

• Weber talks about FFA

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take the first step in their area of interest, they can have the momentum going in FFA which will carry over in other areas." He said his FFA activities tend to provide momentum to go onto more challenging activities. "It was a progression of activities. My

FFA work definitely affected me and contributed to the kind of person I am now."

There are carryovers from FFA to other areas of life, Weber says, noting, "It helps you in dealing with people as well as the personal development of all kinds of skills such as public speaking. It is also a socializing experience for members from farms to get out into other groups. It offers a lot of the first kinds of socializing for some members. It also serves as a confidence builder."

Weber admits that the never seemed to excel in contests. "I was a member of the parliamentary procedure team that went to the state but didn't win. I learned a lot - about losing as well. I had some successes in contests but never really won a state contest."

Now Weber can be found judging FFA contests and in other ways supporting FFA. He said, "I feel I have a debt to repay the FFA and so when I'm asked to judge in a contest I feel I need to contribute what I can. Other students are now benefitting and participating as I did. I can remember the judges when I was in contests."

After a visit to the national convention last Fall, Weber says, I felt so at home there. In a sense it seemed to be the same. The spirit and the challenge is still there."

Nevertheless he feels FFA has changed since he was a member, and for the good. "It now caters to all students interested in agriculture, not just rural youth in farming. It offers any phase of agriculture to urban and rural youth."

He recalls that admitting girls as members as an "issue" when he was a state officer. He now says, "It was the best thing that happened to FFA."

Despite some changes, he notes, "Students are taking advantage of the opportunities in the same way as when I was an officer. They are still being challenged. It has remained flexible and relevant. It had done an amazing job of being relevant to the needs of the students. It has broadened and stayed abreast of the times. Having just been to the national contests, I am really impressed with the contests and with their strength in terms of numbers. It is a viable organization."

Now FFA boasts over 1/2

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, February 16, 1980—B3

million members, which Weber says is 100,000 more than when he was in office. "New programs have strengthened the total program," he declares.

FFA is a broadening experience for members and Weber states, "It helps you see beyond the immediate self, and helps you become more aware of issues and how they affect agriculture and the community." In Weber's case his awareness helped encourage him to make a bid for the state legislature in the 99th district several years ago. He didn't make it, losing by a disappointing 500 votes. He said, "I never worked so hard at anything, but it was a lesson in learning to fail."

He said he probably never would have run for the office if it had not been for his FFA experience. He currently

serves on school board of the Eastern Lancaster County School District, and is a member of the Akron Mennonite Church.

He says now he wants to concentrate on his business and his small farm where he has horses and dairy heifers. "Working at home helps me regroup my thoughts," he said.

Weber is now totally involved in the day-to-day management of his convenience speciality stores, but his FFA experience is never far behind him. "The experience of being a national officer can't be described in one word. It was very valuable in making relationships throughout the country. It meant spreading the FFA story through business and industry. You gain so much in return." — SBB.



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National wool growers elect 1980 officers

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah
— At the concluding business

session of the recent 115th Annual Convention of the National Wool Growers Association in San Diego, Calif., members of the nation's oldest livestock organization elected officers to labor for the interests of sheep producers in this country during the next year.

Re-elected for a second term as chairman of the board of directors was R. J. Rich, a sheepman from Burley, Idaho, and the only leader of the 115-year-old association to follow his father's (R. C. Rich) footsteps in assuming this post.

R. C. Rich is the oldest living past president of the NWGA, serving from 1936-1940.

Also re-elected to a second term is Don Meike, Kaycee, Wyoming, vice chairman; and Norman Rousselot, Sonora, Texas, secretary. Newly elected to the position of treasurer was Steve Gilmore, Salt Lake City, Utah.

These four individuals are board officers and also serve on NWGA's Executive Committee.

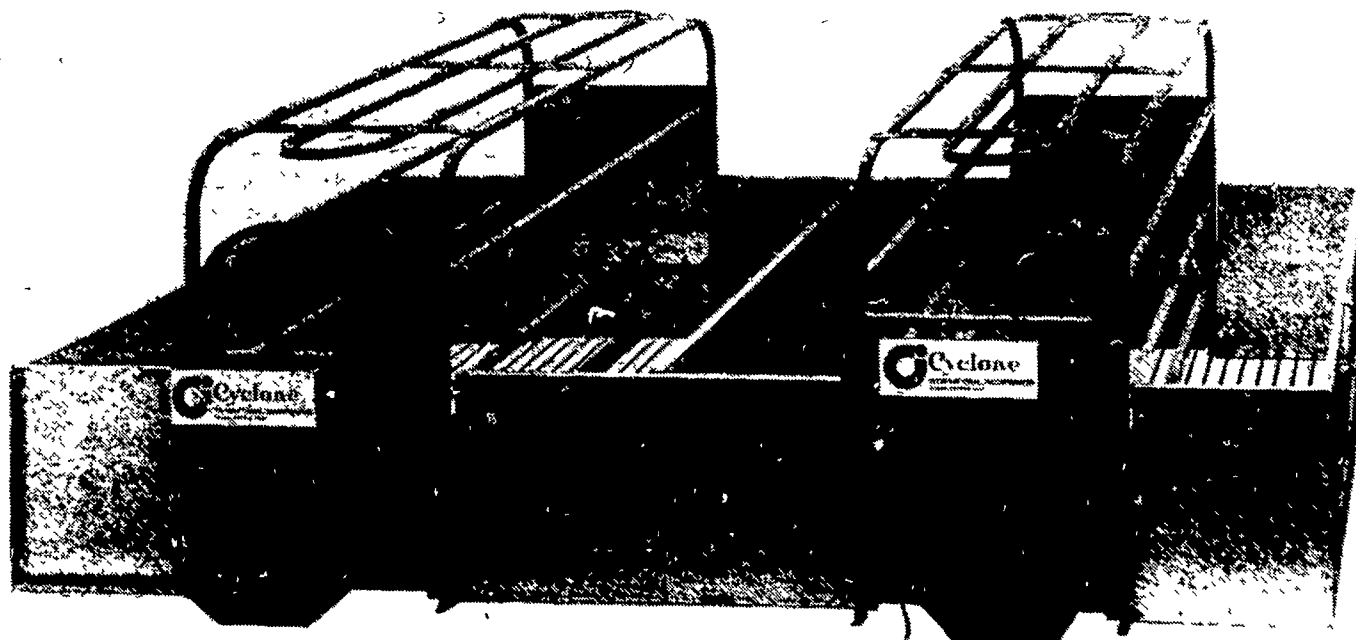
Other Executive Committee members elected include the following Members-At-Large: Norman DalPorto, Jackson, Calif., (second term); Cornelia Swayze, Tunbridge, Vt. (second term); and T. L. Watts, Pinon, N. M. (first term). Marvin Cronberg, Salt Lake City, Utah, was re-appointed president and chief operating officer of NWGA.

These officers work with the Board of Directors, who are presidents of state and area wool growers associations affiliated with NWGA.

The association has two offices: the headquarters in Salt Lake City, from which the NWGA official magazine, the National Wool Grower, is published and mailed to over 20,000 subscribers; and a governmental affairs office in Washington, D.C.

National FFA WEEK is scheduled in February to honor George Washington who was an outstanding farmer as well as a great leader.

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