top contender among the new "virtual" or Internet-only Universities. The company envisions a future student body of millions.

These e-learning and EduCommerce trends are readily apparent, and

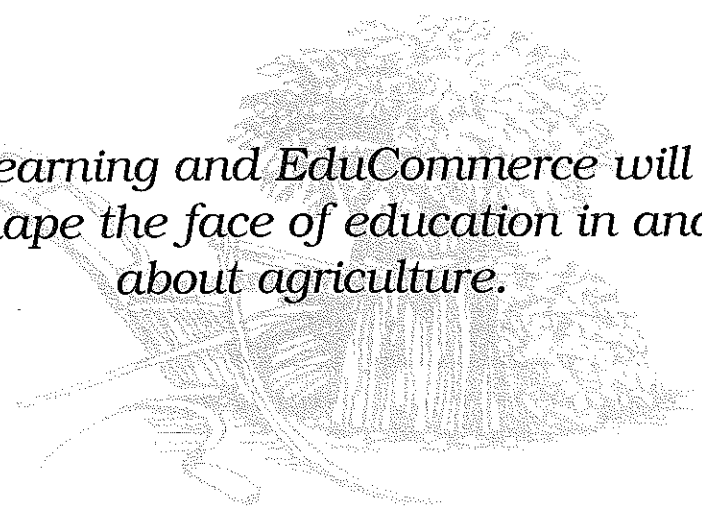
will undoubtedly reshape the face of education in and about agriculture. Many formal educational institutions, at every level, have seen the writing on the wall and are moving to respond to the ideals embodied in Goal II.

Texas Tech University Independent School District is a fully accredited school system with students enrolled in elementary, middle, and high school classes that exist completely online (<http://www.dce.ttu.edu/ttuisd/ttuisd.cfm>). Some students enroll in Texas Tech University High School to receive a transcript and earn a diploma completely at a distance. Several have already graduated, and you may have heard of some of those who are about to. LeAnn Rimes has attended Texas Tech High School. Most students, however, enroll to earn high school credits that can be transferred to any other public school in Texas. If an online high school does not yet exist in your state, feel free to have your students use this one and transfer the credit. While I don't know of other primary schools, there are at least four other high schools on-line.

There are a few undergraduate degree programs in agricultural subject areas that do not require attendance on a college campus. One notable example is the Tri-State Agricultural Distance Delivery Alliance (TADDA). This is a cooperative distance education program developed over the past four years by the colleges of agriculture at the University of Idaho (UI), Oregon State University (OSU), and Washington State University (WSU). TADDA's goal is to enable students in this three-state region to obtain a bachelor's (BS) degree in general agriculture using distance education.

Graduate degrees, those above the BS, are available off-campus from several sources. I have a special interest in two such programs. The

E-learning and EduCommerce will reshape the face of education in and about agriculture.



Master of Agriculture (MAG) degree program (<http://mag.tamu.edu/>) is intended to prepare individuals for leadership roles in education, natural resource management, the extension service, and many other professional careers in agriculture and life sciences. This is a non-thesis degree program that emphasizes the development of problem-solving skills and the practical application of academic coursework. There are currently three degree plans offered. In addition to a degree in Agricultural Education, plans are available in Wildlife and Fisheries and Plant Science. Because of the diverse nature of the careers selected by MAG graduates, the degree plans vary considerably and can be considered unique for each individual student.

In April of 2000, the Texas Coordinating Board for Higher Education (THECB) approved a joint Doctorate in Agricultural Education available via distance education across the state (<http://doc-at-a-distance.tamu.edu/>). The program will be administered through both the Department of Agricultural Education at Texas A&M University and the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications at Texas Tech University. This joint doctoral degree has two major purposes:

1. strengthen the application and integration of knowledge of agricultural education in the professional communities of Texas; and
2. provide agricultural professionals in the State of Texas academic and geographic access to advanced degrees. The program will be offered using a mixture of appropriate distance education technologies including the WWW and interactive videoconferencing.

Each of these programs, from elementary through graduate school

and including those e-learning and EduCommerce activities will, if done properly, create a network of learners. In these networked communities, groups of people will engage in collective inquiry and enhance their knowledge, and the application of that knowledge to real-life situations. In these communities, learners will share knowledge and work together to find ways to use knowledge to pursue their practical interests. These learning networks must be loosely structured and student centered. They will include learners, formal teachers, informal facilitators, learning resources, and materials operating as an interconnected network. Learning will occur from transactions and interactions between and among the learners, teachers, and materials. In work settings, learning networks are also "communities of practice" that consist of knowledge workers engaged in creative problem solving. Some of these learning networks will exist for less than an hour, while others may

continue for years. They will remain together as long as they meet, and until they fulfill the educational needs of their members.

A high level of interaction among and between individual members is required to create and sustain a learning network. Until recently, this level of interaction was possible only with close physical proximity. But with the advent of technologically mediated telecommunications, and particularly the Internet, it is now possible to have rich and meaningful interactions over wide area networks. Learning networks can now expand beyond a classroom, university, or workplace, to spread literally across the globe.

As an example, a presenter at a conference I recently attended said that a woman he knew recently returned from a trip to Asia. She suddenly became violently ill. The doctors were at a loss and checked her into the hospital, conducting

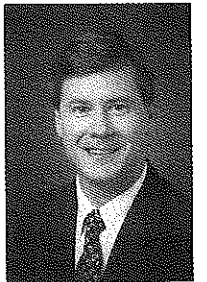
dozens of tests. After a couple of days she was desperate and used her laptop to email a request for help from her hospital room to an Internet newsgroup. Within hours, she not only knew what she had, but the most appropriate treatment as well. The answers came not from doctors, but from others who had suffered from the same rare disease. The most valuable knowledge is often held—not by experts—but by those who must apply the knowledge, the 'users' or consumers of the information. Learning networks will connect learners to all the traditional resources, and in addition, will tap into this extremely rich vein of user knowledge.

As the Internet and WWW mature, institutions of agricultural educational and agribusiness organizations will be increasingly challenged to

address the education and training needs of knowledge workers and consumers in the ever-evolving digital economy. They will need to develop programs for life long learning available just in time, anytime, and anywhere. By sharing knowledge embedded in practice, networks of learners will help provide these opportunities for anytime, anywhere, life-long learning. Some of these communities will certainly arise from around agricultural technology clusters and even specific products, fulfilling the e-learning and EduCommerce potential. Others will arise around shared experience and common interests. Agricultural educators need to step forward and provide the leadership and expertise necessary to create and sustain high quality networked learning communi-

ties. It is time to decide whether we're just along for the ride, or do we actually want to fish?

Tim Murphy is an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Education at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX



Putting This Reinvention Stuff in Proper Perspective...

(continued from page 2)

"But, looking back on it, it was one of the best things I ever did in school."

As we continued to progress toward the front of the line, I looked at this group of happy, hard-working, productive, good people with wonderment. Could G.T. and I, working as agricultural educators have really made that kind of difference in their lives?

In this issue of *The Agricultural Education Magazine*, as with each issue this year, we address the future directions of agricultural education and the changes that need to be made in the program. We talk about visions and goals, problems and challenges, curriculum and activities, leadership and action. However, here is the perspective on agricultural education that I learned while standing in that cemetery in Rogers County. What we do in agricultural education now

and in the future really comes down to what we can do to make a positive difference in the lives of our students. If the changes initiated by the Reinventing Agricultural Education for the Year 2020 allow us to more effectively reach more kids who can benefit from us, then we are on the right track.

I finally made it to the front of the receiving line. Tabitha's mother and I embraced and she said, "Tabitha loved you so much. You'll never know what impact you had on her life."

Now ... I think I do. When I got home I called my buddy G.T.

Rob Terry is Associate Professor of Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, OK.



Classrooms equipped with distance education technologies provide access to advanced degrees via the WWW and interactive videoconferencing.

