



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

Telling Our Story

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Forestry Training in Elk County

On Sept. 11, six Selinsgrove FFA members — including Kevin Dressler, Nathan Moyer, John Merroth Jr., Jacob Dock, Addie Lannan, and Alyssa Landis — traveled to the Elk County Visitor Center to train for the FFA forestry, wildlife and aquatics resources career development events.

This training, sponsored by the Keystone Elk Country Alliance, aimed to prepare students to learn about and practice skills that they will use in FFA CDEs, the Pennsylvania Envirothon, and maybe one day, a career. The day was full of instruction and provided training materials that will further prepare students.

Identification, hands-on practicums, and other current environmental topics were emphasized for all of the different CDEs.

FFA member Alyssa Landis said this about the training, “I learned a lot through this training and I feel it will benefit me as I prepare to compete in the Envirothon.”


For more information about the Visitor Center check out www.ExperienceElkCounty.com



Submitted photo
Selinsgrove FFA members trained for the Forestry CDE at the Elk County Visitor Center. From left, John Merroth Jr., Kevin Dressler Jr., Nathan Moyer, Addie Lannan, Alyssa Landis, and Jacob Dock.

A Life-Changing Decision

FROM THE OFFICER’S STATION



RACHEL GREIG

Everyone has an event or a part of themselves that has changed their life.

FFA is my life-changing experience. Never have I known any organization that teaches so many facts but also leaves so much room for imagination.

FFA is open to sharing opinions, but it is conducted in a professional manner the same as they conduct business.

I joined FFA in eighth grade, and just like many first-year members are, I was terrified. I sat in the back of the room at my first meeting; I didn’t say a word the entire time. I, was just taking it all in, how everyone seemed to be family, how anyone could state their ideas without being criticized or overlooked. How everyone was respected no matter who they were or where they came from.

At the end of the meeting my adviser called me out. I of course, was embarrassed but that was just her way of welcoming me home.

I have learned so much about agriculture thanks to FFA. This organization teaches more than premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. It helps its members uncover what’s already inside them, and it adds knowledge, experience, and friendship into the mix.

Since becoming an FFA member, I have found my talents; I have secured my future plans; and I’ve experienced things that I will never be able to take advantage of again. I know that many other members have accomplished the same.

FFA is more than just an organization; it’s a ginormous family. Since being elected as a Pennsylvania FFA state officer I’ve been honored with traveling the state and meeting members with all different stories. I’m also glad to say that I have gained more brothers and sisters who are just as excited about advocating agriculture as I am and of course I’m talking about my amazing teammates. I want to thank all past present and future FFA members because we are what makes the National FFA Organization what it is and we all should be proud of it.

Editor’s note: Rachel Greig is the Pennsylvania FFA state secretary.

Tulpehocken FFA Conducts Rush Week

MARISSA SPATZ
Tulpehocken Leadership Team Member

The Tulpehocken FFA Leaders Team recently organized a rush week to recruit and encourage FFA involvement in each agriculture class.

Rush week activities included two days of FFA knowledge competitions followed by Ag Olympics and a career development event day.

The FFA knowledge activities started the first day with FFA trivia presented through a slide show and followed with a baseball game requiring students to answer questions concerning FFA knowledge. During the baseball portion, classes were divided into two teams with each trying to answer questions. If they answered the question correctly, team members moved on until they could score. If they answered incorrectly, the other team could answer.

During the scavenger hunt members were put into pairs and searched the agriculture facilities for the answers to questions. The winning team was given a token for their efforts.

On Day Two, the FFA hosted Agriculture Olympics. In that event, classes were also put into two teams. The two teams first went through a tug-a-war. Then the groups would race to get a tennis ball through PVC pipes to the finish line without touching or dropping the tennis ball. After the teams crossed the line they moved on to a butter carving contest. Team members had to make FFA out of a stick of butter using plastic knives. The winning team of the butter carving competition moved onto the egg toss while the losing team tried their skill at milk chugging through a calf bottle. The activity concluded with bobbing for apples.

The final day featured mini career development events. During the CDE day, classes were broken up into four groups. Each group rotated through a series of mini CDE stations. Stations focused on equine judging, where students identified the parts of a horse and tack equipment; at a forestry station, they answered several questions concerning tree identification and invasive insects. At the milk quality and dairy foods station students answered questions and identified three different milks and four cheeses. The final station incorporated nursery and landscaping. Students answered questions and tried to identify different species of plants and pieces of equipment.

Students who turned in their FFA membership forms were invited to an ice cream social.

FFA Members Prep for National Convention

INDIANAPOLIS — The 2015 National FFA Convention and Expo will celebrate its last year of its three-year run in Louisville beginning Oct. 28. More than 60,000 FFA members and guests from throughout the United States are expected at this year’s event, which runs through Oct. 31.

“Amplify” is the theme for this year’s convention. “With the opportunities we are given in our lives, we must take action and share the message of agriculture with others,” said 2015-16 National FFA President Andy Paul. “It’s time we all amplify our voice when it comes to the message of agriculture, and boost our impact.”

Nine general sessions will draw FFA members together at the Kentucky Exposition Center. Students will have opportunities to engage exhibitors from more than 450 corporations, organizations and colleges at the expo center. Other events will be held at venues downtown, in the suburbs and beyond.

This year marks the 85th anniversary of the National FFA Creed as well as the 50th anniversary of the merger of New Farmers of America, an agricultural organization for African-American students, with the National FFA Organization.

The convention will kick off with keynote speaker Rick Rigsby during the opening sessions on Oct. 28 and 29. On Friday morning, past state FFA officer Amberley Snyder will share her message with FFA members on how she overcame adversity, and that evening, Brad Montague, who developed the idea for Kid President, will share his story.

Throughout the week, students will attend more than 70 leadership and personal growth workshops. FFA members will tour industry destinations, including Papa John’s international headquarters, Ford’s Louisville assembly plant, and Churchill Downs.

FFA members will roll up their sleeves and participate in several planned community-service initiatives starting Oct. 29 as part of the National Days of Service. FFA members will pitch in and help a host of local organizations, including YouthBuild Louisville, The Parklands of Floyds Fork, and Louisville Grows, Inc., an organization promoting urban agriculture and forestry.

The Pa. FFA state officer team extends its best wishes and good luck to the chapter teams and individuals that will compete at this month’s national convention.