



VATAT

News

A publication of the Texas Agricultural Education Family ☆ 2012 Volume III, Issue XI

"From the Duck Blind"

By: *Russell Thomas, Gilmer*

It was a sunny and warm afternoon on Memorial Day - a time to remember those who sacrificed for our freedom and this great country. Many service men and women gave their life for us and this country. They rose to lead the charge against forces that would threaten our freedoms as Americans. Memorial Day is a time to reflect and give thanks to those who served, and are still serving today, to make this the greatest nation in the world.

These thoughts came over me as I lit the grill to cook supper for my family and friends. I also thought about how many people are cooking BBQ this weekend. This is like the kick off of summer! As I thought about this, I also wondered how much protein would be consumed today! I was scared to even make an educated guess because I would surely fall short. If you look at my grill, there is way too much food for my family and friends to consume in one sitting. Oh, but it will sure be fun trying!

Then I start to think about where all the different types of meat products were produced and processed? Is it safe? Is it from Texas or the U.S.? What does the average consumer think? I know we have the safest and best food quality in

the world, but what does the lady in the grocery store or the college kid trying to purchase hotdogs to grill think about our food? Food is a common bond with us all, and I think many people have questions about how the food gets from the farm to the fork.

As agricultural science teachers, we have a great opportunity to promote, educate and demonstrate safe agricultural practices in the field and in the barn. This should be a common bond for us! Unfortunately, there are groups against us and they are watching our every move. It could be at career development events, livestock shows or even on our own farms. They are ready to pounce if they see any mistreatment, mishandling or anything that may look unethical to animals.

How do we battle against this type of attack?

For starters, we can have a profound influence on our students, parents and the public by educating them how to properly care, handle and show our animals. Also, we can start teaching the elementary grades lessons on agriculture. Having farm days, or these types of activities, can be a big success and have a tremendous impact with young people.



Programs such as "Quality Counts," "Texas Proud" and "Pork Quality Assurance" allow us to be proactive in educating our students and parents.

While I'm standing over my grill waiting on the burgers and sausages to get ready, another thought pops into my head. What else can we do to ensure agriculture against extreme

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TEXAS AG ED FAMILY UPDATES

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VATAT TRIVIA

Post the answer on our Facebook wall!

What can be listed in your summer plan and who should it be filed with?



Prize Package Drawing
Benefiting the VATAT Scholarship Fund
\$5/ticket or 5 for \$20

This year, RiverStar Farms and the VATAT offer you more chances to win one of four exceptional prize packages, along with several other prizes including the second place prize of a small animal scale from WW-Paul Scales and \$50 cash or gift card! The 10 winning tickets will be drawn, as before, and each winning ticket holder will select a filled balloon. Once each ticket holder has his or her balloon, each person will pop the balloon to reveal the prize inside. One winner will get to choose from the following packages...

South Texas Deer Hunt for Two
Livestock Equipment Package
Custom Livestock Trailer
Las Vegas Trip for Two

Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Tickets can be purchased during FFA Convention and VATAT Conference at the RiverStar Farms booth. Tickets cost \$5 each or \$20 for five tickets. All funds collected will be donated by RiverStar Farms to benefit the VATAT Scholarship Fund. The winner will be drawn at the VATAT Conference during Family Night. Anyone is eligible; need not be present to win. View descriptions of each package at www.vatat.org under Conference>VATAT Activities.

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"From the Duck Blind"

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groups?

The Animal Agriculture Alliance just held their 2012 Stakeholders Summit. The "buzz" word for the summit was to be "transparent." The discussion was to have open farm practices with the media and the public and to ensure open communication is translated in our own industry, from suppliers to processors to retailers. The goal of transparency should be consistent. This is a good approach for the agriculture community.

How do we as agricultural teachers promote this idea? At this year's conference in Amarillo, there will be some discussions and workshops on agricultural advocacy. I hope you will take time to attend and promote agriculture back home in the classroom and the community. We all need to support and help each other from the producer to the restaurateurs and understand the production practices used today and the science behind them.

Recently, Domino's Pizza took a stand to support America's farmers and science based animal care by working with its suppliers rather than making decisions based on pressure from animal rights groups. Maybe others will follow and embrace these types of decisions for our food production.

