



A publication of the Wyoming FFA Foundation

WYOMING FFA TIMES

2012 Convention Edition



Kassie Bauman photos

'Cultivating Character' headlines 2012 Wyo FFA Convention Event to take place in Cheyenne April 2-5

By Jennifer Womack, Wyoming FFA Times



Kassie Bauman photos

Cheyenne — Over 1,000 members, guests and FFA advisors will be in Cheyenne early April for the annual Wyoming FFA Convention. In recent years, the *Wyoming Business Report* ranked the convention as Wyoming's largest youth gathering. Seeing the blue and gold corduroy jackets filling the seats at the Cheyenne Civic Center each April, it's not hard to believe.

The 2012 Wyoming FFA Officer Team chose a theme of "Cultivating Character" for this year's event, in part to highlight FFA's rich agricultural heritage. "Your character is what defines you," says Wyoming FFA 2nd Vice President Jac Klaahsen, "and morals show people your true self."

"Character defines who we truly

are and not who we are trying to be," says Bradon Marshall, Wyoming FFA Treasurer. "Our team wanted to encourage Wyoming FFA members to cultivate their character, develop themselves and hopefully make a positive impact on those around them."

Marshall adds, "Being in FFA helps students cultivate their character by building their social and communication skills, developing qualitative leadership skills and preparing our youth to be useful citizens."

"FFA members have always been thought of as a group of kids who have the utmost respect for others and have courtesy and basically have a strong moral backbone and good charac-

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Windy City FFA celebrates first FFA week at Kelly Walsh

By Saige Albert
Wyoming FFA Times

Casper — On Nov. 11, Kelly Walsh High School became the home of the newly chartered Windy City FFA Chapter and students have big plans for the coming years.

"The things we do aren't very normal," says chapter president Holli Knight. "We like to have fun, and we are very spontaneous. It's awesome."

"Casper is a very big town, and there is a lot of interest in ag," explains Windy City FFA's advisor Jessie Atkinson. "Before, if students wanted to be in ag, they had to attend N.C."

The ag program and FFA chapter at Natrona County High School are very large and successful, and Atkinson notes that if students didn't want to attend the school or drive back and forth to class, they had to opt out of agriculture education.

"We wanted to accommodate those kids that were skipping out on ag all together or driving back and forth," she says.

With the support of school administration and interest from the students, ag classes were introduced in the fall of 2011, and Atkinson began the chapter.

For FFA Week, students were very busy carrying out activities like



The Windy City FFA chapter is growing quickly, and principal Brad Diller, who is pictured with students, says, "It's exciting to see FFA jackets in the halls at Kelly Walsh." Saige Albert photo

their teacher appreciation breakfast, free bar-beque for Kelly Walsh students and selling tickets for a 50/50 raffle to raise money.

"It's been pretty fun this week," says chapter treasurer Ian Brooks, who added that Knight and Atkinson also debuted the chapter on the local news.

Aside from FFA Week, Windy City FFA Chapter members attended F.I.R.E. conference in November and put on the "Shovel-and-Shuffle" community service activity, where they shoveled snow for people in the community.

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Wyoming FFA Officer Team reflects on their year of service

By Jennifer Womack, Wyoming FFA Times

Cheyenne — "This has been the experience of a lifetime," says Wyoming FFA President Asher Markworth of his year serving on the Wyoming FFA Officer Team.

If asked to choose just one event that sticks out in his mind from the last year, Markworth says he'd have to say Wyoming FFA Leadership Camp. "FFA camp has always held a very near and dear spot in my heart," says Markworth. "Being able to experience it as a State FFA Officer is something I will never forget."

As a state officer 2nd Vice President Jac Klaahsen says he hoped to inspire others, but attending camp he says he met a young man who inspired him. "He showed me that it's the little things that make the biggest differ-

- Be yourself
- Always see the positive in every situation
- Set goals
- If you don't like something, change it
- You get out what you put in

Wyoming FFA Vice President
Courtney Yelton



Kassie Bauman photos

ence," says Klaahsen.

"Camp is what really inspired me to become a state officer so it holds a special spot in my life and it was so awesome to experience camp as a camper for three years, and then as state officer for a year," says Secretary Molly McCray. "It

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UW to host meat judging

By Shawna Praeuner, Wyoming FFA Times

Laramie — It's Wyoming FFA Convention time! Advisors and students have been busy preparing for the jam-packed week of competitions, sessions, meetings and dances. The University of Wyoming Animal Science Department also spends a great deal of time preparing for the April convention. The department plays a significant role in the meat judging competition.



Kassie Bauman photo

UW's biggest role is hosting the meat judging competition. Every year roughly 75 contestants travel to Laramie for a full day of meat judging. Prior to the students arriving, meat lab manager and former FFA member Kelcey Christensen, student employees and the meat judging team spend their days getting everything ready. They harvest around 15 head of animals including five head of beef, five market hogs and five lambs. This process alone takes about half a day from start to finish.

From there, the carcasses are fabricated into retail product. On days spent preparing for the meat judging, student employees start their days as early as 5 a.m. These retail cuts and carcasses are what the students will judge on competition day. The entire process takes about a week, resulting in their preparations taking place on a tight timeframe.

Beyond preparing the meat for the competition,

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Cabela's Mark Nelsen to deliver convention keynote

Cheyenne — A born and bred Cornhusker, Mark Nelsen has spent most of his life loving the outdoors. Forsaking his semi-urban upbringing in west Omaha, Nebraska, Nelsen spent much of his youth on farms and ranches of relatives and friends, exploring pheasant coverts and probing the depths of bass ponds when not helping with chores. From an early age, he knew his love of the outdoors and agriculture would guide his life.



Thanks to the work of Farm Credit Services of America, Nelsen will serve as the keynote speaker at the April 2-5 Wyoming FFA Convention in Cheyenne.

Nelsen discovered Vo-Ag in high school, becoming active in the Omaha Burke FFA Chapter. His love of the land helped his team garner top honors at the 1975 State Land-Judging Contest and he was awarded high overall individual in the state. He earned his State Agribusiness Degree as a senior, and was elected as a state officer in the Nebraska FFA Association at that same convention.

As a state officer, Nelsen found himself recruited by several fraternities at the University of Nebraska Lincoln, and he pledged the Alpha Gamma Rho agricultural fraternity at UNL as he entered college. Knowing the odds of farming and ranching without the benefit of a family operation as a starting point were slim, Nelsen found a way to stay connected to the land. After earning a B.S. in agriculture/journalism, he started his communications career as a farm reporter for a TV station in central Nebraska. He soon added a weekly outdoors hunting and fishing report during the sports broadcast, at a time long before there was such a thing as outdoor television programming or networks.

That led Nelsen to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, where he ran the agency's news programs and produced/hosted the Outdoor Nebraska Television and

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2012 WYOMING FFA CONVENTION EDITION

Cultivating Character



PREZ says

I think it was the movie "Bull Durham" where the minor league baseball players referred to moving up to the major league as going to, "The Show." That's very much like how I used to think of state convention and state judging contests when I was an FFA member. I imagine many of today's members think of it in similar terms.

What makes it, "The Show?" Many things. For many members this is the culmination of months of preparation over years of growth for their competitive team, or CDE (Career Development Event). There are several CDEs members can be involved in from the more traditional agriculture events like Livestock Evaluation (Judging for us old schoolers), poultry, horse evaluation and Farm Mechanics. From the agriculture business angle, there are farm and ranch management, sales and service and other team events. Newer leadership team events include parliamentary procedure, and agricultural issues. Plus there are individual speaking events including FFA Creed, prepared and extemporaneous speaking.

Some members have devoted many hours before and after school, and maybe even some weekends, honing their skills for, "The Show." In Wyoming The Show is held in Cheyenne, generally in early April. FFA members from around the state load up and travel here to compete, to learn leadership skills, run for state office, select state officers and some to serve as delegates as they conduct the business of Wyoming FFA. Many will come prepared to defend their applications for proficiency awards. There are over 50 areas in which FFA members can apply for recognition of proficiency.

"The Show" is the chance for members to shine their light and show their skills to members, advisors and sponsors from across the state. Winners from the Cheyenne event will have the opportunity to travel to Indianapolis in October to represent Wyoming at the National FFA Convention, which we'll refer to as "THE SHOW!" For those keeping score Wyoming is consistently a top performer at the "THE SHOW!"

While in Cheyenne for The Show several FFA members will display other talents as well. The state choir will perform at the civic center and if there are enough members, we'll have a state band, too. Other talents we've seen in the past are solo singers, cloggers, tappers, Yo Yo enthusiasts, comedy routines and more. Guitar strummers, ivory ticklers, trumpet blowers and more. It's a veritable variety show.

