

# WYOMING FFA TIMES

Summer 2016

## Wyo non-profits offer fair-time 'Ag Experience Corral'

New at the 2016 Wyoming State Fair, an "Ag Experience Corral" will offer a new opportunity to attending youngsters. The event runs Wednesday, August 17 through Saturday, August 20. From barn tours to hands-on activities, many Wyoming non-profits have stepped forward to offer ag and natural resource-based activities.

Wednesday kicks off with gold panning with the Cheyenne Chapter of Gold

Prospectors. Additional activities that day include reading "The Little Red Hen" and grinding wheat and barn tours with past Wyoming FFA State Officers. The Wyoming Department of Education will discuss careers, inspiring kids to think about what they might want to be when they grow up. The activities run from 9 a.m. through 4 p.m.

Thursday includes the reading of "Who Made My Soup," with an associated

activity. There will again be barn tours and Smokey Bear will make an appearance and talk about bear safety.

On Friday youngsters can learn about photography and participate in a hands-on activity including rockets, bouncy balls and "flubber." Barn tours will again be offered by 4-H and FFA members from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.

After taking in the parade downtown Doug-

las at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 20, youngsters and their parents are invited to visit the Ag Experience Corral. At 11 a.m. Wyoming 4-H will be creating seed mosaics. At 10 a.m. Wyoming Ag in the Classroom will be reading "Cowboy Small" and offering an associated activity. Barn tours with Wyoming FFA and 4-H will run throughout the day and at 1 p.m. artist Lacy Nelson will be offering farm-themed face

painting.

At 2 p.m. the Wyoming Game and Fish will be offering lessons in fly-fishing. That session will again be offered at 5 p.m.

Beginning at 7 p.m. music lovers are invited to gather in the area to play their favorite three and four chord songs. Bring your favorite musical instrument to join in the fun at this "Blue Jeans Jam Session."

The "Ag Experience Corral" is located between the Rotary concessions and the

rest rooms at the west end of the midway. There is no charge for the Corral. Groups of children are welcome. When bringing a large group, a phone call to Stacy at 307-630-6094 is appreciated to ensure ample FFA members are on-hand for the guided tours.

A special thank you goes out to the many non-profits and individuals who have volunteered their time and talent to make this new addition to fair possible!

## FFA officers seek IMPACT

This year's Wyoming FFA State Officer team is off to a great start as they work to make an ImpACT in Wyoming FFA. After being elected to their offices in April, the team has spent a lot of time together. The first stop along their state officer journey was in Cheyenne for "Blast Off" training. The team traveled from Cheyenne to the Cody area to join state officer teams from North Dakota and Montana for the National Leadership Conference for State Officers (NLCOS). "Working with the officer teams from North Dakota and Montana was a great experience!" stated State Vice President, and former Sundance FFA member, Taitlyn Bethea. "At NLCOS, I could feel us as a team really growing together; forming a bond that I will cherish for a lifetime. I learned a lot from our facilitators and other teams that will be helpful as I continue to serve the Wyoming FFA Association."

The team went on to spend time at Wyoming FFA Camp above Lander. Most of them had been to FFA camp before, but experiencing the much anticipated summer tradition from a different perspective was eye-opening. "As an FFA member I have always enjoyed going up to camp, and so this was one of the State Officer 'responsibilities' that I was most looking forward to this year! This was one of the first times that I have gotten to interact with members as a State Officer, and it made me just so much more excited for the rest of the year." Aften Petersen, Ten Sleep native and now 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, said.

With the idea that each act we make impacts someone else, the 2016-2017 State Officer Team chose ImpACT as their theme.

State FFA Secretary from Cheyenne, Katie Schilt explained her interpretation of this year's theme, "Our theme ImpACT is very dear to me. I believe that we need to be careful of the things that we allow to have an impact on us. Negative impacts will bring us down, so it's important that we surround ourselves with positive impacts."

Aften Petersen explained the theme saying, "The message I get from our theme is — I have an impact, my actions make an impact, and I act to impact."

Wyoming FFA President Mark McConnell captured the spirit of the team by stating, "I've set one goal for my state officer year, and that is to be a successful leader. The way my dad described leadership to me was 'Leadership is measured by the success of others.' Reading over this makes me realize that if our organization is successful, and to see younger members achieve greatness, then I've done what I have been called to do. If we can all be successful leaders, then we will be remembered. It's also important to remember being a state officer isn't an 'I' role. There are eight others that stand by my side. We are a team, a family, and a group of individuals with a common goal. We all stand before the Wyoming FFA Association excited for our 365 days to serve, and to improve the organization we all love so much."

Visit the FFA building during the Wyoming State Fair for your chance to visit with the 2016-2017 Wyoming FFA State Officer Team. They'll also be active across the grounds, volunteering their time to hand out ribbons and doing their part to make the 2016 Wyoming State Fair a success.

## FFA offers fair-time taxis

Schedule a ride by calling 303-513-1883

**Douglas** — New in 2016, attendees at the Wyoming State Fair have a new option when it comes to travel across the Wyoming State Fairgrounds. Wyoming FFA has launched the "Blue & Gold Taxi" with support from Samson Energy, AT&T and the Wyoming Pioneer Association.

"We want to make it as easy as possible for everyone to attend the Wyoming State Fair," says Wyoming FFA Foundation Executive Director Jennifer Womack. "We've rented three passenger-oriented golf carts and set up a dispatch system. We'll be posting our number around the state fairgrounds and offering rides around the fairgrounds. Past Wyoming State FFA officers and FFA supporters have volunteered their time to drive the carts."

There's isn't a direct fee for using the taxi service, but tips to Wyoming FFA are appreciated. "Drivers will be asking the taxi patrons to make a gift to Wyoming FFA in exchange for the service," says Womack. "We'll be running the carts daily throughout the fair."

Wyoming FFA sends a special thank you out to Samson Energy and the Wyoming Pioneer Association. Thanks to their generosity, which covered the rental fees on two of the three carts, the project is possible. AT&T donated the use of four telephones, enabling FFA to establish a dispatch system to operate the carts. "It was great that our supporters were just as excited about this project as we are," says Womack.

## FFA's fair calendar action-packed

**Douglas** — Wyoming FFA has more planned for the 2016 Wyoming State Fair than ever before. Don't miss Wyoming FFA members in action in the show ring, and the many FFA-made projects that will be on display in the FFA building near McKibben Cafeteria. Beyond those staple offerings, FFA has an ever-growing line-up of special events and projects.

Early in the week the Wyoming State FFA Officer team will be unveiling their **ANNUAL STATE OFFICERS' SILENT AUCTION**, which will run throughout the week. The event will close on Saturday, Aug. 20 at noon and winning bidders will be notified via a text message. New in this year's auction, Ariat has donated numerous clothing items that will be sold on a first-come, first served basis.

The **BLUE & GOLD TAXI SERVICE** will be running week-long, offering rides around the fairgrounds in exchange for donations to Wyoming FFA. A related article, including the number to schedule a ride, appears on this page.

On Tuesday, Aug. 16, the Wyoming FFA Foundation and the Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation are hosting the annual **COWBOY CHUCK & CHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT** beginning at 2 p.m. at the local golf course. Pre-registration is required. You can determine whether or not there are any openings by visiting the FFA building or by calling 307-351-0730. Registration for the tournament opens at noon. The tournament ends with an evening meal, included in the \$75 per player registration fee.

Visit the **FFA CAFÉ** between Wednesday and Saturday. We'll be serving up hot coffee, cold water, pastries and good conversation. This is a great time and location to catch up with your FFA friends.

Friday, Aug. 19 is jam-packed for Wyoming FFA. At 3 p.m. at the North Platte River below the barns the organization will be hosting its annual **DUCK RACE**. Wyoming's State Officer Team will be selling ducks throughout the week and hosting the event. All proceeds will benefit the state

officers' travel fund. Later that same evening at 6 p.m., Wyoming FFA enthusiasts will gather for the annual **WYOMING FFA PIE FEED**. Join us to recognize Wyoming's top FFA chapters in ag mechanics, agronomy and herdsmanship. FFA supporters from across Wyoming will also be recognized at this gathering.

Saturday, Aug. 20 will kick off with a **5K FUN RUN/WALK** in memory of Tracy Alger. All proceeds will be placed in the Tracy Alger Memorial Fund to benefit FFA member projects in Kaycee and Lusk. Participants are encouraged to wear pink, Tracy's favorite color.

Don't forget about the **BLUE & GOLD MUSEUM**, open in the FFA building again this year. Wyoming State FFA Advisor Stacy Broda is adding several new pieces of Wyoming FFA history to the Association's growing collection.

Be sure to visit the FFA Building while you're in town for the Fair. There'll be a "little more blue and gold" on the grounds than ever before!



