

National FFA Convention Breaks Attendance Record, Names Officers

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — More than 37,000 FFA members and guests were enthusiastic, excited, and motivated after being challenged to develop "Leadership for a Lifetime" during the 68th National FFA Convention, Nov. 9-11.

The record crowd of FFA members and guests from throughout the country and beyond came to experience the world's largest annual student gathering and to show their support for the blue and gold of the FFA. Last year's attendance was 34,372.

Members had the opportunity to hear words of wisdom from some nationally-known speakers, including Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana, and Miss America Shawntel Smith. These speakers challenged members to hone the leadership skills that would assist them throughout their life.

During the opening Reflections program, the 1994-1995 national FFA officers got the standing-room-only crowd on its feet and ready to experience a convention that would provide them with new ideas and fresh approaches to take back to their chapters.

Other speakers who inspired the convention attendees were Diana Golden, Olympic gold medal skier; Fred McClure, past national FFA officer and one of Time magazine's 50 most promising leaders 40 and under; John Alston, motivational speaker; Jeanne Robertson, humorist; David Toma, former New York City police officer; and Emanuel Cleaver, mayor of Kansas City, Mo.

The National Agricultural Career Show featured nearly 300 exhibitors, including colleges and universities with agricultural programs, as well as industry representatives for production agriculture, agribusiness, agriscience, and other diverse agricultural areas. In addition to learning more about opportunities in agriculture, members could enjoy live entertainment, browse through the FFA shopping mall, and grab a bite to eat at the FFA Food Court.

FFA members participated in the multitude of convention activities including career development events, awards ceremonies, leadership workshops and a salute to sponsors who make possible the extensive offering of FFA programs through the National FFA Foundation. The Honorary American FFA Degree, Distinguished Service Award, and VIP Citation were awarded to businesses and individuals who support the organization. The FFA awarded 1,466 American FFA Degrees, the highest degree earned by an FFA member.

In transacting the official business of the organization, delegates voted on proposals and made recommendations to the board of directors. The delegates voted to increase national dues from \$3.50 to \$5 per year.

The National FFA Alumni convention held on Nov. 8 included leadership workshops, awards ceremonies, and another successful auction, raising more than \$48,000 to support FFA programs.

FFA Elects 1995-96 National FFA Officer Team

The 1995-1996 national FFA officer team was elected Nov. 11 at the 68th National FFA Convention.

Leading the six-member team is national FFA president Seth Der-

ner, 20, of Bartlett, Neb. The national secretary is Cody Wagner, 19, of Banner, Wyo. Vice presidents representing each region are: central region, Joe Caffee, 20, of Geneva, Ind.; eastern region, William Catania, 19, of Westfield, N.Y.; southern region, Clara-Leigh Horn, 20, of Ashville, Ala.; and western region, Andy McCall, 19, of Houston, Texas. The officers will take a year-long leave of absence from college to serve their term.

Dermer, the son of Dennis and Sharon Dermer, is a member of the Wheeler Central FFA Chapter. His local advisors are David Nichols and Robert Swett. Dermer's supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program consists of a cow/calf operation, ranch improvement, and placement in agricultural production. He is a junior majoring in agricultural education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Wagner's parents are Jim and Sally Wagner and he is a member of the John B. Kendrick FFA Chapter. Wagner's local advisors are Jim Bohn and Nick Siddle. His SAE program is diverse and consists of a beef and sheep operation and agriculture sales and service enterprises. A sophomore at the University of Wyoming, Wagner is studying molecular biology.

Caffee, the son of Dennis and Rebecca Caffee, is a member of the South Adams FFA Chapter. His local adviser is Fred Schuman. Caffee's diverse SAE consists of beef and poultry production, agricultural processing, and agricultural communications. He attends Purdue University, where he is a sophomore majoring in agricultural education.

Catania is the son of William and Toni Catania. A member of the Westfield FFA Chapter, his adviser is Phil Bajdeme. Catania's SAE involves turf management, landscape management, fruit production, and horticulture. He is a freshman majoring in psychology at Fredonia State University.