The Show is an opportunity for some of the great sponsors of Wyoming FFA members to step out as well. They may have a booth in the trade show area or be recognized during a convention session or at the member welcome dinner. It's a place where the Foundation can work to recognize the many generous people supporting these FFA members.

Truly the highlights of the show are the retiring remarks of the state officers. After a year of service to Wyoming FFA members, each officer will step up on center stage and share insights on life. They're truly amazing young men and women who will move the audience with their hearts and their speech. They'll cap the convention off by installing a new set of state officers for the coming year.

The Show is in town! Starting April 2nd and concluding April 5th over 1,000 FFA members, guests and sponsors are in the capitol city in a celebration of what is right with today's youth. There will be sessions each evening in the civic center, concluding with the final session Thursday morning, April 5th. If you're near Cheyenne, I hope you'll be able to stop and set a spell with us. It's an experience I believe you won't soon forget. Maybe I'll see you there.

Blessings to you,
Court



Court Schilt
FFA Foundation President

Let's Talk WYOMING FFA

Featuring a Wyoming FFA Leader

Remember Those Who Are Lifting You Up! ~ By Ron Rabou, Cheyenne

"This is freaking me out, Ron!" exclaimed Christy. In retrospect, driving blindly in the night as we inched along some random road in a classic western Wyoming blizzard was probably not the wisest choice we made. But then again, it was part of the adventure and we needed to persevere just a little longer. My fellow state officer, Christy Dicklich, and I were traveling the state presenting motivational assemblies to FFA chapters and their schools. In this case, we were headed from Afton down to Lyman, where Rex Hamner's chapter would be waiting for us the next day. We were determined to see the storm through...and we did.

This is just one of the many memories created along the way during my term as a Wyoming State FFA Officer. As a member of the overall state championship judging team, a state officer, national officer candidate, a member of the National FFA Made for Excellence team, and the past Executive Director of the Wyoming FFA Foundation, I was blessed with a very rewarding and fulfilling FFA career. It's one that provided me with an edge in business, in personal relationships, and in life.

As great as it may seem though, my FFA career didn't start out that way. The beginning of my FFA career was rather meek and uneventful. I remember as a freshman in high school, coming home to tell my parents I was quitting FFA. My mother said okay. My father said no. (Guess you know who won!) I don't even recall why I wanted to quit. I was incredibly shy at that age and suspect it was probably

due to my fear of being in front of others.

Because I wasn't allowed to quit, I had to get involved. And that's when things began to change. A countless number of nights, my father would go with me upstairs in our house, and as he lay on the bed in my room, he would have me practice the creed and my speeches in front of him. After I was finished, he would drill me with questions, one after the other. I hated it. And although those times were not my favorite, that was my humble beginning in FFA. After all this time, I finally recognize how this and every other step along the way was a building block that helped shape my life and my career as an adult.

If you're reading this, I don't need to tell you how important the FFA program is to personal growth and career success. Nearly everyone who has had even the slightest contact with FFA knows and understands its immense success in teaching students essential life skills. But what I think many do not fully understand is the program alone, does not instill these values, principles and skills. What makes FFA great is the people. In all of my travels during the past 20 years, I have yet to encounter an organization so full of solid mentors, creative teachers, engaged parents, open-minded students, and giving supporters. There is no organization in this world like FFA. And there is no stronger and supportive group of people than what FFA has attracted.

As I look back on my years in FFA, they were stamped

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Quick Info—

FFA BRIEFS

Texas Roadhouse supports FFA

Cheyenne — In conjunction with National FFA Week, Wyoming FFA teamed up with Texas Roadhouse to deliver pulled pork meals across the Cheyenne area with proceeds benefitting the Wyoming FFA Foundation.

“I’d like to think the folks from the Roadhouse think FFA is as special as I do but the truth is I’ve been fortunate enough to help with a few other lunches they’ve done and they treat everybody like royalty. Mike, Callie, Janice, Tina and all the crew at Texas Roadhouse are just super good to work with. I look forward to the next chance I have to work with them,” says Court Schilt, Wyoming FFA Foundation President.

“We really appreciate the FFA members, parents, advisors and FFA supporters who made this event a success,” says Stacy Broda, Wyoming FFA Foundation Vice President. “From those of you who volunteer your time and vehicles to deliver meals to those FFA members who helped serve, please know your support for Wyoming FFA is appreciated. We’d also like to thank the businesses and over 500 individuals in the Cheyenne area who ordered lunch to support FFA.”

A special thanks goes out to the Wyoming Pork Producers Council for helping offset the costs associated with serving pulled pork at this annual fundraiser event.

Carhartt coats among prizes

Cheyenne — As Wyoming FFA members compete in Career Development Events at the Wyoming FFA Convention they’ll be vying for more than the opportunity to compete at the National FFA Convention this fall.



Murdoch’s Farm and Home Supply and Carhartt, the nation’s leader in outdoor apparel, will be providing a Carhartt coat to each of this year’s winners in the Career Development Events. In 2011 Carhartt and Murdoch’s donated 65 coats to Wyoming FFA and recently agreed to renew that support.

“We want to do all that we can to recognize Wyoming FFA’s outstanding youth and we really appreciate Carhartt and Murdoch’s helping us reach that goal,” says Wyoming FFA Foundation Executive Director Jennifer Womack.

Before leaving this year’s convention, champion individuals are encouraged to visit with Womack and fill out a card detailing their size preferences so the coats can be ordered. It’s the Foundation’s goal to have the coats distributed to the champion individuals and teams before school dismisses this spring.

Jacket dollars available

Cheyenne — One of the Wyoming FFA Foundation’s primary goals is ensuring every Wyoming FFA member has access to a jacket embroidered with his or her own name. Funds are available through the Foundation via a request from the student’s advisor.

A special thanks goes out to the Tonkin Foundation of Casper and the Craig and Susan Thomas Foundation for leading the way in making these dollars available. Individual donors like the Morrison Family of Lingle, Jack and Betty Hansen of Newcastle, Nelson and Carolyn Vineyard of Wheatland and Judy Legerski of Lander have made important investments in this program and its ability to help FFA members reach their goals.

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Radio shows for several years. Continuing his career in the outdoors, he joined Cabela’s in Sidney, Nebraska in 1998 as a writer, where he’s been ever since.

Today he serves as a senior marketing manager for Cabela’s, responsible for the company’s communications team and video production teams. He also serves as the host for Cabela’s Ultimate Adventures TV Show, which airs nationally on Outdoor Channel and on WILD TV in Canada.

Nelsen is an avid big-game hunter, angler, golfer and drummer, and still likes to help out farming and ranching whenever he gets an invite. Nelsen is married to Tammy, a farmer’s daughter from central Nebraska. They reside in Sidney with her two cats and his two hunting dogs.

A special thanks goes out to Farm Credit Services of America for sponsoring this year’s keynote address. The company has a long tradition of delivering outstanding presenters to speak to attendees at the annual Wyoming FFA Convention.

Cheyenne welcomes FFA

Cheyenne — Each year Wyoming FFA members are welcomed to Cheyenne by community members and supporters who would like to wish them luck with their annual convention.

2012 is no exception. On Monday, April 2 Wyoming FFA Foundation members, FFA supporters and members of the Cheyenne Kiwanis Agriculture Committee are serving dinner to FFA members, advisors and guests at the 2012 Wyoming FFA Convention. This event is possible thanks to donations from FUSA Insurance Agency, Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Rocky Mountain Power, the Casper FFA Alumni, Bill and Judy Johnson.