Awareness of these issues will continue to grow; my hope is that we as agricultural teachers can take a lead on these issues. We have to protect, educate and promote agriculture and our food safety. This didn't answer the question, but I hope we can start planning what steps we need to take next!

While removing the burgers and sausage off the grill, one season comes to an end and another begins. School is out and summer begins, which means we are a little closer to duck season! Be safe in your travels and I hope to visit with you in Corpus Christi and Amarillo. Please continue to pray for rain across Texas, our service men and women, leaders, students and each other. May God continue to bless you and your family.

VATAT CAREERS PAGE

The VATAT's Careers page gives you the most recent list of job opportunities available. On the page you can search the entire list of job openings, or you can narrow your search by looking for job opportunities in your area. If you know of a job opening that needs to be posted online, please e-mail it in a Microsoft Word document format to either karen@vatat.org or julie@vatat.org.

Summer Plan? What Summer Plan?

Barney McClure, VATAT Executive Director

According to our fall survey, 90% of the teachers who responded reported having contracts longer than what is normally considered a ten month contract. The ability of a school district to offer these "extended" contracts is a local decision arrived at by your school administration and board. There is no requirement to keep these contract lengths the same from one year to the next.

The summer activities help set agricultural education apart from many other programs in the school. Imagine our profession without the ability to supervise students at FFA Convention, Degree Check, FFA leadership development opportunities or to miss the chance to attend workshops and the Professional Development Conference. Ultimately, the summer activities provide more and improved opportunities for our students.

Agricultural teachers are overworked and underpaid. Never before in our history has more been expected of teachers in general, and agricultural teachers in particular. If most teachers counted up their weekends, nights, holidays and school days, they would far exceed the number of days listed on their contracts. It would not be a bad idea to keep some type written record of this. In most school districts, even with this written record, don't expect to take off most of the summer. Many districts look at those extra days during the school year in the context of the "other duties as assigned" clause in your contract. You are expected to account for the days you are on contract during the summer.

One of the best ways to keep these extra days in your contract is to create and file with the proper people a copy of your summer plan. We have a sample on our website. It is simply a week-by-week plan for the time between the last and first day of in-service. You may list a wide variety of activities designed to improve your program. Depending on your situation, many of these activities will be away from school. Probably the least effective use of summer days is if your school requires you to be in your department from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. File a copy with your principal, high school secretary, and maybe even your Superintendent. They may need to know where you are on any given day, so provide them with your cell number.

You will find that as the trust factor develops with

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Summer Plan

Continued from page 3

your administration, they will be less likely to question you on your whereabouts or the necessity for the extra days on contract. Check in with your administrators during the summer just to let them know you are on the job and keep them updated on your activities. Even with our many summer activities, it is still a good time to relax, catch your breath, and do some strategic thinking about your program. Have a great summer, and I hope to see you at FFA Convention and Conference.



SAE Marketplace is an online resource designed specifically for agricultural science teachers and FFA members to locate livestock sales and breeders, purchase equipment and supplies and find the perfect Supervised Agricultural Experience project.

The SAE Marketplace is a venture of the VATAT and is simple and easy to use. It is divided into three categories, which contain agricultural products and services including: The Show Source, Ag Service and Supply Shop and the Greenhouse.

Advertising on SAE Marketplace is a great way to target Ag Ed Family members! Advertisements run for 12 months and include up to 50 words of text, company logo, website and e-mail links - all for only \$100 per year.

Visit SAE marketplace at www.saemarketplace.com to find your next SAE project or to advertise one!

