



# BLUE AND GOLD

## Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

### Telling our Story

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# McConnellsburg FFA Receives Grant for More Hands on Learning Opportunities

This past month, McConnellsburg High School's agriculture classes had the opportunity to handle horses and cattle as part of their lessons. The opportunity was made possible through the Pennsylvania FFA's Learning to Do Grant.

The chapter purchased round penning with the funds so that livestock can be safely confined and handled on school grounds. Last month's lessons are among the first of what agriculture production instructor Ann Meyer hopes will be many more to come. The penning will be set up as needed behind the high school. Local producers can safely bring horses, cattle, sheep and other livestock to the school for half day or daylong lessons.

The students have enjoyed hands-on lessons from two local producers. Hustontown, Pa., horse owner Jana Malot brought three of her horses to McConnellsburg High School in early March. Agriculture production career and technical education students practiced basic equine handling and management. Malot showed the students how to groom and saddle a horse. Later that same day, students in Meyer's veterinary science class learned basic first aid and practiced wrapping horses' legs to treat wounds or prepare for transport. For many students, this was the first time actually handling or being near a horse. "I have experience working on a dairy farm, but not around horses," said McConnellsburg junior Quentin Doyle. "It's nice to finally be able to put into action what we are learning in the classroom."

The next farmer to visit was Scott Mosemann of Misty Mountain Dairy in Needmore, Pa. Mosemann explained his role as herdsman at the farm and the management techniques he uses



Submitted photos

McConnellsburg agriculture students use new round pen to learn horse care.

to monitor the health of his fresh cows. Students practiced taking the cow's temperature, monitoring pulse and respiration, and even palpated a cow. Mosemann also explained the importance of routine hoof trimming and demonstrated the procedure for the students. Later in the morning,



Needmore, Pa.. dairyman Scott Mosemann, right, helps McConnellsburg junior Quentin Doyle hear the heartbeat on a dairy cow.

students also had the opportunity to work at halter breaking young calves to get them better adjusted to being handled. "This was a great experience for me," said McConnellsburg junior Lindsey Randler. "I plan on being a vet, and so now I have a little more experience."

The agriculture production program at McConnellsburg focuses on teaching students skills and competencies to produce various crops and livestock products. Getting hands-on experience with large animals is difficult unless students live or work on a farm. The new round pen enables students to gain knowledge working with livestock. Future lessons for the spring include sheep shearing and equine veterinary practices. "We're very grateful for the support from the Pennsylvania FFA Association," said McConnellsburg chapter president Zach Bowers. "Without this grant, we wouldn't be able to put into action what we are learning."

# The Beginning of a New Story

## FROM THE OFFICERS STATION

I have had so many new and incredible experiences this past year serving as your state reporter. Looking back, I see a story that gave me memories and friends to last a lifetime. But, it is almost that time where we adjourn our last session together, and I continue on with my life. My story will continue as I enlist in the United States Army and then further my education at Penn State majoring in agriculture education. Being an ag teacher has always been a dream of mine, and I'm so lucky to have had this opportunity. It's almost a sneak peak into my future.

A few words before I go.



KATIE SHARRER

**To the members**

You guys are absolutely incredible. Thank you for welcoming me into your FFAmily. I have had the pleasure of watching you practice and test your skills at career development events throughout the year. I have to say Pennsylvania has a bright and talented group coming up. I trust you will be able to tell the story of agriculture to its truest meaning and keep our traditions for many more years to come.

No one said it better than Dr. Seuss, "You're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, So... get on your way!"

Pennsylvania FFA, you are bound to do great things in that blue jacket. This is your story; how will you tell it?

**To the advisers**

We don't say it enough: thank you! Without you all of us would be lost. You're the glue holding us all together. You showed us the ways of the FFA world, which isn't easy to do. Your kind hearts and wise words have shaped me and all of the other FFA members out there into people who are proud to wear that blue and gold jacket. Many people look up to you and some even aspire to be like you, me being one of them. Thank you for being the best role models a kid could ask for.

**To the parents**

Your children are my inspiration. Each one has a different story, and I want to hear them all. Diving into the FFA world is a hard thing to do, but you held on there and became part of the family too. A lot of the times our members need a little push

to start writing their stories, but I know you're there encouraging them and giving them that nudge they need to jump in the water.

**To all of the others in between**

Your support means so much. The Pennsylvania FFA is able to grow and flourish because of the incredible support system we have. Members will always look to you for advice with projects and learning opportunities. I trust you will be there with ready help and extra barn work. Thank you for all that you have done for our members and me.

"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened" is all I can think as I write this with a saddened heart but a wide grin. I am so grateful for all the people I have met this year and stories they have shared with me. Please never stop Telling Our Story, Pennsylvania FFA.

*Editor's note: Katie Sharrer is the Pa. FFA state reporter.*