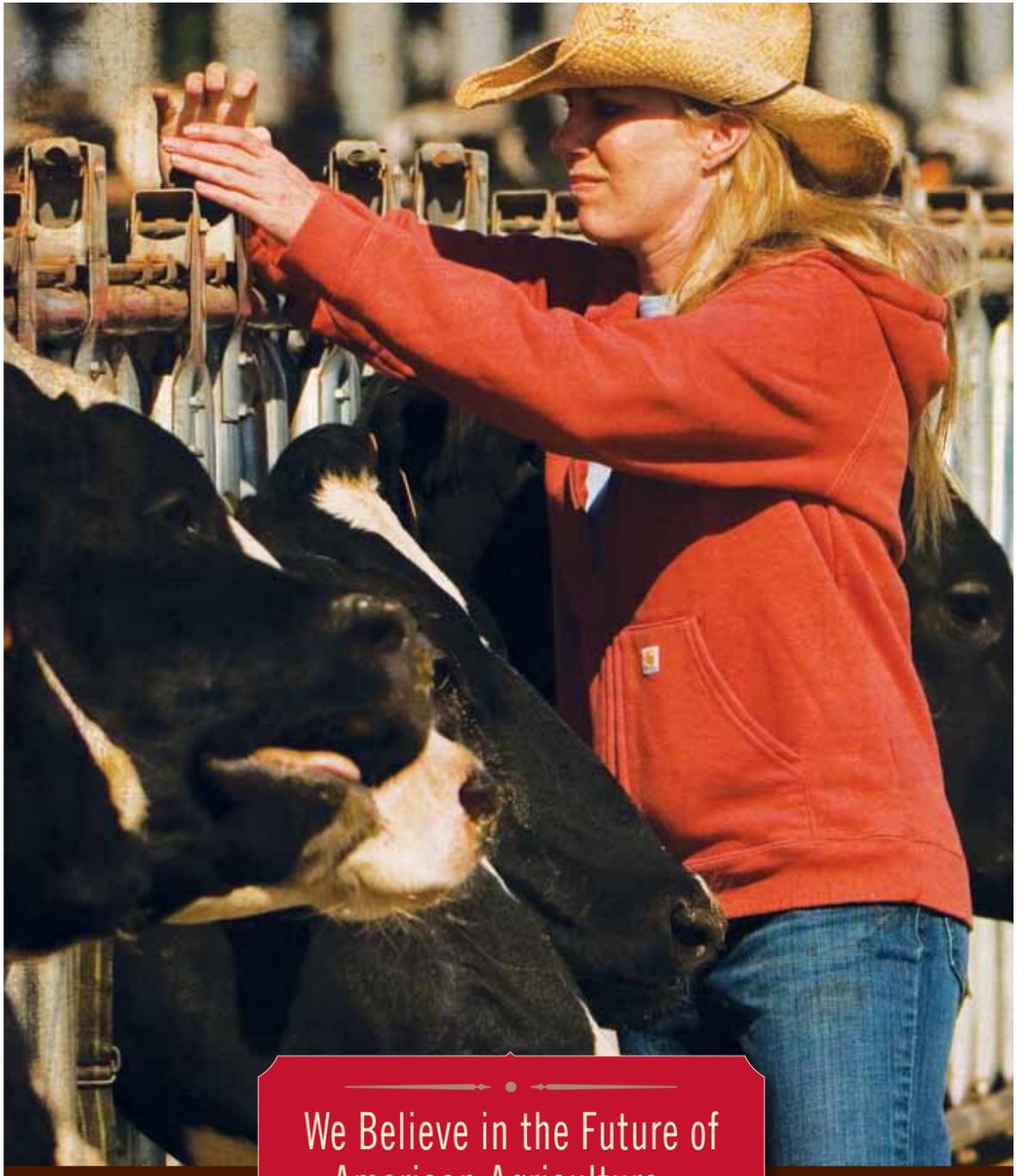
Ty Berry visits with Cheyenne Kiwanis Ag Committee members while making his way through the line at the 2011 Convention Welcome Dinner. Kassi Bauman photo

Bales for Blue & Gold launched

Cheyenne — Through a new program dubbed Bales for Blue and Gold, the Wyoming FFA Foundation is calling on the state’s hay producers to support agricultural education and FFA. Former agricultural educator and FFA advisor Donn Randall, who now works for the Wyoming Business Council’s Agribusiness Division and is a member of the FFA Foundation, is spearheading the effort.

“We’d like Wyoming’s hay producers to consider making a pledge in 2012,” says Randall. “Each of us in agriculture needs to do our part to spread the positive work about our industry and ensure people understand the facts. One way to help make that happen and to inspire young people interested in agriculture, is to support the FFA.” A minimum pledge of \$100 is being requested to sign up for the sponsorship program.

Hay producers interested in signing up for the program are encouraged to contact FFA Foundation Executive Director Jennifer Womack at 307.351.0730 or Jen@WyoFFAFoundation.com. Donors will be recognized in the FFA Times and at FFA events throughout the year.



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ter,” says Tanner Nauta, State FFA 3rd Vice President. “This year we really wanted to instill those character traits that every FFA member should have.”

FFA Parliamentarian Faith Hoffman says the selection is intended to inspire FFA members when it comes to respect, growth, motivation and being positive.

Abbey Davidson, the Wyoming FFA Reporter, says the group gave the theme a great deal of thought. They wanted to choose something that inspired members to reach new heights and look within.

“We, as state officers, know that Wyoming

FFA members stand out as responsible and respectful young adults,” says Wyoming FFA President Asher Markworth. “We decided that it was important to further encourage them to always be the best versions of themselves and uphold our legacy of good character.”

“The theme encourages members to think about their character and do what they can to make it better,” says Jessica Olsen, Wyoming FFA’s Sentinel. “We all ‘cultivate our character’ in our years of active FFA membership. This theme is the heart of what FFA stands for.”

“We hope that through involvement in the FFA,”

says Wyoming FFA Vice President Courtney Yelton, “members will gain those character traits that put them above the rest and cultivate them into being the amazing members and outstanding citizens they are and will become.”

FFA members will start their 2012 convention experience at the University of Wyoming in Laramie with Career Development Events including Meat Evaluation, Agriculture Mechanics and Agronomy. On Monday evening the Civic Center in downtown Cheyenne will come alive with an expected 1,000 attendees including FFA members, advisors, supporters and guests. During the opening session attendees will hear from National FFA Pres-

ident Ryan Best and see some of Wyoming’s leading FFA members receive their State Degrees.

The action continues Tuesday with Livestock Evaluation, Ag Sales and Service, Horse Evaluation and more. Members will return to the Civic Center at 7 p.m. Tuesday evening to see awards presented, hear from keynote speaker Mark Nelsen and much, much more.

Wednesday is laced with public speaking events, a parliamentary procedure competition and younger FFA members

delivering the FFA Creed. A delegate business session will take place at the Civic Center at 1 p.m. At 4 p.m. at the Little America in Cheyenne, chapters from across the state will showcase their agricultural knowledge in the Agriculture Issues Career Development Event.

At the Civic Center Wednesday evening public speaking awards will be presented, FFA sponsors will be recognized and the FFA Foundation will be handing out college scholarships. Several special guests are expected

that evening for the inaugural Wyoming FFA Foundation Sponsors’ reception. Guests will be invited to stay for the evening session of the Wyoming FFA Convention.

The final session of Convention 2012 will take place Thursday, April 5 beginning at 8 a.m. In addition to numerous awards presentations, Wyoming FFA members will have the opportunity to meet their 2012-2013 Wyoming FFA Officer Team. No doubt excitement in the auditorium will be high on this early April morning!

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with tremendous personal growth, practical education and nationwide travel experiences. But, more than anything, those years provided me with the people who would impact my life and help mold me into who I am today. And they didn’t do it just for me, they did it for everyone they encountered, because that’s the kind of people they are. That’s what FFA folks do. They believed in me, they encouraged me and they helped lift me to places I never thought possible. And I thought it would not only be appropriate, but necessary, that I take just a moment to mention who some of these folks are.

First and foremost, my father, always stood by my side. There was my teacher Bruce Nelson, whose sometimes abrasive approach, made me want to better myself. There were good friends like Justin Bailey and Christy Dicklich, whose friendship provided unforgettable memories. Griff Sprout and Howard Jones are still some of my best friends. Lizz Schilt took me under her wing and encouraged me during my college years. Jeff Lundberg encouraged my desire to stand strong for agriculture. Al Snyder inspired me and introduced me

to a whole new world of leadership. And, last, but certainly not least, Ron Pulse, has always provided me with countless hours of his time, has believed in me even when I didn’t, and helped provide me with numerous opportunities that I would never have known otherwise.

Whether you are still in FFA or are a past member, you know who these people are in your life. As we enter another convention season, let us be mindful of who has helped to lift us up. Let’s take a step back to gain some perspective on who has influenced us along the way. With all the excitement and busyness that surrounds convention, be sure to take a moment and let these people know they’ve made a difference. And as time passes, as I can assure you it will, always remember your humble beginnings. And remember that you have been given great responsibility. It’s now *your* turn to take the initiative to be the one who lends an encouraging word, a helping hand and an open heart. The impact you make will be felt for a lifetime.

Thank you, Wyoming FFA, for the memories and thanks to all of you for continuing its legacy!



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Wyoming FFA members put new recordkeeping software to use

Cheyenne — The latest goal in modernizing the Wyoming FFA program and tools available to the state's 2,053 student members was reached early January. FFA members now have access to the Agriculture Education Tracker, a program that encourages and facilitates quality recordkeeping.

