



VATAT

News

A publication of the Texas Agricultural Education Family ☆ 2011 Volume II, Issue IX

"Words with Friends"

By: David Reiley, Seguin

Health: the overall condition of an organism at a given time; soundness, especially of body or mind; freedom from disease or abnormality; a condition of optimal well-being; concerned about the ecological health of the area.

With the big "5-0" just months away, I have started to think of all the wonderful things I will get to experience. I can retire from teaching in two years, and with all of the money I have made I can take a trip a week to some far away exotic locales. I will be able to visit such places as Geronimo, Marion, New Braunfels, Kingsbury and even New Berlin. Geronimo has the Valero convenience store; Marion has the hamburger joint; while New Braunfels has the Starbucks. There is Edna's in Kingsbury, and don't forget the pies at Brietzke's in New Berlin. All of those little places offer some reward for the miles of pedaling it takes to get there; to get the good stuff you have to pay the price!

You are probably asking yourself, "And why do we care about this?" Well, as we get older and we drift away from those youthful figures and lean-mean-fighting-machine bodies we used to have, we start to make excuses not to exercise. While being an Agricultural Science teacher has us running around a lot, it is not the type of running that

usually leads to good health. Experts say you need to exercise at a rate that will elevate your heart rate for at least 20 minutes about three times a week. We walk from barn to barn, and we even run out to the truck to retrieve that forgotten show stick, but do we really exercise? Our lives get so busy we forget to find time to take care of ourselves. We practice with our teams before school, then teach all day and then check projects until dark. We go to contests on the weekend, and the whole time we are eating fast food because the kids want some place cheap to eat. Sometimes that combination can lead to not so good results.

About 15 years ago, I started to ride a bike to get some exercise. I was still fairly young, and our children were old enough that they could ride along sometimes too. I was in my middle 30's, and I had started to expand around the mid-section from too many Dr. Peppers, way too much fast food, many nights on the road and no real exercise program. I had to start blaming the cleaners for shrinking my jeans. I had always heard too much heat would shrink the waistline. I decided to do something about it, so I switched cleaners! No, not really. I got the bike and started to ride on a regular basis. Once the spare tire started to disappear from my waist and I started to feel good, it became an



addiction. I needed to ride my bike! It was no longer exercise; it was a drug. I felt better; I fit in my jeans again, and I even think I looked better!

I still ride that bike today, but I still have to fight the off-season demons sometimes. When the weather gets cold and the stocks shows start, the bike riding stops. It can be a real difficult time getting back on the bike because I make excuses. It is too dark,

Continued on page 2...

TEXAS AG ED FAMILY UPDATES

VATAT pages 1 - 6
Texas FFA page 7
Foundation page 11
Young Farmers pages 12 - 13
Texas FFA Alumni page 15

“Words with Friends”

Continued from page 1

too cold, too windy and too sunny, I will only get 15 miles in, so why go, etc. It is like starting all over again each March. I walk out to the garage (yes, I know that is not where you probably keep your bike, but my wife will not let me keep mine in the house), and I stare at the two-wheeled monster. It wants to hurt me, in a good way, but I make excuses. That first ride back after a few months off is killer. It makes you use muscles you forgot you had, and you wake up the next morning hurting in places you forget existed. Despite all of the hurt, you feel that addiction return. You are already planning your next ride and counting the hours until you can get back on the road.

Next you start looking at organized rides in your area and training for that 65 or 100-mile ride next month. You get up at 6:00 a.m. in the summer and ride out of the gate around 6:30. You plan your day around the ride. Slowly, you work up to 40 or 50 miles a day and ride later into the heat of the day to train for the century ride next month. You feel good about yourself, your health improves, your blood pressure goes down and you start to eat better because you like the way you feel. The only drawback is when I get back from a ride I clean out the refrigerator; nothing is safe when I am hungry. By the way, a good brisk 50-mile ride at an 18 MPH average will burn around 3,000 calories. The other good news is you can go back to your favorite cleaners, since they stopped shrinking your clothes; your jeans fit again.

Along with all of those benefits mentioned, your mental health improves, since you are constantly on alert when riding. If riding with others, you have to know where everyone is as well as watch for traffic. You have to think about your next turn or crossing and have a plan just in case things change. Exercising is a great way to relieve some stress as well; you can get away from all of the troubles and concentrate on the task at hand. No cell phone, no parents, no students, just you and the sweat rolling off your forehead. It helps to refocus your energy in a good direction by not dwelling on all of the things you need to do. It releases endorphins that make you feel good and raises your heart rate helping to burn calories and strengthen your heart in the process.

As teachers, we find ourselves always helping others, but sometimes we forget to help ourselves. We let our health suffer, so we can practice one more time with our students or make one more show this weekend. While that is a great thing to do, helping your students is not what is good for you in the end. Sometimes, we have to just say no and take time for ourselves. We have to be able to do that and not feel guilty, which can be hard. I think if I am that important to them then I have to have time to keep myself in good shape because how will they function if I am gone? You know the best part of all this exercise? It is the rush of beating your students up the stairs, or across the parking lot to the truck.

I challenge my students to race me up the stairs in the hotels, if we are below the 6th floor, and I race them out to the parking lot at the stock shows.

