



BLUE & GOLD NEWS

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

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Dare to Be Unstoppable

OFFICER CORNER



MADELINE MUSSER
CHAPLAIN

Unstoppable — it was the theme of the 95th Pennsylvania FFA Mid-Winter Convention, but it’s also a common trait among Pennsylvania’s over 15,000 FFA members.

There’s an especially unstoppable member from the Garden Spot chapter — Maya Coon. I had the pleasure to meet this individual last year during my chapter visit to her school.

Maya is a sophomore at Lampeter-Strasburg High School in Lancaster County. When I met her, I was instantly drawn to her kind and energetic self.

She’s a member of the band and orchestra where she plays the clarinet, bass clarinet and alto clarinet. She also likes to sing and draw, and has a bunny named Cupcake.

Maya is one of those people who you instantly want to be friends with. Maya’s life changed forever when

she was diagnosed with cancer. She went through chemotherapy, losing a lot of weight and muscle tone and suffering mentally.

She is now in remission.

Maya said cancer was never the worst part of her life — it was the pain and trauma of the treatments that took a toll on her.

Through all this pain and difficulty, Maya stood firm. She said she had to be unstoppable because she had friends and family she couldn’t leave behind.

She pushed hard, determined not to lose the battle. Maya is unstoppable because she never fully gave up. She kept fighting.

Dare to be like Maya.



Maya Coon
Submitted

Unstoppable in the Show Ring

FFA members continue to be unstoppable — in and out of the show ring.

At this year’s 108th Pennsylvania Farm Show, one FFA member showed the true meaning of being unstoppable as she achieved her goal and stepped foot in the show ring with her market lamb.

“My chapter and advisers have supported me every step of the way,” Nicole Cox said.

At W.B. Saul High School, animal science majors have the choice to show either market hogs or lambs as a part of their extracurricular activities.

For Cox, who doesn’t come from an agricultural background, the choice was hard.

A lot of hard work and dedication goes into these projects, she said. The time commitment, understanding that these animals rely on her to be fed and worked each day, is a huge portion of the decision.

She eventually chose to work with a lamb, named Fifi.

Advisers and teachers helped Cox learn animal management. Cox worked with her project three times a week — including over winter break and days when school wasn’t in session.

She spent late nights in the barns at her school to ensure that Fifi was properly taken care of, especially through the lamb’s



Nicole Cox and her project market lamb, Fifi, at the Pennsylvania Farm Show.
Submitted

early weeks, since she was a bottle baby.

The Farm Show was the culmination of Cox’s work. She enjoyed spending her last moments with Fifi, as they reached Cox’s goal of showing at the Farm Show.

Throughout the project, Cox

learned about hard work and dedication in addition to lessons about animal production, showmanship, networking, time management and everything in between.

For her unstoppable work with her project, Cox is an unstoppable FFA member.

An Unstoppable Mid-Winter Convention

This year, at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, the Pennsylvania FFA Association, alongside the state officers, worked hard to ensure that the Mid-Winter Convention was a success.

On Jan. 8, a record number of members, over 970, received FFA jackets through the jacket scholarship. A record number of Keystone degrees was awarded — 504.

Also, Pennsylvania FFA chartered two new chapters.

To receive a charter, schools must go through an extensive process and review, ensuring qualifications are met. New charters must have an agricultural education program, elect chapter officers, have a set of bylaws, establish a budget and develop a program of activities before they can be recognized as a Pennsylvania FFA chapter.

Schuylkill Valley and Spring Grove high schools were recognized at the Mid-Winter Convention for receiving their charters.

Each Mid-Winter Convention also brings recognition of four FFA members who have excelled in the supervised agricultural experience programs. One student is chosen for each category.

Selected members have gone above and beyond in their attitude, involvement, community service and supervised agricultural experience. Finalists have mastered skills in production, finance, management and/or research.

For agribusiness, the star went to Brooke Beamesderfer of the Northern Lebanon FFA chapter in the eastern region.

Beamesderfer started and solely operates her own business — Backwoods and Backroads Forever Floral.



State star recipients, from left, Abigail Mozina, agricultural production; Penelope Brosius, agricultural placement; Brooke Beamesderfer, agribusiness; and Trinity Bey, agriscience, receive their awards during the Mid-Winter Convention, during the Pennsylvania Farm Show. Pictured center is Clayton Hetrick, Pennsylvania FFA state vice president. On right is Maggie McAteer, Pennsylvania FFA state reporter.
Submitted photos



Two new FFA chapters received their charters during the Mid-Winter Convention on Jan. 8.

The company was initially funded with a Learning by Doing Grant. The grants are given out each year by the Pennsylvania FFA Foundation.

Beamesderfer oversees all finances — budgeting, expense record keeping and income — as well as communication between customers and social media advertisements.

The state star in the area of agricultural placement is Penelope Brosius from Gifford Pinchot (south-cen-

tral region). Brosius has centered her supervised agricultural experience on her job at the local Ace Hardware.

Brosius started her job by working the register and interacting with customers. Over time, she gained more knowledge and responsibilities, including issuing fish and boat permits, conducting water samples and assembling product displays.

Brosius has grown greatly through her time at Ace. Some of her biggest accomplishments are being trusted with training new employees and testing their suitability after training.

The state star of agricultural production is Abigail Mozina from the Conneaut Area chapter.

Abigail’s supervised agricultural experience is owning and managing a herd of breeding Boer goats. Through this project, she has taught herself kidding, hoof trimming, feed rationing and breeding.

Mozina does a noncash labor exchange for others, meaning she will work or help others for another good or service. This network helps her be able to pay for her next set of quality breeding goats.

The state star in the area of agriscience went to Trinity Bey of Philadelphia, in the eastern region. Bey’s supervised agricultural experience has helped her reach star-level accomplishments.

Bey received her OSHA-10 certification and an FMC certification for working on a team that provided a solution to Philadelphia’s waterways. Bey enjoys learning and applying new skills — one of which was, most recently, working with hydroponic towers in class.