Agricultural Education in the Elementary Classroom

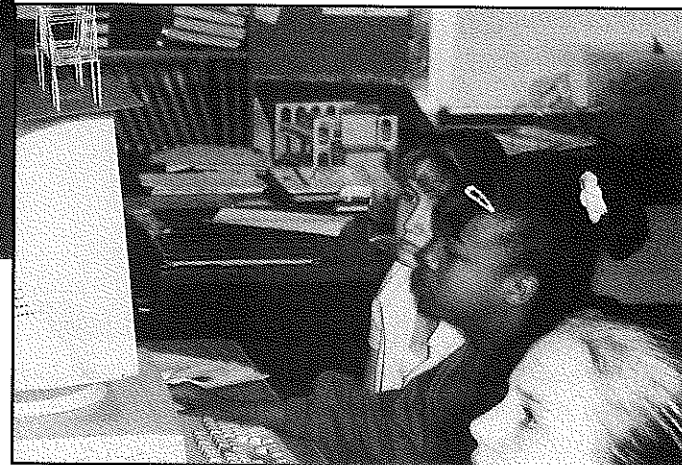
By Jackie Needham

Would I teach agriculture in the twenty-first century to first and second graders in elementary school? You better believe it. It isn't an added subject to my curriculum. Agriculture is all around us. I integrated it throughout all subjects in the elementary curriculum. Agriculture can be integrated in art, science, math, writing, language arts, and social studies.

I believe there is a misconception among classroom teachers that teaching agriculture deals with teaching just about farm life, crops and farm animals. That is such a small component of agriculture. Agriculture is part of our heritage. We need to hang on to it. We need to show elementary classroom teachers how they can incorporate agriculture in their existing curriculum. Oklahoma State University hosts summer institutes called Ag In the Classroom. This is a great agriculture introduction for classroom teachers but we need to reach more teachers who say they are too busy to put more curriculum in their day. They are already teaching subjects from agriculture without recognizing it as agriculture. Let's call it what it is! Many teachers may say they don't have time to teach another subject. What we must do is to heighten the awareness of integrating the subjects so that agriculture will become part of their lessons.

My agriculture lessons are grouped into three main areas – outdoor classroom, European Art, and monthly classroom activities. In the

fall of each year, my students collect soil samples from the playground and outdoor classroom area. Each sample is placed in a baby food jar and labeled with the location from which it was collected. The students examined and recorded characteristics such as color, texture, and smell for each sample. Further experiments were conducted with the soil. They learned about settlement of soil particles, plasticity, and erosion. We examined areas in the outdoor classroom that had been eroded from the rain. They gained experience with the soil components of sand, clay and humus. They created their own compost bags with an earthworm to watch the decomposition of food. This led to the discussion of compost and fertilizers used in growing gardens.



We always take the opportunity to be "bug" scouts and study the insect world. One activity that my students enjoy during our study of insects is to take a two foot piece of twine and go out to the grass area on the playground next to the woods and place the string in a circle on the grass. They use four of their senses to examine the small habitat. They record any insects, insect parts, or other interesting artifacts found in the area. Many of the students take the string home to find insects in a small habitat at home. To enhance the area of study, the students keep a science journal about insects, write creative insect stories, and touch and feel insects from the visiting entomologist.

This year, I had Dr. Kleinholz, a fish biologist from Langston University, bring his fishing gear to our outdoor pond and collect samples of creatures that lived in the pond. He made comparisons between the bass, catfish, bluegill and sun perch that he gathered out of the pond. The students were thrilled. They really had no idea about fish life in the pond. In addition to examining different types of fish in the pond, the students also learned about the career of a fish biologist. We looked at pond water under microscopes to look at the living organisms in the water.

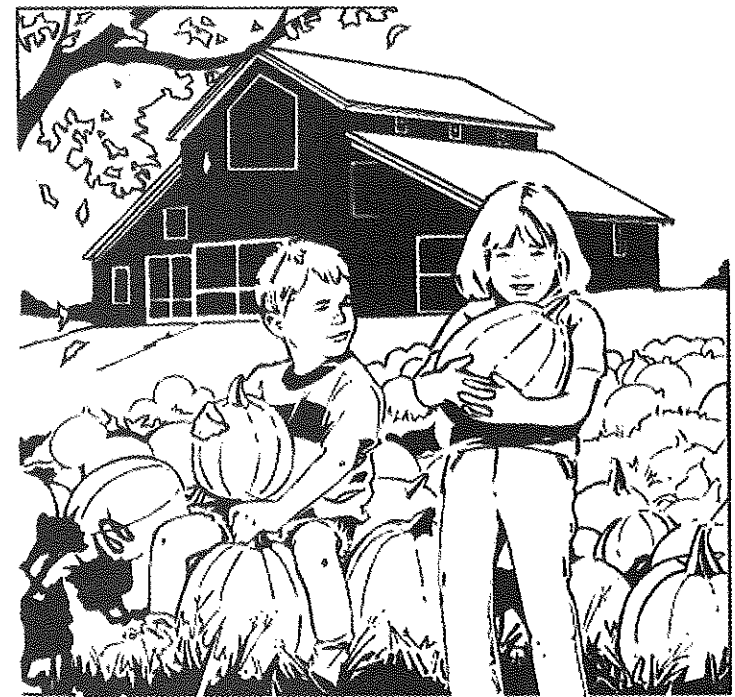
Upon completion of our frog study, the students visited Dr. Fort's

frog lab in the Stover Group. He does research on frogs found in lakes throughout the United States. As a scientist, he looks at the effect of pollution on the growth of frogs. The students were able to see mutated frogs found in polluted lakes. The students were able to touch and look at hundreds of African albino frogs that were in tanks at the research center. They also found out about the career of frog scientist. This visitation led to further discussions about pollution in our environment and its effect in our world.

A fall would not be complete in the elementary classroom without a visit to the pumpkin patch. The students study the growth of a pumpkin from seed. At the pumpkin patch they have the opportunity to feel the soil. Each student selects a pumpkin from the patch to take back to the classroom. They estimate the weight and circumference before taking the actual measurements. One of the classroom pumpkins is cut open after the students predict how many seeds are inside. The students take turns counting the seeds. What great math opportunities tied in with agriculture. Once the seeds are counted, we wash them and do pumpkin seed pictures. I purchase roasted pumpkin seeds for the students to eat. I usually have a parent volunteer to make pumpkin bread for the class.

Apples are just as important to elementary teachers as pumpkins are in our units of study. We do graphing, tasting, cooking, art prints, and history of Johnny Appleseed. The hallways have the fabulous odors of applesauce cooking in the classrooms. This is a component of agriculture. I know some elementary teachers who even talk about the different varieties of apples and their uses. When I taught kindergarten in Indiana, the students had the opportunity to visit apple orchards and drink fresh apple cider.

Peanuts are another topic in



agriculture that I teach in the fall. An agriculture extension educator provides me with peanuts for my class to grow over the duration of the year. The students plant the peanuts in an aquarium and place a black trash bag over the aquarium to simulate being planted in the earth. Every month the students examine the growth of the peanuts. The students have taste tests of raw, salted in the shell, roasted, cocktail, and honey roasted peanuts. They graph their favorite one. A taste test is also made with Smuckers natural peanut butter, Peter Pan peanut butter, and Jiff peanut butter. A graph is made upon completion of the taste test. The students write creative stories about peanut butter. They are introduced to Booker T. Washington and his discoveries with peanuts. What a great agriculture topic for elementary students!

During the month of November, it is the best time to talk about the pilgrims making wheat bread. This is an excellent way to introduce the wheat as a crop, farm machinery to

plant and harvest wheat, and the workers involved in the production of wheat bread. Yes of course, the activity is completed by making loaves of wheat with homemade butter to enjoy in class.

This past fall, my students engaged in learning about the agriculture components of a cheeseburger. They did a taste test of American cheese, Colby cheese, and Colby Jack cheese. Another taste test was created by tasting wheat buns, white buns, sesame seed buns, and egg buns. Graphs were made for both taste tests. The students created a construction paper hamburger and labeled the different food groups of the hamburger starting with the bun. The goal of the lesson was to create awareness among my second graders of the food groups found in a cheeseburger. Did it have lettuce? pickles? catsup? beef? cheese? bread? sesame seeds? Is it a misconception

(continued on page 23)

An Investment Today For Tomorrow's Agricultural Leaders

By Edward A. Franklin and Matthew T. Portillo

What Should the Role of Secondary Agricultural Education Instructors Be?