So, why did I choose health as the topic this month? I wanted to include a picture of me in Spandex of course! Not really! I just wanted to put that bug in your ear about taking the time to care for yourself. I wanted to make you think about how important it is to find time to exercise and eat healthy meals. I wanted you to think about how important you are to your family and students. They need you! Don't let them down.



After the Hotter than Hell 100 Bike Ride in Wichita Falls Josh Steward, AST at Ralls High School, myself and Dr. Scott Burris, Agriculture Department at Texas Tech enjoy the shade during almost 100 degree weather. Those two guys showered and cleaned up for the picture, and I was still in my riding clothes because I had to ride back to my hotel. By the way, Burris completed an Ironman Triathlon in November! The Ironman consisting of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile (180.25 km) bike and a marathon, 26.2-mile run.

Elected Officials

Gerald Young, VATAT Executive Director

This group includes school board members, elected state officials and federal officials. These individuals have a great deal of power, and if they are serious about

their job or position everything is fine. If not, the result is not good. Like the good administrator, you hope elected officials want to make a positive difference. Most elected officials do a very good job. The problem is there are too many that are worse than the power hungry administrators. These officials are about the recognition and not about the job.

Why does this happen? We can blame ourselves for some of it. Election for individuals of state and federal level positions cost a great deal of money. These candidates have to depend on donations to run a campaign. If they get large donations from groups or individuals, they will have to listen to them if they want to continue to receive those donations. The second thing is most of us in the electorate are uninformed when we vote. We do not spend the time it takes to really get to know the candidates. Many of us let advertisements, radio and television programs tell us how to vote and what we know. This is one of the reasons it's so costly to get elected. Since the electorate is so uninformed, the candidates have to out advertise their opponents.

I was told many years ago we should never re-elect an incumbent unless they have done something significant. If we did not let the elected officials get comfortable, they would get more done. Another problem is educators do not, as a whole, participate in the election process. You might say voting day is a school day and teachers are too busy. That is not an excuse since early voting is easy. I noticed in Harris County you could early vote every day of the week, including Sunday.

I would like to discuss the three groups. Let's begin with the school board. The school board is elected to make sure the school district is run correctly, not to run it. They can hire and fire the superintendant, so they should make sure he or she does the job. I get calls regularly about a parent who called a school board member and the board member went straight to the administration and ignored the chain of command. What they should do is tell that parent how the chain of command works and the steps he or she should follow. If all school board members would just do the job they were elected to do, schools would run better.

Next, let's talk about the state legislature. Our legislators began to damage public education when they created the piece of legislation that established standardized tests, since that happened, our dropout rate has risen, and school morale, especially among teachers, has bottomed out. Students are not as well-rounded as they once were. The only thing that is important is the passing of the test. Also, when was the last time you heard an elected official say, "Texas educators are doing a good job, and we are lucky to have them."? Whatever happened to positive reinforcement? Instead, you will hear them say we are not getting the brightest and best to teach in schools. Even at the beginning of the current

session when legislators were being told that schools do not have enough money, they were blaming the schools and never looked in the mirror. The real problem with our legislature is that many do not vote thinking of their district; they are staying loyal to their party. This is how the federal officials have operated for years; this is not good for state government.

Federal officials need to quit trying to one-up the other party and just do their jobs. Whatever happened to representing the people in your district and state? In years gone by, we had statesmen in Washington. Today, we only have "R's" and "D's." The experts tell us that most people in the U.S. are in the center of their beliefs. The problem is many of the leaders in the two parties are either far right or far left. This results in the majority of the citizens not truly being represented.

VATAT AWARDS

Have You Applied?

The VATAT Awards process has been upgraded for 2011, and the deadline to apply is fast approaching! The new award applications and procedures are available on the VATAT website! Check out the following award categories and make plans to apply or nominate someone! ***Area winning applications must be submitted by the VATAT executive committee member at the spring board meeting, May 21-22, 2011.***

- Outstanding School Administrator
- Outstanding Cooperation Award
- Outstanding Newspaper
- Outstanding Radio Station
- Outstanding Television Station
- Teacher's Media Award - **NEW!**
- Teacher's Chapter Publicity & Promotional Award - **NEW!**
- Ideas Unlimited - **NAAE Eligible**
- Texas Turn the Key Award - **NAAE Eligible**
- Teacher Mentor Award - **NAAE Eligible**
- 30-Minute Club

Get all your information for the 2011 VATAT Professional Development Conference at www.vatat.org!

★barefoot★★

est. 2002

Authentic FFA Apparel

CLASSIC

FFA® APPAREL...

CUSTOMIZED FOR YOUR

CHAPTER

Go to www.barefootagriculture.com
or call 254-918-0511



NOW A CORPORATE SPONSOR OF TEXAS FFA

AUTHORIZED FFA APPAREL PROVIDER: PROCEEDS FROM EACH SALE RETURNED BACK TO FFA!



©Registered Marks of the National FFA used under license.

2011 VATAT TENURE AWARDS

If you should receive a VATAT Tenure Award this year and you are not listed below, or if you feel you are listed in error, please contact Karen Grumbles at karen@vatat.org, so that we may update our records. Also, don't forget to contact the VATAT office if you are retiring this year.

