



BLUE & GOLD NEWS

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

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How I Found My Voice

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION



MOLLY CESSNA
STATE TREASURER

In 2018, I stepped into my first agricultural science class. It was small, but still so terrifying for this shy sophomore girl. As I looked around at the rest of the students who entered the room, I realized they were all juniors. And it hit me, I was going to be the only sophomore for the whole entire year.

I was the odd one out. They all had partners except me. I did not want to voice my opinion or stick out. I saw these as bad things. Then one day my ag teacher looked at me and told me that he knew I had a voice, and he was going to help me break out of my shell by the end of the year.

As the year continued, slowly I would begin speaking up in class, then it was more and more. By the end of my year, I was submitting my chapter officer application, and voicing my opinion whenever I had the chance. Agriculture was my passion

and my wonderful ag teacher used that to push me past my limits and break me out of my shell.

At the beginning of my senior year, I was a completely different person. I was serving as my FFA chapter's president and helping others to come out of their shell.

People kept asking if I was going to run for state office. I looked at them like they were crazy just like I did my sophomore year when my ag teacher told me he would break me out of my shell.

The year continued and the thought of state office kept crawling out from the back of my head. When April 29 came, I had the Pennsylvania state officer application sitting in front of me waiting for me to click submit. I closed my eyes and pushed the button, thinking there was no turning back now.

I had found my voice though agriculture and FFA, so why not help others to find theirs.

June 11 is a day that I will always remember. I can still hear my name being called out as I ran onto the stage to begin my new journey to find my new voice.

So I encourage all of you to embrace your voice. Whenever you are too scared to share your opinion or answer the question in class, remember, your voice does matter. You must stand up for what you believe in and what you are passionate about. Without a doubt, I believe everyone has a purpose in life and a voice that they can use to share what makes them unique.

FFA Members Teach Hunter Safety

TREVOR MAXWELL
State Reporter

Members of the Moniteau FFA chapter in West Sunbury, Pennsylvania, participated in a demonstration on the Lancaster Farming Stage on Jan. 11 at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. The presentation demonstrated tree stand safety, and members explained how a hunter can properly use equipment such as safety harnesses, climbing gear and the prusik knot which prevents you from falling from a tree while in the stand hunting.

Most Pennsylvania FFA members are passionate about hunting, hunting safety, and good sportsman-like conduct. Members of the Moniteau Chapter shared that their passions for hunting started at an early age, and they have become interested in multiple wildlife species and safety methods. Most members of the group primarily hunt White-Tail deer, but also enjoy the occasional pheasant, rabbit or bird hunt.

Safety is something each member takes very seriously.

Peyton Kohlmeyer, a member of the demonstration group, hoped that attendees would take home key safety rules.

"It's not important about what you bring home, but it is important how safe you come home to your family," he said.



Pennsylvania FFA photo

Moniteau members Collin Lunn, Matt McGowan, Carter Sutton, Peyton Kohlmeyer and their chapter advisers stand with Stephon Fitzpatrick, the executive director for the Commission for Agriculture Education Excellence, after their presentation on hunter safety.

Meet the State Star Winners

TREVOR MAXWELL
State Reporter

At every Pennsylvania State FFA Mid-Winter convention, several members are honored during the Pennsylvania Farm Show. One of the highest state honors for members is the state star. This award is given to members who have kept a steady record book for their supervised agricultural experience. Below are this year's Pennsylvania's state star winners.

Andrew Snook
Mifflinburg FFA
Agricultural Business

Snook is the owner and operator of his business, Snook's Landscaping, which he started in spring of 2016. His inspiration for the business came from working alongside his grandfather who taught him many lawn-care skills. He also gained skills in hardscape, landscape design and installations. This includes operating equipment such as a Ventrac tractor, skid steer and a mini excavator. On the business side of the operation, Snook has learned to manage employees along with scheduling, budgeting and marketing. Today, he serves about 260 clients.

Allison Zimmerman
Grassland FFA
Agricultural Placement

Zimmerman works at Homestead Nutrition where she assists with marketing and finance. She also has responsibilities in all three of the company's focus areas — dairy, equine and agronomy. Zimmerman started as an intern and has moved up the ranks to event coordinator. As the compa-



Pennsylvania FFA photo

From left, state winners, Allison Zimmerman, Courtney Martin, Andrew Snook and Spencer Watts.

ny's event coordinator, she planned its open house and ribbon-cutting ceremony. She has designed tech sheets, brochures, ads and websites for Homestead Nutrition's different product lines. From a marketing standpoint, she learned the ins and outs of Homestead Nutrition products for consumer sales.

She also handles secretarial tasks such as answering phones and organizes data on nutrient and dairy management.

Courtney Martin
Headwaters FFA
Agricultural Production

Martin's livestock SAE projects include breeding goats, market goats, and her dairy herd. Growing up on a dairy farm, Martin learned how to care for her livestock. Martin has worked with goats since she was 5 years old. Her does provide her with offspring to continue the herd and milk to sell. Each year, she hopes to expand the herd size and improve genetics. Martin raises her market goats from January until August. She also

shows and sells them at her county fair. Martin's dairy herd stems from her grandparents' dairy farm, J-J Farms. She has her own animals that she trains and shows at the county fair. Martin says she enjoys helping with farm chores and milking on the weekends.

Spencer Watts
Greenwood FFA
Agricultural Science

In the past three years, Watts has participated in the state agri-science fair. He has studied various ag science topics including food sanitation and animal science. His first project focused on cleansing methods for farm eggs. His second project was testing two different equine cool-down methods and the effect they had on reducing a horse's heart rate after exercise. Watts is working on his final project, which also focuses on animal science. Watts says he gained valuable knowledge about the scientific method that he plans to use in the future.



Photo by Joell Arnold

Olivia Arnold gives Pennsylvania Farm Show's junior market goat Judge Chastin Leggit a high five after winning the champion title.



Photo by Barbara Franck

Olivia Arnold of Milton FFA chapter stands with her reserve champion market lamb.

Milton FFA Member Secures Honors At Farm Show

Olivia Arnold, 17, of the Milton FFA chapter of Milton, Pennsylvania, had a fabulous day on the tanbark at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. Arnold and her market goat were awarded the heavyweight champion title. Earning a spot in the championship drive, Arnold and her goat were selected as the reserve market champions.

Arnold also placed second in her class with a market lamb that she exhibited. The lamb went on to become the natural division reserve champion.

But, her livestock wasn't the only one winning ribbons and banners. Arnold won a spot in the showmanship contest and was selected as the all species reserve champion supreme showman.

Embrace Your Purpose

GREGORY GIPE
State Vice President

This January, the Pennsylvania FFA state officer team encourages you to embrace your purpose. When doing something in this new year make sure you are doing so with purpose. Be intentional with all your actions. It will allow you to go places that you never dreamed possible. When you are purposeful with everything that you participate in, it doesn't go unnoticed. So, as we start this new chapter of life, make sure that you focus on finding something to do with purpose every single day.