Wyoming's State FFA Officer Team has had a busy summer and will continue their work at the upcoming Wyoming State Fair in Douglas, Aug. 13-20. Pictured from the left are 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Aften Peterson, President Mark McConnell, Reporter Brianna Jolley, Secretary Katie Schilt, Sentinel Logan Despain, Parliamentarian Wilson Stewart, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP Matthew Winterholler, Vice President Taitlyn Bethea and Treasurer Kinsey Ashby.

## AG ED TALK

### See you at the State Fair!

Like iced tea on a hot day, floating the river on old tire tubes, and visiting the mountains to camp and fish, county and state fairs are activities we all can cherish when summer comes around. When it comes to local and state fairs, Wyoming does it right.

I have had the good fortune to experience other fairs around the world. While visiting Australia, I participated in their local show. This event featured three days of local livestock and arts while providing entertainment and an atmosphere of fellowship. Recently, my wife and I traveled to a small town north of Dublin, Ireland where their local fair was being held. Through these experiences, I realized that the concept of fair is even an international one, yet one which Wyoming makes uniquely our own.

Yet, the level of community involvement, I have found, sets Wyoming apart. This alone can provide opportunity to build local culture and share ideas. Fairs allow local enthusiasm to build an event, contrary to what can be found anywhere else in the country or even around the world.

The FFA Foundation thrives in the fair atmosphere. This year at the Wyoming State Fair, the FFA looks to have more of a presence than ever before. FFA will approach the state fair this year not only with expanded activities, but with a renewed spirit. Driven by gratitude from our own experiences in FFA, the Board Members seek to pass on that enthusiasm to those we come in contact with. The Foundation will look to again build upon this event bringing families together to share in what Wyoming does best.

I hope to see FFA supporters from across Wyoming at our annual gathering on Friday evening. For the past two years the State FFA Officers have served up root beer floats. This year we decided to host a pie feed, something we hope becomes an annual tradition for FFA at the State Fair. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear Wyoming's champion Agricultural Issues team present their winning skit. We'll also recognize outstanding FFA chapters and members who excel in agronomy, agricultural mechanics and more. The best part about the evening, however, is the chance to see our many FFA friends from across Wyoming. Each year during State Fair I am reminded of the friendships that span both the miles and the years.

If you find yourself at the state fair, look for members of the Foundation Board. Events like the Duck Race on the North Platte, the FFA taxi cabs, or the educational tent are sure to have the presence of a board member or two. Come, bring your family, or mingle with family and take home some memories. As we know, before you can say, "Where did the summer go?" the seemingly shortest season in Wyoming will be gone.

Brendan



Brendan Thoman  
FFA Foundation President

## Alger to be remembered through FFA fund

By Jennifer Womack  
Wyoming FFA Foundation

*There are some people in life who make you laugh a little louder, smile a little bigger and live just a little bit better.*

I stumbled across this unattributed quote online the other day and instantly thought of my late friend Tracy Johnson Alger. She was quick with a laugh, generous in so many ways and inspired many of us to do, and be, better. Fresh out of college we began our careers with the *Wyoming Livestock Roundup* around the same time. Our work there grew into a partnership that, among other things, included service to the Wyoming FFA.

From FFA to her own community, Tracy was devoted to agricultural education. That included both the education of young people, and ensuring that producers were well-informed about their industry. She volunteered her time to Wyoming Ag in the Classroom and organized an educational summit in Johnson County. When winter storm Atlas impacted so many of our friends in South Dakota, she pitched in to help raise funds and volunteer her time and talent to helping those impacted by the storm. Through a fund being endowed within the Wyoming FFA Foundation, we'll remember Tracy's positive impact and continue her tradition of encouraging agricultural education and inspiring those around us.

On Saturday, Aug. 20 at the Wyoming State Fair, we're dedicating our annual 5k walk to Tracy. Funds raised will be deposited in the account we're growing in her memory. Tracy's favorite color was pink so we're encouraging participants to wear pink in her memory. The 5k itself was Tracy's idea and she largely organized the first-ever event. I've never walked the 5k, but I'll be joining the walkers this year.

On Saturday, Sept. 10 in Kaycee, Wyo. we're working with the Forbes Family to host a match bronc riding. That

event will be followed by dinner, dancing, an auction and an evening of family fun. Tracy's son, Grady, asked for a steer riding so with help from the Forbes family, we'll also be riding steers! We expect several professional bronc riders, including Tracy's brother Chet Johnson, to attend the event.

If you'd like to donate an item to the auction, please consider bringing it to the FFA building during State Fair Week. Or, if you'd like to make a cash contribution, we'd appreciate that, too. Tickets to the event can be purchased online via [WyoFFAFoundation.com](http://WyoFFAFoundation.com).

Dollars within the Tracy Alger Memorial Fund will be held in perpetuity. Each year the Wyoming FFA Foundation will offer project scholarships to members in Kaycee and Lusk, two communities Tracy considered "home." Only the interest generated by the account will be spent. FFA members will be able to use the dollars to launch their own FFA projects, expanding their agricultural knowledge through hands-on learning.

I'm grateful to Tracy's family for working with the FFA Foundation on this project. I look forward to the day when the first FFA member is able to launch a project with support from the Tracy Alger Memorial Fund. I can't think of a more fitting tribute to my friend and colleague, a person who generously devoted so much time to helping others better understand agriculture.

Please join us in building this endowment within the FFA Foundation. If you'll be in Douglas for the Wyoming State Fair, we'll be around the FFA building all week. Stop by and we'll answer any questions you have, or sell you a ticket to the Sept. 10 event in Kaycee!



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## WYOMING FFA Times

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# Reyes family backs patriotism, FFA and American agriculture

By Trinity Lewis, Wyoming FFA Foundation

FFA does a good job of teaching its members to set SMART goals, to dream big and to never underestimate what one person can accomplish. The organization instills a deep pride for American agriculture and showcases those with a good work ethic. For Wheatland, Wyoming's Juan Reyes, these ideas aren't something just taught. They are ideas he has lived out as a result of hardships early on in life, but overcome by taking opportunities offered to him and working hard to make opportunities for himself.

Born in Cuba, Reyes and his two older sisters were sent to America in 1962 when Reyes was 11 years old. Only fluent in the Spanish language the small Cuban boy was without his parents and far from home. Originally placed at a refugee camp in Florida, Juan had the opportunity at a more usual American life when a Washington businessman, representing the Catholic Church, was visiting the refugee camp and offered to take Juan back to Washington with him. Reyes said he would go as long as the man, Roy McDonald, would also take his sisters. His wish was granted and he, his sisters and 70 other children were moved to St. John's Academy of the Catholic Church in Colfax, Washington. Several years later Reyes' parents joined Juan and his sisters and eventually would go to work at a nearby farm owned by McDonald's family. In 1969 Juan Reyes graduated from high school and went on to attend a year of college at Eastern Washington State. During that time he helped a friend move to the University of Wyoming and Juan fell in love with the Cowboy State. "I loved the state, loved the outdoors and the loved the open space," Juan recalls. He transferred colleges and began attending UW. It was there that he met his wife-to-be Joni (Sharp) a girl from Greeley, Colorado who had grown up raising her own purebred Black Angus cattle.

Juan had a passion for agriculture from early on. "In Cuba my father worked for a sugar mill company and he had a few cows and ran those cows in swamp country. That was ag in Cuba." He learned early on about the industry and the spark in his heart was never extinguished. "When I got to Washington State the folks that sponsored us, the McDonald Family, also had wheat farms. I helped them out on the wheat farms and with their livestock and my love for agriculture kept growing."

He and Joni moved to Tie Siding, Wyoming where they started ranching with 11 purebred Angus cows of Joni's and a small commercial herd on a leased ranch. "Everything we

did was bank-backed," Joni says. The two worked hard to make ends meet, Juan working for the railroad and Joni for an abstract company.

"The biggest hardship was trying to raise registered Angus cattle in Tie Siding, WY, which is Siberia USA," says Juan, laughingly adding, "great country in the summertime, which is about two months and then it would snow."

From humble beginnings the Reyes' have worked hard and grown extensively into an operation whose reputation precedes itself. Juan found a love for good stock dogs and, through a series of events, was a founder of the National Cattle-dog Association to which he would also serve as president. Today the ranch isn't run by Juan and Joni alone. Their son Jason Reyes, as well as their daughter Jennifer (Burr), her husband Michael and their children Josie and Corbin all work together to handle the daily operations of the ranch and have plans to carry on the legacy of MR Angus well into the future. The family has raised the bar in seedstock genetics in the state selling an average of 250 bulls at their annual sale. MR Angus ranch currently runs 1200 registered Angus cows, 1200 yearlings and operate a 7000 head feedlot while raising feed on an intensive farming and irrigation system. "If you want to succeed in agriculture you've gotta have 'want to'." Reyes advised. "That means long days, not a lot of profit and you've got to love it or else it isn't going to work. Joni and I grew up with that way of life but we enjoyed it and that's what we worked toward." MR Angus has been recognized by BEEF Magazine's Top 100 Seedstock Operation's list.