5 YEARS

Ken Abney, Hardin-Jefferson High School
 Monica Barton, C.H.Yoe High School
 Brandon Biggs, Olton High School
 Jordan Blount, Community High School
 CyLynn Braswell, Bryon Nelson High School
 David Brown, George Ranch High School
 Joshua Burnett, Azle High School
 Jason Butler, Nederland High School
 Eddie Byrom, Frederickburg High School
 Amber Campise, La Porte High School
 Dustin Clark, Mabank High School
 Chris Cleveland, River Road High School
 Sheridan Clinkscales, A&M Consolidated High School
 Bradley Cobb, Douglass High School
 Kasey Crawford, Paris High School
 Leslie Cronin, Shepherd High School
 Eric Davis, Judson High School
 Jason Derington, Mansfield Ben Barber Career Tech Academy
 Kady Donaghey, North Crowley High School
 Justin Dunlap, New Braunfels High School
 Lindsey Dunn, Hillsboro High School

Chassity Durham Sukiennik, Martin's Mill High School
 Tom Farmer, Clyde High School
 Christopher Finke, Navasota High School
 Brandon Fizer, Samuel Clemens High School
 Karen Forbes, Naaman Forest High School
 Linsey Fowler, Arlington Heights High School
 Veronica Garcia, Associate
 Henry Goff, Lorena High School
 Adam Graham, Onalaska High School
 Sarah Griffeth, Allen High School
 Jason Guidry, Boling High School
 David Hall, Lamar High School
 Haley Harris, Joshua High School
 Sam Harrison, Plano East Senior High School
 Austin Heck, Nazareth High School
 Roxanne Herbrich, Columbus High School
 Bryce Hines, Dalhart High School
 Jeff Holland, Overton High School
 Becky Hunnicutt, Mt. Vernon High School
 Jennifer Jackson, Centennial High School
 Robert Jackson, Breckenridge High School
 Joshua Jaggears, Ennis High School

Chris Jones, North Shore Sr. High School
 Roger Jones, Ore City High School
 Stephanie Jones, North Shore High School
 Nathaniel Jordan, Nacogdoches High School
 Ashley Kellermeier, Central High School
 Honey Key, Mansfield Ben Barber Career Tech Academy
 Kristyn Loomis, Arlington High School
 Priscilla Lopez, Lopez High School
 Clinton Love, Lake Travis High School
 Trent Manning, Irion County High School
 Jamie McDonald, Shoemaker High School
 John McKinley, Porter High School
 Amber McRae, Hallsville High School
 Richard Meeks, Commerce High School
 Ty Merritt, Paris High School
 Troy Mitchell, Calvert High School
 Doug Morrish, Texas State University
 Shelly Mowrey, S&S High School
 Kim New, Manvel High School
 Brandon Otto, Barbers Hill High School
 Eloy Perez, Granger High School
 Milton Perez, Juarez-Lincoln High School
 Cody Peterson, Ballinger High School
 Weldon Rainey, Moulton High School
 Lance Rasch, Mason High School
 Rachel Rawlings, Sanger High School
 Scott Rawlings, Boyd High School
 Fernando Rodriguez, Zapata High School
 Jody Rowland, Claude High School
 Michelle Sammon, Dawson High School
 Amy Schatte, Boyd High School
 Charles Seidensticker, Ira High School
 Amanda Simmons, Klein Forest High School
 Joseph Simmons, Rising Star High School
 Tamsen Smith, Wimberley High School
 Kelly Stapleton, Prairiland High School
 Crystal Stewart, Highland Park High School
 Beau Stutts, Cross Roads High School
 Beth Stutts, Cross Roads High School
 Angela Waiser, Onalaska High School
 Lance Wann, Snyder High School
 Kelly Wehba, Highland High School
 Jess Wheeler, Midway High School
 Aaron Whitener, Alief Elsik High School

10 YEARS

Mike Abrameit, Refugio High School
 Jerrod Baird, Chillicothe High School
 Brad Barnett, Lometa High School
 Jeremy Bonds, Hendrickson High School

Weston Born, Gruver High School
 Christina Capps, The Guthrie Center
 Darren Carson, Roscoe High School
 Shawn Coyle, Skyline High School
 Cindy Dockter, Panther Creek High School
 Travis Dube, Salado High School
 Bobby Farias, Bishop High School
 Roel Garza, Banquete High School
 Sandra Graham, Associate
 Todd Gregory, Klondike High School
 Melissa Grimes, Associate
 Don Harris, Ingram High School
 Rusty Hollingsworth, Garden City High School
 Eric Janszen, Midlothian High School
 Jim Kelly, Kountze High School
 Justin Lacy, McKinney High School
 Elmo Lawson, Lufkin High School
 Joe David, Lehmberg Smithson Valley High School
 Christie Linke, Memorial High School
 Danny McBride, Liberty-Eylau High School
 Kevin McCarty, Kingwood Park High School
 Mark McClure, Cleburne High School
 Jason Miller, East Bernard High School
 John Hunter, Morgan Pearland High School
 Amber Norris, Sulphur Springs High School
 Michael Norton, Elgin High School
 Rodney Peugh, Santo High School
 Jessica Reeves, Tomball High School
 Justin Richey, Merkel High School
 Beverley Schroedter, Rouse High School
 Jeff Sherman, Wellington High School
 Tara Spencer, Skyline High School
 Josh Stewart, Ralls High School
 Bart Stover, Ponder High School
 Ed Strange, Kerens High School
 Steven Tatsch, Texas City High School
 Craig Taylor, Associate
 Matthew Turner, The Woodlands College Park High School
 Danny Underwood, Dimmitt High School
 Mike Wallace, James Madison High School
 William Wallace, Terrell High School
 Robin Wheelus, Devine High School
 Brent Wicker, Peaster High School
 Keith Wiley, Steele High School
 Mark Youree, Pottsboro High School

