
❖ Aggie Annex ❖

January 2009

Central Region News

By JessaLee Goehring

Greetings from the Central Region! It has been a relaxing, yet active summer and start to another busy school year. Many of our teachers spent their summer traveling among the states, adding to their families or getting married! There have also been many additions and/or changes to departments and, as always, active FFA programs. Our region is looking forward to an eventful and successful school year and seeing you all during the Spring judging season!

Yolo Section

Austin Large and *Tim Reid* are both first year teachers and the only ones in the department at Esparto HS. Woodland HS welcomes *Tara Meade* to their department. *Grant Ermis* joins the Davis HS department and is a first year teacher from Chico State.

Sacramento Section

Pleasant Grove HS welcomes new teacher *Maya O'Connor* who replaced Kevin Farwell. Kevin took a counseling job at Kerr Middle School.

Elk Grove HS has been quite busy with the addition of two new teachers, *Shannon Welch* and *Matt Rooney*. Elk Grove also competed at National Convention and brought home National Agriscience Winners in the Advanced Team Environmental Science Division. Congratulations!

Casa Roble HS held a 2-day "Farm Fest" that included games, face painting, petting zoo, haunted barn, snack bar, bounce house and craft show. It was a huge activity and a great deal of work. Also, *Christina Tannehill* gave birth to a baby boy on June 14th. Hayden was born two months premature, both mother and baby are doing great!

Jim Looper at Sheldon HS, welcomed his new baby girl, Katie Rose in October. Some other interesting news, teacher *Matt Kempen*, was a state officer for the Texas Association.

Bryan Dodson from Galt HS was married in October. Did you know that Galt has three past state and one national officer in their department? *Dane White*, *Mandy Gardner*, and *Bryan Dodson* all

served as state officers and Dane as a national officer.

Ponderosa HS would like to welcome Paige Fletcher to their department family, born to *Britta Fletcher* last spring. Their department is also taking on three new breeding projects at their school farm. New arrivals to come soon will be Boer goat kids, crossbred piglets, and Suffolk lambs which students market and manage through their new ag business class.

Cosumnes River College was awarded the Outstanding Small Community College Program as well as the Overall Outstanding Community College Program. Congratulations to Howard Lewis, Dave Andrews and Chris Impinna.

Delta-Cal Section

Argonaut High School will be hosting their Second Annual AHS Gold Rush Classic Steer and Heifer Jackpot Show on April 4th at the Amador Country Fairgrounds. This is a low key educational event to give students experience in working with cattle in and out of the show ring. Contact Ryan Mendosa for more information.

Escalon HS has had a successful start to this school year. At the National Agriscience Competition they brought home national winners in the Advanced Individual Zoology Division and the Advanced Team Zoology Division.

Lodi HS would like to congratulate *Brent Newport* for receiving his Honorary American Farmer this year in Indiana. *Tracy HS* also brought home a National Proficiency Winner in the Diversified Crop Production division.

Bret Harte HS has a new addition to their ag family, *Carrie Phillips* welcomed a beautiful baby boy!

Manteca Unified along with Ripon, Tracy and Escalon High Schools worked with the Ag Venture program in hosting 3,800 third graders at the Manteca school farm in October. There were over 140 presenters and 300 FFA students who did a great job informing the students on different agriculture crops, animal science projects, harvesting machinery and sheep shearing. A big thank you to all the students and teachers who were involved! Congratulations to *Pat Ariaz* for his

Teacher of Excellence Award he received at the CATA Banquet.

Stanislaus-Tuolumne Section

Enochs HS has very busy ag teachers. Mike Brecht climbed Mt. Whitney this summer and he has plans to climb a mountain in Africa over Christmas vacation. *Michele Larsen* recently got engaged to *Mike Schilperoort* from Downey HS. They will be getting married next June. Congratulations to you both! *Katy Cardoza*, formerly Hoag, was married this past June to a former FFA member and American Degree recipient from Gustine FFA. Katy also is new to the Enochs department this year.

Tri Rivers Section

Congratulations to *Pitman HS* for winning the Outstanding 2-3 Person Secondary Program at this years CATA Banquet and also to *Troy Gravatt* for his Teacher of Excellence Award.

Waterford HS is another program that continues to grow and has added a new teacher, *Megan Silva*, making it a two person department.

