



VATAT

News

A publication of the Texas Agricultural Education Family ☆ 2011 Volume II, Issue XI

"Words with Friends"

By: David Reiley, Seguin

Thankful - 1: conscious of benefit received 2: expressive of thanks 3: well pleased: glad

As school began to wind down this year, it seemed the activities increased at a more rapid pace than usual, kind of like other years, but this year seemed to be different. For some reason it shifted into high gear with all of the conventions, meetings, babies, banquets and contests going right into the last week of school. After 27 years of teaching, you would think I would have this all figured out by now and everything would fall into place. Wrong!

Hey, wait a minute did I just say babies? That does not sound like a typical end of the year activity to me! Well, this year ended a little differently than most when about two weeks before school was out my teaching partner Diane and her husband Brad welcomed an adorable little baby girl named Brooke into their family. I am thankful they are all doing well. Did I mention Brooke arrived on a Tuesday, the first day of the Area VII Convention and the day before our banquet? Sometimes the little things slip my mind. Even with Diane in the hospital, our banquet still seemed to go off without any major glitches. We even broadcasted our banquet via Skype, so Diane could see the whole thing live in her room. The

students were excited she still got to be a part of it.

At the banquet, the students created several funny awards to give out, and I was fortunate enough to get the "Casper the Ghost" Award, since I was always disappearing this year and missed a few days of school. They were right; I had missed my share of days due to VATAT obligations and school duties. I received my share of "Do you still work here?," "Are you the new teacher?" as well as the "All visitors must report to the front office" jabs from students and colleagues. I am thankful it was all in good fun, and everyone helped cover my duties throughout the year. I am thankful Diane was there keeping the department running smoothly and keeping our FFA chapter on course for an incredible year.

One of the activities I was out for was the VATAT spring board meeting, which I talked about last month. At the meeting, we selected Barney McClure as our new VATAT executive director. Barney was one of four candidates who applied for the position. I am thankful for those four people who took the time and effort to go through the process of applying and interviewing for the job. Barney is no stranger to the VATAT office and staff as he served as the VATAT President in 2005-2006 and has been instrumental in the TEKS



re-write process. He has also testified before the State Board of Education several times securing state credit for our new classes. Barney will bring over 37 years of experience with him as he takes over as executive director.

Speaking of executive directors, I would like to thank Gerald for his 10 years of service as the VATAT executive director. It was during these times we experienced several major issues

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TEXAS AG ED FAMILY UPDATES

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We've got a brick with your name on it.



Make your mark on the VATAT Brick Campaign. Purchase your personalized brick to be placed in the front walkway of the Agricultural Education Ford

Texas FFA Leadership Center in Austin. Pay \$100.00 for a brick today, and enjoy it for years to come. Each brick comes with a commemorative brick certificate which is perfect to frame and present as a gift!

Fill out the brick order form, found on www.vatat.org>Teacher Toolbox>Bits and Pieces> Brick Campaign, completely and send it in with payment, which includes tax deductible checks, to the Texas FFA Foundation * Attention: Brick Campaign * 614 East 12th Street * Austin, TX 78701. You may also purchase your brick with a credit card through VATAT Online. For more information about the brick campaign please contact Gerald Young at 512.472.3128 or gerald@vatat.org. Don't miss out on this great opportunity!

VATAT Team Roping Scholarship Fundraiser

On Monday, July 25 ag teachers and family members attending this summer's professional development conference are invited to participate in the VATAT Team Roping Scholarship Fundraiser. The event will take place at the Wade Indoor Arena in Terrell, Texas; the books open at 6 p.m. and roping starts at 7 p.m.

It will be a round-robin tournament, and the cost is \$100 per person. Buckles donated by Superior Trophies will go to the first place winners, and Justin Chukkah boots donated by RiverStar Farms will be awarded to the second place header and heeler.

Following the VATAT Team Roping event, there will be jackpot roping for whoever would like to participate. The event will be capped at a USTRC 5 triad number, and the entry fee is \$100.00 per person. All proceeds will go to the VATAT Scholarship Fund to support our youth. Breast collars will be awarded to winners of the jackpot roping and as well as other prizes. For more information please contact Tracy Yarbrough (940)390-8300 or Eloy Perez (361)813-4590.

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Thank you
Gerald Young
for all your hard
work on behalf of
VATAT!



“Words with Friends”

Continued from page 1

that would affect our organization. His leadership and farsightedness kept us going in the right direction. Gerald has taken on the challenges and stood up for our teachers on a daily basis. He has worked hard to secure the future of agriculture in Texas schools. These are probably things we all know, but I thought I would just mention again. It is all of the little things that go on behind the scenes that keeps him busy. Conference planning, board meetings, talking to student teachers, managing the Texas Ford Leadership building, attending meetings involving the rest of the Texas Ag Ed group and managing the day to day operations of the VATAT are all part of the job. He has worked long hours to maintain the dignity of our profession.