15 YEARS

Robby Bow, Happy High School
 Wes Brown, North Lamar High School
 Sandra Choate, Athens High School
 Ernest Clark, Blum High School

Dean Davis, Gonzales High School
Antonio Garza, Edinburg North High School
Charles Buck, Hudson Spurgen High School
Brad Ingram, Mt. Vernon High School
Trey Keys, Granbury High School
Michael Kissire, Sonora High School
Toby Long, Hamilton High School
PT Mahoney, Wimberley High School
Cleveland Morris, Robert E. Lee High School
Troy Oliver, Sealy High School
George Pyle, Buna High School
Stephen Scitern, Anson High School
Glen Shinn, Associate
Jerry Van Cleave, Novice High School
Mark Vitters, Corsicana High School
Larry Watson, Avinger High School
Jana Wilson, Magnolia High School
Kris York, Mullin High School

20 YEARS

Lon Adams, Hedley High School
Jim Allsup, Decatur High School
Chris Bean, Lake Dallas High School
Steven Branecky, Sandra Day O'Connor High School
Doug Flanery, Whitesboro High School
Dean Fuchs, Cinco Ranch High School
Richard Garcia, Raymondville High School
Marc Hackstedt, Needville High School
Robert Hill, Splendora High School
Jeff Huckaby, Hardin-Jefferson High School
Michael Hunter, Lindale High School
Ric Hunter, Jourdanton High School
Jack Jebbia, Stafford High School
Kevin Kelley, Valley High School
Steve Kruse, University Charter School -
Methodist Children's Home Campus
Shannon Layman, Celina High School
Dominic Mazoch, Channelview High School
Roy McCoy, Trent High School
Jerry Perritte, Huntington High School
Dennis Pierce, Associate
Charles Raley, Oglesby High School
Danny Reaves, Klein Collins High School
Edwin Smith, Magnolia High School
Robert Steglich, Thorndale High School
Russell Thomas, Gilmer High School
Tom Trull, Associate
Kelly White, Del Valle High School

25 YEARS

Mark Arnold, Panhandle High School

Steve Black, Fairfield High School
George Brooks, Coronado High School
David Fleming, Sealy High School
Mark Foreman, Big Sandy High School
Wesley Hancock, Caldwell High School
Allen Kaminski, Associate
Alvin Larke, Associate
Brian Lowe, Associate
Monty Moeller, Bowie High School
Charles Prause, Bosqueville High School
David Reiley, Seguin High School
Romeo Robles, Pharr-San Juan Alamo High School
Jimmy Rogers, Rivercrest High School
Bobby Strader, Montgomery High School
Michael Tondre, Sandra Day O'Connor High School
Robert Washington, Gonzales High School

30 YEARS

Ricky Burgess, Covington High School
Roger Claxton, Tulsa Welding School
Fritz Cornelius, El Campo High School
Les Deuel, Associate
Ernie Eckert, Wall High School
Carlos Garza, Rio Hondo High School
Sam Hollingsworth, Hawkins High School
Arthur Hunter, Crawford High School
Gerald Kelley, Abernathy High School
Anthony Mayers, Laredo-Martin High School
Tim McNair, Rider High School
Dennis Palmer, Northwest High School
Roy Ramirez, Littlefield High School
Kenneth Schneider, Rogers High School
Liz Treptow, Weimar High School
Jimmy Vaculin, Tomball High School
Danny Vestal, Baird High School
Doug Vrabel, Hutto High School
George Walters, New Summerfield High School
Kelvin West, Bremond High School
Jack Winterrowd, Cedar Park High School

35 YEARS

Jesse Bradford, Diboll High School
Ronnie Davis, Kempner High School
Roger Green, Monterey High School
Wayne Lamb, Dayton High School
Dale Perritt, Associate
Gary Rosenbusch, Glen Rose High School

45 YEARS

Robert Ray, Graford High School



Texas FFA Update

Texas FFA Board, Staff Amend, Upgrade Adult Recognition

Tom Maynard, Texas FFA Association Executive Director

The Texas FFA Board of Directors approved significant changes in its adult recognition policy and procedures that will open the process to consider a wider, deeper pool of non-teacher Honorary Lone Star FFA Degree nominees and provide more significant recognition at the state convention.

Previously, nominees for the non-teacher Honorary Lone Star FFA Degree were state officer parents, convention host committee members and those nominated by the area association. The new policy allows for other FFA partners and committees to nominate adults who have rendered outstanding service to the FFA. This will allow the entities such as the Foundation and the State CDE Committee to make nominations.

Texas FFA will now provide an opportunity for non-teacher recipients to receive the honorary degree onstage at the state convention on Friday morning. The Friday session was selected because constitutionally, the delegates are required to approve honorary degree recipients, and the business session is currently scheduled for Thursday afternoon. Additionally, many professionals may hesitate to come to convention in the middle of the week, but might be more willing to take Friday off of work. Hotel rooms are more likely to be available on Thursday night than on other nights of convention week. The Texas FFA Convention block loses about 20% of its occupancy between Wednesday and Thursday.

