



# BLUE AND GOLD

## Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

*Beyond the Blue*

[www.paffa.state.pa.us](http://www.paffa.state.pa.us)

### FFA Members Experience the Confirmation of Russell Redding

ALEXANDRIA N. SPEASE  
Pa. State Reporter

HARRISBURG, Pa. —

On Tuesday, FFA members from Big Spring High School had the opportunity to watch history take place right in front of their eyes. At 10 a.m., the Pennsylvania Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee held a public hearing to vote on whether Acting Secretary Russell Redding would stand before the Senate as the new Secretary of Agriculture. The vote was unanimous.

After the meeting, FFA members had the opportunity to meet Secretary Redding and his wife, Nina. The passion that both share for the FFA and agriculture was truly inspiring and made the whole experience even more exciting for all blue jackets in the room at the capitol.

Congratulations to Secretary Redding from all of Pennsylvania FFA and agriculture education students and teachers.



Photo provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Big Spring FFA members and advisers smile big with a picture of the new secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

### 'Tis the Season for Farm Show

FROM THE OFFICER'S STATION

Well every-one, it's almost that time of year again! That's right ladies and gentlemen, in less than one month, the Pennsylvania Farm Show, the nation's largest indoor agriculture show will take place in Harrisburg. The event will be held Jan. 9 through the 16. Chapters from around the commonwealth are already preparing for exhibits that will be displayed or events that will take place during the week. CDE's (career development events) that we will be looking forward to include: demonstrations and Quiz Bowl! Good luck to all of those who are participating.

One day during the week will certainly be more memorable than the rest for many FFA members of all ages. Jan. 11 at 2 p.m. in the Large Arena, the State Officer Team will be conducting the 81st Mid-Winter Convention!



CODY COVERT

During the afternoon, 246 members will be receiving the Keystone Degree, the highest degree that can be bestowed upon them in Pennsylvania!

Also, more than 100 first-year members will be receiving their very own FFA jacket. All these members were chosen based on application that was submitted to the FFA Alumni under an initiative that is known as, "The Jacket Campaign."

The State Officer Team would like to wish all a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year! May each of you be on Santa's, "Nice List," and remain safe during the holiday season. We look forward to seeing you in 2010!

*Cody Covert is the Pa. FFA state sentinel.*



Photo by Clifford Wallace, Mohawk FFA Adviser

Members practice after school to prepare for Farm Show competition.

### Mohawk FFA Prepares Square Dance Teams

TYLER CLAYPOOL  
Mohawk FFA Chapter Reporter

BESSEMER, Pa. — Every year the Mohawk FFA Chapter takes a square dance team or two to the Pennsylvania State Farm Show to compete against several other square dance teams from around the state. It has been this way at Mohawk for the last 40 plus years.

Before 1969, when girls were not permitted to join FFA, the team consisted of Mohawk FFA male members and female members from the Future Homemakers of America.

After girls were permitted into the FFA, the team or teams consisted of both Mohawk FFA female and male members. However, in the early stages female members had to be full-time agriculture students. Meaning that they had to take both a classroom and shop class. This caused female mem-

bership numbers to be low in the early 1970s. Nowadays, however, members can join by either participating in a shop, in a classroom, or in Ag Records to be in the club and participate on the square dance team.

For those 40 plus years, advisers, adviser's wives, or a local square dance caller, such as John McKim, taught the members of the team(s) how to square dance.

Two teams are competing from Mohawk this year, and Janet Wallace will be teaching both of the teams. FFA members include Brandon Aikman, Brandon Ball, Tyler Claypool, Scott Kastner, Kelli Fox, Cassie Musser, McKenzie Raney, and Autumn Piuri for the first team. The second team is Sam Arisman, Allison Ball, Samantha Clark, John Gallagher, Jessica Porchian, Megan Osburn, Matt Rimbey, and Alex Scott. Team members have

been working and practicing hard since early October and will be ready to compete at the Pennsylvania State Farm Show on Jan. 11. Other than the Farm Show, the members will also perform in nursing homes, Granges, and other community places. At the nursing homes, they dance and then talk with the residents. The residents of the nursing homes seem to enjoy watching the square dance team and talking with the members.

The team members and past members enjoy the team activity and learn how to work and communicate as a team. This helps them in the future with jobs and other activities they may pursue. Some former members still square dance after graduation and they continue to do so throughout their lives.