I am thankful I have had the opportunity to work with Gerald over the years and hopefully I have captured some of his enthusiasm and drive as I continue to teach the next few years. Gerald is one of those guys who is the last to call it a night, but he will be the first one to show up at breakfast. I thank him for sharing his knowledge and wisdom as well as his passion for the profession. I also want to thank Nancy, Cole and Neely for sharing Gerald over the last 10 years. If it's anything like my house, all of the bad things happen while I am on the road, like busted pipes, cattle out on the road, neighbor's bull in the pasture with all of the cows set up to AI tomorrow, dog getting in the chicken house, raccoon stuck in the steer-feed barrel, you know, all the stuff that happens to you too, I am sure. Now, Gerald will get to experience all of those issues first-hand and will not have to get the story over the phone.

I also need to thank my administrators at Seguin for allowing me to pursue this incredible opportunity serving as a VATAT officer the last three years. I really appreciate them working with me and allowing me to experience this awesome adventure. They have been understanding and supportive, and I thank them for that. I mentioned my teaching partner Diane earlier, and I need to thank her for all she has done the last two years, not only helping me, but our department as well. She kept the wheels from falling off the cart the last two years, and I am so thankful for that.

Finally, I need to thank my family, Mary, Zach and Hannah for all of the help and support they have provided over the years fixing the busted pipes, chasing the cows back in, putting out hay, helping AI cattle at 5:00 a.m., emergency surgeries, etc. I have missed volleyball games, parent meetings, birthdays, family gatherings and more doing my job, so I thank them for being understanding and for sharing me with my students over the years.

Thank you for what you do and thank you for supporting agriculture education. See you at the conference in July. Have a safe summer!

What a Ride

Gerald Young, VATAT Executive Director

If someone would have told me in the spring of 1971 I would end my agriculture education career as executive director of the VATAT, I would have had a good laugh. This should tell every young teacher they can do anything they want as long as they work hard and have goals. We have a number of teachers who work very hard, but do not take the time to set real and attainable goals. The result is usually a teacher who is very tired and frustrated because he or she does not see any real results.

I was very fortunate every teaching job I had was a little more challenging than the previous job. My teaching career began at Austin Anderson in East Austin. Like all my jobs, I loved my job at Anderson. We had a great principal who served as a mentor to me and taught me a great deal about doing my job. The problem was the school district closed the school at the end of that year. Job opportunities in 1971 were the same as they are today with 30 to 60 people applying for every job opening. Austin ISD offered me a job teaching 8th grade science. This job was very important in developing my classroom management skills. I also learned I did not want to teach in junior high again.

In 1972, I took a job teaching agriculture at New Caney. This position was good in two ways; it was a good place to teach, and I was fortunate enough to teach with someone who had come through an established agriculture and FFA program. Lynn Mosier taught me more about agriculture education and the FFA than I had learned in the previous ten years of high school, college and two years of teaching. During that time, my goal was to become a superintendent of a school district by the time I was forty. From 1974 to 1976, I served as a counselor at New Caney High and began working on my administration certifications.

In the spring of 1976, I realized my heart was not in administration, and I wanted to teach agriculture. I took an agriculture teaching job at Humble. This is when I really learned about goals and goal setting. It had been years since the chapter had won any banners. We set goals as to when and at what level we wanted to be successful. This was a very effective way to accomplish our goals. In 1980, I made the most important move of my career when I took the agriculture education job at Katy. This move was significant in many ways. We moved from what had been our home for eight years and into a program that had been successful for many years.

It was not an easy decision going to Katy. I have always been the kind of person who did not want to take a job just to maintain the status quo. It was important to have a positive effect on the program in order for it to grow

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SAE Marketplace is an online resource designed specifically for agricultural science teachers and FFA members to locate livestock sales and breeders, purchase equipment and supplies and find the perfect Supervised Agricultural Experience project.

The SAE Marketplace is a venture of the VATAT and is simple and easy to use. It is divided into three categories which contain agricultural products and services including: The Show Source, Ag Service and Supply Shop and the Greenhouse.

Advertising on SAE Marketplace is a great way to target Ag Ed Family members! Advertisements run for 12 months and include up to 50 word of text, company logo, website and email links--all for only \$100 per year!

Visit SAE Marketplace at www.saemarketplace.com to find your next SAE project or to advertise one!

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VATAT Awards Ceremony

July 27, 2011 ~ 7:00 p.m.

Sheraton Hotel

Champions Ballroom

Sponsored by:



Come show your support and help recognize outstanding VATAT members and agriculture science supporters at the VATAT Awards Ceremony!

RiverStar Farms Prize Package Drawing

*Benefiting the VATAT Scholarship Fund
\$5/ticket or 5 for \$20*

This year, RiverStar Farms and the VATAT offer you more chances to win one of four exceptional prize packages along along with several other prizes including the second place prize of a small animal scale from WW-Paul Scales, and \$50.00 cash or gift card! The ten winning tickets will be drawn, as before, and each winning ticket holder will select a filled balloon. Once each ticket holder has his or her balloon, each person will pop the balloon to reveal the prize inside. One winner will get to choose from the following packages...