Texas FFA plans to host all non-teacher Honorary Lone Star FFA Degree recipients at a Friday morning breakfast, escort them to VIP seating and honor them in an on-stage ceremony. While the last session is not the most highly attended, it has several unique features that make it special.

For those non-teacher recipients nominated by areas, but unable to attend convention, as in the past, these plaques will be sent by the convention award presentation committee back to the respective areas.

Plans are in motion to honor teacher recipients in a ceremony in a general session at the VATAT Conference. The honorary degree is perceived to be an honor amongst agricultural educators and the VATAT Conference was deemed

the most appropriate time and place to honor those who earned it.

Procedurally, all Honorary Lone Star Degree recipients—teacher and non-teacher must be nominated on a standard form now available on the Texas FFA website. This is a slight change. In past years, teachers would type a letter on school or chapter letterhead. The new form will allow nominators to download forms, type into them on a computer, print and submit. The new procedure is intended to facilitate the nomination process.

**Proud Corporate Partner
of the Texas FFA**



**Specializing in FFA, 4H and
Livestock Show Awards, we have
provided quality products at
competitive prices since 1979.**

Photo by Tom Donoghue © Justin Boot Company • Justin Boots 2011 • Justin Boots #0285/0282



Thinner, denser outsole with Grip-on-Demand™ technology gives you added resilience and more control.

Styles 8810 and 7012



“Knowing you’re not going to lose your stirrup with a crepe sole... that’s a competitive edge a guy might as well take.”

—Trevor Brazile

-CREPE™



Find out more at JustinAQHA.com.



THE WORLD'S GREATEST HAMBURGER
salutes the world's greatest agriculture industry.

Let us bring Fudds to you, we will cater your next event.