Newman FFA is ecstatic about their brand new, young and energetic teacher, *Karling Skoglund* from Chico State. She brings a fresh outlook on agriculture education, CDE's and teaching methods to their department. Karling worked hard as a McKinleyville FFA member, raising swine and sheep to earn her American Degree. Her personal skills will be an asset to Newman FFA's new livestock judging team. Newman is also excited to have the plans finished and funds raised for their 2-acre school farm that should begin construction in early 2009. Former ag teacher turned principal, *Joe Terra*, was the homecoming grand marshal and rode in the parade on his John Deere Tractor.

Merced-Mariposa Section

At *Merced College* there are no newlyweds or pregnancies around the Ag Division. However, congratulations to Steve and Brook Bell as they added to their staff with the birth of little Rogan, a bouncing little boy. AggieFest 2008 was a great success. A big "thank you" to all who participated/donated to the cause. A good time was had by all who came out for suds and sausage. The livestock show team under the supervision of Jaime Farao did well at the

Big Fresno Fair bringing home lots of ribbons and hardware. Kim Donaher and Darol Fishman accompanied seven students on Halloween night to the statewide CAL Conference held at Wonder Valley outside of Fresno. Darol won the costume contest wearing the now famous Hot Dog Suit....we're sure herdbook will be interesting. Interim Dean Jim Andersen has been busy learning the ropes of administration... the teachers are hoping he doesn't hang one of them once he gets it all figured out.

Danny Silva at LeGrand HS has a new baby, Cayla Elizabeth to add to his family and *Megan Schmitt* has joined the Merced HS department. *

San Joaquin Region News

By Shay Williams-Hopper

The big news at *Chowchilla* is that they broke ground in September on a new agriculture building they are constructing. The new building will have an Ag Science Room, a Lecture Room, a 32-station computer lab, new office for the staff and a new shop. The contractors are on a 12 month contract so they are hoping to be able to move in at the end of the summer.

Golden West is off with a bang with the construction of a new poultry house at their new school farm. There are also plans for sheep and cattle facilities and an orchard with a variety of fruit trees.

Reedley FFA received a bequest of nearly \$180,000, from Leola Aalto who was a local farmer who liked to promote and help the community. So far, they have purchased a GMC Yukon, which seats 9 to help in getting two teams to competition. A new scholarship will be set up in her name for graduating seniors. Other funds will be used to purchase land for an operational farm for students' SAE programs in cereal crop production. New equipment will be purchased to update the school's facilities. About \$15,000 will be used to help pay for students to attend the National and State FFA conventions.

At *El Diamante*, they are very excited for Melissa DePaoli's recent engagement to Matt Watkins of Visalia. They are planning a July 2009 wedding. El Diamante also had their 4th annual FFA classic car & tractor show in October.

The San Joaquin Region would like to congratulate *Amanda Beals* of Porterville HS who was married in October.

Pershing FFA raised a 130+ pound

pumpkin at the school farm. Pershing took 18 FFA students to the Children's Hospital to show off the Great Pumpkin for the kids to touch and understand how it grew. The pumpkin was grown as a part of the horticulture project with a focus on community outreach.

Sam Rodriguez of Hanford was appointed to the Kings County Fair Board by the Governor, and *Lilly Pimentel* was selected as the Outstanding Teacher in Hanford Joint Unified School District.

Cindy Brown of Monache recently won a belt buckle in the Bakersfield Team Roping Contest. Congrats to Cindy!!

Exeter welcomes two new teachers! The two firecrackers are *Nicole Castle*, who completed her student teaching at Exeter two years ago, and *Joe Rosa*, a Chico State graduate. Nicole Castle replaced the veteran Janice Ede. Nicole taught at Porterville HS for the past couple of years. Joe replaced Kelly Deftereos. *Dan Crookham* became the department head (again), and *Shelly Elam* is the new FFA advisor.

Kingsburg is very proud to announce Andre Alves as the National Proficiency Award winner in the area of Agriculture Mechanics Design & Fabrication! This is the first National Proficiency Award winner from Kingsburg in over 20 years.

Firebaugh's Ag Department would like to congratulate *Heather Opfergelt* on the birth of her baby girl! The department has been busy with activities such as mud volleyball, hosting an Opening & Closing Contest, a canned food drive, a coat drive, a toy drive, and much more!

