



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

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Garden Spot Chapter Brings Holiday Hope

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Student Teacher

LAMPETER, Pa. — With the holidays rapidly approaching it's easy to get caught in the hype of the season. Honestly, who doesn't think about buying gifts, wrapping presents, or decorating the tree? While all these things are both fun and festive, they often get us so worked up that we forget about the true spirit of giving. Despite this trend, an elementary school in New Mexico can attest that the Garden Spot FFA hasn't forgotten about generosity.

At their November meeting, the chapter began by announcing the success of their fundraising efforts at the fair before introducing two newcomers in the room. Randy Caldwell and Mrs. Mary DaLauro had come on behalf of the Dowa Yalane Elementary School to ask for basic school supplies. The school is stationed on a Zuni Indian Reservation,

and many of the students live below the poverty level. They have difficulty getting basic materials like markers, pens, pencils, paper and crayons. Making it a school wide project, DaLauro set a goal of filling 51 book bags and came to ask the chapter for help.

After brief discussion, historian and Lampeter Fair Queen Shelly Fairchild made a motion to donate \$1,000 to the school. It took a while for the room to process the enormity of the donation, but members wholeheartedly supported the proposal. With a decisive tap the motion passed, and Randy just looked at DaLauro in disbelief, excitedly repeating "a thousand dollars!"

Unfortunately the donation won't bring the reservation out of poverty, but perhaps it will give them something more important. The children will be able to draw pictures and practice writing like normal kids, and they'll also grow up knowing that people



Mrs. Mary DeLauro of Dowa Yalane Elementary School, New Mexico and Shelly Fairchild, a member of Garden Spot FFA display the money and supplies the Garden Spot FFA has donated to the elementary school.

outside of their reservation care about them.

In the words of Mother Theresa, "let no one ever come to



The members of the Garden Spot FFA got into the spirit of the season by donating supplies and funds to the Dowa Yalane Elementary School. Mrs. Mary DeLauro from the elementary school in New Mexico visited to accept the donations. From left are Jacob Brian, Emily Good, Luke Rohrer, DeLauro, Laura Brenner, Katlyn Wissler, Shelly Fairchild, and Sarah Manning

you without leaving better and happier." If the beaming smile on Randy's face was any indication, that evening the Garden Spot

chapter gave the Zuni Pueblo Indians quite possibly the best gift of all this holiday season — the gift of hope.



FROM THE OFFICER'S STATION

Stephanie Bachman
State Secretary, 2007-08

If you're like me, and you haven't looked at your calendar lately, or you're not around small children very much, you may not have realized that it's already December and Christmas is soon upon us! The officers have been staying as busy as ever with chapter visits in full swing, we can only hope that all of you members out there enjoy them as much as we do.

This month the team also received some unfortunate news; Pennsylvania's first executive secretary, Mr. Charles Lebo has passed away. Mr. Lebo left a lasting impression on everyone he met; we are still feeling the effects of his tremendous impact on our association. His legacy serves as an inspiration for all of us to strive to improve ourselves, and the world we live in. Please remember his family in your prayers throughout this difficult time.

Here is just a quick reminder that the deadline for ACES (Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success) registration is coming up as quickly as the holidays on Dec. 21. This is just one more way for everyone to take advantage of the endless opportunities that the FFA has to offer.

I am pleased to find that many of you have already jumped at another opportunity by entering to compete at the 2008 Pennsylvania Farm Show. I can't wait for the Farm Show to arrive and along with it the Mid-Winter Convention, and the chance to recognize 285 deserving members for their years of hard work and service within our organization. These members will be receiving their Keystone Degree; the highest degree Pennsylvania can bestow upon its members. It is a goal that everyone should strive to achieve. We will also witness over two hundred new jackets being given out through the FFA Alumni Jacket

campaign. The team looks forward to seeing everyone again, and if for some reason you can't find us (it's not like the Farm Show complex is big or anything) be sure to look at the FFA Foundation food booth, or the Honey Dumpling stand where we will be working throughout the week.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves; we still have an entire holiday season of yummy food until we can enjoy the scrumptious entrées of Farm Show. This is one of my favorite yet most frustrating times of year, because for some reason I can't ever seem to find that perfect present for everyone on my list. So it seems that every December I am reminded in the words of Emerson that "The only true gift is a portion of thyself". So, if you can't find that perfect present in the crowded malls, with swarms of people just remember all of the incredible gifts that are already wrapped up inside of you. Give the gift of your time, joy, forgiveness, talents, encouragement, prayer, or love. Random acts of kindness like these are gifts that money could never buy, and the best part is there's no assembly required. God bless, and happy holidays.

Danville FFA, MAFMCA to Offer Tractor Safety Program

DANVILLE, Pa. — The Danville FFA chapter, with the cooperation of the Montour Antique Farm Machinery Collector's Association, will be sponsoring a "National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operation Program." The program will begin on Feb. 5, 2008 at the Valley Township Municipal building located near Danville. The instructional program is available to any youth 12 years of age and older, however only individuals who are 14 to 18 will be able to operate equipment and become fully certified. Students do not need to be members of MAFMCA to participate in the program. Much of the coursework will consist of independent study to minimize the number of meetings needed. However, attendance at four evening instructional meetings will be required. There is no cost to attend the course, and a 3-ring binder of informational materials will be provided for each participant.

The MAFMCA is co-sponsoring this course because many of the

tractor show and pull organizations in the state require an operator's certificate for youth under the age of 16 to participate in tractor pulls and parades. The National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operator's Certificate is also required by federal labor laws for a child under the age of 16 to be legally hired to do most types of farm work on a farm not owned by a parent - especially if they will be using a tractor over 20 horsepower or operate any other type of equipment. This course is strongly recommended for all youth 12-18 who spend time on any type of farm regardless of whether they operate machinery or not. Certificates to those who successfully complete the written and driving portions of the course will be issued at the first MAFMCA tractor pull of the year on April 26, 2008.

Please contact Danville High School Ag-Science Instructor Mike Shultz at (570)764-3985 or e-mail at mshultz@danville.k12.pa.us for more information or to register.