



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

Beyond the Blue

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Pennsylvania's Shining 'Star' Butterfly Project Selected as National Star Finalist

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On July 23, Kristie Folk, along with the rest of the Pennsylvania FFA received the biggest news since 1992 — a national star finalist would represent the commonwealth in Indianapolis at the 82nd National FFA Convention. The star awards recognize students who have developed outstanding agricultural skill and competency through their CDE (Career Development Enterprise) programs, demonstrated outstanding management skills, earned the American FFA Degree and met other agricultural education, scholarship and leadership requirement. Each star finalist receives \$2,000 from the National FFA.

Kristie Folk represented the state as the North Central Region Vice President in 2007-2008. Throughout her years of membership, she built her SAE (Supervised Agriculture Experience) in Agribusiness. During her

Who ever thought a butterfly would take me this far?

-Kristie Folk

sophomore year of high school, Folk decided that she was going to raise butterflies. "It was my dad's idea," said Folk, "He said, 'You're going to do this,' and I was in need of a SAE project, so I didn't complain."

Her first attempt did not turn out how she thought it would. Within a short time after her first purchase of a dozen caterpillars, they all perished. Folk was disappointed and realized that this project was going to be more difficult than she had first imagined.

With slight hesitation, she purchased 600 caterpillars in the spring of 2006, and with loving devotion and nurture created a unique SAE along with, "Folk's Butterfly Farm."

Four years later, Folk needs help raising approximately 800 butterflies that thrive within her basement. She described her project as, "exciting" and stated, "One day you could have one butterfly hatch and the next day you could have fifty." Folk also loves her butterfly farm because it has become a family affair. "Through the

butterflies, my family and I get to spend a lot of time together and we all love it."

The largest obstacle the farm faces is a virus that has the ability to wipe out a majority of the caterpillars and can remain dormant for one year.

Folk was speechless when she had discovered she was chosen as a national star finalist. When asked if she ever imagined being in the finals, Folk responded with, "Absolutely not! I filled out the application but thought nothing of it. It completely caught me off guard. Who ever thought a butterfly would take me this far?" She stated that all of the annoyances and disappointments were worth it and would not change a moment.

A panel of judges will interview the finalists and select one winner for each award at the 82nd National FFA Convention, Oct. 21-24, in Indianapolis, Ind. The winner will receive an additional \$2,000 award.

No matter where she places, Kristie Folk has certainly brought a sweep of pride over the Pennsylvania FFA. She will certainly have many supporters cheering her on at Nationals.

A 'Ewe' FFA Partnership



Photo by Alexandria Spease, state reporter

DENVER, Pa. — During the recent Monsanto Fore FFA Golf Tournament, Janelle and Andrea Weaver keep their two Dorset lambs, Rex and Lily, occupied. Janelle is a member of the Grassland FFA Chapter and she auctioned both lambs. The profit will assist her in raising the sheep until she shows them at her county fair. She will show the animals under the name of the sponsor. Janelle's younger sister, Andrea, was there by her side the entire day. Upon meeting both girls, Janelle said, "Andrea is my little helper for the day. I really couldn't do this without her." Janelle became involved in FFA after her father, a former member, encouraged her. Andrea intends to follow in her footsteps.

Raising a Donation

STANDING STONE
FFA CHAPTER

WEST FRIENDSHIP, Md. — Daniele Riley from the Standing Stone FFA Chapter in Huntingdon County was recently declared the winner of an essay contest sponsored by the Youth Conservation Program (YCP). The program works to promote heritage breeds of sheep by having breeders donate lambs to interested youth.

Riley attended the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival in West Friendship, Maryland, on May 3 where she received an Icelandic yearling ewe named Izzy. Janice Jenkins and Michael Arthur from Tamarack Farm located in Spring Mills, Pa. donated the ewe.

To receive this ewe, Daniele had

to write an essay introducing herself, her experiences with animals and explaining her interest in the sheep industry. Daniele also had to answer the question, "Why I would like to help preserve a heritage breed of sheep." Her application also required a letter of recommendation. Daniele was one of 18 youth who received a heritage breed of sheep.

The YCP is dedicated to help preserve rare breeds of sheep, which are slowly becoming extinct by educating youth and adults about these rare breeds.

Elaine Ashcraft, program coordinator, said, "The program is more than raising a sheep. It's raising a child." She said the young winners not only develop skills in caring for an ani-

mal but also "grow and experience opportunities" by informing others about a rare breed of sheep through exhibitions and presentations at sheep shows, county and state fairs.

There are many responsibilities when raising one of these sheep. Each youth who receives a ewe has to exhibit the ewe at least twice in 2009, once at a county or local fair and then again at a state fair. Daniele is planning to attend the Huntingdon County Fair and the Pennsylvania Farm Show. The youth must also breed their ewe to a registered ram of the same breed in the fall. In addition, they must use the ewe's wool to either make a wool item or sell the wool to a spinner, felter or weaver. In 2010 the youth will

have to send a paper with pictures about their year and experiences to the donor breeder.

Daniele who has exhibited market lambs for several years at the Huntingdon County Fair enjoys caring for

her Icelandic Ewe. She is excited to show off her new addition at the 2009 Huntingdon County Fair. Daniele will record her experiences in her Sheep Breeding Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) recordbook.

State Officers Keep Busy Schedule

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION

A lot has occurred since the last edition of the Blue and Gold pages. From Erie to Philadelphia, the state officer team has travelled the state and had a great number of experiences! The Western Pennsylvania Leadership Conference (WPLC) was held in Crawford County at the historic Conneaut Lake Hotel. From July 9-10, the members participated in different workshops and activities, not to mention an awesome beach party! Also in Conneaut Lake was the PAAE (Pennsylvania Association of Agricultural Educators) Conference, where Ag teachers from across the commonwealth came to participate in workshops and tours.

On July 20, we were given a tour of *Lancaster Farming*, where we saw how over 61,000 papers are produced and shipped each week. We also toured Wenger's of Myerstown before setting up for the second Foundation Golf Tournament. The Monsanto Fore



ALLISON HOOVER

FFA Golf Tournament, which was held on July 21, went well and the State Officers were auctioned off yet again, along with many spectacular chapter-donated items. Also on the 21, Molly and Tyler left for the State President's Conference in Washington D.C. to meet with other State presidents and vice presidents to discuss National Delegate Issues.

The State Officer Team was invited to attend PANTS (Penn-At-

lantic Nursery Trade Show), where over 900 exhibitors and

6,000 attendees met to discuss business in the Nursery Landscape industry. Throughout the week, we got to work with many wonderful members of the industry and PLNA (Pennsylvania Livestock Nursery Association) is now the sponsor of the state-winning Nursery Landscape CDE (career development events) team.

Next to come was National Leadership Conference for State Officers (NLCSO), a conference where we met with other State Officer Teams from around the nation. Also, Ag Progress Days will be held on August 18-20. The state officers will be working at the Hatfield Foundation Booth and in the Family Room with the State FFA display! Lastly, if you'd like to see your chapter in the Blue and Gold Page, please remember to submit articles to Mike Brammer at c-mbrammer@STATE.PA.US, guidelines can be at www.paffa.state.pa.us.



At the 2009 Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, Daniele Riley stands with her new Icelandic ewe, Izzy, and donor Janice Jenkins.