Horn's parents are Wallace and Diana Horn. She is a member of the Ashville FFA Chapter where her local adviser is Tommy Hill. Her SAE is a diversified livestock operation that consists of lambs, hogs, steers, heifers and horses. Horn is a junior at Auburn University majoring in basic science/pre-veterinary medicine.

McCall is the son of Michael and Karen McCall. A member of the Cypress Creek FFA Chapter, his local advisers are Kevin Page and Wayne Sales. McCall's SAE consists of showing swine and raising rabbits. He is a sophomore at Lubbock Christian University where he is majoring in agricultural business.

During their year of service the national officers will each travel more than 100,000 miles and make hundreds of appearances on behalf of the FFA. The national officers represent members to officials in government, business, education, and agriculture. As they travel during the year, they meet with members on the local, state and national levels.

American Star Farmer And American Star In Agribusiness

Randy Petrosus, 21, Allegan, Mich., and Wade Kallevig, 21, Willmar, Minn., were named the American Star Farmer and the American Star in Agribusiness, respectively, at the 68th National FFA Convention. Each received a \$2,000 cash award and will participate in an international experi-

ence program in Europe for achieving the FFA's highest honor.

Each star was chosen from a field of four national finalists. Darrell S. Glodowski, 21, Amherst Junction, Wis.; Benji Ortman, 21, Westport, Ind.; and J. Ryan White, 21, Sturgis, Ky., were the other three star farmer candidates. Larry Edward Duffner, 21, Ephrata, Wash.; Chad Eric Reinhart, 21, Normal, Ill.; and Chad Alan Thixton, 21, Salem, Ind., were the other three star in agribusiness candidates. The finalists were selected from 1,466 American FFA Degree recipients, and each finalist received \$1,000.

National, state and local FFA officials selected the stars on the basis of knowledge of their enterprises, management skills, return on investments and growth of their programs. The stars were also judged on leadership abilities demonstrated through their FFA activities.

American Star Farmer

Randy Petrosus' first calf died soon after he entered it in a dairy show. Evidence that the Allegan, Mich., seven-year-old should find another career aspiration? Apparently not. Petrosus, now 21 years old, stayed with dairy farming, bought another heifer the next spring and now has 190 head of Holsteins.

Petrosus' determination and agricultural success have earned him recognition as the 1995 National FFA American Star Farmer, one of the agricultural education organization's highest honors.

Petrosus began his agricultural career as a young boy, making \$1 an hour doing chores on the family farm. His income source gradually shifted to the Allegan County Fair, which "was always a big money maker to generate funds to buy more cows and heifers," he said. Showing livestock taught him marketing essentials such as showmanship and grooming, but also life lessons — namely how to lose, he said. Those life lessons continued after Petrosus joined FFA in 1988.

"It wasn't long before I learned that FFA was more than judging cows at the Agricultural Skills Contest in Lansing," he said. "I began to get involved in all the leadership activities as well, and eventually met a whole new world of friends." He was elected Michigan state FFA officer in 1992. His FFA adviser is Robert Brown.

As a student in the dairy management program at Michigan State University, Petrosus gained new ideas about the dairy industry. His two-year collegiate judging team placed second in Holsteins at the 1992 World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis.

Petrosus recently became a partner with his parents, Jerome and Virginia Petrosus. They operate more than 750 acres and own 550 head of cattle. Currently, they are designing and planning a state-of-the-art 400 milking facility.

Charles Snyder, FFA projects consultant, recommended Petrosus highly for the American Star Farmer Award. "Randy's leadership is only exceeded by his honesty, dedication, hard work and a vision for the future of agriculture and how he can play a role in establishing a future for young agriculturists such as himself," he said.

American Star In Agribusiness

Wade Kallevig owns and oper-

ates a successful seed conditioning plant in Willmar, Minn. He processes more than five million pounds of soybeans annually, distributing them locally, regionally and in Japan. While Kallevig's success would be admirable under any circumstance, it becomes especially noteworthy when his age comes into play. Kallevig is only 21 years old.

The National FFA Organization recognized Kallevig's success by naming him 1995 American Star in Agribusiness, one of the agricultural education organization's highest honors.

