



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

Learners Today — Leaders Tomorrow

www.paffa.state.pa.us

FFA Members 'Living to Serve'

TONY RICE

Pa. State FFA Vice President

"You are what you do, not what you say you'll do." The words of Swiss psychiatrist C.G. Jung resonate well with the members of the Pennsylvania FFA as they live out the last line of the FFA motto, "Living to Serve." This winter, members from all over the state donated their time and resources to make a difference.

Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry County FFA

It can be estimated that there are more than 805 million people worldwide that do not have enough food to lead a healthy and active life. If you were to let it be the world's hungry into Penn State's Beaver Stadium, with a capacity of 107,000, it would take approximately 7,524 football

stadiums to accommodate everyone.

The members of the Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry County FFA teamed up with humanitarian organization Stop Hunger Now. The region's eight chapters fundraised \$6,670 to purchase 15,000 pounds of rice and dried vegetables. The next step was packaging the meals. In about three hours, 50 members were able to pack 23,000 meals.

Attending the event was Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding and several state representatives. The meals that were packed will be shipped to third world countries and distributed to school children that would otherwise have to drop out of school to rummage through garbage heaps in hopes of finding food scraps.

Stop Hunger Now ensures that

students are receiving the nutrition that they need in addition to the education that deserve. Greenwood FFA adviser Krista Pontius said, "It was a great feeling working together with eight FFA chapters to combat hunger related issues." For more information or to donate, visit www.stophungernow.org.

In addition to taking part in the Stop Hunger Now campaign, the members of the Greenwood FFA decided to make a difference not only in their community. They began a "Hunger Week" with the intent to educate families about the reality of world hunger.

Chapter members took a day to travel to Greenwood Elementary School and facilitate activities with the young students to teach them about the issue. Afterward, the chapter hosted a Hunger Banquet for local community members.

Attendees were given an envelope with a category on it that ranged from extreme poverty to wealthy. Those in extreme poverty were given just enough play money to "purchase" rice and beans and maybe a cup of tap water. The ones that were classified as wealthy were able to purchase a full course ham loaf dinner with dessert. Participants expressed that the event opened their eyes to what it feels like to be in need.

The short program followed the meal with a speaker that encouraged discussion on hunger and what the attendees could do to make a difference. The focal point of the banquet was to emphasize the need of change in world hunger.

Donations were accepted and the Greenwood FFA chapter raised more than \$2,500 that will be donated to Perry County Food Bank to aid community members in



Submitted photos

Midd-West FFA members show off one of the no-sew blankets they made to donate to the Janet Weis Children's Hospital.

For more information or to donate, visit www.perrycounty-foodbank.org.

MIDD-WEST FFA

Physical well-being and health care is taken for granted. Members of the Midd-West FFA decided to donate their time to make no-sew blankets to donate to the Janet Weis Children's Hospital.

Based in central Pennsylvania, the purpose of Geisinger's Janet Weis Children's Hospital is to provide top-notch pediatric services to families that may not be able to afford proper medical care. These FFA members decided to take it upon themselves to brighten the day of the patients by making 14 blankets that will be distributed to the children for them to keep. For more information or to donate, visit www.geisinger.org/sites/jwch.

Athens FFA

The Athens FFA works in cooperation with the Bradford-Sullivan County Farm Bureau to collect items to be donated to the Ronald McDonald House in Danville. Several FFA members and community members have utilized the Ronald McDonald house in times of need. For two years now, the Athens FFA has teamed up with the National Honor Society to increase the amount of donations. Members brought in everything from travel-size hygiene items and floor cleaning materials, to nonperishable food items and paper products. Members look forward to this event every year and hope to continue to support the Ronald McDonald House of Danville.



Volunteers for the Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry Area FFA chapters packing 23,000 meals.

Agricultural Ideals

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION

The agriculture industry is constantly evolving and improving to meet the demands of today's society. When looking back on the history of the United States, it is more than evident that agriculture has been one of the driving forces behind establishing our nation. In the words of Thomas Jefferson, "Agriculture... is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals, and happiness."

As I pondered Jefferson's quote, I could not help but to wonder what might think of the FFA Creed because he was able to summarize its meaning in 20 words, and he did so 142 years before the FFA was even established.

In relating to Jefferson's words of "real wealth," the creed emphasizes on "less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining, in the life abundant and enough honest wealth to make it so." Jefferson believed an agrarian society was necessary for our country to be sustainable not only in production, but in revenue as well. "Real wealth" is "honest wealth," and that achievement comes through morals.

Morals are like seeds, they are planted in us at an early age and continue to flourish until finally we flower and pass them on to others. While farming has made great strides since the Jefferson era, the morals within our agriculturalists have been passed down through the generations. The last paragraph of the FFA Creed states, "I believe



KATIE MCLAUGHLIN

that American agriculture can and will live true to the best traditions of our national life." Those traditions could reference many things, but really, it is the morals we possess that allow our industry to be upheld by such high standards and in reaching this, we find happiness.

E.M. Tiffany highlights the "joys and discomforts of agricultural life" within the FFA Creed. In the pursuit of reaching happiness, there are obstacles to overcome, but after trial and error, we learn, grow and find success. Thomas Jefferson believed that happiness came with a sense of achievement, when people uphold their morals and find honest wealth, not only can they find joy, they can be proud as well. The creed goes on to state we need to "play square with those whose happiness depends upon me." Once again, our honesty and morals come into play, and we not only can we live satisfied lives, but so can those around us.

Whether the year is 1787, 1929 or 2015, agriculture and its people are the backbone of our nation. Like Thomas Jefferson and E.M. Tiffany, I believe that honest wealth, good morals and happiness are the drive behind the agricultural industry and our country as a whole. Let it never forget those ideals and inalienable rights as we continue to progress forward. Like the generations before us, it is our duty to uphold the tradition and pass it down for the many years to come.

Editor's note: Katie McLaughlin is the Pennsylvania FFA state president.

KEYSTONE NATIONALS

EXTREME

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Harrisburg, Pennsylvania



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Saturday Championship
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