With an unsurmountable amount of time and energy needed to be put into their operation, the Reyes family doesn't let daily tasks keep them from giving back to the communities around them. It isn't rare for a judging van full of college or high school students to pull into their yard for a practice. They also were the founding producer to support the Wyoming FFA Foundation's Bulls for Blue and Gold campaign. Each year they donate 10% of the income on their lot 10 bull to Wyoming FFA.

With every reason to be boastful, Reyes is far from that. Although readily willing to share his story he always concludes it by saying, "My success isn't about Juan Reyes, my success is about the United States of America and the government that your forefathers have created that enables people like myself to succeed."

Wyoming FFA is proud to have an advocate in this patriotic family that truly understands why each of us is able to live the



Juan Reyes

life that we do. They are shining examples of hard work, deep dedication to agriculture and a constant reminder to "pay it forward."

## CONTINENTAL MOTORS



### George Wenzel

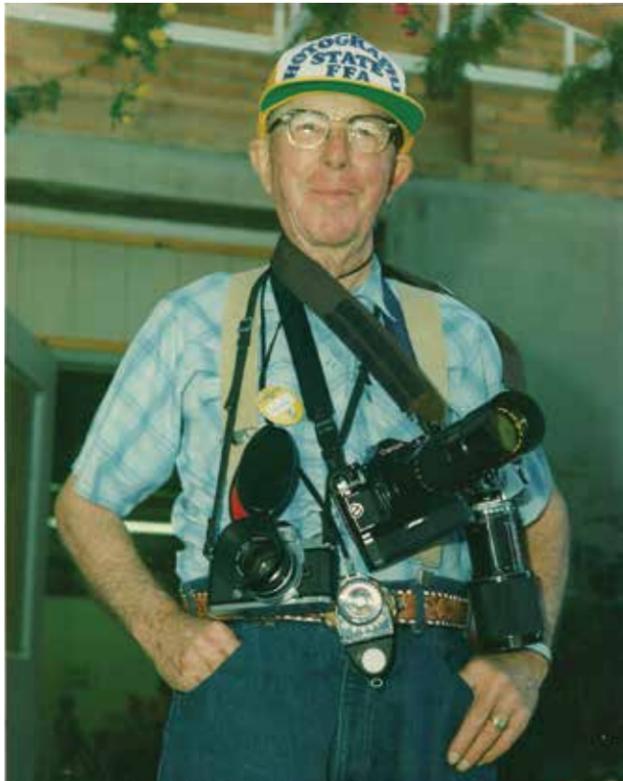
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# Floyd Cashman was behind the lens for many historic FFA photos



**A Tribute to Mr. Floyd Cashman, Wyoming FFA's Official Photographer from 1959-1984**

*By Stacy Broda  
Wyo. State FFA Advisor*

When Lloyd Cashman attended East High School and was told he should take agriculture classes and join

FFA he had no idea the connection that would be built over the next twenty-five years between his father, Floyd, and the Wyoming FFA Association.

As Lloyd's commitment and interest grew within the organization so did his father Floyd's, but in a different way. Floyd Cashman always had a photography hobby and

started taking photographs of Lloyd's livestock projects and FFA events. From that point forward it was a partnership that was just meant to be. FFA members, FFA advisors, parents and supporters knew Floyd "Flash" Cashman as Wyoming FFA's Official Photographer.

Past State President and National FFA Officer Jack Stewart remembers Floyd "as an institution in Wyoming FFA for decades. He added immensely, by recording a lot of its history, to our organization. Mr. Cashman left a rather large, yet largely unheralded, record of our history."

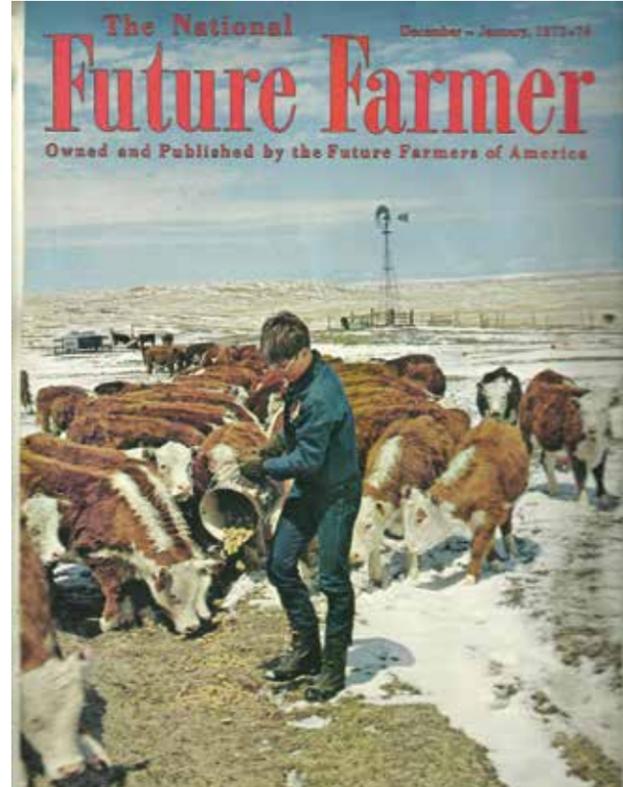
Starting with a 35mm camera, Floyd quickly found that it was not good enough. He then purchased a press camera that took 4 x 5" photographs. Floyd crafted a wood box that fit the press camera, negatives, and sleeves which proudly displayed the FFA Emblem on the front. His family remembers how heavy the box was to cart around from event to event or even family vacations or get-togethers. Taking pictures was a time-consuming process and hard work. Floyd

turned an old root cellar on the ranch into his dark room which was not tall enough to stand up right in. Floyd spent hours upon hours developing photographs in the dark room, and would bring the photographs upstairs and hang on lines to dry in their house.

Past State FFA Officer and current Cheyenne High Plains FFA Advisor Ty Berry remembers Floyd "as a great photographer and a strong advocate for Agriculture and especially the FFA. Mr. Cashman's photographs and news releases provided a great service to not only promote and educate the public about our organization, but to capture the memories and preserve our history."

It is without a doubt the majority of photos collected in the Blue and Gold museum at State Fair are Floyd's work. "Flash," as many called him, spent time traveling all over Wyoming taking photographs at local, regional, state, and national FFA events, as well as of member's projects for proficiency and degree applications. He also captured moments with state officers and FFA Advisors. At a time when only a certain percentage of FFA members received the American FFA Degree, many members attributed their success in receiving the degree to Floyd's photographs included with their applications.

Floyd was a man of many talents. In 1944 he moved back to the family ranch where he and his wife later raised their son Lloyd. Floyd also worked for United Airlines when it was based in Cheyenne, the Plains Dairy as their butter maker, did custom thrashing for area farmers, and at one point



Floyd Cashman took the photograph of Dan Kirkbride that appeared on the December-January 1973-1974 edition of the *Future Farmer*. "Range cattle welcome a pound or two of cake, especially following a snowfall," says the accompanying caption from the magazine. "Dan Kirkbride, a former state president, is feeding a replacement herd of yearlings on his family's southeastern Wyoming ranch. Dan, a member of the Albin Chapter guided by Advisor Jack Humphrey, has won district, regional and state public speaking contests and state judging honors in poultry, agronomy and livestock."

was the fiddle player in a square dancing band called the "Chuckwagon Gang" which played in Cheyenne and several surrounding communities. Although his talents were many, Floyd's love was photography. Along with preserving several FFA memories, many know Floyd's work from weddings and other community events.

Described by many as a generous, kind and soft spoken gentleman, Floyd was also very meticulous in his work. His eye for detail and photography skills are evident in more than 6,000 FFA pictures taken (last count found in the mid-1970s). His photographs were featured in the National FFA magazine and calendar as well as the Wyoming Stockman Farmer. Floyd received

the Distinguished Service Award at the 47<sup>th</sup> National FFA Convention in 1974 and the Honorary American Degree at the 48<sup>th</sup> National FFA Convention in 1975.

Thank you cards and memories of those who had their picture taken by Mr. Cashman say he mailed FFA members hundreds of photos and rarely charged for his services. He often included a note of encouragement or congratulations. Lloyd Cashman says of his father's time with FFA, "I think he just wanted to help out the youth in time that he was here and enjoyed spending time with members and FFA Advisors."

