

The Michigan FFA Creed



Spring 2014



Michigan FFA Association

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L to R: Alan Green, State President; Abigail Schreur, Region I State Vice President; Chris Presley, Region II State Vice President; Sarah Crosby, State Vice President; Richard Southward, Region V State Vice President; Laryssa Bates, State Sentinel; Nathan Frahm, State Reporter; Alyssa Tyrrell, Region III State Vice President; Nick Webster, Region IV State Vice President; Devin Irion, State Treasurer; Dani Heisler, State Secretary; Amber Eagling, Region VI State Vice President

State Officer Excursions

By: Sarah Crosh

As the weather turns cooler and people start to bundle up for the winter, the state officer team is keeping warm and busy traveling around, while preparing for The 86th Michigan FFA State Convention.



One of the most notable events this winter was national convention where we had the opportunity to spend a week in Louisville, Kentucky. The week was packed full of events including workshops, delegate and convention sessions, national days of service, Canadian luncheon, and dinners with sponsors and school officials. However, in the hustle and bustle of it all, we found some down time to travel around and experience Louisville's hottest spots like Churchill Downs.

Upon returning from National Convention, we began chapter visits. Our goal is to visit every chapter before state convention and present the opportunities of the organization as well as careers and fields of study available in agriculture. So far we have had countless memorable experiences with members from all around the state and are looking forward to more as we attend Greenhand

initiations, lock-ins and leadership contests. Hopefully, if you haven't seen a state officer yet, they will be visiting your chapter soon!

In addition to all the traveling, we have started preparing for state convention. Though it seems like we just started our year of service, convention will be



coming up before we know it. To prepare we spent a day with state staff, and our convention director, Tiffany Rogers. Before the meeting we were required to have all of our ceremonies memorized, and come with ideas for our retiring addresses. Since that date we have turned in a first draft of our retiring addresses and convention script parts as well as began working with convention staff on finalizing details.

We look forward to wrapping up our winter excursions with state officer interviews, National FFA Week events, and the 86th Michigan FFA State Convention. As a team we hope the best for all of your upcoming leadership and skills contests.

Conferences, Careers



This past December, FFA members gathered at Michigan Farm Bureau's Career Focus Conference on Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. The FFA members met with Jason Jaekel, Manager of the Michigan Farm Bureau Young Farmer Department. Then they met with Mary Zielger for a workshop

on career insight and planning. The day went on with many round-table discussions and workshops. The students were given the chance to learn about the many opportunities



available to them as FFA members, college students and young farmers.

After the conference, the State FFA Discussion Meet semi-final round was held. Here, regional qualifiers came together and met to discuss pressing issues that are currently affecting the agriculture industry. The students



& Contests

By: Laryssa Bates

were given 30 seconds for an opening statement, revealing their opinion on the topic and then were given 20 minutes to discuss any solutions and issues they had seen with the topic with their fellow participants. Then students were given a minute to give their closing statements and make any final comments that they

thought necessary. This year the contestants in the first round discussed "How can organizations like Farm Bureau, 4H, and the FFA Association/Alumni play a role to ensure the viability of quality agricultural education programs within our high

schools?"

The students were evaluated on their opening statements, closing statements, delivery, problem solving, analysis of the topic and cooperative attitude towards the other participants. The judges chose their top six contestants who got to move on to the final rounds of the meet. The students then discussed

a new agricultural issue provided to them. They were scored on the same criteria as the first round. The FFA members did a phenomenal job and were awarded for their understanding of agricultural issues facing Michigan today. The top six students were: Alexandria Schut,



Connor Ewald, Emily Spolyar, Jadelyn Steward, Aaron Christy and Madison Heath - Alexandria Schut was named this year's state winner.

Congratulations to all of the participants; this year's discussion meet was a huge success thanks to Michigan Farm Bureau. It was remarkable to see these FFA members discussing these issues with passion and concern.

Careers in

The company:

GreenStone Farm Credit Services is a \$6.7 billion organization, one of America's largest rural lenders, with more than 23,000 members and 36 branches throughout Michigan and northeast Wisconsin. Here's a look at a few of their agri-finance careers.



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Lending

A cornerstone position within the agri-finance sector is agricultural lending. At GreenStone this track is divided in two paths – traditional and agriconsumer. The traditional staff works with customers who have a primary operation focused on production agriculture. The agriconsumer segment works primarily with mortgages for customers who live in a rural area. Although the end customer may differ, the primary job duties are similar. A key role in this position is building and maintaining relationships with customers and striving for excellent customer service. This is achieved by combining agricultural, business and credit knowledge with an in-depth understanding of each customer's current financial position in order to provide innovative and achievable solutions to problems that the customer faces. Technically speaking, an individual in this position will maintain a sales database, evaluate loan requests, review and prepare financial statements and analyze financial ratios all while developing an understanding of finance, macroeconomics and credit.