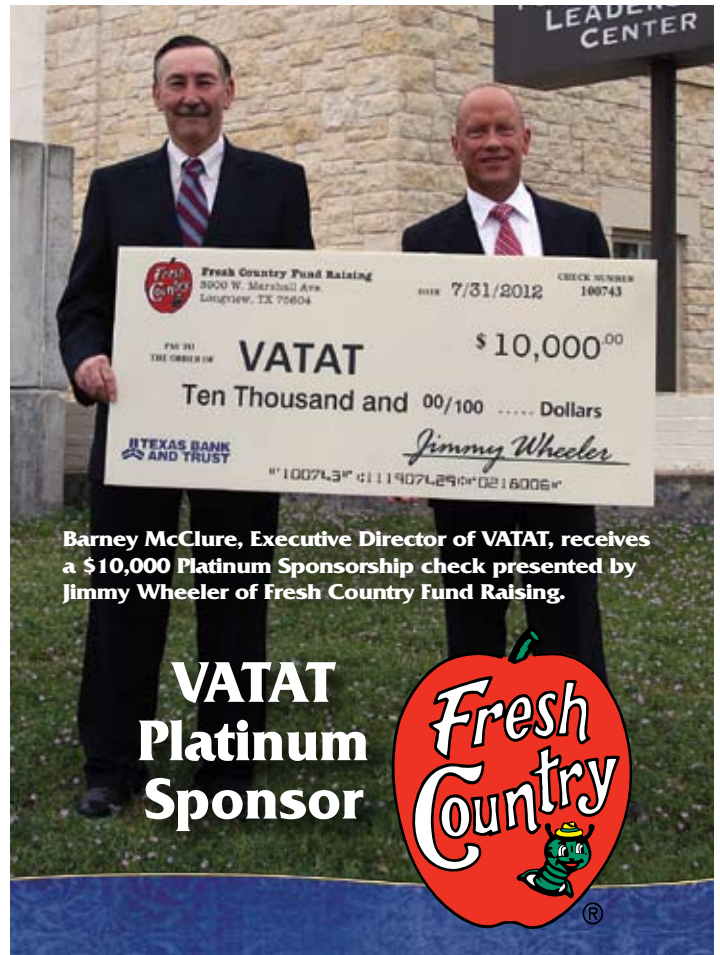
www.saemarketplace.com

VATAT Awards Ceremony

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Come show your support and help recognize outstanding VATAT members and agriculture science supporters!



Barney McClure, Executive Director of VATAT, receives a \$10,000 Platinum Sponsorship check presented by Jimmy Wheeler of Fresh Country Fund Raising.

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Platinum
Sponsor**



VATAT Conference Information

Ag Teacher Open - 24th Annual Golf Tournament

Come join VATAT members at the Palo Duro Creek Golf Course in Canyon, Texas. Check in will be from 6:30 to 7:30 a.m. on Monday, July 30. The tee off time is 8:00 a.m. The all-inclusive entry fee is \$70.00 per player, which includes lunch. The proceeds benefit the VATAT scholarship fund. All players must be current VATAT members and first year teachers are not eligible. In order to participate, please send the completed entry form, found at www.vatat.org under Conference>VATAT Activities. You must register and send payment by July 19. For more information, contact Fud Robertson at 806-543-8298 or via e-mail at frobertson@idalouisd.net.

2012 Fifth Annual VATAT 3D Archery Tournament Scholarship Fundraiser

Any questions regarding this event can be directed to Honey Key at vatatarchery@yahoo.com.

VATAT Conference Annual Family Night

Join us for food and fun at the annual VATAT Family Night on Thursday evening, August 2, 2012, starting at 6:00 p.m. and ending at 9:30 p.m. Come enjoy music from the Ag Teacher's Band and participate in the raffle. We look forward to seeing you and your families there!

VATAT Awards Ceremony

This year award winners will be recognized during the opening general session, area meetings and the closing general session, rather than having the traditional awards ceremony. The following will be awarded during the opening general session: tenure awards for 30, 35, 40 and 45 years; administrator awards; and retiree recognition. During the area meetings, VATAT Award recipients and tenure awards for 5, 10 and 15 years will be recognized. During Friday's closing general session, the tenure awards for 20 and 25 years will be recognized.

Family Activities

Visit the VATAT's website under Conference>Sights and Sounds of Amarillo for a list and information on family activities including Splash Amarillo (water park), Amarillo Zoo, Amarillo Botanical Gardens, Route 66 District, Texas Air and Space Museum, Texas Show, Wildcat Bluff Nature Center, and much more.

2012 Annual Meeting and Board of Director Nomination Announcement

The VATAT Credit Union would like to announce that this year there are three (3) Director positions are up for election at the annual meeting in Amarillo, Texas. Any member interested in submitting his/her petition for one of the three positions should contact our Nominating Committee no later than July 24, 2012. The nomination committee members are: Glenn Clinard 512-661-8058, Don Henson 210-560-8806, or Adren Pilger 979-219-1355.

