



BLUE AND GOLD
Pennsylvania FFA Happenings
 www.paffa.org

Chapter Visits Moved to Zoom Platform

ALAYNA HARRELL
 State Reporter

Chapter visits are a time when Pennsylvania FFA state officers and members can grow and connect. In a normal year, the state officer team would travel to agriculture education programs across the commonwealth to facilitate leadership workshops.

This year, due to health guidelines, most visits must take place in a virtual setting. Over the past three months, the state officers have hosted over 20 chapter visits. The goal of these visits is to help members develop premier leadership, personal growth and career success. Topics such as team building, communication, diversity and

inclusion, supervised agricultural experiences, professionalism, and opportunities in the FFA are led by the state officers.

Virtual chapter visits have been taking place over Zoom. While this is more challenging than a traditional in-person visit, students still have had the chance to meet with state officers and communicate with them. This opportunity has helped both members and the officers to build lasting connections within the Pennsylvania FFA.

As we continue to take our tour of chapters on the computer screen, we are excited to see what the year holds. We hope to make an impact on each member of the Pennsylvania FFA and help them maximize their time in the blue jacket.

PA FFA Foundation Hosts Calendar and Apparel Sale

The holiday season is here, which means it is time to start holiday gift shopping. This year, the Pennsylvania FFA Foundation is hosting a 2021 calendar sale and Pennsylvania FFA apparel sale.

The calendar features Central Columbia FFA, Cumberland Valley FFA, Tyrone Area FFA, Line Mountain Mahantango FFA, Grand Canyon FFA, SVRCS FFA, and the 2020-2021 state officer team.

Each of the photos showcases members in action, while wearing the blue corduroy. To purchase a calendar, head over to the

Pennsylvania FFA Foundation's Facebook page.

The apparel and gift sale includes a wide variety of Pennsylvania FFA merchandise. Items such as coffee cups, blankets, masks and sweatshirts are just a few of the many items for sale. To view all of the merchandise, go to <https://stores.customink.com/pa-ffa>

Each of these fundraisers will support Pennsylvania FFA and its 13,000 members. Both fundraisers are a great way to give back to the future of agriculture.

Three Chapters Host Area Virtual Fun Night

Pennsylvania FFA Association

Each year the Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry chapters hold a "fun night." This night is designed for FFA members from the surrounding region to meet each other and participate in various activities.

This year, the fun night was moved to a virtual setting, which meant the event looked slightly different than normal. However, Pennsylvania FFA members once again, did not let 2020 stop them. On Nov. 12, over 25 FFA members participated in the CDP Area

Virtual Fun Night.

Members had the opportunity to participate in three different small-group activities that were led by the state officer team. The activities consisted of trivia, a scavenger hunt and a game of Scattergories. The members rotated through each activity in breakout rooms and were able to meet each of the seven state officers. They also had a chance to mingle with FFA members from all three counties. This event was a great way to step away from virtual work and have fun as FFA members.

Learning by Doing Grant

Pennsylvania FFA Foundation

The Pennsylvania FFA Foundation is in need of your support now more than ever. We have received over 125 grant requests this month. Local FFA chapters are in need of financial support due to the effects of COVID-19.

Members were unable to sell livestock projects, FFA chapter fundraisers have been canceled and school budgets have been decreased. We are seeking financial support at any level. Please visit www.paffa.org/ways_to_give to donate.

The Pennsylvania FFA Foundation believes agriculture education students should have the maximum opportunity to grow and succeed, leaving high school as prepared as possible for the world ahead. The Learning By Doing Grant program is just one way the foundation supports this mission. If you choose to donate to the Learning By Doing Grant program, you are making an investment in agriculture education. Funds allocated through the Learning By Doing grants are intended to make a lasting impact on the future of Pennsylvania's agriculture.

Counting the Fruit

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION

Somehow, somewhere, I ended up here. I ended up with a crisp blue corduroy jacket. Same girl, new name on the back. It has been nothing, but an honor and a dream come true to serve the Pennsylvania FFA Association for five whole months. My time in this jacket has stretched me and challenged me but has also taught me to count myself blessed and see the joy in the midst of it all.



JESSICA HERR

A few years ago, I adopted this idea of "Counting the Fruit." At the end of every month, I sit down and look over my calendar or read over my journal entries, and I write down at least five things from that month that brought me joy. Sometimes I can fill my page with sweet memories, but I occasionally have a month that feels less "fruitful."