Appraisal

A lending institution needs to maintain accurate knowledge about collateral prices. This is the responsibility of a collateral analyst and appraiser. The difference between the two positions is that appraisers have been licensed through the state's certification process. Individuals in these positions perform collateral valuations and inspections. The two types of collateral the analysts work with are real estate and chattel. Real estate can include land and houses. Chattel includes machinery, equipment, animals, crops and any fixture that is not permanently attached to the land. The inspections check for environmental risks and other factors. The end result assigns the collateral a current market value. Individuals working in this role must stay up-to-date on prices and perform market surveys and collect real estate and chattel sale information to support appraisals and asset valuations. The information collected and reported by the appraisal team is used to make current and future lending decisions.

Credit

By: Jonna Meyers,
Human Resources Specialist
GreenStone Farm Credit Service

Credit Analyst

Lending can be complicated - the credit analyst works to collect, analyze, score and review financial statements and ratios to help determine the viability of the loan request. Individuals working in this role use financial information that includes assets and liabilities, credit bureau scores, and valuation reports prepared by the appraisal team, to assess the risk associated with the loan request. Credit analysts also help develop loan narratives, a document that focuses on the capital, capacity, collateral, conditions and character of the customer and their operation. These individuals also compile comparative data using similar farms and credit standards to verify ratios and aid in the decision making process. This role works closely with the lending and appraisal staff to ensure the information is accurate and up to date.

Crop Insurance

GreenStone also offers agricultural-related services. Crop insurance is a risk management tool used by many farmers to provide stability in the event of crop damage. The purpose of the crop insurance specialist position is to provide insurance and agricultural expertise to customers as well as to build strong relationships with these customers. These individuals act as a liaison between the insurance companies and customer for policy inquiries, claims or servicing issues. In this sales role, individuals partner with customers to determine which insurance products best meet the customer's needs. The specialists use progressive marketing efforts, including on-farm visits and sales calls while serving as an insurance resource to best benefit the customers. They must also maintain a thorough understanding of hail and multi-peril crop insurance policies and stay up-to-date on new changes from insurance companies and governmental agencies.



For more information about GreenStone Farm Credit Services career opportunities and internship visit greenstonefcs.com.

Winner, Winner - Chicken Dinner

By: Nathan F



What would inspire FFA members to take care of 25 chickens for five weeks? The Michigan FFA Broiler Contest of course! This event is designed to teach students how to properly care for, process and package broiler hens for consumption.

This contest is held at Munsell's Poultry Processing in Fowlerville, Michigan and takes place over the course of three days. At this contest, members unload their birds from their cages and help with the slaughtering, cleaning and processing of the birds. Once the bird is clean, the students pick their top three out of the five birds. These three birds will be judged in the contest. Judging was done by Dr. Darrin Karcher of Michigan State University. Dr. Karcher judged the birds on their weight, quality of the breast, legs and thighs, the conforming and fleshing (finishing) and the overall uniformity of the group.

Once their birds were judged, members took the birds to be packaged. First, they weighed them one final time and put them in an ice bath to cool them below

40 degrees. After the birds were cooled, workers from Munsell's, along with FFA members, finished trimming the unwanted parts off the bird and vacuum packed each one for the students to take home.

In addition to the judging and packaging, members were asked to keep records of their birds over the five weeks that they raised them. Members had to record what feed they used, the weight of the birds and the livability or living conditions. This year's competition was one of the best that has ever been held; in the end, there were three clear victors, one from each day. The winner from Wednesday was from the Hart FFA Chapter, with a total score of



941 out of 1000. Thursday's winner came from the Concord FFA Chapter, with their score of 956/1000. Finally, the winner from Friday was the Benzie Central FFA Chapter, and their score totaled 970/1000.

State Officer Stats



Nathan Frahm

State Reporter

Chapter: Caledonia
College: Lansing Community College
SAE: Food Science Technology
Song: "Live Like You Were Dying"

Favorites:

Movie: The Lion King
FFA event: State Convention
Musician: Lee Bryce
Food: Pancakes
Hobby: Fencing and Writing



Laryssa Bates

State Sentinel

Chapter: USA
College: Lansing Community College
SAE: Diversified Livestock
Song: "The Only Way I Know"

Favorites:

Candy: Swedish Fish
Hobby: Showing Livestock
Sports team: Detroit Tigers
Movie: Pitch Perfect
Food: Steak Dinner



Amber Eagling

Region VI State VP

Chapter: Alpena
College: MSU
SAE: Beef Production
Theme song: "Life's a Dance"

Favorites:

FFA Event: Leadership Conference
Musician: Miranda Lambert
Hobby: Racing Sled Dogs
Sport: Bull Riding
T.V Show: Supernatural

The Roses are Red

There is a statistic that has been thrown around by the National FFA Organization for quite some time now, but until earlier this year, I didn't believe it to be true. According to the National FFA Organization, agriscience programs and FFA chapters can be found in 18 of the 20 largest U.S. cities including New York, Chicago and Philadelphia. Last year in early October, my teammate Chris and I had the opportunity to visit the Roosevelt FFA Chapter in Wyandotte, Michigan - miles away from the Detroit Metropolitan Airport. It was there that this statistic really came to life.