Conference Attire

Monday, July 30
Casual

Tuesday, July 31
Business Professional

Wednesday, August 1
Business Casual

Thursday, August 2
Business Casual

Friday, August 3
Business Professional

Follow the VATAT on:  & 

Agricultural Career Fair

Preparing students for their future careers by equipping them with leadership skills, proper terminology and a vast amount of knowledge pertaining to agriculture is just part of an agricultural science course curriculum.

This year the Mansfield Agricultural Science Department decided to provide their students with a career fair to explore the various agricultural career opportunities.

“We brought in ag related companies and organizations to allow the students a chance to meet individuals in those careers,” said Larry Florence, agricultural science teacher at Mansfield ISD.

Representatives from Texas AgriLife Extension, Texas Forest Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife, along with store managers from Tractor Supply Company and a Case IH dealer were available to meet with the students.

“The career fair gave the students the opportunity to find out what kind of education they will need to get to those type of positions,” Florence explained.

In addition to the career fair, the Southwest Dairy Farmers exhibited their Mobile Dairy Classroom, a traveling milking parlor featuring a live cow and an oral presentation.



Mansfield students attended the career fair to obtain information on agricultural careers, as well as toured the Southwest Dairy Farmers mobile dairy exhibit.

VATAT News

and the benefits of advertising

Do you know of a company interested in advertising in the *VATAT News*? It is the perfect opportunity to promote a product or service to more than 4,000 VATAT members, Young Farmers, FFA Alumni, FFA Foundation partners and other agricultural and FFA supporters in Texas. Members use the *VATAT News* to receive important information about agricultural education, ag teachers conference, legislation and much more. Advertising prices are reasonable and it is the only way reach Texas agricultural science teachers in their homes.

Advertisers will save money on labor, postage and the announcement will not get lost in the school mail!

We welcome advertising and hope to foster a lasting relationship with every company who advertises in the *VATAT News*. Please share this information with a company you think would be interested in advertising with us. For information regarding advertising formats, size requirements and deadlines please e-mail Julie Vrazel at julie@vatat.org.

2012 VATAT Award Winners

Sponsored by:



IDEAS UNLIMITED (NAAE)

Carin Cason, *Weimar High School*

Lynn Heflin, *Ore City ISD*

Diana Freeman, *Ennis ISD*

Don Muckleroy, *Buna ISD*

TEXAS TURN THE KEY (NAAE)