Special thanks to the Cashman Family for sharing photographs, scrapbooks, and information.

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*Wade Allnutt, 2013 College of Agriculture & Natural Resource graduate in Agricultural Business and Animal Science*

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**Proceeds support travel for Wyoming's State FFA Officer Team and a \$500 scholarship for a Wyoming FFA member**

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# Past Nat'l Officer Crews recalls his beginnings in Wyo FFA

By Trinity Lewis  
Wyoming FFA Foundation

High school was only a three-year endeavor, FFA was secluded to boys only and FFA members across America only consisted of about 350,000 members – a sharp contrast to the nearly 630,000 that belong today. This was life as Jack Crews knew it in the late 1950s. He joined FFA as a high school sophomore. Crews didn't initially sign up for a vocational agriculture class. Like many students today he was worried that he wouldn't get all of his college-prep courses. "The assistant principal called me into his office and told me I was very misinformed and that I had better get my behind over to the ag building and make arrangements to be enrolled," Crews recalls, adding that it was the "best advice I was ever given!" At the time J.O. Reed was teaching ag at the only high school in Cheyenne. Crews remembers his chapter being very competitive as Reed was a retired combat Marine who had fought in World War II. "We worked hard, discipline was high and we wanted to always win," he stated. Crews would go on to have two other advisors in Cheyenne, Jim Wilson and Clark Allen. Crews went on to run for a state office his senior year

of high school. "Choosing to run for state office was a very natural step given the competitive environment that our chapter enjoyed. I have to admit that there was no grand plan about being an officer. It was just the thing to do and it was expected of us. If you're going to be in the game, you play hard and expect to win!" He was elected President of the 1958-1959 State Officer team and said that his experience at the state level was a launching pad for further FFA involvement. "As the State President, I learned of some previously hidden abilities that I had. I realized that I could rise to the occasion when I needed to. I liked that! It also built a 'fire-in-my-gut' to get the most out of this experience and to progress as far as I could."

Although becoming a National Officer wasn't something Jack Crews remembers dwelling on, he had an experience his first year in FFA that planted a seed that would one day grow into a nationally held position. "When I was a high school sophomore, our chapter gave the then national vice president a car ride from the state convention to the airport to go home to Montana. His name was Pete Knudson from Livingston. He was so bright, personable and persuasive that,

then-and-there, I made up my mind that I wanted to be just like him." Crews wasn't alone in thinking that he would fit a national officer position well, "Wyoming's State Advisor at the time, Percy Kirk, gave me all the encouragement possible."

To prepare, Crews served on the national nominating committee and learned the ropes of running for the position. "The overwhelming emotion was one of desire. With every part of my being, I wanted to be chosen," Crews remembers of waiting for officer selections to be made at the 1959 National Convention. "However, the intense competitive atmosphere created by all the outstanding candidates did create occasional black-clouds of self-doubt. We all developed a strong sense of friendship knowing that every individual applying would be a great choice for an officer."

Crew's name was called, a moment that he says he'll never forget. "The journey toward the podium up that aisle, flanked by the sea of blue jackets, was a trip of a lifetime. I thought that my chances of being chosen were decent but the actual moment was magi-



cal in my mind. The culmination of the years of preparation and the ending of the rigors of facing that nominating committee was an unexplainable flood of emotions."

Jack says that the best moments of his time as an officer occurred when he had direct conversations with young members. "When I could sense that some of these young members were igniting that 'fire-in-the-gut' desire to win, I felt, that somehow, I was doing the job to which I was elected." Jack says each and every experience he had as an officer was a building block for a future career and service to the community. He later served in the Wyoming Legislature and his local school board. He had a very successful career

in banking and community economic development, which Crews says reinforced all he learned in FFA. "Developing interpersonal relationships, honing communications skills, formulating sound judgment and building a better community," he says of the lessons learned in FFA and

carried on through life.

Jack and his wife, Tuda, left Wyoming after Jack's retirement to move "home" to Tuda's family ranch in New Mexico. While working daily to develop a high performing cowherd Jack Crews still espouses the values he accrued during his time with the FFA and lives them out on a daily basis.

## Top chapters named

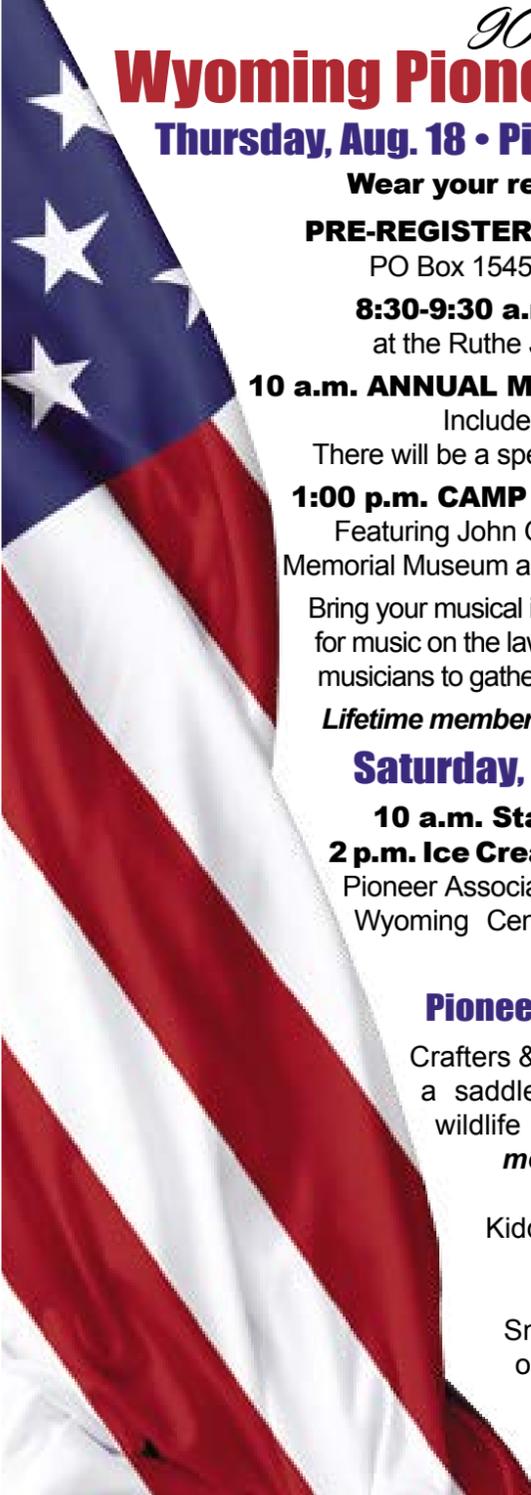
Six Wyoming FFA chapters are receiving recognition at the national level.

Casper FFA earned Three Star Chapter recognition, making them eligible to compete for additional awards at the upcoming National FFA Convention.