"Upon joining the FFA," says Wyoming FFA

Foundation Vice President and former ag educator Stacy Broda of Cheyenne, "members are asked to set up an account and begin tracking their projects and their involvement in the program. Later in their FFA career this information seamlessly transfers to our awards and applications, making it easier for FFA members to seek recognition for outstanding

work." "Recordkeeping skills are essential for the young leaders who belong to the FFA to learn," says Michael Geesey, Executive Director of the Wyoming Bankers Association. "Learning to keep good records in high school will ensure these students are well prepared for future careers, life and potential business endeavors.

We applaud the FFA for instilling this trait in Wyoming students and we're glad we could help make it happen."

"Encana is always proud to support the young men and women who are setting and achieving goals within the FFA program," says Randy Teeuwen, Community Relations Advisor for Encana Oil and Gas. "We appreciate the FFA's proven success record for teaching its members skills that will prove beneficial lifelong."

The Wyoming FFA Foundation also received support from the Gretchen Swanson Foundation to make this new software

available to Wyoming FFA members.

"We truly appreciate the support FFA enjoys across Wyoming," says Broda. "Because of donors like the Gretchen Swanson Family Foundation, Encana Oil and Gas and the Wyoming Bankers Association, we're able to ensure our young people have countless opportunities. There's nothing more rewarding than seeing students flourish with new tools like the Agriculture Education Tracker in hand."

Wyoming FFA advisors, who just recently began making the software available to student mem-

bers, are already applauding the software and the benefit it brings students.



With Wyoming FFA's new Agriculture Education Tracker software subscription, members can keep records and seamlessly transfer them into award applications. Kassi Bauman photo

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the University of Wyoming meat judging team gets the opportunity to see what it's like on the other side. Both the past and current teams will help during the competition. This year they will be involved in the judging and scoring portions of the event. This gives the team a chance to see what their judges are looking for when they travel to competitions at the collegiate level. They are also volunteering their time to help out wherever it's needed during the day long competition.

For junior and senior FFA members who are getting ready to end their high school FFA careers, the University of Wyoming is ready to welcome them with open arms. Along with the Collegiate FFA Chapter, the University also has teams in meat, livestock and horse judging.

Any student enrolled in the University is eligible to be a part of the competitive meat judging team. Degree choices and previous experience play no part in eligibility. The competitive team travels across the country to vari-

ous meets, including the Houston Stock Show. To get started, students have to enroll in Meat Evaluation, a class typically offered in the fall semester and available to students at the sophomore or junior level. Upon completing the class students are eligible to become a member of the competitive traveling team. In order to maintain eligibility, students have to have a cumulative GPA of 2.25.

The Animal Science Department is very supportive of the judging teams. Department Head for Animal Science, Dr. Doug Hixon, views judging teams as very beneficial, saying that, "It enhances students' ability to make decisions, critically evaluate information, and communicate those decisions." It also provides a great opportunity for students to travel and meet people within the industry. Employers who come to recruit at the University often ask what students are involved with the judging teams because they know the strong communication skills that are required to be successful on the team."

"Employers that come to recruit at the University often ask what students are involved with the judging teams because they know the strong communication skills that are required to be successful on the team."

— Dr. Doug Hixon, University of Wyoming Animal Science Department

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They organized a chapter lock-in and raised money through concessions at high school sporting events. Windy City FFA members are also involved in Career Development Events.

"We have horse judging and livestock judging teams going to state convention this year," explains Knight, adding that the chapter's second vice president Samantha Sharpe will also be competing in the regional extemporaneous speaking contest.

Atkinson adds that as the chapter continues to grow she hopes to increase the number of Career Development Events students participate in and eventually take home the honor of the number one chapter in Wyoming.

"We do have some competitive kids in our chapter, and we hope to do well in CDEs at state convention," she says.

Despite their strong

beginning, things aren't all fun and activities, says Knight.

"It's been interesting for me," she adds, "but getting people interested in the chapter has been a big issue. We have lots of people who want to be involved, but they won't make the commitment."

Knight also explains that, because the chapter is new, it has proven difficult to get their name out.

"We have to make a name for ourselves, and it's hard," Knight mentions.

Brooks, who started his FFA career at the CY Chapter, says, "We are trying to get things started, get our name out there and establish what we are going to be as a chapter."

The positive attitude toward the Windy City FFA has facilitated a number of successes and Atkinson says ag and FFA opportunities will continue to grow.

"Interest has increased.

"Kids who participate in extracurricular activities do better. It's a win-win situation."

— Brad Diller, Kelly Walsh High School Principal, welcoming FFA to the school

I have kids who pass me in the hallways and say they are going to sign up for ag," she says. "Classes are great, and my students have a good attitude."

Atkinson continues that teaching agriculture education is enjoyable because the class is an elective and students are excited about both agriculture and FFA.

"They are good kids, and they are doing a good job," she adds. "We are really excited and hoping to grow quickly. Pretty soon, we'll have Ag one, ag two, and ag three here at Kelly Walsh."

The administration of the school also supports the FFA chapter.

Kelly Walsh principal Brad Diller approves of the program, saying, "The direct benefit is right back to the kids.

We talk about preparing our students for their next step, and, for the kids you see around here, agriculture is part of their next step."

Diller adds that the interest, work ethic and professionalism of FFA students at Kelly Walsh is impressive, and the chapter gives students another extra-curricular opportunity.

"Kids who participate in extracurricular activities do better. It's a win-win situation," he comments, also mentioning that the program will continue to grow, and he hopes both the teaching professionals and funding will be available.

"Right now, this group of kids are not going to demand something that is just ok, they want the program to be outstanding," says Diller. "We're excited, and Jessie has done a great job."

"FFA isn't just at N.C. in Casper anymore," adds Brooks. "It's at Kelly Walsh, and we're trying to expand. Here we are."

Paintrock FFA goes showin' at the 2012 NWSS

By Morgan Flitner, Paintrock FFA Vice President

Denver, Colo. — Four months of work for five days of show, but to the Paintrock FFA Show team members, it was well worth it!

Jace Hook, Morgan Flitner, Ira Hook, Taylor Werbelow, Bree Dooley and their Ag Advisor Jared Boardman traveled to Denver's National Western Stock Show and Rodeo January 2012 to show their heifers in the Prospect Heifer Pen Show and Sale. The members acquired the three head of the Simmental Angus cross heifers from the Boardman Ranch out of Frannie and a Club calf cross heifer from Fred Bronnenberg of Cody. They began working with the heifers three times a week after school from Oct. 1, 2011 until they left for the "Big Show."

On Wednesday, Jan. 11, with the horse trailer packed with show boxes, luggage, lawn chairs and the heifers and the truck packed with the members and Mr. Boardman, the group took off for the Stock Show. After eight hours of driving, they arrived at the stockyards and unloaded all of their tack. They secured a display area where they previewed the heifers for any interested buyers. The heifers were on display Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Members showed the heifers on Sunday and sold them on Monday. The heifers showed well taking third place in their class and were the second high selling pen of heifers in the sale averaging \$2,600 a head. The members also took in many breed shows, the rodeo, and the trade show while at the stockyards. The whole show was a great experience, and the show team looks forward to sending heifers down again next year!

Getting the heifers ready for the show took a lot of work and help from others in the community. Northwest College students and their teacher Quinn LaFollette lent a hand teaching the kids how to fit and clip the calves, along with letting the members use their indoor facilities to wash the heifers. Tyler Young, a Freshman at NWC, deserves a special thank you for his patience and all his help with the heifers and Cassie Newkirk for all her help and wisdom down at the show. The show team would also like to say a big thank you to everyone who helped them out with the heifers. Great community support is what makes opportunities like this possible for the chapter.



Paintrock FFA members took a pen of heifers to the National Western Stock Show where they showed and later sold the females. Courtesy photo

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TEAM continued from Page 1

is truly something I will remember forever.”

“I remember at FFA camp after finishing up a workshop with some members I had a girl stop me on the way back to the lodge and she simply asked me for advice on a troubled relationship she was having with a friend,” says 3rd Vice President Tanner Nauta. “I was talking to a complete stranger and she trusted me enough to open her heart and talk to me about what was troubling her. I will never forget it because that was the first time I really felt like a FFA state officer. Better than that, I felt like a person that people respected

and trusted and looked to for advice and guidance.”

Wyoming FFA Leadership Camp, held each June in the mountains above Lander, is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year. For 35 years the camp has served as a gathering spot for FFA members as they make new friends, set goals and so much more!

Abbey Davidson, Wyoming FFA Reporter, says National FFA Convention stands out in her mind when thinking about the last year’s events and travels. “The number of blue jackets at National Convention is amazing and it was great

to be a part of it.” While attending convention students hear from motivational speakers, meet FFA members from across the nation and have the opportunity to attend one of the nation’s largest youth oriented trade shows.