I have carried this practice with me into my year of service as a state FFA officer. When I log off a Zoom call, leave a chapter visit, finish talking with a student, I count the

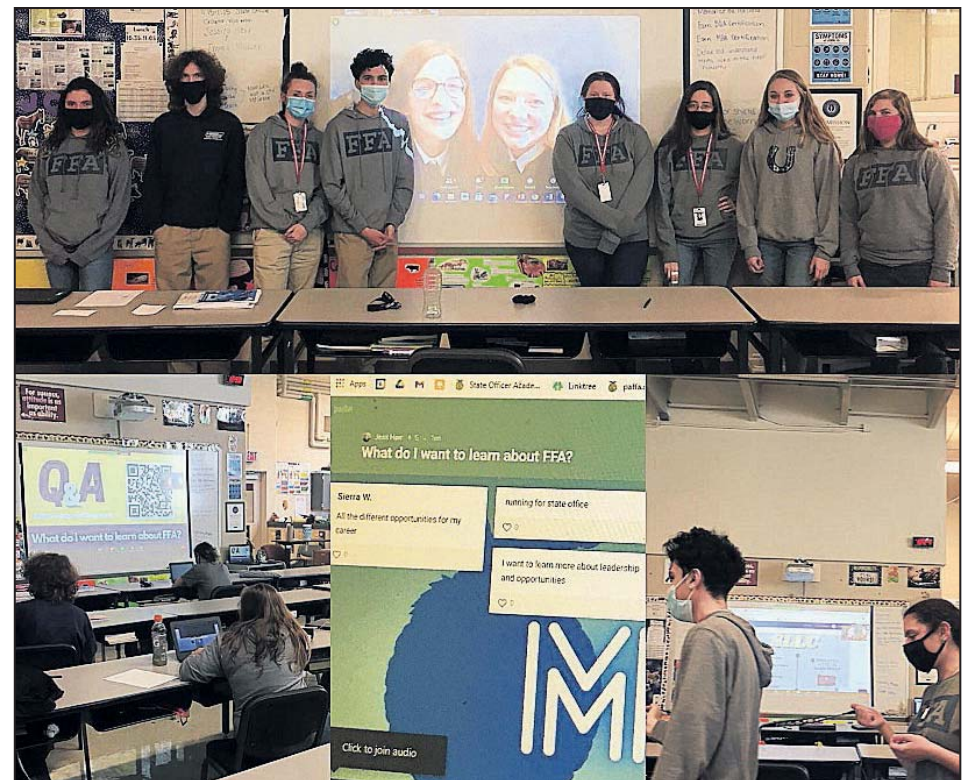
fruit. This year has been far from what I expected when I zipped up my jacket for the first time, but it still has been so rewarding. Some days I am left exhausted or overwhelmed, but most days I am left in awe of this year. I am constantly blown away by the resiliency of our members, of my teammates, and how even though this year has been

hard, it has still been so fruitful.

2020 has been a wild year. At first glance, it seems like nothing good has come from it. But when we slow down, reflect, and take a moment to count the fruit, a different picture is painted for us.

My challenge to you is this: the next time you feel discouraged, disappointed or defeated, take a deep breath, take a moment to reflect, and count the fruit. Because there is always something more. More joy. More light. More fruit.

Jessica Herr is the Pennsylvania FFA secretary.



Pennsylvania FFA photo

Over 200,000 FFA members attended the virtual National FFA Convention. Above, Pennsylvania FFA members tune into the event via Zoom.

A Virtual Convention for All

CHEYENNE BASTIAN-BROWN

Pennsylvania FFA State Treasurer

Each year, the National FFA Convention draws around 70,000 FFA members to the streets of Indianapolis. During the 93rd National FFA Convention this number was blown out of the water. With a record attendance of over 200,000 virtual attendees, the National FFA Convention will truly go down in history.

The "Convention for All" was packed to the brim with fun one-on-one experiences suited for everyone attending the convention. At different times, each day there were "connection rooms" hosted on Zoom where members around the nation interacted with each other.

There also were different activities including dance parties, trivia, facilitated conversations, and meetings with different company representatives. Members and teachers had the opportunity to use on-demand lesson plans and self-reflection workshop materials. And we cannot forget the two daily sessions

that were broadcasted live straight from Fort Worth, Texas. Every day two national officers hosted a general session that included the recognition of national level award winners, American Degree recipients, a retiring address, National FFA Chorus and Band, sponsor recognition, and much more.

The final session was truly a nail-biter, with the 2020-2021 National FFA officer announcement at the very end of the last session Thursday evening. The new officer team consists of: Doster Harper, president; Anna Mathis, secretary; Paxton Dahmer, Central Region vice president; Miriam Hoffman, Eastern Region vice president; David Lopez, Western Region vice president; and Artha Jonnasaint, Southern Region vice president.

With tons of excitement surrounding the event, there are many ways to relive all of the amazing moments. If you wish to see any convention materials, they're still available online at ffa.org.