



# BLUE AND GOLD

## Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

### ACTIVATE: Purpose-Passion-Potential

[www.paffa.org](http://www.paffa.org)



Chapter members, starting from left, Hunter Huggins, Cheyenne Walters, Kayla Shaffer, Michael Huggins, Liz Perkinson, Ryan Perkinson, Addie Lannan, Jacob Dock, Alyssa Landis, and Brittany Haynes at the Adopt-A-Highway community service project.

# Selinsgrove FFA Continues Journey Toward Excellence



JILL PALMER  
Pennsylvania FFA State Reporter

Volunteering, laughing and creating new ways to advocate for agriculture are just a few things that the Selinsgrove FFA chapter executes very well in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania.

In June of 1957 the Selinsgrove FFA chapter began its journey towards excellence. Current teachers Valerie Fry and Curtis Swineford enjoy sharing the moments with their students as they teach classes like agriculture leadership, horticulture and power engineering. Other skills like volunteering and being courteous to the community in which the students grow up are taught in different forms like State School dinners and Third Grade AG Day.

During these events, students volunteer at State School dinners by handing out food and cleaning up tables. During the AG Day event, members bring in third graders from their elementary school and promote the sides of agriculture not always revealed to them. Stations include tractor safety, agronomy and greenhouse operations. The elementary students are then offered refreshments and a spot in the petting zoo.

Also during this day, Selinsgrove FFA members hold their annual pumpkin seed contest for the upcoming year. Third graders are given a pump-

kin seed to grow until October, and when the time comes the heaviest pumpkin can win a small amount of money. Selinsgrove FFA members also strive to keep their community clean through the Adopt-A-Highway Program. Members clean for about an hour, four times a year, on Clifford Road, not too far from the school. Gym rec nights and the annual Christmas party also provide ways for these members to interact and celebrate being part of such a great organization. Aside from all of the volunteering and activities that this chapter participates in, this chapter prides itself on being good members of the National FFA organization. With unique projects like insect farming from President Nathan Moyer, these members are surely setting themselves apart. "I went to a reptile expo once, and I heard about cockroaches and how they were so much better than crickets and it just went from there. I've got a huge operation now and I love how each day is a new experience," says Nathan Moyer. "You know, my dad farmed for a little and I was never really involved, but when I got to be a part of FFA I really started to appreciate all the things that I learned, but also look forward to all of the things I haven't learned, and honestly that's been the most beneficial thing about being in FFA."

Chapter Chaplain John Merreth Jr. stated, "Being able to zip up the blue and gold jacket has been so beneficial to me. I've gotten to be a part of a family, but also get involved in my community. FFA helps you grow, and the people who are a part of it are always looking to help push you to be the best citizen and member you can be."



Selinsgrove FFA members at the Susquehanna Valley Mall Parade in November. From left, bottom row are Liz Perkinson, Tabitha Hauck, Molina Rhodes, Tatiana Henninger, and Liz Gemberling. Top row, from left are Michael Huggins, Hunter Huggins, Jacob Dock, Nathan Moyer, Alyssa Landis, Kayla Shaffer, Thomas Barajas, and Kyle Martin.

# Blessed By the Best

## FROM THE OFFICERS STATION



JILL PALMER

Growing up I was always raised to enjoy the little things in life, whether that was a walk in the park or even getting a pizza for dinner at the local pizza shop. This philosophy is something I will always keep near and dear to my heart.

Recently, my teammate Maddy and I have been active in creating new memories on some of those small adventures. We've seen visits with Conneaut FFA members to their favorite attraction and wing night, joining the class at Turkey-foot that is trapping chipmunks for a study, and even the simplest snowfall in Somerset, Pennsylvania. With all of this happening in our lives in the blue and gold jacket, I've also seen the little things come to life outside of it. I've seen family, friends and FFA members in a community and state pull together in hard times, the beauty of a drive to the county lookout at sunset, the excited feeling that my dog gets when he sees me come home after a few days or a few weeks, and it all just makes perfect sense when you sit back and think about it. Simply, I am blessed. I was made to be the person I am today, and experience all that I am in my blue and gold association jacket, and out of it. I will never get these experiences back, so why wouldn't I enjoy the little things in life? I firmly believe that this is a philosophy we all should carry with us in our daily lives. We are who we are for a purpose, and we should do everything in our power to figure out what that is, and live it out to our true potential.