*South Texas Deer Hunt for Two
Livestock Equipment Package
Custom Livestock Trailer
Las Vegas Trip for Two*

Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Tickets can be purchased during FFA Convention and VATAT Conference at the RiverStar Farms booth. Tickets cost \$5 each or \$20 for five tickets. All funds collected will be donated by RiverStar Farms to benefit the VATAT Scholarship Fund. The winner will be drawn at the VATAT Conference during Family Night. Anyone is eligible, need not be present to win. View descriptions of each package at www.vatat.org under Conference>VATAT Activities.

What a Ride

Continued from page 3

and improve. Once I realized this could be possible, the move was easier to make. The first six years at Katy were very good. However, when Gary Vos came to Katy High to teach, the program took on new life. The next sixteen years were phenomenal; we grew from 175 students to over 325 students and from two teachers to four teachers. The success of the program was unbelievable and very rewarding for the students, the teachers and the community.

In the spring of 2001, when Mr. Finstead announced he would retire as the VATAT executive director at the end of the year, I had a dilemma. The VATAT executive director position was one I had considered and felt I could do. I also was as happy teaching agriculture as I had ever been. After visiting with my family and much prayer, I decided to apply for the job, and you know the rest. I shared with the board this spring that I learned very early if I made a mistake when I was teaching, it affected four teachers and 300 plus students. In my current job, if I make a mistake, I affect 1700 teachers and 100,000 students; a very sobering thought.

As I write this final article, I leave you with some basic thoughts. Know what you are capable of doing and be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Enjoy what you do. If you are not happy in your job, find a new one or change professions. We work too many years in our lifetime to hate going to work everyday. Use the words "we" and "us" more than you use the words "me" and "I;" it will take you further in life. Your family has to support what you do for a living. Without their support, you will never be as successful as you could be. If I had any success in my life, it was for two reasons. The first reason was God was involved in every decision I made, and the second reason was because I married the right person.

VATAT CAREERS PAGE

The VATAT's Careers page gives you the most recent list of job opportunities available. On the page you can search for the entire list of job openings, or you can narrow your search by looking for job opportunities in your area. If you know of a job opening that needs to be posted online, please email it in a Word document format to either karen@vatat.org or allison@vatat.org.

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THE JOHN A. BARCLAY AGENCY

Retired Teachers' Meeting

Come join us!

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Arlington Convention Center

Room: M9

Get all your information for the 2011 VATAT Professional Development Conference at www.vatat.org!

Follow the VATAT on:

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VATAT Activities

Ag Teacher Open- 23rd Annual VATAT Golf Tournament

Come join VATAT members at the Grand Oaks Country Club in Grand Prairie, Texas. Check-in will be from 6:30 to 7:30 a.m. on Monday, July 25. The tee off time is 8:00 a.m. The all-inclusive entry fee is \$80.00 per player, which includes lunch. The proceeds benefit the VATAT Scholarship Fund. All players must be current VATAT members and first year teachers are not eligible. In order to participate, please complete the entry form found at www.vatat.org under Conference>VATAT Activities. You must register and send payment by July 19. For more information contact Fud Robertson at 806-543-8298 or email frobertson@ldalouisd.net.

2011 Fourth Annual VATAT 3D Archery Tournament Scholarship Fundraiser

On Monday, July 25 ag teachers and family members attending the 2011 VATAT conference are invited to participate in the Fourth Annual Archery Tournament. Proceeds will benefit the VATAT Scholarship Fund. All VATAT members, spouses and children are welcome to attend the tournament. Registration for the tournament will begin at 8 a.m. with a shotgun start at 9 a.m. The fee to participate is \$30.00. There will be door prizes and other awards as well as buckles for division winners, sponsored by Superior Trophies. Please visit www.vatat.org under Conference>VATAT Activities for information on how to register for the event.

VATAT Bass Classic Benefiting the VATAT Scholarship Fund

The VATAT Bass Classic benefiting the VATAT Scholarship Fund will be held Sunday, July 24, 2011 from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The event will take place at Lake Grapevine - Katie Woods Ramp. The entry fee is \$50/boat, two people per boat and one person must be a VATAT member or retiree. For more information regarding this summer's VATAT Bass Classic download the entry form, rules and description found at www.vatat.org under Conference>VATAT Activities.

VATAT Conference Annual Family Night

Join us for food and fun at the annual VATAT Family Night at the Arlington Convention Center on Thursday evening, July 28, 2011, starting at 6:00 p.m. and ending at 9:30 p.m. Come enjoy music from the Ag Teacher's Band and participate in the raffle! We look forward to seeing you and your families there!