Carin Cason, *Weimar High School*

OUTSTANDING NEWSPAPERS

TEACHER'S MEDIA AWARDS

Ryan Cummins, *Tomball Memorial High School*

Tom Farmer, *Clyde High School*

Swiftkicks, *Nazareth*

Grand Saline Sun, *Grand Saline*

Devine News, *Devine*

Diboll Free Press, *Diboll*

30-MINUTE CLUB

Ardy Tiner, *Industrial High School*

OUTSTANDING COOPERATION AWARDS

TEACHER'S CHAPTER PUBLICITY AND PROMOTIONAL AWARD

Ryan Cummins, *Tomball Memorial High School*

Bellville FFA Alumni

Blanton Tex-Style

Academy ISD

McCoy's Building Supply

McAllen ISD

OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATORS

David Teal, *Gruver ISD*

Joseph Kolenda, *The Guthrie Career & Technology Center*

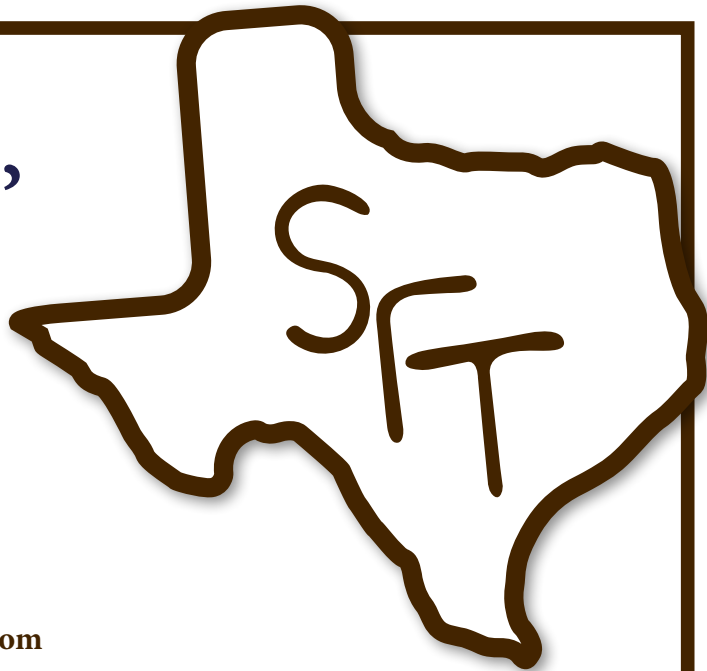
Jim Yancey, *Mineral Wells ISD*

Michelle Pieniazek, *Krum Middle School*

OUTSTANDING RADIO STATIONS

1470 AM KWRD / 100.7 FM KPXI,
Henderson

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Of Texas FFA

TEXAS FFA ALUMNI

Since 1969

The mission of the Texas FFA Alumni Association is to secure the promise of FFA and agricultural education by creating an environment where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success.



Don't forget to bring your baskets to
our booth by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday!

The winning baskets will be sold at the auction
on Thursday.

Texas FFA Alumni Association
attn: Membership Services
614 East 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701



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Texas FFA Update

Ford CEO discusses 65 years of support at FFA State Leadership Conference

The 65-year relationship between the National FFA Association and Ford Motor Company has provided numerous opportunities for the young members involved in the agricultural organization, including networking, scholarships and most recently attending the unveiling of the 2013 F-150 pickups.

Ford CEO Alan Mulally, along with other members of the Ford truck group, attended the Texas FFA State Leadership Conference in Bruceville, Texas.

Mulally spoke about leadership, career success and personal growth to the 100 FFA members in attendance.

“By striving for continuous improvement, developing a vision, strategizing a plan of action and collaborating together, FFA members can surpass high expectations,” Mulally explained. “Good things will happen, but you will also run into some disappointments on the path to meet your vision. Be open to all of those experiences.”

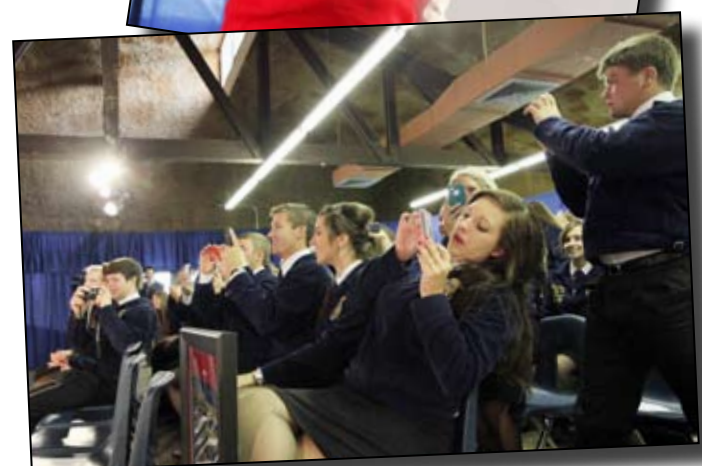
Ford has supported the FFA since 1948, the same year the Ford F-Series pickups were available for purchase. Ford has also provided \$7.1 million in scholarships.

“Each of you are associated with something exceptional, the Texas FFA and its vision,” Mulally said. “It is fantastic to support you and we can’t wait to see your outstanding accomplishments.”

Four Texas FFA State Officers - Heston Heller, Kelli Neuman, Krysti Kelley and Abby Prause - assisted Mulally in unveiling the 2013 F-150 pickups.

“We are excited for our members to have the opportunity to interact with great Americans like Alan Mulally,” said Texas FFA Executive Director Tom Maynard. “Ford’s 65-year partnership with the FFA is more than money. It’s also about bringing students in contact with recognized, visionary leaders.”

“Texas Ford dealers and Ford Motor Company’s support of the Texas FFA is historic. From their initial gift of \$1.3 million, we have established the Agricultural Education / Ford – Texas FFA Leadership Center, Ford Leadership Scholars program and other leadership development efforts to assist Texas FFA members and agricultural educators with the tools to help make dreams come true,” said Aaron Alejandro, executive director of the Texas FFA Foundation.