The Roosevelt High School agriscience program isn't your typical agriscience program by any means. Instead of having a large array of

agricultural classes, like some schools do, students at Roosevelt focus on one topic; botany. Just as curriculum for any agriscience class is supposed to be hands on and applicable, the 97 students at Roosevelt apply what they're learning in class at Teddy's Flower Shop. Teddy's is a business that their agriscience program started in the early 1990's. Mr. Robert Johnson, the botany teacher at the time, started Teddy's to give students a business opportunity and to show them how business and science were related.

The thing that I was most impressed by with this program is that students actually have the opportunity to work right in the flower shop - making it a student-led business. Along with their classroom instruction from their

botany teacher, Mrs. Jennifer Ferris, the students work with Ms. Tammy Grimes, a certified florist, who works part time for the program. Grimes works with the students to teach them a wide variety of life



at Roosevelt

By: Alan Green

skills such as floral techniques and designs, how to write orders, types of arrangements and customer service.

The program stays busy year round as they sell a multitude of items ranging from flower bouquets all the way to vases of flowers, floral arrangements, balloons, stuffed animals and gift baskets to students, staff and the community. They also make arrangements for school



event decorations, weddings and funerals. The program sells roses and carnations on Valentine's Day, which is one of their biggest fundraisers; wreathes, poinsettias and centerpieces during the Christmas season, and corsages and boutonnieres during homecoming.

Besides the flower shop, the program also has an industrial-size greenhouse, a garden and an aquaponics system that we were able to tour. The students also care for the landscaping around the campus and in the city of Wyandotte.



Michigan FFA Alumni



BLUE CORDUROY SEA ENGULFS SCHOOL OFFICIALS

Nine high school officials and administrators took part in the annual Michigan FFA Alumni trip to the National FFA Convention, Oct. 30 through Nov. 1 in Louisville to gain insight into the organization and its potential impact on their local community. The convention is the nation's single largest gathering of students with nearly 63,000 FFA members, teachers and administrators in attendance, turning Louisville into a sea of blue corduroy FFA uniforms.

Attending this year were Sheila Pilmore, principal of Breckenridge High School; Deb McCarty, secretary of Caledonia Community Schools Board of Education; Andrea Gordon, new FFA Advisor and agriscience teacher at Concord High School; Tressa Wenk, guidance counselor of Fremont High School; Greg Tatrow, assistant principal of Marshall High School; Paula Steele, principal of Perry High School; Michael Moran, trustee of Ravenna Public Schools; and Ann Iott-Uphaus, teacher at Sand Creek High School (*pictured below*).

In addition to attending convention sessions, the National FFA Convention gives participants the opportunity to visit with Michigan FFA state officers and staff, national FFA staff, Michigan FFA alumni members and students from their local FFA chapters.

"This trip builds lasting relationships between FFA chapters and key decision-makers within the school district," said Jason Jaekel, executive director of the

Michigan FFA Alumni Association. "The alumni association is honored to help Michigan's FFA chapters showcase the National FFA Convention so school officials see the end result of students' hard work in agriscience education and the opportunities it affords them."

Overall, the convention is an opportunity for student members from across the country to gather and share experiences while competing for awards, recognitions and scholarships. Central to the experience are service learning projects, leadership seminars, educational tours and motivational speeches.

The school officials and administrators hope to take these experiences back to their local communities to help set the course for the next year. FFA helps prepare students for more than 300 careers in science, business and technology in agriculture through hands-on experiences.

The 2013 National FFA Experience was sponsored by the Michigan FFA Alumni, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan FFA Association and the Michigan FFA Foundation.





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Birdseed Biscuits

By: Nathan F

What you will need:

3/4 cup of birdseed
1 tablespoon of flour
Water
Cookie Cutter
Oil

Foil
Cookie Sheet
Straw
Ribbon

Instructions:

- 1. Our recipe makes two 3-inch biscuits or a single 4-inch biscuit. Mix together the birdseed, flour, and 2 tablespoons of water.**
- 2. Spray or wipe a cookie cutter with oil and place it on a foil-covered cookie sheet. Pack the mixture into the cutter, inserting half a straw near the top to create a hole for hanging.**
- 3. Bake the biscuit (with the straw) in a 170° oven until the biscuit is hard, about one hour. Let cool.**
- 4. Remove the straw, thread a ribbon through the hole, and hang it outside in a sheltered spot.**



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