888-FUDD-2-GO

BEAUMONT • COLLEGE STATION • CORPUS CHRISTI • KILLEEN • LUBBOCK • MIDLAND • ODESSA • TEMPLE • WACO

**WE REMEMBER YOU
DON'T FORGET US!**



**FREE
Quotes
are
Available**

CLICK IT

www.agworkers.com

CALL IT

 1-800-772-7424 Ext. 1721

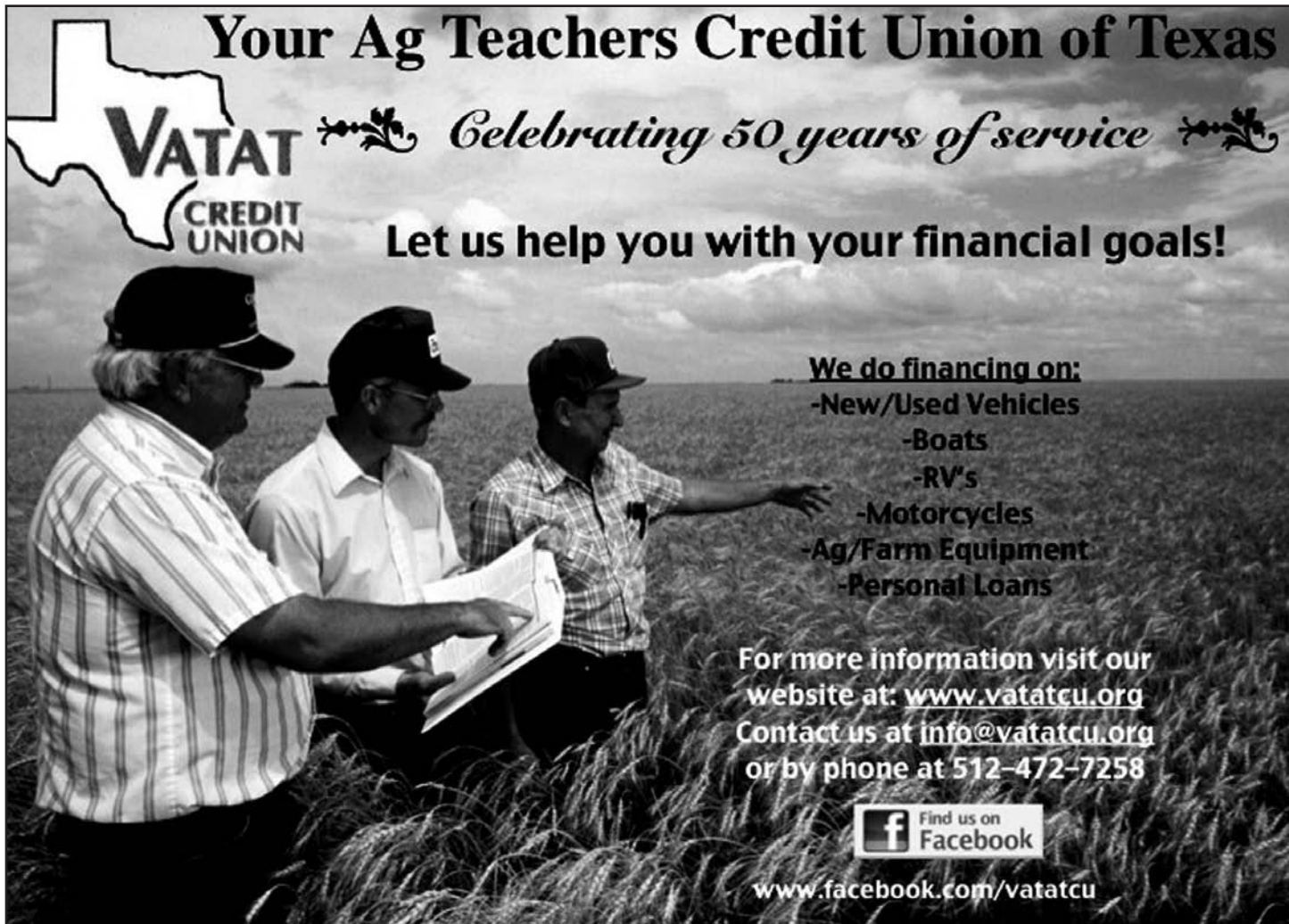
MAIL IT

 Complete Information
& mail to get started

Ag Workers Mutual has insured Agricultural Science Teachers in Texas for more than 60 years. We work hard to provide you quality insurance at a competitive price. We're in business to support agricultural professionals and are proud supporters of the Texas FFA.

Founded in 1948 on the promise to maintain a select-risk group of drivers, and deliver the highest quality of service possible, Ag Workers continues to meet the challenges of the changing environment while fulfilling its promise daily. Visit www.agworkers.com to complete your free quote or give us a call at 1-800-772-7424, extension 1721.

AG WORKERS™
 INSURANCE
 P.O. Box 88, Fort Worth, Texas 76101
1-800-772-7424
www.agworkers.com
 Agricultural Mutual Auto Insurance Company



Your Ag Teachers Credit Union of Texas


VATAT *Celebrating 50 years of service*
CREDIT UNION

Let us help you with your financial goals!

We do financing on:

- New/Used Vehicles
- Boats
- RV's
- Motorcycles
- Ag/Farm Equipment
- Personal Loans

For more information visit our website at: www.vatatcu.org
Contact us at info@vatatcu.org or by phone at 512-472-7258

 Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/vatatcu



SAE
MARKETPLACE

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 word of text, company logo, website and email links---all for only \$100 per year!

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

TEXAS A&M
Horse Judging Camp
June 22-24, 2011
And
July 6-8, 2011
College Station, TX

For More Information Visit:

[http://animalscience.tamu.edu/
workshops/youth-workshops/
tamu-horse-judging-camp.htm](http://animalscience.tamu.edu/workshops/youth-workshops/tamu-horse-judging-camp.htm)

Or Contact Dr. Clay A. Cavinder:
979-845-7731



Foundation Update

A Letter from the Scholarship Administrator

Joanne Shelton, Texas FFA Foundation Scholarship Administrator and Executive Assistant

As the newest addition to Texas FFA Foundation staff, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself; my name is Joanne Shelton and I am pleased to be working with the Texas FFA to build a strong future for the youth of Texas. The Foundation is fortunate to have many generous scholarship donors who support students and provide the opportunity for them to fulfill their dreams.

One of my main responsibilities at the Foundation is that of "Scholarship Administrator." It is very important for our students to receive their scholarship and award funding when and where they need it. At this time of year, while many seniors are busy making plans for college, I thought it would be a perfect time to mention a few tips to assist with their transition from high school and processing scholarship funding requests.

One of the most important items is efficiency. Beginning with the spring 2011 semester, the Foundation revised the process to request scholarship and award funding. All requests for payment of scholarships and awards administered by the Texas FFA Foundation are submitted to the Foundation by email. This includes all required paperwork in .jpeg or .pdf format attached to an email sent to: scholarships@texasffaoundation.org. I am confident the electronic submission is a more efficient and convenient method.

Submit your documents by the deadlines of August 1st and January 1st. If your contact information (address, email or phone) has changed, it is your responsibility to notify the Foundation, so we can update our records. Have you changed schools? To avoid a delay in payment be sure give us the name of your new school. If funds are sent to the wrong school, checks will not be reissued until the refund has been received.

Academic Scholarship and Award Information:

academic scholarships can be funded over multiple semesters. These scholarships are applied for and then finalists are interviewed during the State Degree Check. Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, San Antonio Livestock Show and Star of Texas Rodeo recipients are responsible to their specific benefactor. Texas FFA Association has agreed to select their award winners using our application process, but they administer their own monies. All other academic recipients are responsible for reporting their grades, acceptance agreements and updated letters throughout the duration of their scholarship to the Texas FFA Foundation.

Award scholarships are a one-time award for a specific event. These award scholarships must be used within 12 months after graduation, unless the recipient submits a hold request. No award will be held for more than 24 months following graduation, unless they have received approval from the Foundation. It is important that as soon as your student is awarded a scholarship of this type they complete and return an Award Acceptance Agreement by email along with sending a thank you note to his or her donor. After graduation, the student will submit his or her schedule showing full-time college enrollment.

I recognize parents, teachers and students are busy and stressed trying to follow guidelines and meet deadlines. I appreciate your efforts and invite you to contact me at anytime, 512-480-8047 or joanne@texasffaoundation.org. I'll be happy to help.

To learn more about the Foundation and Our Mission that Matters, please visit www.texasffaoundation.org



Texas Young Farmers Update

From the President's Pen

Janet Bulger, Texas Young Farmers President

Howdy, to everyone reading this. I hope you are all doing great. Things are still busy, busy, busy. Kenny has planted our garden. He planted tomatoes, squash, eggplant and peppers. The last couple of years he has planted in big plastic/rubber barrels that cattle syrup comes in. If you only want to plant a few things, I would recommend this type of gardening. It works great!