“Being a delegate at national convention for Wyoming was awesome,” says Nauta. “To be able to have a voice on the national stage was awesome. The whole experience really made me feel lucky to be a part of the greatest student ran organization in the world!”

“Chapter visits were definitely an experience!” says Wyoming FFA Vice President Courtney Yelton. “To be able to travel and see such a large por-

tion of our members and be able to meet them and hear their stories was certainly eye opening. I will never forget the amazing stories of success, failure, hard work, family and friends that I heard through our travels. Not to mention, the opportunity to spend time with two amazing members of the team.” State FFA Officers travel the state each year, meeting with members, reviewing applications and presenting leadership workshops at Wyoming schools.

It was during chapter visits that FFA Parliamentarian Faith Hoffman says, “I got to see the true potential of FFA members and how well they interact with each other

and what the characteristics they hold to make their chapter what it is today.”

Throughout their travels, Wyoming’s State Officer Team has grown, learned and made countless new friends. They’ve also encouraged fellow FFA members to look beyond limitations in the quest to reach their goals.

“Work hard, set your goals high, and never look down,” says Bradon Marshall to younger FFA members. “There are so many opportunities through the FFA and if you reach for the finish and never look back, you’re on the right track. You can do whatever you set your mind to!” Marshall encourages Wyoming FFA members to set their goals and stick to them.

“If there is something in life that you want and desire there is no one stopping you but yourself,” says Klaahsen. “I had my doubts of ever getting a state office but someone told me before I started my interviews that I had to believe in myself before anyone else was ever going to believe in me. We all have struggles and hard times but we live life to its full potential and shoot for the stars because we only live once and you have nothing to lose so take a chance on something you have a passion for.”

“Be open to new friendships,” says McCray. “I went into my FFA career as a shy and introverted girl, but all of the friends I made in FFA will be my friends for life. They have encouraged me with my dream of being a state officer and offered any kind of advice that I could have wanted. If you are open to new friendships you never know how these people

“If an FFA member has a goal, they should pursue it with every ounce of energy they have.”

— Abbey Davidson,
Wyoming FFA Reporter

can change your life.”

“FFA has opened so many doors for me and as a state officer I’ve acquired so many new skills that will help me in the future,” says Marshall.

“It’s really outstanding the amount of talent and limitless potential Wyoming FFA members portray,” says Klaahsen.

“If an FFA member has a goal, they should pursue it with every ounce of energy they have,” says Davidson. “Don’t let anything get in the way of your dreams.”

“In this organization, all that you have to do to reach your goals is shoot high and don’t look back,” says Markworth. “You will have to eventually decide how hard you’re willing to work and come to terms with who you are. Just be who you are and don’t be afraid to get your hands dirty.”

“Passion is a key to success,” says Hoffman. “If you have the heart to do something do it with pride, and do it to the best of your ability. Don’t give up and remember failure leads to success.”

“Have fun!” says Nauta. “FFA isn’t all about farming and being a good agriculturist; it’s about rolling the dice and being yourself and not being afraid to show who you really are and stand up for what you believe in. If you open your heart, I promise FFA members that you meet across the state will become your very closest friends that will never leave you behind, but push you to be whoever you want to be and be good at it.”

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Oldham wins at National Western Stock Show *By Saige Albert, Wyoming Livestock Roundup*

Denver, Colo. – At last year’s National Western Stock Show, 15-year-old Lander student Jess Oldham caught a calf, along with nearly 40 other youth, to participate in the annual Catch-a-Calf contest.

This year, Oldham showed his steer, bringing home the Grand Champion prize from the contest, marking the first Wyoming youth to win, according to sponsor Bill Waneka.

The contest

Molly Keil, who works with the program’s record book and letters division, describes the program, saying, “Students apply and catch in January. Then, in May, they return and receive a steer for 240 days.”

Keil notes that the steers all originate from the same breeder and are similar in type to level the playing field.

“They return home and raise their steers and maintain a record book,” says Keil. “Participants are also required to write a monthly letter to their sponsors, telling about their calves and life in general.”

All of the letters are also sent to Keil, who reviews them as a component of the final award in the contest. Beyond simply raising a calf, participants are judged on their record books, letters and an interview.

“The purpose is to educate participants about the beef industry,” says Keil. “It’s about the learning experience.”

A history of catching calves

Oldham isn’t the first one in his family to participate in the program, though he is the first to win at the National Western Stock Show.

“The main inspiration for me to participate in the Catch-a-Calf program was my mother,” explains Oldham. “About six years ago, my brother participated in the New Mexico State Fair Catch-a-Calf program, and my mother thought it was a great idea for me to sign up.”

“I also thought it would be cool to do the program like my brother,” adds Oldham. “He is a big inspiration for me too.”

The contest wasn’t Oldham’s first chance to show steers, but he says that he learned a lot through the program.

“I’ve showed calves before at county and state fair for four or five years,” says Oldham. “I’ve always had a lot of fun showing cattle.”

Learning more

“I’ve never really paid attention to if I was making money or not,” says Oldham of his past show experience. “I really learned the expense and profit side of it. You try to break out even or gain some profit. It gave me a lot of respect and a new outlook on the industry.”

The program provided a great learning experience for Oldham, who says it was a great opportunity.

In raising a steer over the eight-month timeframe, Oldham says the project gave him some more responsibility aside from his school involvement and sports.

“It’s an awesome program, and I would definitely recommend it to other people,” comments Oldham. “It’s a lot of work to keep caught up on all the record books and letters, but it’s a great opportunity.”

Oldham also adds that the relationship with the other youth who also caught calves allowed him to work together with them and to learn more.

“There were many kids who had never shown a steer before,

and we bonded together and helped each other out,” says Oldham. “It was a team effort – not just everyone out for themselves.”

Great sponsors

A ranch or family sponsors each student by purchasing a steer. Charles, Lois and Bill Waneka sponsored Oldham’s calf this year, and Oldham says they were very supportive and helped him to learn more.

“The Waneka family was my sponsor. Charles is 92 and attended his first stock show at nine years old in 1929. He’s a great guy. Lois, his wife, is 88 and was very sweet and willing to help,” says Oldham of his sponsors. “It was great how willing everyone was and how much they wanted me to do well.”

The Waneka family was also impressed with Oldham.

Bill Waneka says, “Everyone is always talking about how this program affects the young people, but if you could have seen my parents when Jess won, they didn’t know whether to cry, laugh or jump up and down.”

Waneka continues, “Jess is an exceptional young man. He is outgoing, and deserves recognition for his accomplishment.”

“I’ve been around many contests and many youth, and I’ve never seen a truckload of awards like Jess has for anyone else his age,” adds Waneka.

Keil adds that the judging committee was also impressed, saying, “He is a very mature and well rounded young man, and he’s very tal-

ented.”

“The interview judges were very pleased, especially when they learned how young he is,” notes Keil.

More than steers

Oldham is the son of Dwayne and Denise Oldham of Lander and does far more than raising and showing steers.

He is very involved in the Lander FFA Chapter and enjoys livestock judging, as well as basketball, soccer, football and choir, and he says he particularly enjoys science in school.

After he graduates from high school, Oldham has big plans for the future, though he is only a sophomore.

“I hope to attend Casper College on a judging scholarship, get an associates degree and go to a university from there,” says Oldham, who adds he wants to

continue on to vet school after receiving his bachelor’s degree.

Oldham’s calf is also one of only 90 eligible youth for the junior auction on Jan. 20 at the National Western Stock Show, and Oldham notes that, along with being the first Navajo to win the Catch-a-Calf contest at the National Western Stock Show, he is also the first Navajo to be entered into the junior

sale.

Oldham brought home a Grand Champion Overall Rosette and Plaque, as well as the first place ribbon for interview, intermediate showmanship and production records. He placed fourth with his market steer, second for his record book and also received a blue ribbon for sponsor relations along with his other achievements.



Jesse Oldham with his Grand Champion Steer at the 2012 National Western Stock Show.

