



# BLUE & GOLD NEWS

## Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

www.paffa.org



# Dare to Be You

FROM THE  
OFFICER’S CORNER



CLAYTON HETRICK  
VICE PRESIDENT

Dare to be ... you.

Over the past several months, I have learned a lot about agriculture, the amazing people who are a part of it and why different parts of the world work the way they do.

It is great to see all of the special traditions and events in each chapter, county/area or region as we travel the state. These small events and little traditions are what make each place unique.

That uniqueness is what makes them special.

This is similar to people. If we all were the same, life would be boring, right?

The members who have had me at their chapter for a visit or have

seen me at a leadership conference probably heard me do a “sound effect” of some sort at one point or another. None of my other teammates make sound effects to the extent I do.

Why?

Because we are all unique individuals. It is not a bad thing that they are not animated in that way; it is just that each of our styles and personalities varies.

As FFA members, we are unique and all have different interests.

Earlier this year I encountered a young man from the western part of the state. The man has a small business where he would design/make old tractor and truck parts that are no longer manufactured.

He 3D-prints them with the plastic that is needed based on the amount of stress, heat and purpose.

This particular project/SAE stuck out to me because this young man saw a need and fulfilled it. He took his passion for trucks and tractors and put it to work.

I now challenge you to be like this FFA member: use your passions and interests to make a difference. Dare to be you.

# National Convention Places, Records

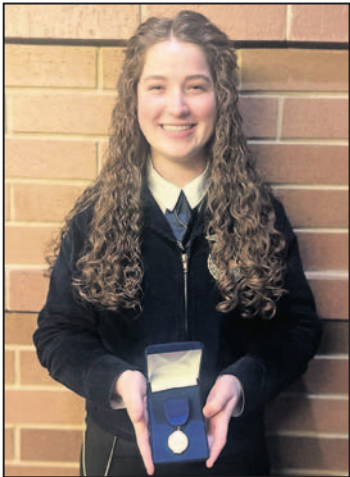
The National FFA Convention, held Nov. 1-4 in Indianapolis, brought together chapters from across the country to learn and be recognized for various accomplishments.

Pennsylvania chapters and members did well, representing the Keystone State and its agriculture.

Attendance of over 70,000 set a record.

Other highlights included:

- One Pennsylvania member was in the national band — Levi Ferster
- Three Pennsylvania members were in the national chorus — Esther Bishop (Southern Tioga), Lauren Erson (Wilmington Area), and Hope Wagner (Little Dutchmen)
- Four chapters had national finalists in ag science (West Perry, Tyrone, Honesdale and Cumberland Valley)
- Four chapters were awarded three-star ratings. These chapters were recognized for actively implementing the mission and strategies of FFA.
- An individual placed first in individual dairy cattle evaluation and management — Sara Reed, Troy FFA
- An individual placed third in environmental and natural resources — Canton
- An individual placed in the top 12 in employment skills — Captain Jack
- A team placed ninth in dairy cattle evaluation and management — Troy
- A team placed in the top 15 in poultry — Manor
- A team placed 10th in veterinary science — Franklin County CTC
- 82 American Degree recipients, which was a record
- National finalist in ag sales placement proficiency — Allison Zimmer-



Submitted  
Sara Reed of Troy FFA displays her award for placing first in Dairy Cattle Evaluation & Management at the National Convention.

man, Grassland

- A member of the National Nominating Committee — Greg Gipe, Mason Dixon
- A national officer candidate who made it through to the final rounds — Abigail O’Neill, Grassland
- Honorary American degrees awarded to Ed Norman, Dr. Kevin Curry, Sherisa Nailor (retiring from the National FFA board of trustees), and Eric and Melissa Herr (national officer parents)
- Distinguished Service Citation for 75 years of support — New Holland; Received on stage by two former Pennsylvania state officers — Lena Bioni and Mark Lowery

Congratulations to all who participated. Thank you for representing Pennsylvania agriculture well.



Submitted photos  
The Athens Middle School FFA chapter.

# Chapter Learns About Tanning Hides

This past month, Athens Middle School’s forestry and wildlife classes did a project on the history and industry of tanning hides.

FFA members and students were introduced to numerous methods of hide tanning. They used a primitive as well as a commercial method.

These hides were tanned throughout their class periods, implementing both methods learned. After completion, students were allowed to take their hides home.

Students start by fleshing donated, locally trapped Pennsylvania wildlife. This marking period, they fleshed beavers, but in the past, they have fleshed wild rabbits and raccoons. They commercially tanned muskrats purchased from a local fur trader.

Students mix and tan the hides in a solution before applying oil and work to finish their pelts to take home.

The project was introduced last year, and over 75 students have participated thus far. The conserva-

tion district and a local taxidermist have come to the classroom to help with the process.

The middle school appreciates support it gets from the local conservation district.

“Throughout this experience, students are able to interact with multiple outdoor careers related to wildlife and possibly ignite a love and respect for trapping and the origin of leather products,” Athens FFA adviser Emily Bidlack said.



An Athens Middle School student works on her hide.



Athens Middle School students display their hides.



Submitted  
The Pennsylvania FFA officers visit a corduroy-decorated New Holland tractor with their eighth delegate, Cody Lehman. From left, Maggie McAteer, reporter; Rebecca Lehman, secretary; Grace McCarty, treasurer; Clayton Hetrick, vice president; Cody Lehman; Crystal Bomgardner, president; Grace Brammer, sentinel; and Madeline Musser, chaplain.