The Committee on Agricultural Education in Secondary Schools (1988) made the following recommendation to the National Research Council, "beginning in kindergarten and continuing through twelfth grade, all students should receive some systematic instruction about agriculture" (p. 2). In response to this recommendation, the Food and Fiber Systems Literacy project was developed to provide a systematic K-12

such as Ag in the Classroom, provide elementary and secondary teachers with tools and materials to blend agricultural information into the existing curriculum. The goal of Ag in the Classroom is "to help students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society, so that they may become citizens who support wise agricultural policies" (AITC, p.1). Do you know who in your district is currently utilizing Ag in the Classroom materials?

Secondary Ag instructors must play an active role in the dissemination

natural resources can proceed. Exposing Elementary and Junior High Students to Agriculture

The mantra of agricultural education and FFA rests on the development of strong leaders and good citizens. Conners (1992) stated agricultural education and FFA are situated in a unique position of stressing the importance of community service and volunteerism as part of Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects. Students volunteering in service-learning activities participate in real experien-

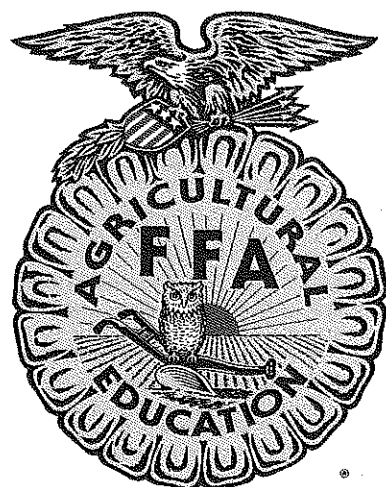
goal is business, could the student volunteer as a 4-H student leader supervising record books?

Do Not Neglect Other Youth Organizations

4-H clubs are one source of providing a seamless transition for elementary age children to high school agriculture programs. Secondary agricultural education programs should not view such youth organizations as competing for students, but as an important partner for preparing students for agriculture education

between community colleges, technical schools, and universities creates many advantages for local programs. First, students have an opportunity to receive college credit for work completed in your agriculture mechanic, plant science, agribusiness, or animal science classes. Your material is aligned with course work at the next level for the students who desire to continue with a particular plan of study. This can be accomplished by contacting the post-secondary institution in your area and arranging to sit down and discuss your program curriculum with the college.

Ed Franklin is an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Education at the University of Arizona in Tucson, AZ.



curriculum for food and fiber literacy. The Food and Fiber Systems Literacy project has published a compendium of standards, benchmarks, and instructional materials for teaching prepared lessons in areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies using agriculture as the vehicle. Currently, the project has lessons for elementary levels (K-8) to infuse Food and Fiber Systems knowledge into core academic subjects and across grade levels.

Agriculture literacy programs,

of agriculture into the curricula of the school district that reflects a broad base for community interest and support. The Ag instructor can act as the clearinghouse for information. Elementary teachers already have a full plate. They do not want more curriculum. They need access to new resources. Part of in-service training can consist of workshops on how to utilize AITC and the Food and Fiber Systems. Once the elementary teachers utilize these resources, a seamless, lifelong instruction in agriculture and

tial learning outside the classroom. Heightened by these experiences, students apply subject matter to meaningful career exploration.

If the career goal for a student is to become an educator, could the SAE activity include the development of agricultural-based learning activities for elementary school teachers? If the career goal is to focus on computers, could the student develop an interactive homepage that depicts the ecosystem of a pond located near a junior high school? If the career

programs. One organization should not "prey" on the other for members. FFA and 4-H both offer unique educational and leadership opportunities. Can students belong to both? Surely. What better leadership opportunity for FFA members than to serve as junior or teen leaders for a local 4-H project?

Adopting the Discovery Degree

What can we do to provide a seamless transition from the high school to post secondary education programs? Developing articulation agreements

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Experience —The Real Teacher

By Nathan L. Moore

Ever wonder how or even if our students will have access to agricultural instruction in 20 years? Of course, the very idea that agriscience instruction could cease or diminish appreciably does not even enter our minds, or does it? Better yet, should it? Perhaps now is the time to point the finger of evaluation on ourselves and ask, does the agricultural curriculum we teach enthuse tomorrow's agriculturists or does its non-practical, non-vocational nature predispose the learning process to failure?

My father had a typical favorite saying: "experience is the best teacher." After teaching agriscience in two different states for 31 ½ years, I believe I finally understand the impact of his proverb. He was a great believer in learning by doing.

After we agriscience instructors have completed our formal training, we have just begun to learn. Like our students of this new millennium, we can then focus on deficient areas in which we need improvement. Just as student teaching prepares us well for the practical side of agricultural education, we should attempt to expand our field knowledge as much as possible once we begin and continue to teach. Only then can we suggest we are prepared for varied delivery systems and educational settings unique to the youth of tomorrow.

Alexander Pope, English poet of the late 1600s, expressed his belief in education when he said, "If in vain our toil, we ought to blame the culture, not the soil." Certainly today's truths are offered to us by the toils and experiences of our ancestors. Agriscience teachers have a vast reservoir of community resources from which additional skills and competencies can be learned.

Upon moving from the Midwest to Arizona in July 1973, I was thrust into a unique teaching challenge. Having been trained in general agriculture, my new assignment of teaching agricultural resources offered a real opportunity to grow and broaden my agricultural skills and competencies. Fortunately, my

adjustment was eased by the welcomed guidance from the other three agriscience instructors at Westwood High School. However, I still felt I needed more practical experience in agricultural resources. I learned that additional training through several on-the-job internships.

Our ability to help future students is directly proportional to our preparation and enthusiasm for their life-long instruction in agriculture. The skills and competencies that we gain have already and will continue to add background information to our instruction of agriscience students. Our continual growth and development as a teacher of agriculture is based on a simple rationale: students learn best by example. We need to

put into practice what many of us teach in our Agricultural Cooperative Education programs, i.e. offer on-the-job training through our supervised agricultural experience programs. Our delivery system at Westwood High School is unique, even for an inner-city school.

As we attempt to ensure that every student has access to seamless, lifelong instruction in agriculture, we vary the delivery and educational systems at Westwood High School. I can personally expand the motivational part of all the lessons by offering more varied examples. I understand, not simply recognize, many of the problems of agricultural education. My students now have



*"If in Vain our Toil, We Ought to
Blame the Culture, Not the Soil"*

more guidance in specifying possible solutions to agriscience challenges.

Learning agriscience formally begins at the freshmen level with an Introduction to Agriscience. Our students may take this substitute science class at one of three feeder junior high schools. This curriculum lays the framework for whetting the student's interest in one of several available career-training paths. As you would expect, FFA and supervised agricultural experience help put into practice the skills and competencies learned in the classroom.

As sophomores, our students declare an occupational training choice. Although they may change their minds and direction of preparation, several curricula are available. Course titles such as Agri-Engineering and Technology, Agricultural Welding, and Environmental Science allow students with an agricultural mechanics interest to prepare themselves for a multitude of those occupations dealing with small gas engines, electrical wiring, electric sensing devices and controls, electric motors, concrete, welding, forestry, soil and water management, etc.

Horticultural interests are pursued with sophomores and juniors receiving university laboratory science credit for our Applied Biological Systems

course and substitute laboratory science credit for Plant Science. Technical preparation is achieved in the animal science area with the Applied Biological Systems course with substitute laboratory science credit for Animal Science and Aquaculture. Other than the normal land laboratory experiences with poultry, companion animals, beef steers, greenhouses, citrus, vegetable and flower gardening, and pasture management, we have developed an aquaponics facility housing 3,000+ tilapia over the past three years. In November we installed an 11' x 16' aquascape pond to accent both the horticulture and animal science programs.