Foundation Update

TIME TO HONOR SOMEONE

Aaron Alejandro, Texas FFA Foundation Executive Director

The 84th Annual Texas FFA Convention is just around the corner and the annual event captures more than just the “fan fare” of being a Texas FFA member, teacher, supporter, former member or parent – it serves as a backdrop of a legacy of serving one another. More than 2,500 students will be recognized on stage for a job well done – students who have benefited from a parent, teacher, mentor or supporter who stepped up and said “I believe in you.” With **The Experience** campaign well underway, July is our chance to honor those individuals who have helped us all have a positive Texas FFA experience.

The Honor Gift program is designed to say “thank you” to those people who along life’s path helped us get the most out of **The Experience** we call the Texas FFA. In giving to the Texas FFA Foundation, you are helping to ensure the strength of a program we all know has the power to change lives. In giving, you may wish to remain anonymous or choose to let the honoree know who made the gift. Either way, it is important to note someone has recognized your efforts, inspiration and gratitude.

It is simple. Do you know someone whom you would like to honor - teacher, current member / student, family or family member, mentor, sponsor, scholarship donor, business associate, work colleague, supervisor or administrator? Once you’ve identified whom you would like to honor, giving is simple and secure. What’s more, you know your gift honors someone today but touches the future by investing in the Texas FFA Foundation.

After you have identified whom you would like to honor, it is a simple process.

- **Complete the Honor Commitment Form** – this form can be requested by mail from the Texas FFA Foundation (512) 480-8047 or can be downloaded from the Texas FFA Foundation website (www.texasffaoundation.org) and clicking on the “Giving” section from the menu bar.

- **There is no set dollar amount requested.** This is your gift to honor the individual(s) you choose. You can choose to honor those by giving \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100,

\$250, \$500 or \$1,000 – the choice is yours. We just want the opportunity to share with them that someone has said “thank you” and recognized their investment in a life.

- **Giving is easy.** The commitment form and gift can be mailed to the Texas FFA Foundation (614 East 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701) or can be given through our secure online giving option. You can visit the Texas FFA Foundation website (www.texasffaoundation.org) and click on the “Giving” section from the menu bar and give a one time or recurring gift by clicking on the link at the bottom of the page.

- **An acknowledgement letter is sent to the individual(s) you have honored.** Each of your honorees will receive a letter letting them know a gift has been given to the Texas FFA Foundation in their honor. You can choose to share your name so the individual you honored knows it was you who honored them, or you can remain anonymous.

- **You will receive a “thank you” letter from the Texas FFA Foundation.** We appreciate your gift, recognition of others and investment in the future.

- **The chance to pay it forward.** When your honoree receives their acknowledgement letter, there is a place at the bottom of their letter where they too have a chance to honor someone themselves. There is virtually no end to the legacy we have in 84 years of the Texas FFA experience.

- **Purpose.** The most important part of **The Experience** program, process and initiative is purpose. We were blessed with an experience known as the Texas FFA and we have a duty to ensure others can enjoy the great empowering leadership opportunities afforded to our students. We have the chance to Serve with Purpose, Give with Passion and Grow the Legacy. **The Experience** is what the Texas FFA taught us – it is time to give back and pay it forward.

VATAT BRICK CAMPAIGN ORDER FORM

Please Print

Donor's Name:

Donor's Email:

Address:

City/State/Zip:



per line (including spaces).
 You may also purchase your brick with a credit card through VATAT Online. For more information about the brick campaign please contact Barney McClure at 512.472.3128 or barney@vatat.org. Don't miss out on this great opportunity!

Cost is \$100. Make tax deductible checks payable to: Texas FFA Foundation.

Mail completed form to:

Please write what you would like your brick engraving to say above. A sample brick is pictured for reference. Limit 3 lines, 14 characters

Texas FFA Foundation
Brick Campaign
614 East 12th Street
Austin, TX 78701



Texas FFA Alumni

Update

And the winner is...

Kelly White, Texas FFA Alumni President

I understand the phrase “and the winner is...” is not politically correct and the correct usage should be “and the award goes to...” Anyway, the deadline has past, applications were sorted through, and the committee has reached their final conclusion. The following will be recognized at the State FFA Convention.