Kallevig began growing soybeans on a 7.5 acre field as a freshman in high school. The next year he increased to 43.5 acres, bought a tractor, and rented a neighbor's grain cleaner. Kallevig eventually purchased the cleaner and moved it onto his family's farm. He has since built a new processing plant and warehouse, and now processes more than 83,000 bushels of soybeans annually.

Several of Kallevig's largest customers sought him out for his reputation for high quality processing. He has contracts with ICI Seeds, a division of Zeneca Inc.; Cenex/Land O' Lakes Seeds; Minnesota Public Seeds; and Access Marketing, which markets his seeds in Japan.

Unlike many young agriculturists, Kallevig did not step into an existing family business, but created his own. Kallevig said he has benefited from learning the seed business "from the ground up." Raising certified seed taught him the growing end of the business. Planning his own expansions and operating his facilities initiated him into the seed processing industry. Working with both individual customers and large companies has helped him develop excellent sales skills. Concerted record keeping gives him a firm handle on the business, and managing employees has given him human

resources experience.

Kallevig, son of Steve and Cindy Kallevig, is active in several crop associations. He has participated in numerous local, regional, state, and national FFA activities and was Minnesota's FFA Star in Production in 1992. Kallevig is a member of the Willmar FFA Chapter, and his advisors are D. Hanson and N. Pearson.

FFA Foundation Raises \$6.07 Million

For the 29th consecutive year, the National FFA Foundation has set a record level of support for FFA and agricultural education programs. At the 68th National FFA Convention, H.D. "Harry" Cleberg, 1995 FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board chairman, announced that the Foundation raised a total of \$6,070,000 in 1995 to support projects and programs for FFA and agricultural education, an all-time record. A crowd of more than 35,000 FFA members and guests cheered the announcement.

Cleberg, president and chief executive officer of Farmland Industries, Inc., said the contributions of the more than 1,000 Foundation sponsors help prepare future agricultural leaders.

"The FFA provides excellent training, not only for agricultural careers, but also for personal leadership skills," he said. "My industry colleagues and I know that supporting the FFA today ensures us well-trained, motivated employees tomorrow."

Cleberg introduced 1996 FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board Chairman-elect Allan R. Johnson, president of Farm Progress Companies, Inc. Johnson announced the 1996 Foundation theme, "FFA — Leadership for a Lifetime."

Since 1944, the National FFA Foundation has provided more than \$63 million to FFA members for awards, scholarships and achievement programs.

Farm Employee Management Seminar In Mid-December

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)—Finding and keeping good employees is a continual struggle for many farm businesses. Some farmers don't expand their businesses because it would require hiring employees.

"Employment Management for Farm Business" is a two-day seminar designed to help farm managers meet the challenge of developing a strong and productive team of employees.

The seminar, sponsored by Farm Credit, is being offered in two Pennsylvania locations in mid-December. According to Jonas Kauffman, executive director of Farm Credit Financial Management Service, the seminar will be useful for farm managers who employ or are considering hiring at least one full-time employee and to key middle managers who supervise one or more employees.

"Over 500 farm businesses in New York and New England have enjoyed this Farm Credit-sponsored seminar, and we are very pleased to be able to bring it to Pennsylvania's farm mana-

gers," said Kauffman.

Among the topics to be discussed at the seminar are recruiting, interviewing, and training new employees; motivating different types of employees; developing a compensation and incentive plan; and improving communication within your business.

Instructors for the seminar are Kauffman and Gary Snider. Snider is a farm business consultant with Farm Credit of Western New York. Both men have been presenting seminars for farm business managers for many years.

The seminars will be held Dec. 13 and 20 at the Carlisle Holiday Inn and Dec. 14 and 21 at the Williamsport Sheraton Inn. Preregistration is required. The seminar registration fee is \$195 and includes reference materials, lunches, and coffee breaks for both sessions.

Additional participants from the same farm can register for a reduced fee of \$125. Registration deadline is Dec. 5. For more information or to register, call Jonas Kauffman at (800) 477-9947.