VATAT Awards Ceremony

Come show your support and help recognize outstanding VATAT members and agriculture science supporters at the VATAT Awards Ceremony sponsored by Superior Trophies. The ceremony will be held on Wednesday, July 27th from 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. in the Champions

Ballroom at the Sheraton Hotel.

Family Activities

Six Flags over Texas and Hurricane Harbor have a special offer, and tickets are good for the entire 2011 season! Tickets will be available for purchase Monday through Thursday of the conference at the Information Desk. Discount tickets are only available to VATAT conference attendees and their guests. See the VATAT Activities page online for details.

VATAT Conference Nights at Rangers Ballpark

See the VATAT Activities page online for details about this exciting opportunity!

Spouses' Luncheon

On Tuesday, July 26 there will be a lunch for the spouses at the Sheraton Hotel sponsored by CEV Multimedia.

The Kenneth Hughes Plan

Have you heard of the Kenneth Hughes Plan? Are you a member? The Kenneth Hughes Plan was started to give ag teachers a life insurance plan to financially help their families at the time of their passing. The plan is named after the 1982-83 VATAT President Kenneth Hughes.

How do I join? Active VATAT members sign up by filling out the enrollment form and beneficiary form and pay the initial payment of \$25.00 (\$5.00 administrative fee included). Go to the VATAT website>Member Services>Member Benefits and complete the application and the beneficiary forms and then mail them in with your payment. It's that easy!

What happens when someone passes away? When a teacher who is on the plan passes away, we will calculate the numbers of teachers on the plan times \$20.00 and send the amount to the person(s) listed as the beneficiary. When there is a death of a member on the plan, the members of the plan will be notified and asked to remit \$20.00 to stay on the plan. It's that simple! The more active teachers are on the plan, the more the beneficiary will receive at a time when he or she could need it the most.

What happens when an active member retires? If you are on the plan at the time of your retirement, you will be automatically moved to the Honorary Life Plan in which the policy is the same.

In addition to the VATAT member plan, we also have a spouse plan. If the VATAT member is a member of the Kenneth Hughes Plan, his or her spouse is eligible to be on the spouse plan. The spouse who signs up for the plan pays the initial payment of \$10.00. The spouse plan works the same way as the active plan. When there is a death of a member on the spouse plan, the members of the plan will be notified and asked to remit \$10.00 to stay on the plan. For more information, please visit the VATAT website>Member Services>Member Benefits.

2011 VATAT AWARD WINNERS

Sponsored by:



IDEAS UNLIMITED (NAAE)

Ryan Cummins, Cesar E. Chavez High School

John Peterson, Stanton High School Athletic Director

Adren Pilger, Bryan ISD CTE Director

TEXAS TURN THE KEY (NAAE)