\$1,000 TEXAS FFA ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP

Kolton Page ~ Columbus
 Hannah Treptow ~ Weimar

\$500 TEXAS FFA ALUMNI GRANTS

Allen	Judson
Florence	Cedar Park
Brazos	Rouse - Leander
Gilmer	Columbus
Canyon Lake	Weimar
	Wimberley

WASHINGTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE AWARD

Brittney Borsierine ~ Allen FFA
 Coleton Callan ~ Rouse FFA
 Ashley Hubenak ~ Weimar
 Paris Walther ~ Decatur
 Payton Wunderlich ~ Weimar

OUTSTANDING AFFILIATE

Gunter

The funding for the above mentioned awards are secured through our Annual Alumni Auction. The Texas FFA Alumni appreciates the support of companies like McCoy’s, Landmark Nurseries, Morgan Livestock Equipment, Ag Worker’s Insurance, LaQuinta, Superior

Trophies, RiverStar Farms, DJ’s Fundraising of Texas, Seitz Fundraising, Fresh Country Fund Raising and the numerous other companies that are always found as exhibitors at our functions. So if you are in the market for a squeeze chute, scales, fencing, boots, camping equipment, etc... Come by the Alumni booth and find out more information about the auction. You may also want to donate an auction item. We are always looking for items to sell.

By the way... And the winner is YOU!

FFA Alumni Q&A

Q: *Who can become an Alumni member?*

A: Anyone can be an Alumni member; membership is open to anyone who is interested in supporting and promoting agricultural education and the FFA on the local, state and national level.

Q: *How much does an Alumni membership cost?*

A: •Annual National membership - \$10; you will receive the FFA Alumni New Visions newsletter and a voice in alumni business; for an additional \$2, you can receive the National FFA New Horizons magazine.

- Annual State Membership - \$5.00
- Annual Collegiate membership - only \$5 to collegiate students who are dues paying members of the Collegiate FFA. Now that’s a bargain!
- LIFE membership - \$150 per individual – one time payment; you will receive a membership card, certificate, life subscription to New Visions newsletter and New Horizons magazine as well as a voice in alumni business.
- Corporate membership - \$300; this membership is extended to businesses and corporations.



Texas Young Farmers Update

From the President's Pen

Connie Koopman, Texas Young Farmers President

Heavenly Father we ask you to bless us with the much needed rain for our pastures and grain fields. We praise you for everything you have blessed us with and thank you for the rain given so far. We, as farmers, use the tools and knowledge you gave us to work the earth to provide for everyone. Not only do we provide in the cattle market, but also vegetables for everyone to enjoy and grain to make products necessary for our everyday life. Thank you for loving each of us and blessing us. Amen.

I would like to share with you an article that I read on facebook. I believe this sums it up.

I'm Part Farmer

by Rhonda Ross, Las Vegas, Nevada

People ask why I'm so passionate about farming. I finally figured it out. By Rhonda Ross, Las Vegas, NV. I travel to fairs and farm and ranch expos all around the country putting on the Ag Magic Show, in which the "magic" words are always, "Thank a farmer!"

Ever since I started doing this, people have asked me why I'm so passionate about agriculture. I come

from a farming family, but I don't personally farm. I didn't even grow up on a farm. So most folks have a hard time understanding my obsession for educating the public about farmers.

And I have to admit I struggled to explain why it's so important to me. Then last fall while I was performing at the River City Roundup/Ak-Sar-Ben in Omaha, Neb., it all became clear.

After one of my programs, a little girl about 6 years old ran up to me and proudly announced, "I'm part farmer!"

"Oh?" I replied. "What part is that?"

"My grandpa is a farmer!"

All the adults who were listening got a big kick out of that, but I totally understood what she meant.

When I attended Iowa State University in the 1980's, I saw the farm crisis up close in the eyes of my fellow students and their families. It was a personal devastation I will never forget. Many of the town students would say, "Oh, they'll find another job." I tried to explain that farming isn't a job to most farmers. Farmers don't farm for the same reasons most people take jobs. Farmers farm because it's who they are. Farming is about love of the land and of everything that comes with it. Farming is a 24/7 commitment and a risk they share with God.



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As farmers continue to consolidate, each new generation of Americans has fewer direct ties to the land. And educating the public becomes absolutely crucial. I come from a six generation farming family. Even though I don't till the soil, I'm a farmer in my soul. I feel my commitment to explaining the importance of agriculture 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I don't care how difficult it is, how many miles I have to travel or even how much money I make. So when people ask me today why I'm so passionate about promoting agriculture, I answer just like that little girl in Omaha. "I'm part farmer!"