I attended a couple of shows at the Houston Livestock Show (HLSR) and really had a good time. This was my first time to ever go to HLSR. I loved seeing my granddaughter show her hog. Even though she did not make the sale, she had a great learning experience. I am so proud she wanted to show in Houston. There is a lot of work involved in showing an animal in any show, but a major show seems to take a lot more time and effort.

It was such a great learning experience for our younger grandchildren as well. Capital One Bank had what they called the AgVenture. This was such an educational adventure. We watched baby chicks hatch; baby pigs were being born, and I believe a calf was born. In addition to the birthing area, they had all breeds of rabbits to study. Southwest Dairy was there with a milking demonstration and many more educational exhibits. If you have a chance sometime in the near future, I would recommend you go.

At the Ag Mechanics Show, Young Farmers gave a \$500.00 scholarship to Tucker Jacob from Round Top Carmine. He is a member of the Fayette Co. 4-H. Photo

from left to right: David Stratton, Chairman of Ag Mechanics Contest; Don Beene, Texas Young Farmers Secretary; Tucker Jacob, Round Top Carmine; Janet Bulger, Texas Young



Farmers President and David Boothe, Vice President of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and Officer in Charge of Ag Mechanics Contest.

With spring comes working in the yard. Here are a few hints on taking care of your lawn/turfgrass.

Mowing – Is the lawn smooth enough to mow with a reel mower? Is it smooth enough to mow at the optimal mowing height for the grass variety without continual scalping damage? Scalping will put grass at a competitive disadvantage and eventually lead to the decline of lawn quality. Evaluate the yard for high spots, low spots and ruts to decrease scalping. Add soil to level out the lawn



MATHESON

ask. . .The Gas Professionals™

surface. Fill in ruts by lifting sod (in ruts) with a sharp spade and place topsoil underneath. Replace sod and keep the area moist for several days to help redevelop a healthy root system.

What is thatch? Thatch is the intermingled layer of living and dead stems, roots, rhizomes and stolons that develops between the live green vegetation of your lawn and the soil surface. The thatch layer is composed of plant parts at various stages of decay by soil microorganisms. Most lawn turfgrasses used in the southern United States are perennial grasses that spread by both rhizomes and stolons, and form thatch. Having a moderate thatch layer, between ¼ and ½ inch thickness is beneficial because it makes turf more traffic tolerant, decreases compaction, protects grass crowns from extreme temperature and acts as a mulch to decrease water loss from the soil surface. Thatch decay also releases beneficial nutrients to the turf environment. Excessive thatch layers of more than ½ inch can lead to serious problems.

Thatch problems include reduced water, nutrient and air infiltration into the soil, which leads to reduced rooting and decreased drought resistance, and increases disease and insect damage. A lawn with an excessive thatch layer declines in quality and becomes much harder to manage. The turf becomes less responsive to fertilizer applications and much more water will be required to wet the soil profile through a thick thatch layer.

Thatch control is a preventive and curative process. Thatch prevention can be achieved through proper fertilization and mowing. Avoid applying nitrogen at a rate exceeding one pound per thousand square feet. Maintain adequate, but not excessive soil moisture to encourage thatch decomposition - deep and infrequent watering - ½ inch every four days when dry. Use composed or organic materials for topdressing sparingly and lightly. Adding highly organic materials adds to the already decomposing organic thatch layer and can increase thatch problems.

TXYF AWARDS

I would like to encourage you to be working on your awards applications. These applications are due November 1, 2011, and that day will be here before you know it.

Outstanding Chapter Award: The purpose of the Outstanding Chapter Award is to recognize and honor those chapters who conduct activities that uphold the ideals of the State Association of Young Farmers of Texas. All chapters are eligible to apply for this award.

Report of the chapter's accomplishments shall cover the period of September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011. One picture, black & white or color, for each activity will be accepted, but are limited to 3x5, 4x6, or 5x7.

An activity may only qualify for one category. Activities shall be categorized and given the following emphasis.

- a. **Educational** - any activity that will provide information or training to benefit the membership and/or agricultural students.
- b. **Community Service** - activities sponsored or co-sponsored by the chapter that provides service to the community.
- c. **Leadership** - activities with the purpose of developing and/or improving the leadership ability of members.
- d. **Recreational** - activities sponsored for the entertainment of the members. *You may go to the website to see more detailed description of awards.*

Dates to Remember...

July 11-15, 2011 – State FFA Convention – Lubbock, TX

July 25-29, 2011 – VATAT Conference – Arlington, TX

November 1, 2011 – Awards Applications Due

December 7-10, 2011 – National YF Institute in Kansas City, MO

January 13-14, 2012 – YF State Convention in Austin, TX

AG TRIVIA

1. What is the most consumed beverage next to water in the United States?
2. What is the second most popular fresh vegetable in the U.S.?
3. What is the second most popular fruit in the U.S.?
4. What state grows the most apples?
5. What is the third most popular fruit raised in the U.S.?

Answers from last month's trivia: 1. d-All of the Above; 2. a-\$218,860,000,000; 3. d-17%

Give your students an
EARFUL
♦ about their ♦
MOUTHFUL.
They'll listen.