Ryan Cummins, Cesar E. Chavez High School

OUTSTANDING NEWSPAPERS

The Bellville Times, Bellville

The Bullard Banner News, Bullard

The Castro County News, Dimmitt

The Enterprise, China Spring

The Lake Country Sun, Graford

The Martin County Messenger, Stanton

The Nueces County Record Star, Robstown

TEACHER'S MEDIA AWARDS

Ryan Cummins, Cesar E. Chavez High School

Gynnalyn Ezzell, Seymour High School

30-MINUTE CLUB

Ryan Cummins, Cesar E. Chavez High School

TEACHER'S CHAPTER PUBLICITY AND PROMOTIONAL AWARD

Ryan Cummins, Cesar E. Chavez High School

OUTSTANDING COOPERATION AWARDS

Earl Plagens, Colorado City

Butler-Weldments, Cameron

Albany Kiwanis Club, Albany

Martin's Mill FFA Booster Club, Ben Wheeler

Calallen FFA Alumni, Corpus Christi

OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATORS

William Ball, Calallen High School Asst. Principal

Dustin Barton, Blanco High School Principal

Debra Clinton, Nazareth ISD Principal

Brian Gray, Union Grove ISD Superintendent

Kerry Hansen, Troy ISD Superintendent

Dr. Russell Marshall, Mabank ISD Superintendent

Dr. Virginia Mosier, Abilene ISD CTE Director

OUTSTANDING RADIO STATIONS

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98.3 KORA, Bryan

94.3 KSEY, Seymour

1320 AM KVMC & 107.1 FM KAUM, Colorado City



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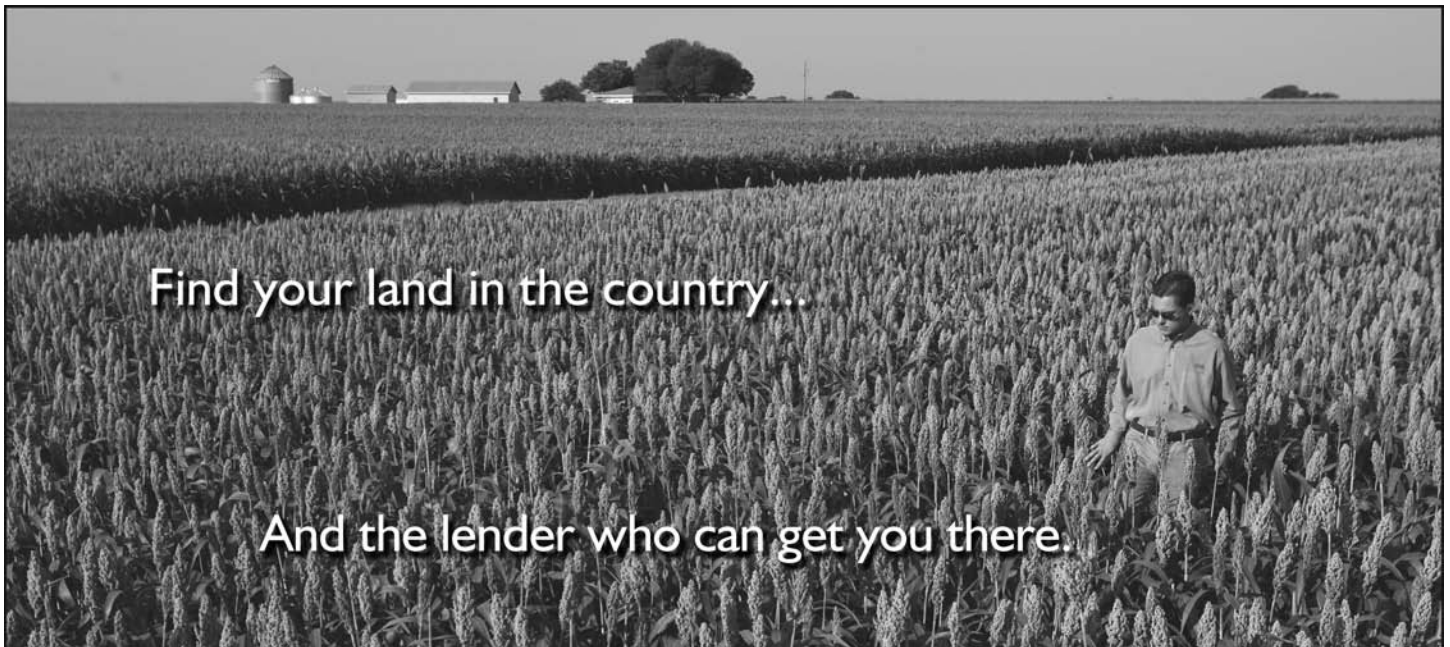
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Texas FFA Update

A Letter from the Executive Director

Tom Maynard, Texas FFA Association Executive Director

Board Approves Minimum Membership Policy

The Texas FFA Board of Directors approved a policy which will require chapters to have at least enough members to field a full officer team as described by the Texas FFA Constitution. Article XII, Section C of the Texas FFA Constitution mandates six officers. A small number of chapters have submitted less than six officers on their roster. Local chapters are intended to be functioning organizations through which students learn to develop and apply leadership skills through executing a program of activities and holding regular meetings.

The intent of the policy is to provide a policy mechanism for the state association to reach out to programs that are struggling to deliver agricultural education's leadership development component which, pursuant to the Texas Education Code, is to be integral to the instructional program.

Texas FFA Constitution, Article XII: Area, District, and Chapter Officers

Section C. The offices of Chapter Associations shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, and Sentinel. Other officers may be elected as provided for by the Chapter constitution. The advisor of the chapter shall be the Agricultural Science Teacher(s) in that school. If an officer moves to another chapter, the office will be vacated and replacement will be elected through according to Chapter constitution.

Texas FFA Policy Handbook Section 4.4(g) adopted June 10, 2011

Chapters which have been in existence for more than two years that report fewer than six members and do not report at least six constitutional officers shall be sent a letter of warning by the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall have the authority to consider a chapter undergoing a rebuilding under the new chapter status of this policy. The Executive Director shall work in good faith to provide assistance local chapters which do not have an adequate membership and leadership development programs to produce enough members to field an officer team. If a chapter remains on warned status for two consecutive years without remedying the deficiency, it

shall be considered to be not in good standing. Size of school and other mitigating circumstances may also be considered in the enforcement of this policy.

FFA Board Set to Appoint Delegate Task Force

The Texas FFA Board of Directors agreed in principle to appoint a task force of students, teachers and other experts to examine the current student delegate process.

The current process provides each chapter with a voting delegate for the first 50 members and an additional delegate for each additional 50 or any fraction thereof. It's an old paradigm that may have outstripped the organization's capacity to seat and manage a delegate body of this size. With membership growth, the total potential delegate numbers are closing in on 2,000, creating logistical and facility challenges for the convention. Additionally, the Texas FFA has an interest in using the process to create a leadership experience and to elevate the status of the convention delegate. All of these considerations must be balanced with the need to provide a degree of representation in the affairs of the association.