Finally, we strongly encourage our agriscience seniors to become genuine completers by becoming active learners in our proven Agricultural Cooperative Education program. We place them in such supervised learning experiences as the East Mesa Veterinary Hospital, Harper's Nursery, Greenfield Citrus Nursery, and one lucky completer as our own land laboratory manager. These students are not simply going to a job site, but are truly using their agriculture experiences over the last three years to gain supervised learning in a real job setting with guidance at

school, at home, and in the agricultural business of their choice.

The noted leader Lindly C. Baxter once wrote, "What is done in our classrooms today will be reflected in the success or failures of civilization tomorrow" (Hughes, Henson, Metcalfe, and Johnson, 1957) Let us, the vocational agriculture instructors, keep ourselves as well prepared as possible to maintain our precedence of excellence in education. Remember, "To teach is to learn twice" (Joubert, 1842).

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4-H: Offering Lifelong, Seamless Learning

By Valeri J. Terry and Charles B. Cox



When someone coined the term, lifelong learning, the individual must have had 4-H in mind. Children, teens, young adults, the middle-aged, and senior citizens can all find opportunities in 4-H youth development programs. Learning based on clearer thinking, greater loyalty, larger service, and better living adds up to endless possibilities for the young and old alike.

Four-H is an idea that was generated in the United States. It has become an integral part of an even larger American idea — the Land-Grant university and Cooperative Extension Service Systems. One of the many unique aspects of 4-H is the continuous and growing private support. Private sector support joins with the public sector to make 4-H one of the most successful youth programs in this country. The 4-H idea has been an expanding one with concepts that have been adapted to more than eighty countries around the world. In 1999, some 6,481,801 youth participated in the 4-H program.

With the evolution of the corn,

tomato, and canning clubs of the early twentieth century to the science and technology projects of today, the 4-H program has enjoyed great success because of the many valuable opportunities offered to its participants, regardless of their ages. The 4-H program of this century continues to base programs on the same objectives as in the early years — hands on experiential learning.

With the support of parents and some 603,266 volunteers, young people in today's 4-H program deal with issues like stress management, parent-teen communications, personal development, careers and global understanding, and a variety of other topics that allow 4-H members to gain valuable leadership and citizenship skills.

Part of 4-H's success can be attributed to family involvement. When a young person enrolls in 4-H, parents, grandparents, and guardians will also find themselves wrapped up in their child's valuable 4-H experiences. Through involvement with their child, parents find that 4-H increases the avenues of communica-

tion within the family while allowing the family members to share in valuable family-oriented activities. Whether it is learning to care for an animal project or learning the techniques necessary to be a proficient marksman, 4-H allows the member and parents or other caring and significant adult to influence learning.

The 4-H Cloverbud program provides younger youth an opportunity to learn about the 4-H program. Through project exploration, it involves children who are generally five to eight years old. Cloverbuds do not participate in competitive events because of their level of cognitive development; however, they do receive a taste of some of the traditional events by receiving recognition for taking part in activities in non-competitive ways.

Youth are allowed to join 4-H clubs when they become eight or nine and may stay in the program until they are 18 or 19 (membership ages vary from state to state). Once in a club, a child can select from any number of projects in which he or she is interested. Project topics vary somewhat from state to state, but nationally the most popular projects relate to plants and animals, healthy lifestyle education, science and technology, personal development and leadership, environmental education, and earth sciences; followed by communication and expressive arts, citizenship education, and consumer and family sciences. Through largely self-paced, self-directed experiential learning, young people increase their skills in a subject matter area while assuming leadership roles, participating in decision-making, learning to understand complex

systems, working in diverse teams and building networks that equip them for both present and future contributions to society. There is truly an opportunity for everyone!

Once enrolled, the 4-H'er may take part in many activities that expand life skills. Life skills are abilities individuals can learn that will help them in achieving a productive and satisfying life. Educational opportunities such as speech and demonstration contests, fashion revues, livestock shows, judging contests, fairs and other activities, along with the long-time support and nurturing from caring adults combine to equip young people for life. The member may choose to expand his or her involvement to teach others about what they have learned. Projects and educational activities serve as vehicles for youth to achieve the primary goal of 4-H: to develop life skills.

Four-H also serves youth that are not enrolled in a traditional 4-H club by offering school enrichment opportunities in public, private, and home school settings. Some of the most popular school enrichment programs relate to the promotion of food and fiber production. Activities like embryology and plant science help students make real-life connections to the curriculum. Also, 4-H serves youth who are involved in other organizations and they may benefit from the programs offered. In many communities 4-H members are often involved in a variety of other school activities. Some may be members of other organizations such as FHA, FFA, Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, church groups, and the list continues.

While the 4-H program is not exclusive with regard to membership, it does encourage life-long learning and its members often tend to be leaders in other academic pursuits.

As reported in a national 4-H brochure (2000), there was a two year Cornell University study that found young people who participated in New York's 4-H programs do better in school, are more motivated to help others and achieve more than other youth that do not participate. The study also found that 4-H youth are more educationally motivated, have higher levels of self-esteem, place more emphasis on having a value system and communicate at higher levels than do their peers.

The role of adults in 4-H is very vast and never-ending. Four-H programs are designed to provide youth opportunities to learn life skills, while being led and mentored by adults, who may serve as club leaders, project leaders, educational event judges, educational program presenters, and chaperones. Although most of the adult volunteers involved in the program are parents of members, there are many 4-H alumni and other interested adults who have contributed many hours of assistance.

Adults in 4-H have the opportunity to receive instruction to help make them better at providing leadership to the 4-H program. Volunteer training opportunities are available on the local, state, and national levels that target adult 4-H volunteers.

Learning in the 4-H program is truly lifelong, whether considering the six-year-old 4-H Cloverbud or the 75-year-old organizational leader. There is an opportunity for seamless learning throughout 4-H.

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The Revival of Agrarian Youth Organizations in the Former Soviet Union: Lithuania—One Country's Story

By M. Craig Edwards, William L. Thuemmel, and Sonata Kisieliene

On July 5, 1940, the Soviet government closed the Young Farmers' Circles Union and destroyed all of its property.

Introduction

Lithuania, a Baltic state, is one of the Former Soviet Republics that regained its independence with dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. This Eastern European nation is slightly larger than the state of West Virginia; it shares land borders with Russia's Kaliningrad Oblast and with the nations of Poland, Belarus, and Latvia.

As a Soviet Republic, Lithuania was a major exporter of agricultural products to other parts of the Soviet Union; these goods were "primarily processed meat, dairy products, and fish" (United States Department of Commerce, 1998, p. 3). Following the break-up of the Soviet Union, Lithuania's agricultural infrastructure underwent massive reform, shifting from a highly centralized, state-controlled system that included state and collective farms to one that was privatized into agricultural companies and family-owned units (Meyers, Kazlauskienė, and Giugale, 1999). "By January 1, 1997, less than 1700 of the large scale farms survived [initially there were nearly 4,300] with an average size of less than 400 hectares, while the number of family-owned farms had increased to

196,000" (Meyers et al., 1999, pp. 5-6). However, less than half of those family farms were thought to be functioning units.

Between World Wars I and II, Lithuania was a sovereign and independent state—with numerous small privately owned farms. It had a Chamber of Agriculture, young farmers' organizations (circles), and a national union of young farmers' circles. Then came the period of Soviet "incorporation" that began in 1940, one that was interrupted by German occupation (1941-44) during World War II, and, subsequently, was reinstated with the return of Soviet forces in 1944. This "reincorporation" once again established a communist state, an era that lasted for nearly half a century.

The following is a brief historical sketch of the origin and beginning of young farmers' organizations in Lithuania during the 1920s and 30s, and their second "beginning" or "renewal" since the fall of communism, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the regaining of Lithuania's independence in the 1990s.