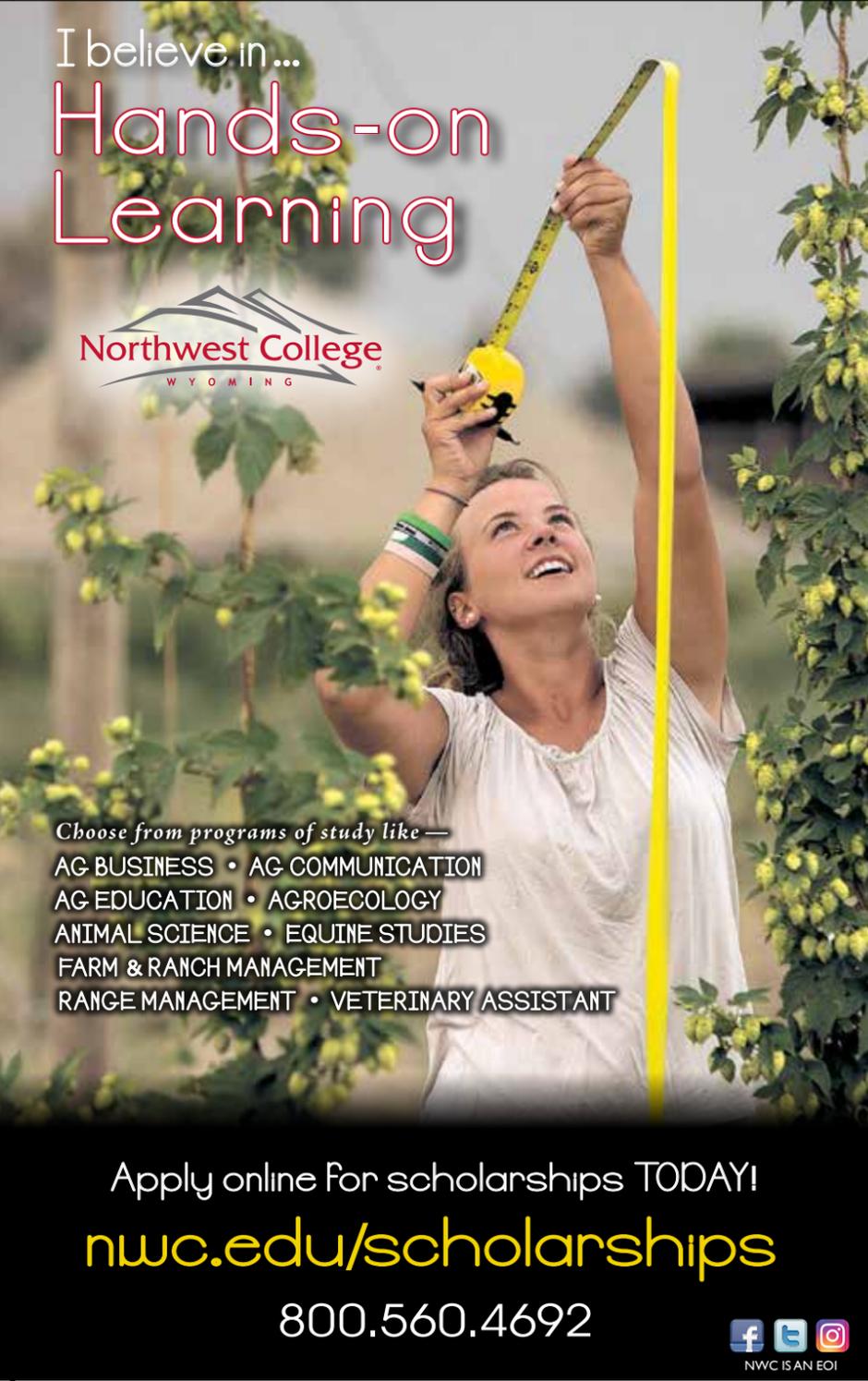
Receiving Two Star honors are High Plains FFA of Cheyenne, Cheyenne East's Frontier FFA Chapter and the Snowy Range FFA Chapter in Laramie.

Rocky Mountain FFA and Kaycee FFA are both being recognized as One Star chapters.

National recognition for an FFA chapter is a noteworthy accomplishment, showing dedication by both the advisor and the chapter's members.



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**Wear your red, white and blue!**  
**PRE-REGISTER** Send \$17 per attendee to  
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**8:30-9:30 a.m. REGISTRATION**  
at the Ruthe James Williams Center  
**10 a.m. ANNUAL MEETING • 11:45 a.m. LUNCH**  
Included in registration fee  
There will be a special Color Guard presentation!  
**1:00 p.m. CAMP DOUGLAS PRESENTATION**  
Featuring John Goss of the Wyoming Veterans  
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musicians to gather in the area throughout the week.  
**Lifetime membership in the Pioneers is just \$50!**  
**Saturday, Aug. 20 • Parade Day**  
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**2 p.m. Ice Cream Social** hosted by the Wyoming  
Pioneer Association and Wyoming State Parks for  
Wyoming Centennial Ranch families from this  
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# FFA Camp challenges members to seek leadership, growth



FFA member Jaxon Kersch with Wyoming State FFA Officers Matthew Winterholler, Taitlyn Bethea and Aften Peterson.

**Lander** — Almost 200 FFA members traveled to Wyoming FFA Leadership camp in June for a week of intense leadership training. This year's numbers were more than the camp has seen in recent years with around 100 members attending each of two sessions. "Both sessions of campers were super energetic and we all got a lot of personal growth out of camp," stated Camp Director Lindsey Freeman.

When campers arrive at FFA Camp, a week jam-packed

with fun activities, hikes, and excursions are to be expected. Campers have a great time while learning with their peers and finding themselves challenged and stretched to new heights. "It is amazing to see the transformation in individuals and the camp culture as a whole from day one to day two of camp," said Freeman. "The way that campers open their minds to stepping outside of their comfort zone and accept and encourage others who are doing the same is really something special for me to witness." This year camp had an extra addition with camp founder, Dr. Al Snyder, visiting as well as an original camper who returned as camp nurse. "It was wonderful to have Deena O around to provide a Band-Aid and a smile," said Freeman.

Another inspiring story that emerged from this year's camp was that of Meeteetse camper Levi Gitlitz. As told by Wyoming FFA 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, Matthew Winterholler, "Levi has a disability that requires him to use crutches all of the time due to his muscles not working correctly. This was his 2nd year at camp and he was able to get a camp office this year and he's a chapter officer. Throughout his FFA career he hasn't let his disability get in his way and it was easy to tell that he was an inspiration to all of the campers. It was amazing to see how willingly everybody helped him throughout the week and the confidence instilled in him."

Camp is made possible every year by a diverse group of people who volunteer their time and talents to FFA. Campers aren't able to attend camp for free, but camp organizers work hard to keep the costs low. Some members, thanks to generous donors, are also awarded camp scholarships. "This year we found our-



Meeteetse FFA member Levi Gitlitz shares a laugh with Wyoming State FFA Officer Katie Schilt.

selves in need of scholarship funds in a hurry," said Freeman. "The Wyoming FFA Foundation and its supporters came through tremendously along with some other donors." Donors included: Scott and Emily Priebe, Burt Andreen and the John C. Bunker Memorial Family Fund. "This year we had more scholarship applications than ever before and it has always been my vision to provide the opportunity for every kid to go to camp if they desire. I am so grateful that our generous FFA supporters who share that vision."

To learn more, visit [FFACamp.org](http://FFACamp.org).



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**Social Hour & Silent Auction 5 p.m.**  
**Dinner, Auction & Dance 6 p.m.**

# Teresa Milner has spent over 20 years serving Wyoming FFA

Originally a member of the Cheyenne FFA chapter, before it grew into two chapters, Teresa (Cole) Milner has generously given time and energy to Wyoming FFA.

Milner served as the 1995-1996 Wyoming FFA

State Secretary and was selected as Wyoming's National FFA Officer Candidate in 1996. She then became the Wyoming FFA Executive Secretary under past state advisor, Ron Pulse and worked closely with 18 Wyoming FFA

State Officer teams, influencing far more than that through her involvement.

Past Wyoming FFA State Officer and a former National Officer Emily (Horton) Priebe shared that Teresa's influence played a pivotal role

on her FFA experience. "Teresa Milner made a significant impact on my life and several others when she was the Executive Secretary. Her fun loving, yet organized and get it done nature made our state officer team better. Her coaching was always honest and appropriate, I trusted what she said because she thought through it, and the intent was to help everyone improve. I knew she had my back, and making her proud is something I still strive to do today." Like others who have had the opportunity to work with Teresa, Emily said that their time together was not all business. "Our team tended to like pranks, and I distinctly remember her having a great attitude through it all, even being sprayed with toilet water at state fair, during a 'plumbing problem' the boys on our team were trying to 'fix'. She led our team as we initiated Wyoming FFA's first FIRE conference. She helped us to keep our eye on the goal, to positively impact students, and make sure there was some healthy fun mixed in. That foundation helped to create a conference that is still

alive and well today." That team went on to produce two national officers that Teresa, no doubt, helped develop.

Milner went to work for National FFA as their webmaster directly after college and has also held numerous positions with other businesses and organizations including the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts and Publications Supervisor for the Wyoming Game and Fish.

Loyal to her alma mater, Milner is an avid UW Cowboys fan. Teresa, her husband Ben and their four-year-old daughter Emily now enjoy life on the Downar Bird Farm near Yoder where Ben works as its coordinator. Still intricately involved in FFA, Milner serves as the Wyoming FFA Public Relations Coordinator handling all media releases, social media, training the state officers with media and all other media-related tasks that arise. Teresa's leadership as the current State FFA Convention manager has allowed for some of the most well organized and efficient conventions in Wyoming FFA history. "Teresa is in charge of

everything that happens on the stage at the Civic Center from overseeing the script for sessions, organizing awards, puts together videos and power points and the schedule for sessions. She manages the staff and crew for us at the Civic Center and is my anchor to make sure everything runs smoothly," State Advisor Stacy Broda stated.

Teresa's 20 year-long involvement with the organization is well respected and appreciated. Her leadership in a variety of areas has brought Wyoming FFA to the place it is today. Broda has expressed deep appreciation for Milner and said "We're fortunate to have her as a part of the Wyoming FFA family. As with many of us, she's a product of our program, knows the benefits and understands that her work, time and efforts are a part of a bigger picture-developing Wyoming's youth to be our future leaders. She's a shining example of what it means to give back to a cause or organization that one believes in."