Each area will be represented on the task force—half by teachers and half by students. The task force will study recent survey data and input and how other state FFA associations and other organizations manage delegate processes. The task force will examine how best to balance the needs of the process and have a preliminary report by the board of director's second quarter meeting in January.

Texas FFA App Set for July Release

Texas FFA continues search for ways to connect with teachers and members. Soon Texas FFA "will have an app for that."

A new smart phone application is set for release at the 83rd Texas FFA Convention in Lubbock. The application will include convention information, Texas FFA News Online, competitive event results and upcoming events. The application should work on most smart phones—Blackberries, Droids and iPhones released in the last two to three years. The application is part of an effort to connect with members and teachers who are increasingly technology savvy and less likely to browse hard copy publications such as newsprint and magazines.

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Foundation Update

Thank You...

Joanne Shelton, Texas FFA Foundation Scholarship Administrator and Executive Assistant

As we enjoy the 83rd Annual Texas FFA Convention and the VATAT Professional Development Conference this summer, we would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our agricultural educators/FFA advisors.

Whose job is that? Did you ever read the story called "Whose Job Is It?" This could describe many areas in our life, but none quite as well as the process of educating a student. It goes something like this...

This is a story about four people named: Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

From time to time we all suffer from a case of the "Anybodies." It is easy for people to say, "Let the teachers do it—it's their job," and easier to say, "I have other responsibilities." In truth, it is all of our responsibility. Make no bones about it, teaching agriculture science and serving as an FFA advisor are extremely tough and challenging roles. You are molding leaders for our day and our future. In my brief time with the Foundation and speaking with many teachers, I have come to believe it's the toughest job you will ever love!

During the FFA convention and VATAT conference, when you see our teachers and advisors, please use the opportunity to say "thank you" for providing students with innovative and leading-edge education and preparing them to servant leadership today and equipping them with skills to make for a better Texas tomorrow.

To our sponsors and supporters, Texas agriculture education and the Texas FFA program have been blessed with many great supporters. Some have been supporters at the local and state level, scholarship and award sponsors. Others engaged through the Foundation's Star Partner

program or Convention Partners program. Either way, their generosity provides the "fuel" to fulfill the mission and efforts of the Texas FFA Foundation and help us engage opportunities for students and teachers to excel. The Texas FFA Foundation is proud of our accomplishments to date, but believes our best days are ahead. Our success would not be possible without sponsors who see the same value – A Mission that Matters.

During the FFA convention and VATAT Professional Development Conference, students and teachers will have the chance to see many of these sponsors. Please use the opportunity to say "thank you."

Thank you! Texas will be a better place to live, work and raise our families as a result of the investment being made in our young people and educators. We extend a special thanks to the West Texas Host Committee for their leadership in assisting with convention activities and record breaking donations from convention sponsors.

A Mission that Matters

The blue corduroy fabric of the FFA Organization has been a recognized staple despite trends and societal influences. Like the fabric, our weave of young people has maintained itself as one of the top youth organizations in the nation. Agricultural education in Texas is recognized nationwide as innovative, coupled with strong youth programs such as the Texas FFA, which is a training ground for future local, state and national leaders.

The Texas FFA provides opportunities for both students in urban and rural settings. With a mission to "Preserve the Strength and Future of the Texas FFA," the Texas FFA Foundation was established to provide a mechanism by which the Texas FFA affiliates, and other supporters, could independently provide a strong agricultural education system with dynamic programming and services.



Texas Young Farmers Update

From the President's Pen

Janet Bulger, Texas Young Farmers President

School is out and summer is here. Where has the first half of 2011 gone? Even though at the time I am writing this the calendar says summer is not officially here, the temperature says it is. We had a few days with descent rain, but it is pretty dry again. I am hoping by the time you read this, we will have had more rain.

I am happy to report Kenny's garden, in the syrup buckets, has been very successful this year. We have enough tomatoes to supply the whole street and our squash is doing great. We get just enough squash every couple of days for me to fry for lunch. He also planted peppers, and they are doing good. We don't eat many peppers, so he has been taking them to work and giving them away. A man who works with Kenny raises chickens, so Kenny gives Larry peppers, and Larry gives Kenny eggs. I think it's a pretty good trade-off.

In May, we met with Gordon Stone, National YF Executive Secretary, at the Omni Hotel in San Antonio where we are planning to host the YF National Institute in December, 2013. We were given a tour of the facilities and then treated to a lunch. This is an exceptionally nice hotel, and they are offering us a really good deal.

Today, the challenges of feeding the growing global population are significant. In fact, in the next 50 years, agriculture will be called upon to produce more food

than in the previous 10,000 years combined! Not only will food production need to double, but the increase in food output will have to come from the same land currently being farmed. We must grow two stalks of corn where one once grew.

Global population is expected to reach more than 9 billion people by 2050. It is clear the world is going to need more food and energy. Agriculture can, and must, grow sustainably to meet these vital needs. By making sure that crops are collected and processed efficiently and by employing innovation to make the most of every kernel, grain and bean we touch, we will be able to achieve this goal.