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2012 WYOMING FFA CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Abbreviated copy – This agenda provides a glimpse of the 2012 convention events. Please pick up an official copy at the 2012 Wyoming FFA Convention

MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2012

12:15 p.m.	Agriculture Mechanics CDE	University of Wyoming
1:00 p.m.	Meats Evaluation CDE	University of Wyoming
1:30 p.m.	Agronomy CDE	University of Wyoming
7:00 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies	Cheyenne Civic Center
	State FFA Degree Ceremony	
	Courtesy Corps Recognition	
	Retiring Address—Faith Hoffman—State Parliamentarian	
	State FFA Degree Ceremony Continued	
	Retiring Address—Jessica Olson—State Sentinel	
	State Star Ceremony	
	Chapter Awards Ceremony and #1 Chapter	

TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2012

7:30 am	Livestock Evaluation CDE	LCCC Ag Classroom Building
8:00 am	Ag Sales and Service CDE	LCCC CCI 129/130
1:00 pm	Farm Business Management CDE	LCCC CCI 129/130
1:00 pm	Horse Evaluation CDE	LCCC Ag Classroom Building
1:30 pm	Greenhand Quiz Bowl Contest	LCCC
4:30 pm	Marketing Plan CDE	LCCC CCI 129/130
4:30 pm	Nominating Committee Work Session	LCCC Ag Classroom Building
5:00 pm	Poultry Evaluation CDE	LCCC Ag Classroom Building
7:00 pm	Convention Session Two	Cheyenne Civic Center
	Ag Mechanics CDE Awards	
	Honorary State Degree Ceremony	
	Retiring Address—Abbey Davidson—State Reporter	

Greenhand Quiz Bowl Contest Awards
 State Booth Contest Announcement
 State Officer Parent Recognition
 Retiring Address—Bradon Marshall—State Treasurer
 Agronomy CDE Awards
 Keynote Speaker Mark Nelsen (Sponsored by Farm Credit Services)
 Closing Ceremonies

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2012

8:00 am	Natural Resources & Environmental Science CDE	LCCC Ag Classroom Building
8:30 am	Extemporaneous Speaking CDE Check-In	Little America Hotel
9:00 am	Extemporaneous Speaking CDE	Little America Hotel
9:00 am	Leadership Workshops	LCCC CCI 129/130
10:00 am	Creed Speaking CDE	Little America Hotel
12:30 pm	Prepared Public Speaking CDE	Little America Hotel
1:00 pm	Parliamentary Procedure CDE	Little America Hotel
1:00 pm	Delegate Business Session	Cheyenne Civic Center
	FFA Partner Reports	
	FFA Foundation	
	FFA Alumni Association	
	Wyoming FFA Camp	
	Wyoming Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association	
4:00 pm	Agriculture Issues CDE	Little America Hotel
5:30 pm	Wyoming FFA Foundation Sponsors' reception	Cheyenne Civic Center
7:00 pm	Convention Session Three	Cheyenne Civic Center
	Public Speaking Awards	
	Prepared Public Speaking CDE	
	Extemporaneous Speaking CDE	
	Creed Speaking CDE	
	Farm Business Management CDE Awards	
	Retiring Address—Molly McCray—State Secretary	
	Proficiency Awards	
	Parliamentary Procedure CDE Awards	
	Agriculture Issues CDE Awards	
	Retiring Address—Tanner Nauta—State 3rd Vice President	
	Agriculture Sales and Service CDE Awards	
	Proficiency Awards continued	
	Marketing Plan CDE Awards	
	College Scholarship Presentations	
	FFA Sponsor Recognition	
	Retiring Address—Jac Klaahsen—State 2nd Vice President	
	National Officer Keynote Address	
10:00 pm-12:00 am	FFA Member Dance	LCCC Multi Purpose Room

THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 2012

8:00 am	Closing Convention Session	Cheyenne Civic Center
	Prepared Pubic Speaking CDE Champion Presentation	
	Natural Resource and Environmental Science CDE Awards	
	Horse Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Junior High Horse Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Extemporaneous Speaking CDE Champion Presentation	
	Chorus Performance & Introduction	
	Poultry Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Junior High Poultry Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Creed Speaking CDE Champion Presentation	
	Retiring Address—Courtney Yelton—State Vice President	
	Meats Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Junior High Meats Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Agriculture Issues CDE Champion Team Presentation	
	Livestock Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Junior High Livestock Evaluation CDE Awards	
	Parliamentary Procedure Champion Team Presentation	
	Sweepstakes Awards	
	Committee Reports	
	Audit Committee	
	Constitution Committee	
	Resolutions Committee	
	Retiring Address—Asher Markworth—State President	
	Nominating Committee Report	
	Officer Installation	
	New President Presents Remarks	
2:00 pm	New State Officer Luncheon	Little America Hotel

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2011-2012 State Officers share their plans for the future *By Jennifer Womack, Wyoming FFA Times*

Cheyenne — As nine outstanding young leaders wrap up their year as members of the Wyoming FFA Officer Team, there's one logical question lingering in many minds. "What now?"

The *FFA Times* recently caught up with a few members of the team to ask that very question.

Wyoming FFA President Asher Markworth is making plans to join the Livestock Judging Team at the college in El Reno, Okla. A current English major, Markworth says he's thinking long and hard about a switch. "I look back and see all of the great advisors who made a

difference in my life and am still heavily considering a career in agricultural education."

Courtney Yelton, Wyoming FFA Vice President, will graduate from Laramie County Community College in the spring and continue her studies at the University of Wyoming. She'll be studying either ag education or ag business, after which she plans to earn a degree in Agricultural Law. In the years ahead look for Courtney in the halls of the Wyoming Capitol Building where she hopes to serve in the Wyoming Legislature.

Bradon Marshall,

Wyoming FFA Treasurer, will spend Summer 2012 as an intern at the Fremont County Extension Office. From there he's off to the University of Wyoming to study pre-med with eventual plans of becoming a pediatrician.

Second Vice President Jac Klaahsen plans to continue studying Agriculture Business at Sheridan College. Following graduation he'll pursue a career in a field he loves and continue devoting a portion of his time to helping those around him.

Wyoming FFA Reporter Abbey Davidson is also quick to mention her commitment to volunteer ser-

vice. She's been increasing her involvement in organizations at the University of Wyoming and will soon run for Carbon County Rodeo's Lady in waiting with the eventual plans of serving as the Carbon County Rodeo Queen. No doubt FFA's public speaking skills will serve her well in this role!

Wyoming FFA Sentinel Jessica Olson plans to earn her degree in Business Administration.

FFA Secretary Molly McCray plans to earn her Master's in accounting and open her own business in her hometown of Powell, Wyo. "I hope to remain incredibly involved with FFA through camp, coach-

ing Career Development Event teams or whatever is needed from me," says McCray.

Parliamentarian Faith Hoffman plans to complete her studies at Sheridan College and then attend nursing school. She plans to complete the courses to become a nurse specializing in either pediatrics or obstetrics.

Nauta hopes to have a lifelong involvement helping FFA. In the immediate future he plans to finish his studies at Laramie County Community College. After that he'll transfer to Oklahoma State University to pursue a degree in Animal Science. "Graduating from OSU has been a goal of

"No matter where I go in life and what I decide that I want to do, I will always be an advocate for agricultural education, FFA and the industry itself."

— Asher Markworth, 2011-2012 Wyoming FFA President

mine since I was a freshman," says Nauta, "and I'm really looking forward to making that dream into a reality."

"No matter where I go in life and what I decide that I want to do, I will always be an advocate for agricultural education, FFA and the industry itself," says Markworth.

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Miss Rodeo Wyo appreciates her FFA roots

By Jennifer Womack, Wyoming FFA Times

Laramie — On Aug. 20, 2011 Kimberly Kuhn, an alumni of Cheyenne's High Plains FFA, was named Miss Rodeo Wyoming.

"As Miss Rodeo Wyoming," says Kuhn, "I don't only have to give speeches, but be up-to-date on agricultural issues and current events and I need to be able to answer questions on the fly." Kuhn says FFA prepared her to think on her feet, promote agriculture and stand up for the industry.

As an FFA member Kimberly attended FFA Leadership Camp and showed horses and swine. Kuhn says the leadership skills she developed paid off in college and when she ran for Miss Rodeo Wyoming. She holds a Bachelors of Science in Agriculture Business from the University of Wyoming with a minor in Finance. While attending UW she was an Agriculture Ambassador for the College of Ag and participated in breakaway roping and barrel racing on the college's rodeo team.

"The reason I've been successful as Miss Rodeo Wyoming so far is because of FFA," says Kuhn. During her FFA career Kuhn delivered the creed, served as a chapter officer and participated on the Parliamentary Procedure Team for her chapter. She was also honored as the State Star in Ag Placement.

"One of the hardest decisions I've ever had to make was whether to run for a State Office or Miss Frontier," says Kuhn. She ended up serving as Miss Frontier 2009.

Her travels as Miss Rodeo Wyoming got underway this January. Her theme for the year is "Be Your Best Self," a phrase

she hopes will inspire young women to build their self-confidence and pursue their dreams.

"Always take time to invest in your knowledge," says Kuhn. She continues to pursue that goal as Miss Rodeo Wyoming. "It's not about competing. It's about the life skills you'll develop that are beneficial as a wife, a mother and in the career world. They're skills that will help you the rest of your life."