Learn more about Teresa Milner by following her blog [DirtRoadWife.wordpress.com](http://DirtRoadWife.wordpress.com)

## Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation helps Wyoming, FFA included

*"The land is not ours, we merely borrow it from our children."*

This proverb sums up the ideals of the Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation (WNRF). Formed in 1993, the WNRF is dedicated to supporting community driven conservation in Wyoming. Working on both a local and state level, the Foundation has raised funds to accomplish projects such as the Pathway to Water Quality project on the Wyoming State Fairgrounds, assisted the Wyoming Board of Agriculture with the Living Legacy Program also on the State Fairgrounds and supported local efforts to implement similar projects.

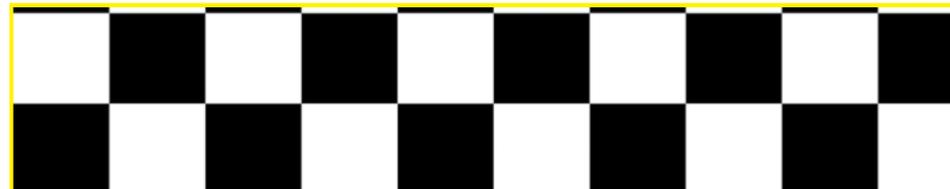
The Foundation's work has impacted the entire state and all of their work is accomplished through funds from generous donors. Each year, in partnership with the Wyoming FFA Foundation, the WNRF hosts the Cowboy Chuck and Chip Golf Tournament during the week of state fair. This fundraiser is earmarked to grow the Olin Sims Endowment fund created and managed by the Foundation in memory of former Wyoming and National Association of Conservation Districts President and leader Olin Sims, McFadden, Wyoming. The Endowment will serve as a lasting fund to help support on the ground conservation projects, leadership devel-

opment and the operations of the Foundations in future years.

"Our donors and supporters allow us to do the work we do for Wyoming, her communities and natural resources," stated Executive Director Bobbie Frank.

While impacting the conservation of natural resources across the state the WNRF also plays a pivotal role with local conservation districts. The Foundation helps to support the work of the districts both locally and statewide. Frank explained, "The Foundation helps to ensure that individuals who believe in our mission and want to support on-the-ground conservation work in Wyoming can realize a tax benefit from their generosity."

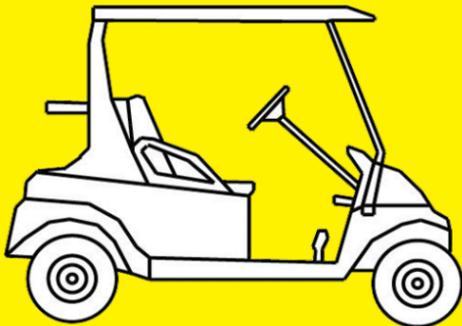
Frank and her staff have worked hand-in-hand to help Wyoming FFA with several projects. A partnership valued by both parties. "The future of our working lands lies in the hands of our youth." Frank stated, "Helping an organization that helps promote critical thinking skills, sound working lands conservation principles and promote the importance of agriculture now and into the future helps the Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation meet its goal of youth education. Wyoming FFA is helping grow the next generation of leaders and land managers."



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# It's My Party puts the finishing touches on FFA's Blue Jeans Ball

by Trinity Lewis, Foundation Thermopolis — The Wyoming FFA Foundation's annual Blue Jeans Ball has become a much anticipated evening for many FFA supporters across the state. One of the main talking points of the event are the elaborate decorations that pull the whole evening together. Dena Anderson, and the Anderson family, own and operate It's My Party 307 out of Thermopolis and have

donated their time for the past several years to help take the event to the next level.

With a background in floral design, Dena has worked as a wedding consultant and florist for over 30 years. Her daughter Ashle McLean has always had a love for helping plan events and learned the tricks of the trade from her mother. In 2009 a wedding and event business came up for sale and the two ladies, along

with Dena's other daughter Oaklee, knew it was their opportunity to run their own event planning business. The business is officially owned by Dena, Ashle and Oaklee but Oaklee said it would be impossible to handle the business by themselves, "We couldn't do it without the support of our dad (Dena's husband) Rod, Ashle's husband Dusty and our brother Wesley and his family. They are

the troops we rally when the event is extremely big." When events are large enough the family hires additional staff.

It's My Party 307 handles almost anything party-related that one can imagine from party supply rental to full service event planning and decoration. They have traveled the entire region with their farthest event in Reno, Nevada. In 2013, the family business decorated for the Cody, WY Patrons Ball held at the Buffalo Bill Center. That year, the Prince of Monaco attended to celebrate the centennial of his great grandfather coming to Wyoming and meeting and hunting with Buffalo Bill. Although they are well traveled and extremely popular on the event scene, the Andersons remain closely tied to Wyoming FFA.

Dena's father, Dean Ready, was an active member of the Thermopolis FFA Chapter. Dena was a member of the Thermopolis FFA chapter and served as a chapter officer while later working as the horticulture teacher and assistant advisor with the Shoshoni FFA where Ashle, Oaklee and their brother Wesley were all chapter officers. Oaklee went on to serve as the 2008-2009 Wyoming FFA State Vice President and plays an integral role in making today's Chapter Presidents Conference and State Convention happen. "Wyoming FFA has



It's My Party helps with events ranging from weddings to fundraiser dinners and galas, including this wedding near Devils Tower.

given so much to my family. From our local chapters to the State Association, I can't help but give back through working with the State Association. From the Blue Jeans Ball to CPC and State Convention, I love getting to see our association grow." Oaklee stated.

When asked what she enjoys most about helping with events Dena said, "It is very hard for me to choose one area that is my favorite. If forced to choose it would be planning all the small details that go into an event from meeting with the bride, ordering the supplies, flower orders and all the other details involved. I love the idea of giving an

event a one of a kind theme that will never be replicated. It goes without saying I love the flower end of the business but seeing the end product is always amazing." Oaklee and Ashle agreed that all of the event details pulling together is the icing on the proverbial cake.

Built in Wyoming, woven together with family ties and a passion for planning, It's My Party 307 is unlike any other event planning service in the state. The Anderson's philanthropic attitudes and loving hearts have touched many throughout FFA history and will continue to do so in the future.



Sisters Oaklee and Ashle, along with their mom Dena (center), have volunteered to do the decorations at FFA's annual Blue Jeans Ball for the past three years.

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# Wyoming FFA members national convention bound to compete

Several Wyoming FFA members have earned a trip to represent Wyoming at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis this fall. The Convention begins on Oct. 19 and runs through Oct. 22. Attending members can visit the world's largest youth-oriented career fair and hear from a wide variety of top-notch keynote speakers.

Wyoming is highly competitive at the national level despite having far fewer members than many of the attending states and territories. "Wyoming's performance at the event," says State FFA Advisor Stacy Broda, "speaks volumes about our Wyoming FFA advisors and members. Their hard work and commitment to the program shows when we reach the national level."

Wyoming FFA members will compete in a wide variety of Career Development Events. Wheatland FFA will be representing Wyoming in the Agronomy competition and in Farm Business Management. Cheyenne's Frontier FFA will be competing in Horse Evaluation. Casper FFA is taking teams to the event in Meats Evaluation, Ag Sales & Service and Veterinary Science.

Buffalo FFA will be representing Wyoming in the Parliamentary Procedure contest and in the Environmental and Natural Resources competition. Douglas FFA will be competing in the Ag Mechanics contest.

Laramie's Snowy Range FFA will be competing in Livestock Evaluation and the Agricultural Issues Forum. Torrington-Lingle FFA will represent Wyoming in the Marketing Plan contest. Casper's Windy City FFA will represent the state in the Poultry Evaluation contest.

2016 marks the first year Wyoming has entered a contestant in the Job Interview contest. Addysen Rosner from Cheyenne's Frontier FFA will be competing.

Trey Campbell of Casper will be representing Wyoming in the Prepared Public Speaking competition. Aften Peterson will speak in the Extemporaneous Public Speaking contest. Ayanah Winsor of Kaycee will be competing in the National FFA Creed Speaking contest.

Several Wyoming FFA members, as listed below, will be vying for a national title in the agriscience fair.

Callie Klinghagen of Worland's Chief Washakie FFA  
Jacob Bentley & Gillen Faxon of Casper FFA  
Ellary Gollumb & Payton Hallsted of Casper FFA  
Michael Hollister of Casper FFA

Kelly Collins & Lexis Woodgeard of Casper FFA  
Christopher Brown & Matthew Willadsen of Casper FFA  
Caleb Bradford of Bow River FFA  
Annette Pasley & Mackenzie Todd of Casper FFA  
Emily Richardson & Taya Steffens of Casper FFA  
Wes Bray of Casper FFA

Carlice Cutright & Stone Lucas Vitale of Casper FFA  
Tori McMurray & Baylie Till of Casper FFA

Timothy Heward of Windy City FFA, after recently being named a "National Finalist," will compete in the "Beef Production - Placement" category at the National FFA Convention.