Background

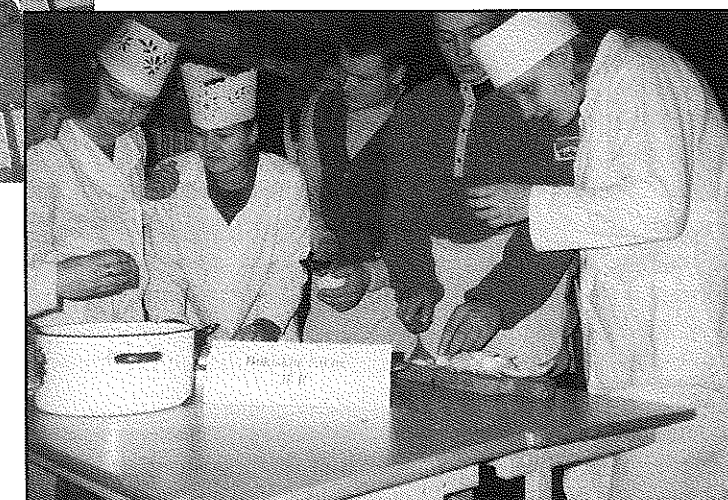
Information about organizing young farmers' clubs first came to Lithuania from the United States in 1923. However, it was not until 1929 that the Lithuanian Chamber of Agriculture first considered questions concerning its role in the education of rural youth. As a result, a commission was appointed to research this issue. The commission recommended establishment of two institutions—a Young Farmers' Union and a Bureau for Adult Education.

The Lithuanian Chamber of Agriculture was originally founded in 1926 but was closed by the Soviet government in 1940. In 1991, the Chamber was reopened and in 1997 it was "re-confirmed" by federal statute. Today, it is a non-governmental body comprising 115 agriculturally related associations, such as producer groups and regional associations (Lithuanian Chamber of Agriculture, 1999). The Chamber's general purpose is to "represent interests of the [its] members in the institutions of State Authority [sic] and government," and to assist "farmers to realize [the] idea of self-government.")



Students practice their marketing skills while selling vegetables produced cooperatively by members of their young farmers' circle (Kaunas, Lithuania).

Members of a young farmers' circle in Daugai, Lithuania are inspecting ingredients used to prepare a food demonstration project.



The Young Farmers' Circles Union was organized into local "departments" at the village level. In many cases, district agronomists with the assistance of ward- and village-level agricultural "specialists" were instrumental in establishing local organizations that were then and are today known as "circles." During the Union's formative period, its organizers received extensive information about young farmers' clubs in England; thus, due to this early influence, the English organizational "model" was adopted.

It was determined that the target audience for the Young Farmers'

Circles would be rural boys and girls who were 10 to 20 years of age. However, initially, students from the highest class of the local primary school, that is, the fourth "form" or grade, made up the majority of a circle's membership, and their school-teacher was the "local" or school-level club leader. Therefore, the local village schools became the centers of activity for the Young Farmers' Circles.

By the mid-1930s, 700 local circles with a total membership of nearly 20,000 students were in place throughout Lithuania. In 1935, for the purpose of future administrative

systematization of Young Farmers' Circles, the early organizers of many of the circles, that is, the district agronomists, were formalized as 21 district-level administrators. Further, on March 28, 1936, the Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament) passed the Lithuanian Young Farmers' Circles Union law. This statute formally united all of the country's Young Farmers' Circles into one nationwide Union (Organization), and designated the president of the state as its "guardian."

In 1939, the Lithuanian Young Farmers' Circles Union had grown to include 1,179 circles and more than

40,000 members. However, tragically, as a consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 (Internet Modern History Sourcebook, 1997), forces of the Soviet Union forcibly occupied Lithuania, and on July 5, 1940, the Soviet government closed the Young Farmers' Circles Union and destroyed all of its property.

Era of Renewal

Beginning in 1989 and continuing through the decade of 90s, there has been a renewal of Lithuanian Young Farmers' Circles and a National Union. In February 1989, at the Lithuanian University of Agriculture in Kaunas, a conference of young farmers was held at which time it was decided to "restore" Young Farmers' Circles in Lithuania. Moreover, on March 21, 1992, the 1st convention of Young Farmers' Circles (following Lithuania's newly regained independence) voted to re-establish the National Young Farmers' Circles Union. Shortly thereafter, the Union adopted a flag, a mark, a seal, established a bank account, and began publishing a newspaper; and, in an attempt to honor its pre-World War II heritage, re-instituted a flowering Shamrock as its official "attribute" or emblem. Moreover, an additional "reconnection" to another pre-war tradition, the president of the Republic of Lithuania again assumed the role of chief "guardian" for the organization.

Since 1992, the Young Farmers' Circles Union has been a member of the Lithuanian Youth Organizations, and was admitted to the European Committee for Young Farmers and 4-H Clubs in 1997. In 1999, the Young Farmers' Circles Union of Lithuania encompassed 105 Young Farmers' Circles comprising more than 2,000 members. Currently, Union activities include organizing training seminars



for its members in areas such as practical works, as well as courses, competitions, quizzes, exhibitions, fairs, excursions, and international camps. Additionally, the Union coordinates exchange programs with rural youth organizations in other countries. The Union is constantly in search of financial support to fund these and other activities, and regularly submits project proposals to the Lithuanian Ministries of Agriculture and Education, the Lithuanian Youth Foundation, the Open Society Foundation of Lithuania, and other potential partners.

At the community level, circle members, both individually and as schools, grow vegetables, root crops, wheat, flax, fruit, berries, spice plants, flowers, and ornamentals; conduct demonstration tests of different vegetable varieties; raise poultry and other small animals, and practice beekeeping. In addition, there are circles devoted to learning the skills required to produce Lithuanian folk art, such as the weaving of waist-



bands, making patterns, knitting, weaving from twigs and grain straw, wood carving, and creating ceramics.

The Future . . .

In his foreword to the book, *Lithuania's Accession to the European Union Successes and Challenges for a Rural Economy in Transition* (Meyers et al., 1999), Hartwig de Haen stated:

For the former centrally planned economies it has indeed become increasingly apparent that the most difficult part of their transition process consists of creating the complex

institutional, legal, administrative, and social framework necessary for an advanced market economy to function. (p. xiv)

Moreover, other scholars (Bernard, Hemlich, & Lehning, 1998; Rau, 1991; Seligman, 1992) suggest that for these nations to "build" the fundamental foundations requisite for sustaining these "complex" components, there must be an embedded, functioning, and progressive "third cell" or "third sector." Specifically, Bernard et al. (1998) stated:

[A] "Civil society, or 'civic space', [that] occupies the middle ground between government and the private sector ... It is in this civic space that people are 'public beings' ... It is a voluntary realm devoted to public goods ... It is constituted by freely associated individuals and groups and, unlike the private sector, it aims at finding a common ground and integrative and collaborative modes of action. (p. 28)

One role of education in formation of a sustainable civil society is to serve as an agent for transferring the social "DNA" necessary for societal change, growth, and prosperity to

occur. Moreover, fundamental human components required for this change process to proceed successfully, include the needs and interests of and opportunities for the youth that populate a nation that is undergoing such a massive and profound transition. Perhaps, even more significant are the unique challenges facing the rural youth of these nations (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1998). Conditions may be further exacerbated by the fact that, "the CEECs [Central and Eastern European Countries] have a substantial proportion of their total population [including young people] living in rural areas," and, that, "farming and its associated industries remain significant for the well-being of local communities" (Malcom, 1999, p. 32).


To this end, the Young Farmers' Circles and their national Union of Lithuania are seeking to make a positive and sustainable difference in the lives of these young people, their communities, their nation, and our world. The following is an excerpt from the mission statement of the contemporary Lithuanian Young Farmers' Circles Union: "[The

purpose of] Lithuanian rural youth, who [have] gathered to the circles of young farmers, is to learn diligence, order, persistence, [and] economy to enrich and Mother- [sic] [the] land, its fields, forests and farmsteads." Concomitantly, many of today's Lithuanian rural youth have interests that include, but go beyond the bounds of, practical agriculture. They wish to learn more about other youth organizations, to gradually integrate into the activities of other public organizations, to conduct cooperative activities with different youth organizations, and to visit, live, and work with young farmers in other countries.