My favorite holiday is Christmas. No, I'm not the fanatic that plays Christmas music before Thanksgiving or even talks about it, but you bet that as soon as it hits midnight on Thanksgiving Day I am doing some Christmas shopping for presents, and even décor. This year, I decided that not only do I want a tree in my living room, but I would like to have one in my room as well. Of course, my mom thought I was crazy when I told her I had bought a tree at Wal-Mart, but she was fine as soon as I told her it was only 12 inches tall and \$10. So, I did only what every good tree designer does during the holiday season; I picked a theme. This year serving

as state reporter, I am "stationed by the flag." My duties are to inform the people of America just what FFA is and why you should take the opportunity to seize an amazing experience of leadership within agricultural education. With this being said, I am also a very patriotic person so, of course, it would be only fitting to have an "America" themed tree. That is exactly what I did. I brought it home, and decorated and even put 46 feet of lights around my room to celebrate not only Jesus' birth, but all my blessings he has given me over the last 18 years. You know, my time is spent each day doing something different, and it has helped me understand just how blessed I am, by only the best. I was given this one life to live, so why not make it awesome and create some meaningful memories along the way? What better way to do that as well, like being a state FFA officer? Like I said, Maddy and I and the entire team have all experienced awesome things like this. Each day is a new adventure and it is something we all don't take lightly. As we continue along our journey in these jackets, and our life journey outside of them, may we always keep in mind that we are blessed, and should never lose sight of that, and you should, too. Life is a beautiful gift and like my momma always says, "We are never promised tomorrow, so make today great."

I for one, cannot wait to see what tomorrow will leave me with if I am promised that day. In the upcoming months that will bring conferences like Mid-Winter, ACES and SLLC, I can't wait to bring joy and hope to FFA members. Helping them activate their purpose, passion and potential in their lives is my purpose, and indeed my passion, in my life.

My teammates and I can truly say we are excited to see where the rest of the year will take us, and we hope that you can follow along in our journey as we activate purpose, passion and potential within the lives of FFA members in and out of the blue and gold jacket.

*Editor's Note: Jill Palmer is Pennsylvania FFA State Reporter.*

# Bradford County FFA Explores Livestock, Equine Opportunities

TRICIA HOJNOWSKI  
State FFA Chaplain

WEST BURLINGTON, Pa. — The Bradford County FFA Livestock and Horse Evaluation Career Development Event was held recently at Fairview Farm.

Dale and Pam Harper, owners of Fairview Farm, hosted the event. Four FFA chapters from Bradford County — Athens, Canton, Troy, and Northeast Bradford — participated.

Career development events are competitions that test students' abilities in many possible career paths in agriculture. Events can range from livestock to public speaking to floriculture.

Nearly 80 FFA members evaluated classes of horses, beef animals, pigs, lambs and goats. They were not only competing but also received education

about animal evaluation and how to give reasons on their placings.

Also playing a critical role in making the event a success were: horse judge Ashley Shedden; the supplier of the beef animals and livestock judge Jon Harnish; owners of the lambs, Dave and Heather Loomis; goat owner Lauryn Watkins; and the advisers of the FFA chapters.

The event has become an annual event giving FFA members from the area an opportunity for hands-on learning on a local farm every year. The students look forward to these events as they allow them to test the knowledge they have gained in the agriculture classroom at school. The event also gives the students more practice in preparation for the state event that takes place in June at Penn State University if they choose to participate.