



BLUE AND GOLD

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Blue Jackets Flood Indianapolis: National FFA Convention Highlights

SUZANNAH J. MELLINGER
Pa. FFA State Reporter

INDIANAPOLIS — What does the Oscar Meyer Weiner Mobile, Henry Winkler (a.k.a. The Fonz from “Happy Days”), The Beach Boys and 55,000 people have to do with the FFA? They were all part of the 80th National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis during the last full week of October.

From Oct. 24-27, 55,000 FFA members, advisers and other guests attended the convention where they could attend sessions, take part in the Days of Service, check out the FFA Career Show, Shopping Mall, and Hall of States, go on educational tours, and much more.

The excitement felt almost electric as the national officers called the opening session to order in a completely packed Conesco Field House. The sea of blue corduroy

jackets in the seats listened intently as Rick Rigsby said, “It’s not about your image or the image you uphold, it’s about the impact you make. Don’t look and act like a good leader, be a good leader.”

Rigsby’s encouragement stayed with members as they participated in the Days of Service, FFA sponsored service projects at places like food pantries, art museums, and anything in between. With more than 1,600 participants, FFA members truly impacted Indianapolis.

There were many other speakers such as Chad Hymas, Mark Sanborn, and Henry Winkler, as well as national officer retiring addresses to be heard in the nine sessions. Those in attendance also heard selections from the FFA band, chorus, and talent.

Many awards for members and friends of the FFA were given from the national chapter awards (Pennsylvania had thirteen) to the Honorary American Degree. Pennsylvania was proud to have 55 American Degree recipients and two Honorary American Degree recipients as well as six Career Development Experience (CDE) teams earning a “Gold” rating in their contests.

Between sessions, members attended the FFA career show which contained displays, activities and free goodies from many colleges as well as ag-related businesses from Oscar Meyer and Tractor Supply Company to Stihl, and more. Montgomery Gen-

try, Danielle Peck, John Stamos and The Beach Boys all came to Indianapolis to put on concerts and add to the fun. While all of this was going on, the 475 delegates from across the nation were working hard to represent the members of their respective states and make decisions on official FFA business.

The convention was brought to a close on Oct. 27 as Pennsylvania’s Kelly Over announced the names of the six individuals selected to serve as the 2007-2008 National FFA Officer Team. These six people are President Zach Kinne of Missouri, Secretary Becky Sullivan of Kansas, East Region Vice President Tyler Tenbarger of Indiana, Southern Region Vice President Brady Revels of Florida, Central Region Vice President Morgan Parker of Colorado, and Western Region Vice President Kari Boettcher of Oregon.

By the time the new officers taped the gavel and ended the 80th National FFA Convention, everyone was exhausted but excited to take all their memories and all they learned home to their chapters. See you next year at the 81st National FFA Convention.



FROM THE OFFICER'S STATION

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!! Believe it or not, November is already here and Christmas is slowly creeping up on us. Hello, my name is Cale Grimes and I am currently serving as the State Treasurer for the Pennsylvania FFA Association.

For the Pennsylvania FFA State Officers, October was very eventful. It started with the first week of the month with the Farm City Day during the Keystone International Livestock Exposition (KILE). We had the opportunity to work with inner city children from the Harrisburg area and show them what “farm life” was all about. That same week, we were fortunate enough to be VIP guests of the White House and see President George W. Bush speak at the Jay Group in Lancaster, Pa. What an exciting experience that was!

aka “the Fonz”, talk to more than 47,000 FFA members on the importance of not giving up on your dreams of success. November presented the Blue & Gold Ball sponsored by the FFA Alumni. Here, we were able to spend time with our FFA Alumni that help make our association run smoothly and function as well as it does. As Jack Frost moves in this time of year, I wish you safe travels and full stomachs for the holiday season. Stay warm, and God Bless.

The next three weeks were filled with chapter visits, chapter visits, and more chapter visits. The State Officer team traveled all across the Keystone State visiting various schools educating the students on the importance of team work, leadership, communication, and character building and we had a blast.

On the 19th, the 11 of us piled into a van and headed off for Indianapolis Indiana for the 80th National FFA Convention. Here, we experienced a week of motivational speakers, met members from different states, interacted with you, the members as well as the national officers, and of course, experienced first hand what it was like to stand on the football field where Peyton Manning plays in the RCA dome. We were able to hear Henry Winkler



From left are Eastern Region Vice President Jason Zimmerman, John C.R. Tacelosky, Phil Pitzer, and North Central Region Vice President Kristie Folk. Pitzer and Tacelosky were awarded the Honorary American Degree for their involvement in the FFA SAFE Program. Photo by Suzannah Mellinger



Listed in alphabetical order are Pennsylvania’s American Degree recipients at the degree ceremony in Indianapolis Ind. They are Stacy Lynn Allen, Ashley Lauren Austin, Zachary Biddle, Tami Marie Burkett, Joseph Carosielli, Brandon Cherry, Albert J. Corle, Donna Delp, Ayla Detwiler, Joelynn A. Donough, Paul Druckenmiller, Matthew M. File, Eric Lee Forgy, Jennifer L. Garber, Kati-Ayn Garman, Jarred Geist, Nicole Grof, Ashley M. Harshbarger, Aaron Hay, Jennifer M. Hedges, Linford A. Hershey, Crystal Hoffman, Julene Elizabeth Hoover, Valerie Hoover, Aaron M. Horst, Jessica M. Kessler, Abbie J. Kuhlman, Megan Cristine Kutz, Eric D. Lawrence, Ann M. Loucks, Keith D. Lutz, Justin Tyler Martin, Jennifer S. McClune, Melinda McFarland, Travis Mills, Samantha L. Moore, Clark L. Oberholtzer, Kelly D. Over, Becky Peterson, Tyler Rice, Johanna Rohrer, Michael Shearer, Lydia H. Snyder, Marie J. Snyder, Ginger E. Spangler, Thomas J. Spring, Amanda Stoltzfus, Andrew Shane Troutman, Linda M. Vislosky, David L. Warner, Ryan White, Sarah Wickard, Matthew K. Wiker, Todd Russell Wilson, and Janelle R. Zimmerman.



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