In January Kuhn attended the National Western Stock Show. While at the event she says she saw Lynne Cheney honored as the Citizen of the West, visited with local school-

children about agriculture and rodeo, and helped with the NWSS rodeo. From there it was off to San Antonio for a rodeo queen clinic and then on to Rapid City, South Dakota to attend the annual Black Hills Stock Show. "We also did school visits there and I helped carry flags at the rodeo," says Kuhn.

In December Kuhn will run for the coveted title of Miss Rodeo America. "That takes place in Las Vegas during the National Finals Rodeo," she shares. There's a good chance that while in Vegas Kuhn will see other alumni of the FFA. "A lot of the people I rodeo queen with have been members of the FFA," says Kuhn.

Kimberly is the 22-year-old daughter of Pete and Vicki Kuhn and a fifth generation ranch owner in Johnson and Sheridan counties. While attending the University of Wyoming she was a member of the Delta Delta Delta Sorority, SPURS Honorary, Ag Ambassadors and the UW Rodeo Team.



Kimberly Kuhn

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Cameco challenges FFA members to do good in their communities *By Jennifer Womack, Wyoming FFA Times*

Cheyenne — Two years ago the Wyoming FFA Foundation partnered with Cameco Resources to encourage the state's FFA members to make a positive difference in their community. With community service at the heart and soul of FFA, it's not a new ven-

ture for FFA members, but the Cameco Cowboy State Challenge put some funding behind the challenge, empowering FFA members to do more.

"It's exciting to see this investment in members, FFA chapters and their goals," says Becki Dale, a member of the

Wyoming FFA Foundation who helped review this spring's applications. "I was impressed with the quality of applications and the projects that will be taking place across Wyoming in the coming months with the power of FFA members behind them."

Dollars secured by the Wyoming FFA Leadership Camp will allow attendees at this year's event to leave behind a nice addition to the camp. They'll be building benches that will not only benefit attendees at each summer's FFA camp, but the hundreds of youth who use the camp facility each year. The project will be laced with leadership lessons, skills development and teamwork.

In Basin, Wyo., members of the Paintrock FFA Chapter have set their minds to giving the local fairgrounds a "face lift." Improvements, says the Chapter, will not only enhance the county's fair, but create nicer facilities for those who use the grounds each year. "It will increase the pride in our local county fair," says FFA Advisor Jared Boardman. "It will benefit students and visitors from all over the county." As members of the FFA chapter carry out the work, they'll also master new skills and earn a sense of accomplishment while helping an important cause.

Glendo FFA members will be building a community greenhouse, an extension of their existing hydroponics work. Hydroponics is the process of growing plants in sand, gravel or liquid with added nutrients, but without soil. The green-

house will be built by FFA members and used and maintained by the chapter long-term. Members of the community will benefit from the more readily available plants. During the summer months the greenhouse will serve as a community garden providing fresh produce.

Who doesn't enjoy a shade tree while attending county fair? Goshen County's Southeast FFA chapter will be adding trees to the local fairgrounds with dollars received through the Cowboy State Challenge. While helping meet a public need, students will learn about tree selection, proper planting and add a new level of appeal to the facilities. Goshen County's fairgrounds receive a great deal of use beyond the local county fair, serving as a center of activity in the community.

Worland FFA members are setting out to landscape the area surrounding their community library. The project is being carried out in partnership with the Washakie County Commissioners, the Worland Library Board and Mr. Jim Gill. The chapter will be removing the existing overgrown trees and replacing them with

native trees and shrubs. They'll also replace the weathered wood benches in front of the library with a newer version built using composite material.

The above is just a sampling of projects funded Spring 2012 through the Cameco Cowboy State Challenge. If your chapter has a community service project in mind, watch the Wyoming FFA Foundation Facebook page and the website at www.WyoFFAFoundation.com for an upcoming round of fund offerings. The Cameco Cowboy State Challenge is intended to help FFA members identify needs in their communities and provide the dollars to help meet those needs.

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FFA receives AgrAbility material

Laramie — Wyoming AgrAbility is a USDA-sponsored program that helps farmers and ranchers and their families who have experienced an injury or limitations leading to disability. Thanks to the efforts of Randy Weigel, who directs the project through the University of Wyoming, all Wyoming FFA chapters recently received a 20-minute DVD

introducing them to AgrAbility. Several tools are available for those who can benefit from the AgrAbility project and more details are available online at <http://UWAdmnWeb.Uwyo.edu/AgrAbility> or by contacting Weigel at AgrAbility@uwyo.edu or 866-395-4986. The program also has a Facebook page.

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Wyoming FFA Foundation to award scholarships to outstanding members

Cheyenne — The Wyoming FFA Foundation will be awarding scholarships during this year's Wyoming FFA Convention. It was a record year for applications, including over 45 applications received from high school seniors.

"We at the Wyoming FFA Foundation believe it's important to offer scholarships to graduating FFA members who've proven their ability to set and achieve goals and need help pursuing their college dreams," says Stacy Broda, Wyoming FFA Foundation Scholarship Chairperson. "Similarly, we offer scholarships to FFA members who are enrolled in college. We're

able to make this annual offering thanks to private donors and companies and fellow non-profit groups that support Wyoming FFA's goals and mission."

Among this year's offerings is the Andrea Lohr Live by Faith Scholarship. Lohr, former Kentucky FFA President and the wife of former National FFA Officer Matt Lohr, lost her battle with cancer in 2011. Amidst life's biggest challenges Andrea maintained a positive attitude while inspiring others. Matt and Andrea Lohr touched many Wyoming lives over the years through their involvement in FFA and their talent delivering motiva-

tional speeches. Ron and Julie Rabou, friends of the Lohrs who live in Cheyenne, launched this scholarship by making an initial donation and challenging others to do the same. The scholarship will be presented to an FFA member who shares his or her story of how someone has made a positive difference in his or her life.

Friends of Agriculture Industry and Recreation (F.A.I.R.) is once again partnering with the Wyoming FFA Foundation to offer a scholarship to an FFA member who has multiple years of experience exhibiting projects at the Wyoming State Fair. Applicants will be asked to

share their State Fair experience.

A member of the FFA from Park County, Wyo. will be presented a \$1,500 scholarship in memory of Nickie Linnabur. The Jake Clark Mule Days Charity Pool funds the scholarship in memory of Linnabur, a young lady from Park County who was killed in a car accident. The 2012 scholarship recipient will be asked to join in the festivities, including a rodeo, parade and an auction, in Powell and Ralston as the Clarks host Mule Days June 13-17, 2012 (www.saddlemule.com).

The Wyoming FFA Foundation also gathered scholarship applications on behalf of the Wyoming

Ag Business Association. The Association will present a \$500 scholarship to a student continuing his or her higher education in Wyoming.

With support from Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc., scholarships are awarded to students pursuing natural resources studies. A priority is given to those students who are enrolled or plan to enroll in the University of Wyoming Reclamation and Restoration Center. Students who take classes from the UW Reclamation and Restoration Center leave college better prepared for work reclaiming Wyoming land following a disturbance or development.

Beyond the college scholarships, two entities that support Wyoming FFA are helping ensure the program's members can attend the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC). WLC familiarizes FFA members with the nation's capitol while helping them build their leadership skills and strive for personal growth. Tri-State Generation and Transmission and Basin Electric sponsor this offering, which will help four FFA members attend the Summer 2012 conference.

Watch the stage at the 2012 Wyoming FFA Convention to see this year's scholarship recipients or check the next edition of the *Wyoming FFA Times*.

You're Invited to the 2012 Wyoming FFA Convention Welcome Dinner

Time: 4:00 p.m. until ? (We'll keep serving meals as FFA members arrive in Cheyenne until it's time to leave for the first convention session)

Place: Laramie County Community College

Sponsored by the Wyoming FFA Foundation with support from FUSA Insurance Agency, Rocky Mountain Power, Tri-State Generation & Transmission, Cheyenne Kiwanis, the Casper FFA Alumni and Bill & Judy Johnson.



FFA project helps wildlife

Newcastle — For the second year in a row Newcastle FFA members formed and constructed wildlife escape ramps in cooperation with the Weston County Natural Resource District.

The district's goal is providing information, education and technical assistance to district residents. One of the items they provide ranchers, free of charge, is wildlife escape ramps to place in their stock water tanks. The District recently turned to Mr. Ed Merrill and Newcastle's Saddle & Siroloin FFA Chapter to see if they'd be willing to help with the project as a chapter fundraiser.

In 2010-2011 the FFA Chapter made 40 wildlife escape ramps and built another 45 this winter. Modifications were made to improve the ramps' shape. This year instead of bending the metal by hand, they went to Newcastle Equipment to use a floor brake.