A few Wyoming students earned national recognition for their proficiency project entries, based on their Supervised Agricultural Experience project entries. They are as follows:

Ben Jacob Rein, Southeast Goshen FFA  
Kaylen Rose Lewis, Casper FFA  
Brook Lynn Howard, Pine Bluffs FFA



## 5k for Agriculture

Saturday, August 20, 2016

State Fair Park

7:30 a.m. Registration

FFA Building

8 a.m. Race

Youngsters & bikes

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or at the race!

*This year we're walking in memory of Tracy Alger, who devoted countless hours to teaching Wyoming about the importance of agriculture and natural resources. In her memory, wear her favorite color, pink! Agriculture and natural resource facts will appear along the race route.*

*Walk for Ag Literacy*

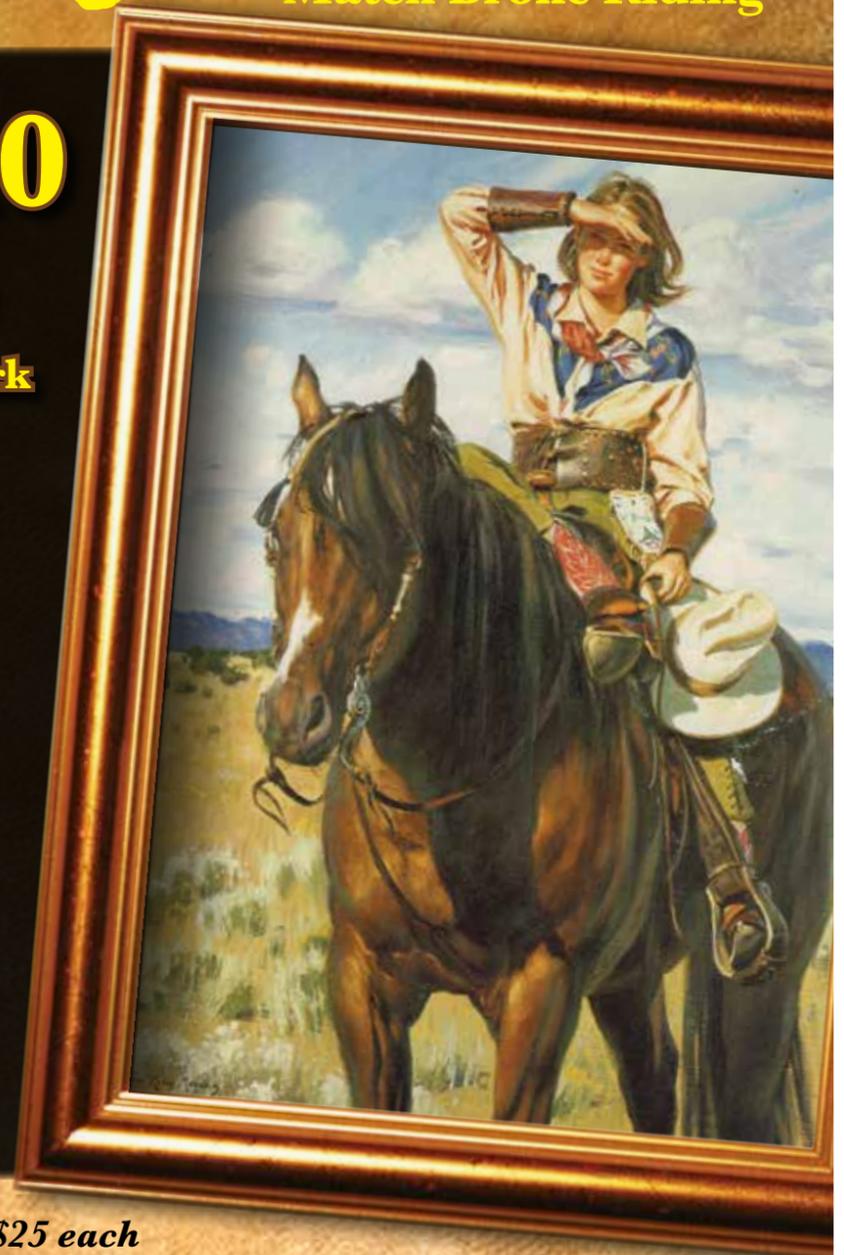


## Western Art & Tack Auction Tracy Alger Memorial Match Bronc Riding

**Sept. 10**  
**Kaycee**  
**Harold Jarrard Park**

**3 p.m. Match  
Bronc Riding  
& Calcutta**

**6 p.m.  
Dinner,  
Auction &  
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Tracy Alger, who was recognized with her Honorary American FFA Degree during the fall of 2015, was an ardent supporter of agricultural education. From Wyoming Ag in the Classroom to the Johnson County CattleWomen and Wyoming FFA, she devoted countless hours to helping people better understand the ag industry. Following winter storm Atlas, she was instrumental in raising thousands of dollars to help ag producers impacted by the devastating event.

Proceeds from this event will be endowed with the Wyoming FFA Foundation for the long-term benefit of FFA members in Kaycee and the newly-formed Lusk FFA. Annually, with first priority given to members of these chapters, funds will be made available. FFA members can apply for grants to start or grow their FFA project with an emphasis on expanding their agricultural knowledge.

**The donations of western auction items with a focus on art, tack and handmade items, are appreciated. 100% of all funds raised will be deposited in the endowment in Tracy's memory.**

*Special thanks to Terri Kelly Moyers for allowing us to use this painting that reminds us of Tracy!*

# FFA is a family tradition for past nat'l officer Stewart's family



Jack Stewart was part of Douglas FFA's 1978 judging team coached by his dad, Bill Stewart, far right. From the left are Dean Horr, Shawn Daly, Colt Rodeman, Craig Jepson, Sam Henson, Monty Fertig, Veva Sullivan, Andy Gray, Kerry Daly, Kurt Alexander, George Etchemendy, Lewis Stock, Jack Stewart and Bill Stewart. Courtesy photo

**By Trinity Lewis**  
**Wyo. FFA Foundation**  
**Casper** — Jack Stewart is almost a household name in the Wyoming FFA world. He served as a State FFA Officer and later as a National FFA Officer. Now you'll see Stewart at most every contest either coaching a team, helping his own young adults, now FFA members, or taking it all in as a supporter. His beginnings in FFA make his commitment to the organization really all make sense. "Growing up as an ag teacher's kid, my heroes were always State Officers (Cowboys were in second place!). I wanted to be just like the

S.O.s. They walked on water in my opinion," he says. Jack was the son of Douglas FFA Advisor Bill Stewart. He said that his admiration for State Officers and the program in general is what made him want to serve, "I truly loved everything about FFA and wanted to be involved and assist in any way I could. That included serving and giving back as a State Officer."

Stewart did just about everything he could in FFA. His SAEs (Supervised Agricultural Experience) included sheep, cattle, horses, hogs, hens and hay. He competed in showing with sheep,

cattle and hogs. He was also competitive in CDEs (Career Development Events) competing in creed, public and extemporaneous speaking, and was on the Farm Management, Livestock Evaluation, Meats, Poultry and Agronomy teams as well. "Also, I was fortunate to win state sheep and diversified livestock proficiencies," Stewart humbly stated although it is obvious to the rest of us that it was well deserved.

Although he served as a State Officer first in 1979-80, he wasn't selected for a National Office the following year. Stewart explained "Back in the day, an S.O. could rerun for State President the next year. I was blessed to get to be an S.O. for two years. Visiting chapters and members was always a ton of fun. Spending time and working with fellow S.O.s, state staff and local advisors was also a highlight."

Jack Stewart ran as a National Officer in 1981-82 and, no surprise to those around him, was elected on his first try. "I got to be a college dropout (and my folks were

proud of it!)" Stewart says. "Seriously, I traveled nearly 100,000 miles, into 42 states, Japan and South Korea with 109 airline flights in a year. Meeting FFA members, advisors, families and supporters and going to events from literally coast to coast and north to south was incredible. Learning to be even more open minded to doing things in ways different than what Wyoming did them was another important lesson. Of course in doing all of that, one's speaking and other people skills get honed sharply. The breadth and scope of FFA, even then, was amazing. It was the opportunity of a lifetime for a kid who grew up in the sagebrush outside of Douglas, Wyoming."

Although all that Jack Stewart has accomplished may seem out of reach for the average FFA member he would disagree. "The neat thing is, that if I can do it, a lot of Wyoming FFA members have the potential to serve in this way."