To learn more about the Lithuanian Young Farmers' Circles, the Young Farmers' Circles Union, or the Chamber of Agriculture, you may write to:


Mrs. Sonata Kisieliene
Lithuanian Young Farmers'
Circles Union Office
K. Donelaicio G. 2 - 205
3000 Kaunas Lithuania

(continued on page 22)



Where institution building (and not mere constitution writing) is concerned, time is measured in decades. This was true of the German Länder, it has been true of the Italian regions and of the communal republics before them, and it will be true of the ex-Communist states of Eurasia, even in the most optimistic scenarios.

**—Robert Putnam
Harvard University**



Predictors of FFA Program Quality in North Carolina

By Zane J. Vaughn

What are the predictors of a quality FFA program?

Agribusiness needs new leaders with vision according to Oliver (1991) and Hildreth (1991). Agricultural education has postulated that FFA provides premier leadership development for students. The Reinventing Agricultural Education for the Year 2020 initiative created a new vision that calls for meeting diverse student and industry needs well into the next century. These challenges call for increasing the quality of agricultural education and FFA programs.

What are the predictors of quality FFA programs? This was the research question posed by the author in a recent study of North Carolina agriculture teachers.

Data analyzed for the study revealed that multiple teacher departments and the leadership experience of the teacher were two predictors of FFA program quality.

The first conclusion, that multiple teacher departments had higher quality FFA programs, is supported by Straquadine (1988) who found that the higher the number of teachers in a department, the higher the program quality. This implies that if school systems want a higher quality FFA program they should strive to increase the number of teachers in the department. A second implication is that teachers in single teacher departments could use more assistance in their efforts to provide a quality FFA program. Single teacher departments

should consider using resources such as FFA alumni, an advisory committee, the National FFA Organization and their state agricultural education team. An active alumni chapter can decrease the total workload of the teacher by helping prepare CDE teams, driving students to events, and helping the FFA program raise money. An active advisory committee can also assist the teacher in recruitment efforts and developing a program of activities; thereby reducing the teacher workload in a one-teacher department.

The National FFA should provide more resources to single teacher departments through the Internet and other avenues. For example, providing lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations, and examples of completed applications would be valuable resources that National FFA could provide. State agricultural education teams are also encouraged to provide a Web site for teachers in their state similar to the National FFA Web site. The site should provide the latest information about teaching, state requirements, and classroom materials such as lesson plans. State staff may also want to consider developing a blueprint for a leadership course or reexamining what is currently being taught related to leadership in current courses. The Professional Growth Series initiative of the National Council for Agricultural Education is encouraged to develop

materials that specifically relate to single teacher programs. For example, The Council is encouraged to develop lesson plans and classroom materials that would help reduce the workload in the classroom; thereby reducing the total program workload. State staffs are encouraged to contribute resources to the Professional Growth Series in their state.

The second conclusion of the study was that the leadership experiences of the teacher has a positive influence on the FFA program quality. The number of regional/state agricultural education committees a teacher served on was associated with FFA program quality. Teachers who participate on these committees have better quality programs probably because they are abreast of the newest information at the state and national levels through contact with peers and partners during these meetings. One implication is that younger teachers should volunteer to serve on committees to improve their contact base and expand their knowledge base in agricultural education. However, there should be a blending of younger and more experienced teachers on these committees.

If the teacher held a regional/district/state FFA office while in high school, they had higher FFA program quality scores. In this study, being an FFA member was not a predictor of FFA program quality. This is supported by Vaughn's (1976) study, which reported that participation in FFA as a student did not affect the degree of teacher success. The implication is that FFA officers should be actively recruited into agricultural education teacher preparation programs.

The number of leadership positions the teacher held in the local

vocational department was another indicator of FFA program quality. If a teacher is an active leader in the local school, it stands to reason that the teacher would be an active leader of his or her FFA program. However, the opposite may also be true, if the teacher has a quality FFA program he or she may be selected as a leader in their high school. The implication is that teachers who are involved in leadership positions in their school are likely to be more active in strengthening their FFA program.

The number of times the teacher attended the Washington Leadership Conference for Advisors was associated with FFA program quality. This leadership conference is a nationally sponsored conference developed especially for advisors. It provides a unique in-service opportunity to strengthen teacher leadership skills. The implication is that more advisors should attend the Washington Leadership Conference for Advisors. This supports the research conducted by White (1982) that determined that more in-service activities for advisors should be held to teach leadership and leadership training skills.

The number of offices held in high school leadership organizations other than the FFA was also associated with FFA program quality. Perhaps FFA does not have a monopoly on leadership training. High school students who plan to be agricultural teachers should not be discouraged from participating in other youth organizations. This will help them in the future.

In conclusion, the programs that were shown to be of higher quality were those that had multiple teachers and those that had teachers with more leadership experience. An unexpected

finding of the study was the overall low FFA program quality. Many chapters simply are not doing what leaders in the field believe quality FFA programs should be doing. For example, the number of chapters using the official opening and closing ceremonies at FFA meetings was 73.2%. The number of FFA programs that had speakers/formal programs last year at meetings was 36.9% and of those they only averaged 1.04 speakers per year. Only 55.4% of the FFA programs in North Carolina had a written program of activities. These variables along with several others were found to be at a level that is less than acceptable. One must ask if FFA is doing everything possible to carry out what the United States Congress has charged it with doing and what the organization says it provides to students through participation in the FFA.

Many authors have trouble defining leadership. It is elusive. This study only explained 36% of the variance. This is further evidence of the difficulty of studying leadership.

Further research should be conducted to determine the scope of the FFA advisor position and what FFA advisors actually do. Further research is needed to assess what agriculture teachers are doing and how that correlates with their pre-service training. If FFA program quality is low, are students obtaining all of the benefits that the FFA offers? Are FFA advisors doing what it is thought that they should do?

An evaluation of the benefits of the Washington Leadership Conference for Advisors should be conducted. The leadership training that teachers receive at this conference should be evaluated. It should also be determined how many teachers are

aware of the conference and what the conference provides. The recruitment of teachers to the conference should be assessed as well.

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Sonata Kisieliene is an Instructor for the Lithuanian Young Farmers' Circles Union and a Council Member of the Lithuanian Chamber of Agriculture in Kaunas Lithuania. (no photo)

Agricultural Education in the Elementary Classroom...

(continued from page 9)

that the cheeseburger is unhealthy or is it the number of cheeseburgers that a person eats that makes it unhealthy? My class concluded that it is the number of cheeseburgers and things that people may eat with the cheeseburger that causes it to get an unhealthy status.

My second group of agriculture lessons would be integrated with European artists. Each spring, I introduce my students to the French artist Claude Monet. We study about his life as a painter and gardener. I introduce the students to impressionistic painting. We study the haystacks that Claude Monet painted. He was one of the first European painters to paint pictures outdoors. The students learned that Claude Monet discovered that he must paint the outdoor object the same time each day or the sun's shadow would create a different picture to be painted. Monet loved flower gardens and was very particular about colors in his flower gardens. He is known for Monet's Garden of Giverny. The students also study the lily pond pictures that Monet painted. During the course of study about Monet, the students decide on plants for our outdoor classroom pots in the courtyard. The students grow the flowers from seed and transplant them into the pots. To increase spring color, the students plant tulip and crocus bulbs. Once the flowers are in bloom, the students go outside and paint pictures of the flowers in the pots.

This past year, I introduced the artist Picasso. The students studied examples of his brushstroke, colors, and flower paintings. They produced their own pictures of flowers in a vase. We created a Picasso gallery

for the school to enjoy. Yes, growing the flowers from seed, transplanting them, and caring for them is part of my agriculture lessons.

I call the last group of lessons mini ag lessons. During the first week of school, the students place a pinch of rye grass seed in the bottom of a knee-high stocking followed by two handfuls of potting soil. A ball shape occurs and is tied off by a piece of string creating what looks like a round head of dirt. Wiggle eyes and a mouth are glued on to the head. They rest the "dirt" baby at the top of a large baby food jar, and the remainder of the stocking that hangs below the head becomes the wick for the water in the baby food jar. The students keep a science log on their dirt babies' growth. They record the growth of hair (grass) over a period of four weeks. I have had students who kept the dirt baby outside for a year.