We must ask ourselves are we doing our part to communicate the benefits that modern agriculture provides in meeting the world's food needs today and tomorrow? With continuing advances in agricultural machinery, the role of the farmer will become increasingly specialized.

Agricultural engineers work in the context of agricultural production and processing and the management of natural resources. Their specialties include power systems and machinery design; structures and environmental science; and food and bioprocess engineering. They perform tasks such as planning, supervising, and managing the building of dairy effluent schemes, irrigation, drainage, flood and water control systems. They develop ways to conserve soil and water and to improve the processing of agricultural products. In addition, they may perform environmental impact assessments and interpret research results.



MATHESON

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TEXAS YOUNG FARMERS FRIENDS AND FAMILY REUNION

We have had several inquiries about resuming the Texas Young Farmer summer get together that used to be held along with the summer board meeting. This year, I am proud to announce the First Annual Texas Young Farmers Friends and Family Reunion to be held in Mexia, Texas on August 6, 2011.

This year's event will be hosted by the Limestone County Young Farmers at the Confederate Reunion Grounds located on 1738 FM 2705. Activities start at 9 a.m. and will continue until the park closes at 5 p.m. The Limestone County Young Farmers will prepare the meat dishes and guests are asked to bring a covered dish, drinks and lawn chairs or anything they want to throw on the pit. There is a \$2 park entry fee per person. There will be washer pitching, horseshoes, dominoes, fishing and swimming in the Navasota River. We will be adding a reunion flyer to the TYF website soon with all the details.

For more information and to RSVP your headcount contact Bill Ward at 254-747-0991, Doug Gandy at cdgandy@aol.com or Don Beene at 254-625-0509 or dbtxyfa@gmail.com. Make plans now to attend!

TXYF Awards

When you read this article, it will be early July. I again want to encourage you to be working on the awards applications. These are due November 1, 2011. Also, be thinking about the Basket Contest. Each chapter is ask to participate in this. Bring a #2 Washtub filled with goodies. These baskets will be judged and then auctioned off. The money raised from these baskets go toward our scholarship fund. Go to the webpage to get complete information on the awards and contests.

Dates to Remember...

- **July 11-15, 2011** – State FFA Convention – Lubbock, TX
- **July 25-29, 2011** – VATAT Conference – Arlington, TX
- **August 6, 2011** – YF 1st Annual Family and Friends Reunion - Confederate Reunion Grounds, Mexia, TX
- **August 20, 2011** – YF Summer Board Meeting – Austin, TX
- **October 29, 2011** – YF Fall Board Meeting – TBA
- **November 1, 2011** – Awards Applications Due
- **December 7-10, 2011** – National YF Institute - Kansas City, MO
- **January 13-14, 2012** – YF State Convention - Austin, TX

Come Say Hello!

Be sure to stop by the Texas Young Farmers' booth at both the Texas FFA convention as well as at the VATAT conference this summer to see what's new with our organization and how you can get involved. So, come say hello; we would love to see you!

AG TRIVIA

1. Which fruit bearing trees are evergreens?
2. Of all the vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted each year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
3. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
4. In many liquor stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. The pear is whole and ripe, and the bottle is genuine; it hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
5. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked or in any other form except fresh.

Answers from last month's trivia: 1. One; 2. Vitamin D

MATHESON Launches Limited Edition Custom Welding Helmet

The Limited Edition helmet is the first of a collector series of welding helmets designed to appeal to welders seeking a distinctive look.

The launch of the Limited Edition Collector Series of custom welding helmets is the kickoff event in the launch of the new MATHESON Select line of welding products, industrial tools, and associated supplies. The MATHESON Select family of products will support the needs of the industrial community with high performance quality products at a competitive price.

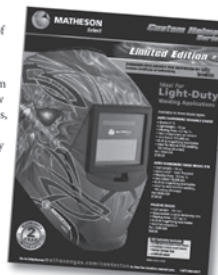
The Limited Edition #1 helmet will be the first product to feature the new MATHESON Select brand, and is available with three lens types to meet the needs of different users.

MATHESON is offering this Limited Edition series of helmets as a tribute to welders world-wide, in recognition of the value of welders and the welding profession in daily living.

MATHESON commissioned Fred Sicoli, owner of Killer Kreations in Philadelphia, PA to create the bright green, yellow, and black design that is featured on the Limited Edition #1 helmet. Mr. Sicoli is nationally recognized by custom car and motorcycle enthusiasts for his distinctive designs.

This special helmet is available in all of MATHESON's 184 retail stores. The packaged gas customer facing team is actively selling the new helmet to their customers and prospects throughout the US. The helmet can be purchased on-line at www.toolsforless.com/helmet. We are targeting young welders as part of this marketing campaign and are reaching out to welding schools and national events featuring welding – such as Skills USA – and launching a welding school instructor rewards program.