Stewart sums up his current FFA status as being an FFA Dad and supporter. "At this writing, my sons, Wilson



Jack Stewart, front row second from the right, returned from the 1978 Wyoming FFA competitions with several awards. Jack was elected Wyoming FFA Second Vice President, received an outstanding service plaque and was the high individual in poultry judging. Also pictured are George Etchemendy, Steve Bennett, Colt Rodeman, Dean Horr, Shawn Daly, Craig Jepson, Veva Sullivan, Lori Sikes and Lewis Stock.

and Sheridan, are both officers in the Casper Chapter, my daughter Afton is a 4-Her who will be in FFA in 3 1/2 years (but who's counting!)" Stewart has obviously not kept his love for FFA to himself, "The boys are at FFA and other activities nearly every night, so Renee and I get to feed, etc. when they are gone. FFA is really a family activity done in conjunction with their advisors and school. I am not sure how many dinners for practices at our house, or pots of spaghetti or chili for FFA functions Renee has made so far, but it is beyond count. The boys have both enjoyed FFA success at the local, state and

national levels. Going to State and National Conventions with them and watching them prepare and compete is a ton of fun for me." Stewart currently serves as the Casper FFA Alumni President and recently became a Wyoming FFA Foundation board member. Since this article was written, his son Wilson has joined the Wyoming State FFA Officer Team as parliamentarian.

Stewart exemplifies a life impacted by FFA and closed by stating, "We joke about FFA standing for Father Feeds (or Farms) Alone. But I really believe it stands for 'Favorite Family Activity.'"

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# Past Wyoming FFA State Officer Experiences life internationally



can learn from and grow from.”

Webber admits to being bit by the “travel bug,” and is now always on the lookout for opportunities to travel.

The ILSSO experience is only open to current and past state FFA officers, but other international experiences are available to high school and college students. FFA members interested in global travel should contact their local FFA advisor, guidance counselor, church or service organization about volunteer opportunities

abroad.

Webber and state officer teammate Baxter Heinert, who has also travelled internationally, conducted a workshop on their experiences as part of the 2016 Wyoming FFA Convention. They encouraged members to seek out experiences such as international travel that help them grow as leaders.

Don't be afraid to take a chance on yourself, Webber said.

“I would encourage FFA members that if they want to do something, grab it by the horns and



get going. Do research. Make phone calls. Figure out what you need to do to make it happen and don't be afraid to ask for help. You won't be disappointed.”

by Teresa Milner  
Wyo. FFA Association

Powell resident and 2014-2015 state officer Kyle Webber was looking for a different kind of experience, one that would help him grow as an individual and see the world in a different way. He found that opportunity with an FFA international trip for state officers that he completed this January 4-17, 2016.

Webber travelled to South Africa through the International Leadership Conference for State Officers, or ILSSO, sponsored by the National FFA Organization. The trips are open to current and past state FFA officers and offer international travel to different parts of the world each year.

Webber's journey began in our nation's capital, with two days of training on understanding cultural differences and similarities. He and the 74 other state officer participants learned new ideas and how they could grow as a leader from the experience.

“We learned that different words and even gestures are viewed differently in other parts of the world,” said Webber. “Some places consider the peace sign rude, and in some places pointing actually is a sign for a knife.”

From Washington, D.C., it was off to South Africa. Webber spent the next weeks visiting with government officials on foreign relations, going on safari, touring South African agriculture, sight-seeing and experiencing life through the eyes of a local.

“We stayed on a game reserve and got to experience a safari,” he said. “We stayed in tents, but weren't allowed to walk around outside at night because it was too dangerous. There was a hippo in the swimming pool, and we saw leopards, lions and cheetahs. We learned pretty quick that monkeys will take your swimming

trunks if you leave them out to dry!”

He says he enjoyed seeing the differences and similarities between American and South African agriculture. Webber explained that while we often think of Africa as largely undeveloped, there are places that are just as advanced as the United States. The ILSSO group visited one operation that cultivated more than 44,000 acres of corn, sugar and potatoes, and had its own entire fleet of machinery and equipment. Webber said so many people live and work on the farm that it is much like its own small city.

Some of the other highlights from Webber's trip were experiencing the ocean and touring the Cape of Good Hope, despite some aggressive baboons.

Webber said the most moving part of the journey was touring Township, which he described as a shanty town. He saw tin shacks, lean-tos and tents made from wooden poles with blankets draped over them to create houses.

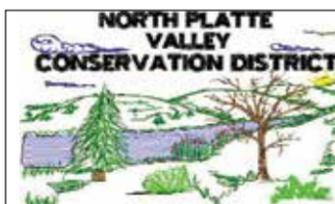
“We just don't see a lot of that stuff in Wyoming,” he said. “But the kids we met were so friendly and grateful for what they did have. They find joy and fun in everyday things. It was humbling to see that. I sit here and complain when it takes the Hot Pocket three minutes to cook and I'm hungry. We take so, so much for granted in our lives.”

Though the trip is organized by the National FFA, each participant was responsible for paying around \$5,000 to cover the cost of their trip. Webber said he secured sponsorships from friends, family and local businesses to help pay for his trip.

“My take home from the whole experience is to realize that everyone is not the same where you go,” he said. “Wyoming is kind of a monoculture. I love it, but there are other kinds of people and other places out there we

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# Griff Sprout: The biggest thing FFA gave me was confidence

"The biggest thing that FFA gave me was confidence. It was a great foundation of how to treat others and how to become a better leader. After my time as a State Officer I felt as if I could accomplish anything," says Griff Sprout.

Sprout is a great example of a past FFA member who has done an exemplary job of carrying on all that he learned and the characteristics he developed in FFA. Griff was raised near Lander, Wyoming where at the young

age of four years old he began working in his family's greenhouse. Aptly named, Sprout's Greenhouse was, and still is, a major supplier of plants for individuals and other greenhouses. Griff was always part of every facet of the business while also participating in 4-H and eventually FFA. "I loved agricultural education and grew up with pigs and sheep besides all the plant growing," Sprout said. "I also loved the leadership training aspect of the FFA

program."

Griff's first ag teacher at Lander High School was the now legendary Pee-wee Carlson. After Carlson retired Mike McConnell taught Griff's junior and senior years. McConnell remembers Griff as an exceptional student and noted, "One thing that made Griff stand out to me was that he was always willing to help everyone and was as kind and sincere of a person as you'll ever meet. He was instrumental in helping me learn some of the things I

do today as an ag teacher." McConnell said that Sprout played an especially large role in helping him better understand agronomy.

His senior year, Griff decided to run for a state office stating, "I wanted to impact other kids the way I was impacted." Sprout had been on the nominating committee the year prior and was elected State Treasurer of the 1992-1993 State Officer team. "All of the people on that team are people who continue to make an impact in agriculture and youth leadership today," FFA Advisor Mike McConnell states. "Griff is no exception. He continually hires and employs young people at his business and does a great job of teaching them about agriculture."

Sprout says he appreciates the opportunity to share production agriculture with those who might not learn it otherwise. He also employs many current and past FFA members. "I find that kids that are involved in FFA tend to be great employees." He shared this advice that he tries to instill in the young people around him, "When you work no matter what you are doing, whether CEO of a large company or raking leaves, do your best and give your full effort. It's not our titles or how we think others are looking at us that make us successful. It is

going home each day knowing that we put the best effort possible in whatever we are doing that gives us true gratification in life. Dreams and goals are great, but it's a long ride. Don't get so stuck on all your dreams and goals and get limited by them. Always be open to the fact that what we think is going to give us joy and happiness in accomplishment might change as we grow and change. Be dynamic and willing to change and grow as life changes."

Griff has proved his own advice to work. He now owns and operates his family's greenhouse where they grow annuals, perennials, vegetables and herbs from seed. "This makes for a whole lot more work but has made us grow a much better product." Griff explained. The



Griff as a youngster with his winning entry from the County Fair. Courtesy photo

greenhouse's reputation has reached far and wide and has become a destination garden center in the Rocky Mountain region. "We have customers from every corner of the state." Griff said. "Many friends from the FFA days are customers today." Griff also sells plants on their website at SproutsWyo.com.



Past Wyoming State FFA Officer Griff Sprout and his family, shown here, continue to support Wyoming FFA and its positive impact on the state's young leaders.



Flowers hang from the ceiling and line the floor at Sprout's Greenhouse near Lander, Wyo.

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"**Learning by doing**" is an important teaching strategy that agriculture instructors Heath Hornecker, Tom Parker, Marty Finch, Jeremy Burkett, Todd Jones, Jason Johnson, and Tyler Reagan employ with students. Much of that "learning by doing" is employed in the field working with global positioning systems (GPS), livestock presentations, range ecologies labs, and soil science activities.

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