



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

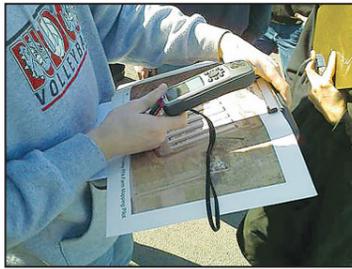
One Emblem, Endless Opportunities

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FFA SAFE Protects Farm Property

SUZANNAH
MELLINGER
State FFA Reporter

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Think about a farm near where you live. Do you know how many buildings are on that farm? Can you list what is in each building? How many cows do they have? Where are the fertilizers, pesticides, and fuel tanks stored? What if there is a fire, explosion, or someone in need of rescue on the farm? Rescue workers need to know where all these potential hazards lie and they need that information for every farm in their response area. Unfortunately, very few farms have this type of information readily available to emergency responders. However, this is starting to change thanks to FFA members and the FFA Saving Area Farms Effectively (FFA SAFE) program.



Global positioning devices and software were used to accurately plot the location of various items on the maps.

The FFA SAFE program allows FFA members to create farm emergency response maps, with the owner's permission, to show emergency responders the location of buildings, equipment, and chemicals, inform them of different types of silos (conventional versus oxygen limited), and show

utility shut-off locations on the farm. By knowing this information, emergency workers can avoid possible hazards to themselves and any possible victims during a farm emergency, save response time, and more effectively preserve the property at risk. These maps are first hand-drawn by FFA members during a visit to the farm. When the members finish this first draft, they return to their school and use global-positioning software (ArcGIS) to make a digital map. This map is printed and given to the farmer in a weather-protecting tube and is stored at a location specified by the farmer. Only the farmer and the local 911 dispatcher know where that tube is kept but the dispatcher can relay the map's location to emergency responders if the need arises.

In order to properly train FFA members from around the state, Penn State University and the FFA teamed up to offer two Farm-Mapping camps in June. Students from Upper Dauphin, to Bermudian Springs, to Canton, to Walter Biddle Saul, to Northern Potter FFA and many other chapters were all participants of this camp and are now prepared to map local farms. In fact, 17 farms in the State College area were mapped during these two camps and a hand-full of other farms have been mapped since the camps. The long term goal for this program is to train teachers as well as FFA members so that the teachers can use this program in their regular curriculum every year and continue to map more and more of Pennsylvania's more



FFA members work with a Centre County farmer to map his farm during the FFA SAFE Mapping Camp.

than 59,000 farms. "This is not a class project, this is for real," said Rick Day, associate professor at Penn State University.

Paul Heasley, the agriculture teacher at State College High School noted that he has received nothing but positive feedback from the participating farmers. "It allows our kids to get out into the community and work with local farmers and provides so many opportunities for the kids to gain skills and learn about job opportunities (in technology area of agriculture)" said Heasley.

A lot of progress has been made in the FFA SAFE program, but there is still much progress to be made. "We need to get more schools to participate in the program. We have sixteen school districts trained but we need all the chapters to get involved," said Day.

FFA members who are interested in getting their chapter involved in this program, talk to the school's agriculture teacher and tell them to contact Mike Brammer, executive manager at the Pennsylvania FFA Office to get started.



PENNSYLVANIA FFA
BEGINS A NEW YEAR
Suzannah Mellinger
State FFA Reporter

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!!! It may be July, but within the past month, the Pennsylvania FFA Association entered into its 80th year. During the second week of June, more than 1,400 members and guests gathered to celebrate a year of hard work and dedication as we participated in Career Development Events (CDEs), attended sessions, and for some of us, ran for a State FFA Office. As State Convention drew to a close, our "New Year" was rung in by induction of the 2007-2008 Officer Team. I am one of those new state officers, your State Reporter, Suzannah Mellinger, and I am thrilled to be getting to know all of you this year, whether you're a member, advisor, parent, sponsor, or just friendly person I meet in passing.

This year, our theme is "One Emblem, Endless Opportunities." We have the opportunity to switch things up a little in the Blue and Gold pages so we are going to try some new things. We are no longer highlighting a different region in each edition —now articles from any region can be in the next Blue and Gold pages. We will also be posting informa-

tion on our Website (www.paffa.state.pa.us) on how to properly prepare an article for the Blue and Gold pages as well as putting the Blue and Gold pages on our website so you can show it to friends and family who do not receive the Lancaster Farming. If you have an article you would like to see in the August Blue and Gold pages, make sure the article, pictures and picture captions are e-mailed to Mike Brammer by August 7th at c-mbrammer@state.pa.us

If you think that summer time means a lull in FFA activities, think again! Since State Convention, the FFA Foundation has already held the Hoss's Fore FFA Golf Tournament and visited the Derry Fair and the Western Pennsylvania Leadership Conference. Coming up in this month, look for your state officers at the Shippenburg Fair and the Monsanto Golf Tournament (July 27th). During the first week of August, the team will be traveling to Maryland for the National Leadership Conference for State Officers and then the next edition of Blue and Gold pages will be published just before Ag. Progress Days. Until next time, keep up the good work, good luck at your local fairs, and tell us all about the great things happening in your chapter!

Canton Celebrates Achievements, Increases Membership

JERIKAH HITE
Canton FFA President

CANTON, Pa. — Although school is out and summer is here, many of the students at Canton High School cannot wait until school is back in session. Why? Because of the FFA!

Near the end of the school year, the Canton FFA stayed active with a variety of activities. The first item on the agenda was running the day-long fourth grade Environmental Day for Canton Elementary School students. Members ran workshops which taught the young students about streams, livestock and conservation issues. After helping many kids in the area gain knowledge regarding the environment and agriculture, it

was time to kick back, relax and enjoy the Bradford County FFA Banquet with food, fellowship and awards. It was great to see Canton members be recognized for their accomplishments and the hard work done throughout the year. Following the banquet, the annual Canton FFA campout was held on Armenia Mountain. It was a night full of fun, games and of course a campfire, which gave us all a chance to just relax.

More important than the year-end events was the fact that members spent many hours planning and now the chapter membership has grown in size. By the end of the year, many new faces were attending meetings, ready to learn what the FFA organization is all about and to get involved. With the help of a few state officers and

dedicated chapter members, both which have served as excellent role models this past year, many underclassmen have been inspired to join the Canton FFA.

By increasing the number of FFA members, any chapter has a greater chance to build a larger, stronger future in agriculture. By setting a good example, along with encouraging others to step outside their boxes and join an organization which can take them anywhere, members of the Canton FFA have learned that agriculture education surely does lead to succeeding. There is no greater award to be received, or achievement to be reached, than to watch an underclassmen walk in the Ag. room and ask, "When can I get fitted for my blue jacket?"



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