I hope you enjoyed this story as much as I did. I am asked the same question in today's time. Why are you so passionate about the Young Farmers and agriculture? It is the love I have for the land I live on and to see everyone get an opportunity in life. I am not a farmer of the soil. My husband and I have 10 head of cattle and each one has a name. I can walk in the pasture and pet each one, including the bull. I am not afraid of them running me over or charging me. I can hand feed each one. When I buy a new cow or heifer, I don't look at that genetics. I look at how pretty or cute they are, because they are all part of my extended family. Some people laugh at me because I name our cows. They can laugh, but I am happy. And when I get the opportunity to speak to someone about agriculture and Young Farmers, I stand tall and proud.

I presented scholarships to our local seniors at the FFA Banquet. I told them they are blessed with the agricultural teachers we have. I told them my FFA experiences and learning parliamentary procedure helped me conduct meetings when I was elected mayor of our town. I told them to absorb everything those teachers tell them.

To me the agricultural teachers go beyond their call of teaching. They have a passion for passing on gifts that make their students excel. I have not met an agricultural teacher yet that is there for the paycheck. They enjoy what they do and that is why they are agricultural educators.

I will be attending the State FFA Convention in Corpus Christi. I hope that I am able to talk to as many FFA members and agricultural teachers as possible. I want to help educate the people on agriculture. I will also be attending the VATAT Conference in Amarillo. If you do not have a Young Farmer Chapter and would like to have one started, come by our booth. I will be more than happy to visit with you. Also, in July we will be having our Summer Picnic in Sugarland. Please go to the Young Farmer website for information.

In closing I ask you to give praise to God for

letting us live as Americans in the land that is free. Also, be thankful to him for giving us the opportunity to worship in the house of the Lord. And one last thing, thank him for giving us the gift of life. Until next time, be blessed.

2012 Texas Young Farmer Scholarship Winners

Brady Johnson, son of Jerry and Chifawn Johnson, plans to attend Texas A&M and pursue a degree in Animal Science. He has exhibited a breed champion steer at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the Grand and Reserve Champion Steer at the Freestone County Fair. Brady has participated in Livestock Judging, FFA Quiz, Radio, Farm Business Management and several other contests on the Area and State level. Upon graduation from A&M, he plans to have his own cattle business.

Clay Robinson, son of Tammi Carraway Robinson, plans to attend Lamar University and pursue a career plan of designing, developing and manufacturing of agricultural equipment. Clay share crops a pecan orchard and hay production. He has a Santa Gertrudis cattle operation of 38 head and has been active in applying for proficiency awards in pecan and forage production.

Hailey Robinson, daughter of Susan Prime, plans to attend Tarleton State University and pursue a degree in Swine Production. Hailey has shown pigs each year of agriculture and has participated in Livestock Judging, Radio Broadcast, Dairy Judging, Prepared Public Speaking, and Job Interview. She also has received the Lone Star Farmer Degree.

Connor Jackson, son of David and Jodi Jackson, plans to attend Abilene Christian College and major in Animal Industry and Business. His SAEP includes show lambs, steers, heifers and a registered Brangus herd developed from his show heifers. He has served as President of his local chapter and the Waco District and participated in prepared public speaking, chapter conducting, and Jr. and Sr. Quiz team. His 18' lowboy trailer received a Blue Ribbon and he has also received his Lone Star Farmer Degree.

Corbin Martin, daughter of Rick and Ronda Martin, plans to attend Texas A&M and major in Biomedical Science. Corbin raised and exhibited primarily swine, but has also shown lambs and rabbits. Her activities have included serving her chapter as President, San Saba District Reporter and Secretary. She has participated in Prepared Public Speaking, Livestock Judging, Chapter Conducting, FFA Quiz and other contests.



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TEXAS AG ED FAMILY EVENTS

2012 State Fair Validation Dates

All manila forms, hair envelopes, ethics policies, committee forms and e-mail excel spreadsheets are due in the FFA office on or before July 6, 2012. All information must be in alpha order or it will be returned to the county at the county expense. In regards to tag alterations, any change to size, shape, form or color will void the tag. The tag will be replaced at the event and the replacement cost will be charged to the individual. Ear notch correction and ear tag replacement forms must be faxed (512-476-2894) to the FFA office on or before July 20, 2012. Do not send information after this date, as it will not be accepted.

Vocational Agriculture
Teachers Association
of Texas

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