Newcastle FFA members are joined by Cindy Gruwell, a member of the Weston County Natural Resource District. Courtesy photo

Escape ramps are used to make it easier for wildlife that may fall into a stock tank to escape by gripping the expanded metal.

The Weston County Natural Resource District was pleased to partner with the chapter, ensuring the ramps are available to help area ranchers, benefitting all small species including sage grouse.

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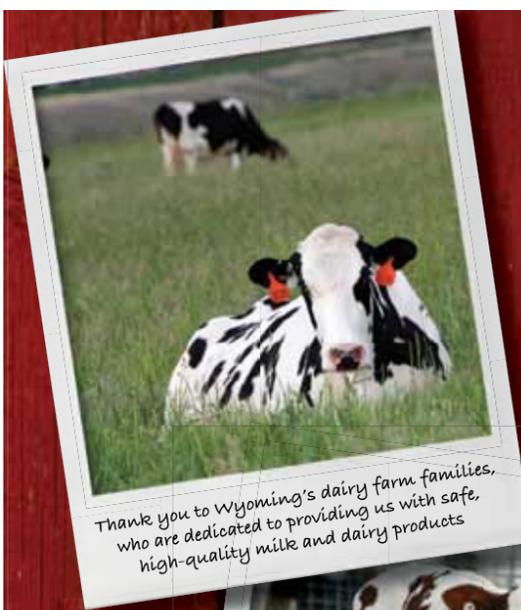
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Casper College livestock judging sees national successes *By Saige Albert, Wyoming FFA Times*

Casper – The Casper College livestock judging team has seen a number of successes this year and is an ever-growing program, according to livestock judging coach Jeremy Burkett.

The team consists of 31 students, who have proven to be a very competitive group this year.

“This team was third at the National Agricultural Collegiate Teachers Association contest in Modesto, Calif., fourth at the National Barrow Show in Austin, Minn., first here at Casper, eleventh at the American Royal and first at the Oklahoma Panhandle State contest,” says Burkett, also listing a number of other big ticket wins, including placing as the overall high team at the Southwestern Exposition and Livestock Show in Fort Worth, Texas.

“We will also have a couple of students in contention for All-American this year,” adds Burkett. “There are usually about 20 students named, out of almost 400 students who judge.”

To be considered for All-American standing, students must have strong academic standing and perform well at the four contests designated by the National Junior College Coaches Association. Those contests include Denver, Louisville, Kansas City and Houston.

Each year, the Casper College judging team puts on over 50,000 miles traveling to contests, according to Burkett, and averages 15 contests per year.

“We try to take everyone to 12 or 13 contests, but we reserve the national contests for our traveling team – the sophomore students,” explains Burkett. “We drive to all of our contests.”

To be eligible for livestock judging, students are only required to enroll in the livestock judging course, regardless of prior experience. Burkett says that, if students are in the Ag department, interested and willing to work, they can be part of the team. “Students don’t have to be recruited to judge,” he explains. “We’ve had students in the past couple of years that have never judged before and were very competitive. It’s not what your background is, it’s how hard you work.”

However, Casper College works to actively recruit team members from across the country and has members of its judging team from as far east as Ohio, west to California, north from Montana and south as far as southern Colorado.

Livestock judging serves primarily as an educational tool, explains Burkett, saying, “The judging program is set up to allow students to have some hands on activity to put into practice what we are trying to teach in the classroom.”

“They aren’t learning only evaluation skills, but public speaking and communication,” he continues. “It’s really an extension of the classroom in terms of applying the principles we try to teach everyday.”

Burkett adds, “It doesn’t matter how many trophies we hang on the wall, it’s about what students are able to learn and put into application in real life.”

Livestock evaluation skills enable students to evaluate their own herds, as well as keep current with livestock trends and technology. The program also provides the opportunities for students to network with producers and experts

from across the country.

“We try to take students to local producers when we travel and show them livestock they might not see around here,” mentions Burkett, noting Boer goats as an example. “We’ve seen them before, but we don’t see them often.”

Livestock judging is part of the learning experience that the Casper College Agriculture Department strives to provide for students.

Heath Hornecker, department head, says that the Casper College Ag Department has a strong tie to FFA and the Ag programs throughout the state and offers students the opportunity for continuing education.

“As a whole, I think one of the biggest things that allows us to recruit students is the education and transferability,” says Hornecker, adding, “We also want to help students creating relationships that can help them down the road.”

Casper College offers two programs for students, designed for their interests. For students looking to transfer to a four year institution, the Associate of Science degree is offered in general agriculture, ag business, animal science and range management.

“The Applied Science degree is designed for students who want to be done after two years and get a job,” explains Hornecker. “They can study animal science technology or agribusiness. We have a lot of students who are very successful in finding jobs with just the two year degree.”

Currently, the Ag program has nearly 100 students. Hornecker also emphasizes that consistency in faculty member is one of the department’s goals, and decreasing instructor turnover is important.

“We have a consistent teaching staff going on three years now,” he says. “I think consistency is important.”

“It doesn’t matter how many trophies we hang on the wall, it’s about what students are able to learn and put into application in real life.”

— Dr. Jeremy Burkett, Casper College

“We want to be the go-to place in Wyoming and the region for those livestock judging kids and Ag kids.”



After competing in the Southwestern Exposition and Livestock Show in Fort Worth, Texas, the Casper College judging team came out with top honors for the first time at a national contest since 2007. Team members pictured above include (from left to right) Kaycee Carpenter, Mikenzie Taylor, Katie Ochsner, Jacy Pannell, Kinsey Freeman, Morgan Hatfield, Catherine Karoulis, Jessie McClellan, Trinity Holland and coach Jeremy Burkett. Courtesy photo

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Competition tests FFA members' skills

By Jennifer Womack, Wyoming FFA Times

Cheyenne — Succeeding in Wyoming FFA's Extemporaneous Public Speaking competition takes commitment. Beyond developing finesse in the public speaking arena, students are called upon to study several important agricultural topics.

Students participating in the competition draw a few choices from the below list, are asked to make a single selection from those and quickly develop and present a speech to a panel of judges. Here's a look at the topics this year's participants have been studying:

Agriscience & Technology

1. Precision agriculture and other innovations that have enhanced the results from purchased inputs thus impacting production
2. Challenges ahead for production agriculture as chemicals and medicines are resulting in chemical resistant weeds and diseases
3. The future of green technology as we learn more about their economic and environmental viability

Agri-marketing & International Agriculture Relations

1. Free trade agreements cause US and the foreign country economies to prosper
2. The impact of alternative forms of energy on the future prices of agriculture products
3. The impact of change in industrial and manufacturers decisions about returning jobs to the US that was outsourced to foreign countries

Food and Fiber Systems

1. Cause and effect of recent reports about food-borne pathogens in fruit and vegetable products
2. Severe drought and severe flooding and its impact on the US food supply
3. Protecting our food system from all forms of contamination both at the farm and throughout the processing stages

Urban Agriculture

1. Our role in educating the public about agriculture production and processing and why that's important
2. Developing and using green technology that actually works both in theory and in practice in the urban setting
3. Using community service projects to reinforce the power of returning our citizens to their connection to the land

Watch the next edition of the FFA Times for results from this year's competition and the outstanding young people who set out to expand their knowledge on the above topics.

Encana helps celebrate 100th State Fair

Douglas — Thanks to the generosity of Encana Oil and Gas, 4-H and FFA youth attending and competing at the 100th Wyoming State Fair and Rodeo will benefit.

Encana, known for its outstanding support of Wyoming's agricultural youth, is covering the dormitory and admission costs for 4-H and FFA members attending the 100th Wyoming State Fair.

Encana, known for its outstanding support of Wyoming's agricultural youth, is covering the dormitory and admission costs for 4-H and FFA members attending the 100th Wyoming State Fair.



“Please join us in showing our great appreciation to Encana USA for this wonderful partnership,” said WSF Deputy Director Vicki Rupert in announcing the donation. “The Wyoming State Fair is very pleased to partner with such a community-minded, youth supporting company such as Encana USA.”

Submit material for our next edition by April 16, 2012



Experience education for a lifetime

The Casper College **Agriculture Department** offers A.S. degrees in agriculture, agri-business, animal science, and range management and A.A.S. degrees in agri-business and animal science technology. Students can participate on the livestock judging team, rodeo team or the numerous ag clubs on campus.

“**Learning by doing**” is an important teaching strategy that agriculture instructors Heath Hornecker, Tom Parker, Marty Finch, Jeremy Burkett, and Todd Jones 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.



Andrea Leininger
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