The commercialization team led by Judy Long includes Jerry McClumphy, Christine Scully, Beth Sullivan, Lynn Donnelly and Bob Klopnicki.



Give your students an
EARFUL
◆ about their ◆
MOUTHFUL.
They'll listen.



In rural parts of Texas, one of out of every six students currently use smokeless tobacco. But you can help. Teachers can visit SmokelessEducation.org to view training videos, materials and to contact a regional Prevention Resource Center to order the Spotlight on Smokeless curriculum. We'll teach you how to teach them to quit using tobacco.





Texas FFA Alumni

Update

Reunion

Kelly White, Texas FFA Alumni President

It started as a flash in the pan of the brain of one of Bob Singletary's former students. She wanted to have a get together for his former students to rekindle old friendships, share some memories and honor him for the service he gave to the Sam Houston FFA Chapter of Houston, Texas from 1970 to 1982.

Once an FFA member, always an FFA member. The leadership skills, organizational skills and plain common sense of this alumni group sprang into action. The dates and places were discussed, and a Facebook group was created. This group page was only open to former students of Mr. Bob Singletary. Although, he has had an influence on more than those who were fortunate enough to have him as a mentor in the classroom.

The group page grew in size. Memories and photos were being shared, and the date of the planned event seemed to loom in the future like a star in a distant galaxy. The date was finally posted. It was the same date as our Area CDEs. I had to mark "tentively attending," but this was for Mr. Singletary, not for Kelly White, so the show must go on.

The morning of the CDEs in College Station and the reunion in Huntsville started. I would leave the house around 3:30 a.m. to pick up the school vehicle and my students to head on to Texas A&M. The contest would end about the time the reunion would start.

Fast forward, and the contest is over. I fed the kids, dropped them off, dropped off the school vehicle and like *deja vue*...I am back in College Station and on the road to Huntsville, hopefully in time for the reunion. By the time I arrived almost half of the group had dispersed. I was lucky Mr. Singletary and his wife, Linda, were still there.

The Singletary's sat with the members of the "Metallic Club," gold in the teeth, silver in the hair and lead in the bottom. I did not recognize some people, but others I recognized immediately. Some had graduated with me 30 years ago. Others remarked they had not seen each

other for 40 years. A few were lucky enough to still fit into their FFA jackets, which they wore proudly.

What impressed me the most? For a brief moment in time, we were kids sitting around in ag class. We listened in awe as Mr. Singletary shared stories of those days. We wanted that "teacher recognition" again from a man who had touched our lives many years ago.

What a tribute! A tribute to the man who in turn paid tribute to a good bunch of students. The event was a first for this group, but not the last. However, we were saddened to hear one of our fellow alumni lost her life three weeks later in an accident. So, bottom line is enjoy life whether it is the past or the present, and live for the future; honor those who deserve it.

Alumni Chapter Basket Contest

You are asked to enter your FFA alumni chapter in the Texas FFA Alumni Chapter Basket Contest. Each Alumni chapter may enter one basket representative of their locality. It may have homemade goodies, jellies, items made by local companies, home made items, items from the local ag. department, caps, etc.

Baskets should be delivered to the FFA Alumni booth by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 12th. The baskets will be judged on a penny (\$.01) per voted. The basket with the most votes will receive the rotating "Basket Winner" plaque. The baskets become the property of the Texas FFA Alumni Association and will be sold in the auction on Thursday evening.

Contest Rules:

1. Baskets need to be delivered to the FFA Alumni booth by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday.
2. A list of the items included in the basket should be clearly labeled on the basket.
3. The basket can be of any creation.



Vocational Agriculture
Teachers Association of Texas
614 East 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

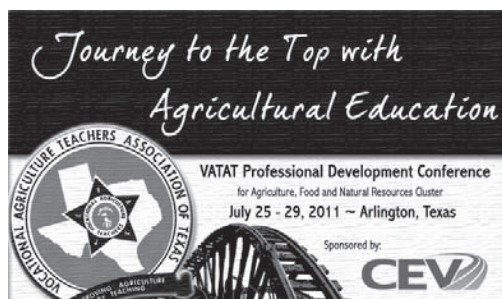
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TEXAS AG ED FAMILY EVENTS

See you soon!



83rd Annual Texas FFA Convention
Lubbock
July 11 - 15, 2011



VATAT Professional Development Conference
Arlington
July 25 - July 29, 2011

2011 State Fair Swine Validation

All swine validation forms, hair samples, ethics policies, swine validation committee forms, change of ownership forms and Excel spreadsheets are due in the FFA office on or before July 8, 2011. Excel spreadsheets may be emailed to the FFA office, but you will need to mail a hard copy to the office as well. Do not staple forms together. Please use rubber bands, paper clips or metal binder clips. All forms must be in alphabetical order by name, not number. Please follow the instructions as stated above. Thank you!

Vocational Agriculture
Teachers Association
of Texas

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