



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

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Agriculturalists Are the Champions of Change

SEAN JONES

Pa. FFA State Sentinel

WASHINGTON — On Oct. 9, Washington D.C. opened its doors to the mentors and youth advocates of agriculture. The Champions of Change program honored those who are involved in FFA and 4-H, who are constantly making a difference in the lives of others through their programs.

According to the Obama administration, the honorees have devoted their time and effort to their communities across the country and had the opportunity to share their stories with administration officials and 4-H and FFA members from around the globe. The Champions of Change program was created to honor ordinary Americans doing great work in their communities.

All of those who attended were given a short tour of the White House. Then it was on to the awards ceremony, where all of the students and teachers recognized were given time to tell their stories. Out of 12 recipients from across the nation, Pennsylvania was honored to have Jessica McAtamney, an agricultural teacher from W.B. Saul High School, selected as a winner.

McAtamney was honored because of her dedication to conservation. She led her agro-ecology class in a school-wide recycling program and has educated her students on why recycling is important. She has also helped to create a program where students and community members, along with local cooperatives, can have access to fresh fruit and vegetables by utilizing urban farming techniques.

"Mrs. McAtamney is an inspiration to many of her students, and will undoubtedly continue to make a difference in her Philadelphia community," Casey Shawver, state FFA president, said.



White House photo

FFA members and prominent agricultural figures meet in Washington D.C. to honor the FFA and 4-H winners of the Champions of Change award.

Tent City Tours Teach Teamwork

EPHRATA, Pa. — On Wednesday, Sept. 26, the Warwick and Cloister FFA worked in cooperation to give agriculture presentations to preschoolers and kindergarteners from the Ephrata area. The chapters started working together last year and decided to continue building their relationship through this event.

Cloister FFA adviser Miss Sarah Quigg, said, "when I saw that over 400 students coming to visit Tent City tours this year, almost double what we have had in previous years, I was relieved when Warwick contacted me to offer their help. It was like the cavalry had arrived."

Although the day ran very smoothly, there were a lot of behind the scenes workers who made the event possible. Kirsten Kauffman and Emily Pfeiffer, president and vice president of the Cloister FFA, spent several days putting together goodie bags for the classes and assigning station presenters.

Sue Bollinger, a local dairy farmer, also worked with the teachers to compile class sizes,

set-up the final schedule, and ordered the promotional materials. Graduate Erin Beever also brought her horse Lexi, and Lizzie Gallagher also brought in several rabbits so students could interact with them prior to beginning their tours. Gallagher is the Pennsylvania State Rabbit Breeders Association Duchess and a Warwick FFA member. Dan Lynch from the Pennsylvania Game Commission lent the chapters a pelt kit to help with the wildlife station. Lisa Hochreiter, Warwick FFA adviser, also worked with her students to coordinate additional demonstration aides including live crayfish.

Many youngsters were amazed as they got the chance to learn more about horses, dairy cows, sheep, wildlife, and rabbits while the FFA members shared their enthusiasm and passion for agriculture. Both the Cloister and Warwick FFA chapters are looking forward to additional opportunities to work together on community service projects.



Lizzie Gallagher, right, allows Akron students to pet her Angora rabbit.



55,000 Blue Jackets, Four Days to GROW

MARIS WILSON

Pa. State FFA Reporter

In just a few short days, blue corduroy jackets from all over the country will descend on Indianapolis to attend the 85th National FFA Convention and Expo.

Pennsylvania FFA members will be competing against members from other states in their Career Development Events. In order to qualify to attend National Convention, these students must have received first place at Pennsylvania's State Convention in June.

Along with competing, students will have the opportunity to visit the career fair, where exhibitors set up stands promoting their business to members. Agricultural colleges will also be in attendance to show students where they can go in their universities.

The Pennsylvania state officers will be working as delegates throughout the week, debating on current issues facing the FFA. The beginning of an Agricultural Education CDE and the creation of an Agricultural Summit are two issues that will be discussed, along with four other prominent topics in the organization.

While members are there, they will be attending several convention sessions. They will get to hear the National Officer team's retiring speeches, along with keynote speakers who come from all walks of life. Featured are a male figure skating star, a professional basketball player, and a Marine who overcame the odds.

These convention sessions are for more than guest speakers though. At one session, qualified members will receive their American Degrees, the highest degree in the FFA. Pennsylvania has 36 members who will be receiving this degree. The Pennsylvania FFA officer team would like to congratulate all of the members for their efforts in achieving the organization's highest degree.

At the last session of the convention, the new National FFA Officer Team will be announced. Jenna Moser, from the Philadelphia FFA Chapter, is Pennsylvania's candidate. Good luck to her throughout the process.

This year, National Convention is sure to be a blast for all those in attendance, according to the Pennsylvania FFA officer team. The team would like to wish the best of luck to all the Pennsylvania members who are attending and representing the state.