During the study of Fairy Tales, the students study seeds. We examine soaked lima beans and label the parts of the seed. But go beyond that lesson. We classify and sort all types of seeds. We talk about how seeds travel in nature. The students grow their bean plants and attach a Jack to the beanstalk. Agriculture is one of the best components in my curriculum. It comes to life in so many ways for children. These are the types of lessons that need to be shared and realized as agriculture.

In October, the students learn about plant nodules and plant baby spider plants. We hot-glue wiggle eyes on the pot and add pipe cleaner antennae. The students watch them grow and take them home at the end of October to grow as an indoor plant. We also plant coleus cuttings from the garden. This is another type of plant that shows nodules. When the students take them home in December, they are in flower.

Around the 4-H Fair time,

Charlotte's Web is read in many classrooms. The students find out just a bit about farm life. The kindergarten teacher in my building takes her students to the fair to see the farm animals. This type of activity brings a community agriculture connection to the classroom. They learn about farm animals, farm equipment, farm products, and meet people who live on farms.

During the winter, I introduce my students to micro-propagation of African violets. The students are given a very basic introduction of this information. Tissue culture is the propagation of a plant from the tissue or cells of a plant part. Winter is the best time for the students to start African Violets from the tissue culture. It is a very slow process. The students used yogurt cups filled with potting soil and planted two or three African Violet leaves about one fourth inch tall into the pot. They used an inverted drinking cup to create a greenhouse for the baby plants. By Mother's Day, they have a small African violet plant to give to their mother.

Jackie Needham is a second grade teacher at SangreRidge Elementary School at Stillwater, OK



Go To The Head Of The Class...

(continued from page 26)

- Answers:
- 10. D
 - 9. C
 - 8. B
 - 7. A
 - 6. D
 - 5. B
 - 4. C
 - 3. D
 - 2. C
 - 1. A
- Answers:



webmaster@agedmag.edu

By George Bostick

s i t e s o n t h e w e b

This installment of webmaster@agedmag.edu presents some of the very best educational web sites, resources, lesson plans, and webquests available on the web today. These sites provide quick and easy access to substantial and excellent resource collections of educational materials found on various federal, state, university, non-profit, and commercial internet sites. And, many of the sites loan materials to educators, students, and parents throughout the US.

The Gateway to Educational Materials <http://thegateway.org/>

The Gateway to Educational Materials Project is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and is a special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology. The Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM) project is a consortium effort to provide educators with quick and easy access to the substantial, but uncataloged, collections of educational materials found on various federal, state, university, non-profit, and commercial Internet sites.

Teachers, parents, and administrators can search or browse The Gateway and find high quality educational materials, including lesson plans, activities, and projects from GEM Consortium member sites.

(☆☆☆☆)

Agripedia <http://frost.ca.uky.edu/agripedia/>

Agripedia is an internet accessible interactive multimedia instructional resource, developed by the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture with a USDA Higher Education Program Grant.

Agripedia presents facts, figures, demonstrations, examples, graphics, and more regarding the concepts, practices, and vocabulary of agriculture in a multimedia format using audio clips, graphics, text and animation.

(☆☆☆☆)

Office of Educational Services <http://www.oes.siu.edu/>

The Office of Educational Services is committed to serving people in education, business, industry and government who are involved with planning, developing and delivering education and training. They loan materials to educators, trainers, project coordinators, and students throughout the US. In addition

to the materials that they loan, they maintain a database of more than 1,000 task lists that can be used for developing Tech Prep and STW programs as well as other career and technical education programs. A search using the keyword "agriculture" returned 169 items. A search for FFA returned 16 items.

(☆☆☆☆)

Techportal.org <http://www.techportal.org>

Search for funding and grants, in-kind donations, training, volunteers, discounted hardware and software, web resources, or more. This site supports nonprofits (schools and communities) with needs in technology.

TeamTech is a collaborative effort on the parts of Americorps*VISTA, IBM, and United Way of America, as a response to America's Promise to bring nonprofits in eleven cities across the country up to date technologically. America's Promise was founded in Philadelphia at the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in April, 1997, and is chaired by General Colin L. Powell. There's lots of stuff at this site.

(☆☆☆☆)

Bernie Poole's EdIndex of Resources for Teachers and Students <http://www.pitt.edu/~poole/edmenu.html>

This web resource is an indexed set of links to web sites that support teaching and learning in grades K-12. The indexes are age and subject-specific, and they are updated almost daily. Thousands of links lead to hundreds of thousands more, all of which have been prepared or selected by professionals interested in providing cross-curricular multimedia learning resources for teachers and students.

(☆☆☆☆)

Ben's Guide to the U.S. Government for Kids <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

"Ben's Guide to the U.S. Government for Kids" helps students learn how our government works. Students can learn about the branches of government, the election process, and how laws are made. This site includes debate topics, word puzzles, historical documents, and resources for parents and teachers.

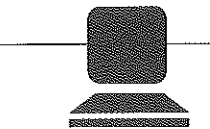
This site provides learning tools for K-12 students, parents, and teachers. These resources teach how our government works, the use of the primary source materials of GPO Access, and how one can use GPO Access to carry out their civic responsibilities. GPO Access provides locator services to U.S. Government sites, and Ben's Guide provides a similar service to U.S. Government Web sites developed for kids.

(☆☆☆☆)

EduHound <http://www.eduhound.com/>

The "engine" for everything education in grades K-12! Their motto is: "We tracked it down so you don't have to!" Good ideas come from an over-riding need. That is the case in the birth of EduHound.com. This site was developed and conceived in the spring of 1999 by a team of educators, teachers, and parents who felt the need for an Educational Directory to help them cut through the clutter that was currently available on the Web. They have dedicated themselves to giving the best of the best for all K-12 educational purposes. This pre-screened directory to more than 30,000 K-12 sites will help you easily locate the very best educational web sites, resources, lesson plans, webquests, and much more. This is an excellent resource for teachers.

(☆☆☆☆)



George Bostick is a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC.



The International Aspects of FFA

By Gary E. Moore

While the FFA emerged as an American institution, it has spawned sister organizations in a number of other countries. And the FFA has been involved in a variety of international activities for over 50 years. Go to the Head of the Class if you can answer the following questions related to the international aspects of the FFA.

- The first FFA international exchange program, which started in the late 1940s, was with the:
 - Young Farmers Club of Great Britain
 - Future Farmers of Argentina
 - Junior Farmers Club of Germany
 - 4-H Club of Denmark
- In 1963 the FFA started a Peace Corp project. In what country?
 - Philippines
 - India
 - West Pakistan
 - Ghana
- The International Leadership Seminar for State Officers, an annual event to provide state FFA officers with international experience, typically travels to:
 - Africa
 - Asia
 - Central America
 - Europe
- Ivan Nelson, a former teacher of vocational agriculture attached to General McArthur's staff was influential in the development of the:
 - Future Farmers of the Philippines
 - Future Farmers of Italy
 - Future Farmers of Japan
 - Future Farmers of Germany
- Each year the national FFA officers travel on a Goodwill trip in January. The destination is:
 - Belgium
 - Japan
 - South Africa
 - China
- Which of the following is (or was) not a real organization?
 - Future Farmers of Columbia
 - Future Farmers of Canada
 - Future Farmers of Peru
 - All of the above are (or were) real organizations
- In 1972, the National FFA along with the Iowa FFA association established a program to improve agriculture in Jamaica. The project focused on:
 - Swine Improvement
 - Corn Production
 - Tractor Repair
 - Milk Goats
- State and national winning dairy and livestock judging teams of both FFA and 4-H have the opportunity to participate in the International Dairy and Livestock Judging Seminar which consists of sightseeing, visiting farms and agribusinesses and having short host family stays in Europe. The highlight of the program is the judging team participation in the:
 - International Livestock Judging Contest in Hamburg, Germany
 - Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh, Scotland
 - European Classic in Paris, France
 - Alps Invitational in Berne, Switzerland
- In 1975, the National FFA Organization helped sponsor (along with Massey-Ferguson) the First World Conference in Agricultural Education for Youth and Adult Leaders. Twenty-eight countries were represented. One of the highlights of the conference was the:
 - International Talent Show featuring talent from all participating countries.
 - Banquet of the Nations featuring food from all participating countries
 - First International Agricultural Olympics
 - The awarding of 25 International Farmer Degrees
- The National FFA currently has an international experience program that teams up with the:
 - US Agency for International Development
 - Peace Corp
 - US Department of State
 - US Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agriculture Service

(answers on page 22)

Joe Scatterscrew...