In rural parts of Texas, one of out of every six students currently use smokeless tobacco. But you can help. Teachers can visit SmokelessEducation.org to view training videos, materials and to contact a regional Prevention Resource Center to order the Spotlight on Smokeless curriculum. We'll teach you how to teach them to quit using tobacco.





Texas FFA Alumni

Update

\$ Money \$

Kelly White, Texas FFA Alumni President

"Money isn't the most important thing in life, but it's reasonably close to oxygen on the 'gotta have it' scale."

Zig Ziglar

Money... Budget Cuts... Cuts in Salary... This article wasn't the easiest to begin writing considering what's going on with our State at this time. It is not a conversation to have at the dinner table with your spouse either. Times are tough; money is tight. No one is going to just give you money, or will they? The Texas FFA Alumni is willing to give you money, but there are a few strings attached. First, about the money...

The Money: Each year, the Texas FFA Alumni gives out the following monetary awards. These include: two \$1,000.00 scholarships; ten \$500.00 local grants; and lastly we graciously give \$1,000.00 each to the Texas FFA, the Texas FFA Foundation and the VATAT. The money we give is raised at our Annual Alumni Auction held in conjunction with the Texas FFA Convention. Items such as scales, airline tickets, boots, retreats, FFA memorabilia, outdoor items and much more is bid on and goes home with the fortunate bidder. FFA Alumni Affiliates and Chapters also contribute to our auction by entering in the Alumni Basket Contest, rules for the contest can be found on the alumni website.

\$500.00 Grants: What do you do to get grant money? How must it be used? Be prepared to answer the following questions. What is your project? What do you want to accomplish? What is your plan of action (Who, what, when, where, why, how)? How will this project make an impact on your members and/or program? Be prepared to have an estimate of what your project will cost.

The Catch: You are asking yourself about how to get free money, and what is the catch? All a FFA Chapter has to do to be considered for the above mentioned awards is have an active local FFA Alumni Affiliate

which is a minimum of 10 members to pay their annual state and national dues by February 1st and to fill out the applications and have them into the Texas FFA Alumni Association by the June 1st deadline. Grants and scholarships have been denied because they did not meet the requirements or missed the deadline.

Applications can be found on the Texas FFA Alumni website at <http://texasffaalumni.ffanow.org>. Register to get updates about the Texas FFA Alumni. Thanks for all you do!

What Does the Texas FFA Alumni Value?

- *We value the integral nature of FFA and agricultural education.*
 - *We value agriculture as an essential part of society.*
 - *We value diversity in serving all populations.*
 - *We value the impact of a teacher on a student's life.*
 - *We value the impact and involvement of parents/guardians and communities on a student's life.*
 - *We value the community's support of agricultural education teachers and programs.*
-

Remember to visit <http://texasffaalumni.ffanow.org> for all the latest updates on Texas FFA Alumni news!



Vocational Agriculture
 Teachers Association of Texas
 614 East 12th Street
 Austin, Texas 78701

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 AUSTIN, TX
 PERMIT NO. 1

TEXAS AG ED FAMILY EVENTS

MAY 2011

7th - State CDEs - Texas A&M, College Station

7th - Late Swine Tag Order Begins - Austin (Ends June 10)

TBD - State Wildlife CDE - Nacogdoches

JUNE 2011

1st - State Speaking Events Online Entry Deadline

4th - 7th - State Leadership Conference

8th - State Officer Selection Interviews & Testing

9th - State Scholarship Selection

9th - Texas FFA Board of Directors Meeting - Location TBD

9th - 10th - State Degree Check - Location TBD

11th - 17th - State Fair Priority Tags, Fax Only - Austin

21st - Agriscience Fair Online Entry Deadline

30th - Last Day to Validate Swine

JULY 2011

7th - Deadline for all Swine Validation Materials - Austin

11th - 15th - 83rd State FFA Convention - Lubbock

25th - 29th - VATAT Professional Development Conference - Arlington

2011 State Fair Validation Dates

The early tag orders are \$7.00 from April 4 - May 6, 2011. The late tag orders are \$10.00 from May 7 - June 10, 2011. The priority tag orders must be faxed to 512-476-2894, and the tags are \$10.00 per tag plus \$20.00 priority postage and handling fee from June 11 - June 16, 2011. All swine must be validated on or before June 30, 2011. The Validation Chairperson must be present when the animals are validated. The change of ownership is due in the FFA office on or before June 30, 2011.

All manila forms, hair envelopes, ethics policies, committee forms and Excel spreadsheets are due in the FFA office on or before July 8, 2011 (Manilas, hair envelopes & ethic policies - Alpha Order). In regards to tag alterations, any change to size, shape, form or color will void the tag. The tag will be replaced at the stock show, 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 22, 2011. Any required validation information not in the FFA office by July 22, 2011 will not be validated. Information is due July 8th; we do not have personnel in the office to process or call for missing validation items after this date.

Vocational Agriculture
 Teachers Association
 of Texas

OFFICERS

David Reiley
President

Russell Thomas
Vice President

Kevin Swor
Secretary/Treasurer

STAFF

Gerald Young
Executive Director

Karen Grumbles
Membership Services

Allison Bequette
Communications

CONTACT US

614 East 12th Street
 Austin, Texas 78701
 (512) 472-3128

toll free: (800) 777-5818
 fax: (512) 472-0555

e-mail: vatat@vatat.org
 Web: www.vatat.org