(continued from back cover)

to kinda see it through and discuss the details with the General."

"What happened then, dear?"

"I think it must of made a lot of jealousy some way. Sgt. Murphy talked to me for thirty minutes and they wasn't a word in it you could use in front of children. Mad, see. Because he hadn't thought it up and got in the Generals good graces himself. I would of showed him if I had been around to see it through."

"What happened?"

"Well, right after that I got my order to Alaska. I thought some of going over to the General and pointing out that I would be a whole lot more value to just be put on a sort of free lance basis to rove around the camp and think up ideas for saving time. A whole lot more valuable than tramping around in that ice and snow in Alaska."

Joe shook his head morosely.

"Sgt. Murphy coulnt't see it, though."

"That's too bad, Joe, but I don't see how you apply what happened in the army to your teaching career."

Joe re-lit his cigar and closed the foot locker. "I got my ideas on administrative relations from that.

Rule one.

Stay away from the superintendent and principal.

Rule two.

Don't ever volunteer any ideas. Like right now the farmers out at Bee Gum are awful mad because they think the busses are going to be re-routed but I don't aim to tell the superintendent. Let him find out the hard way."

"But Joe, you know the busses are not going to be changed. Why couldn't you.....?"

"No, sir-ree!" Joe said firmly, "It's liked I learned in the army. Let

the General do his job the best he can and I'll do mine!"

"But...."

"No. Another rule is to never tell them anything about my job. In the army if I had never told them about my plans I might have been a Lieutenant before it was over, although I would of hated to associate with that class of people! I figure it like this. Just do what you are hired to do and not a bit extra."

"Well, Joe," Myrt sighed, "I suppose you know best." "A man learns from his experiences. Just like in Alaska my job was to service and grease the jeeps. Well, one day I put out a little extra. I decided it would be sort of nice, sort of add a little touch of color and all if I would touch up the captain's jeep with some fresh paint. I painted it a two-toned white and maroon and if I do say so it looked real nice. Sort of distinct and different from the others."

"Well that was real considerate of you to think of that," Myrt said approvingly. Joe grunted.

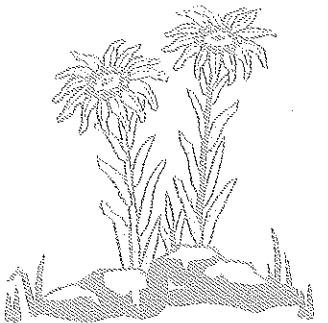
"I thought so at the time but sort of had to change my opinions. It took me four nights to scrape all that nice paint off and then I pulled fourteen months solid of K.P. No sir-ree! Just do what you hire out to do and don't ever do anything extra. That's me. That's the way to get along in this world. Brains and initiative ain't appreciated in this old life. I turned down the Chamber of Commerce today on serving on the Agriculture Committee. My pay is just the same without that extra work."

Myrt began to sprinkle the day's ironing.

"But, Joe, if you would do a little more than the job calls for, perhaps you could get promoted to a better one with more pay."

Joe picked up the daily paper and turned to the comic section. "Myrt, I am not exactly looking for a higher paid job. Take this community and this school. They have sorta got used to me. I wouldn't want to go through that again!"

Experience Is The Best Teacher



Editors Note: The Joe Scatterscrew stories were written by Prof. E. V. Walton at Texas A&M in the 1950's. These stories were originally meant to entertain and to provide subtle hints for those teachers who needed them. These stories do not portray agricultural education today. The behavior and teaching practices of Joe Scatterscrew are not recommended practices. The purpose of publishing these stories is to simply provide agriculture teachers with a little humorous relief from the stress and strain of teaching today.



Scatterscrew Learns From Experience

Joe Scatterscrew held up an old khaki shirt and gazed at it fondly. "Myrt, I sure am glad I brought this old foot locker in from the garage."

Myrt looked at the old G.I. clothing with distaste and resumed her sock darning.

"I can't imagine why," she said.

"Well, I tell you, Myrt, this brings back a lot of memories. I learned a heap in the army that applies to my ag. teaching. I use my experiences ever single day."

Myrt looked doubtful and frowned.

"I thought you didn't like the army."

"I wasn't too sold on it and that's a fact. They ain't no chance in the army for a guy with progressive ideas but all the same I learned a lot. Now you take this shirt. I remember distinct when I lost these corporals stripes. That experience has helped me get along with my principal and superintendent. I learned right then never to pass on my ideas and to avoid the brass like the seven year itch. Myrt, you wouldn't believe this, but by watching close I get by for four or five weeks without being seen by the superintendent or principal. I learnt that the day I lost those stripes."

Myrt sighed and put the baby's bottle in the warmer. "How did it happen?"

"Well, first place the smart alec second lieutenant didn't recognize ability. It was at Ft. Hood. I spoke up to him one day when we was drilling and told him from my experience as a teacher of boys that the men would think a whole lots more of him if he would give them a break every twenty minutes or so and another thing, their morale would be higher if he would kinda let them sleep, say thirty minutes later ever

other day. I told him I thought they would drill harder when they did drill."

Myrt looked up from her sewing basket.

"How did he respond?"

"Well, it was awful. No man ought to use langwidge like that! Lt. Gimlet also put me on K.P. I scrubbed them dad-blasted G.I. cans for over a week before I got a chance to speak to the General about my idea for saving man power. It was like this. After I had scrubbed out 418 of them big garbage cans, I got the idea of mounting a great big steel brush the size of the can on an electric motor and just sticking the cans down on top of the brush and throwing a switch."

Myrt finished with the last of the socks.

"Sounds practical."

"It is. But do you think they appreciate progress? No sir-ree! I took the idea to Sargeant Murphy and pointed out it would give me more rest time and I would be more efficient with my potato peeling."

"What did he say?"

"Well, I tell you. Sgt. Murphy was another man that must not of been raised in a Christian home! His langwidge, I believe, was worse than Lieutenant Gimlet's."

Myrt frowned.

"He wasn't nice?"

"Now that's a fact if I ever heard one! But I believe in progress. I had never seen the General but one day he come by with a whole passel of people trying to get in his good factors walking along behind him. Come right by where I was scrubbing them dad-blasted cans. I could see myself getting promoted for a valuable idea and getting to sorta rub Sgt. Murphy's nose in it for speaking to me like he done."

Myrt looked at him with interest. Joe shook his head gloomily. "Well,

Myrt, I thought it was a good a chance as any. The General looked like a reasonable man and you know me I ain't never been a man to be awed by position. You've seen me slap Area Supervisors on the back and even call the Commissioner, 'J. W.'."

"I stepped right up after I saluted and stuck out my hand. 'General,' I sez, 'I don't believe I have ever had the pleasure of making your acquaintance. I am Joe Scatterscrew, former Ag. teacher over at Birdcraw, Texas.'"

"The General sorta stiffened up and didn't shake hands but I could tell he was interested. He looked at me and his face got sort of intent looking and I spoke up."

"General, in teaching agriculture, a man has to learn a lot. Now you take farm shop, we learn to save time by using electricity', and then I sprung my idea on him."

"That was nice to try to help the General save time."

"Well, he got a deep frown on his face and a little two-bit Lieutenant come tearing up from behind the General. The General sort of choked up and his face got red as a beet. I sort of thought he has asthma the way he begin to breathe."

"Take this man's name!" he said indistinct like. I knew then that the General thought it was a good idea and that I would hear from it later. I figured I might even get Master Sargeant out of it. The party went on and the Lieutenant wrote my name down on a notebook.

Joe shook his head in disgust.

"I bet today the army would be using my idea and saving millions of man hours if I could of stuck around

(continued on page 27)