The Tulare Ag Department would like to welcome their two newest members, *Chris McKenna* and *Jennifer Souza*. Chris McKenna is a CSU, Fresno graduate hired to replace Angela Mayfield. Jennifer Souza comes to them from the College of Sequoias as a replacement teacher for Max Corbett. Jennifer has been a wonderful addition to their department during this difficult transitional period. On behalf of the Tulare Agriculture Department, they would like to thank each and every one of you for all of your support, donations, cards, prayers and phone calls during the last few months. Their department truly appreciates all of the support the ag teaching community has shown to them in this difficult time. Max Corbett was a friend, father, and mentor to thousands of students, teachers, and CATA members. He will be greatly missed. *

Southern Region News

By Rob Norwood

The Southern Region is off to a great start this year beginning with our Fall CATA Regional In-service at the Northwoods Resort in Big Bear. All summer long it has been down-right, record-setting hot in the southland and the promise of cool mountain air may have caused attendance at the inservice sessions to set new regional records as well as record attendance at the business session. Jack Havens, Robin Grundmeyer, and I feel it has more to do with the professionalism of our region's members, rather than the weather. I'm sure they would all agree.

High Desert Section

Apple Valley received a 1-D Grant to expand animal facilities on campus. They will begin construction in February. New welding teacher, Casey Penfold, brought a new level of excitement to the shop with new equipment, projects and powder coating. The old greenhouse has been refurbished and will allow plant classes to again be taught at Apple Valley.

Palmdale's applied ag mechanics course is now aligned with algebra. They are giving science a run for their money. Due to recent student fatalities the xeriscape sponsored by Palmdale Water District will now include an "Angel Corner."

Antelope Valley's llama show team cleaned pens and entered two landscapes at the Antelope Valley Fair to help raise funds to attend the ALSA Regional Finals in Sonoma. Facilities are coming along with new ultrasound equipment, school sheep flock and electricity to the floral refrigeration unit.

At *Lucerne Valley* they are moving into a newly remodeled 3,000 square foot shop. The animal science land lab is currently being remodeled.

Littlerock students helped with the flowers for a wedding over the summer. They are raising baby trees and their ag mechanics class is building great furniture. They'll take your order today!

Imperial Section

Imperial HS climbed to over 800 on its API score and the school's numbers have grown considerably more than projected.

Brawley HS finished their 2-kilowatt solar panel project this summer. The power from this will run the electrical needs for the greenhouse.

Calexico HS had over 350 members at their first FFA meeting. They just had their

first litter of piglets at the school farm. Students are also off to a quick start in their newly added Agriculture Communication, Leadership and Technology course that starts an hour early each morning.

Holtville HS officer team has now grown to nine members. This year's officer retreat was at La Jolla Shores.

Calipatria HS is off and running – they are offering five agriculture classes, up from one the year before. The school API is at 751 and shooting for an 800!

Southwest HS in El Centro hosted the Sectional Leadership Conference and Basketball Tournament with over 250 students attending. All classes are full to capacity with an overloaded agriculture science class and shop class. Southwest was the first chapter to complete the R2 Report, graduate follow up and FFA Roster.

San Pasqual Valley HS in Winterhaven has about half of this year's student body enrolled in agricultural education. Their 19th Annual Homecoming BBQ was a success serving over 400 dinners with a profit of \$1,800.

Palo Verde HS in Blythe is off and running with 133 students and 103 livestock projects. The new school stadium is finished and the maintenance department has started to relocate the greenhouse and is installing a new waterline from the irrigation pump to the crop science lab.

Orange Section

Covina welcomes their new teacher, Virginia Dwyer. The Dairy Council mobile classroom numbers are up with involvement in dairy projects.

Buena Park is working on an "Ag is for Everybody" DVD. The community is helping to redevelop the chicken coops.

Sunny Hills hosted a "Back to Ag" Night with over 350 people. It is reported that Mary Kerr is loving the OC. KC Brown had a baby girl and is now teaching floral at Fullerton.

Sonora hired a new full time teacher, Adeline Quintana. Their numbers are higher than they have ever been in the school's history.

Patty Williams is back at *Orange HS*.

San Diego Section

Fallbrook has a new greenhouse in the construction stage and a new class - Art & History of Floral Design

El Capitan reports that last year's entire hay crop is sold, they will use the proceeds to paint the barn. A new farrowing house is finished and bred gilts were purchased.

San Marcos FFA was pleased to have the following recognition at SD County Fair

this past summer: two finalists in the novice master showmanship; 1st place barn/educational presentation in swine, lamb, and overall; and photos and compliments given by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Ed Schafer regarding the hydroponics display by San Marcos in the small landscape division of the Flower & Garden Show. Staff and students will be busy planning and designing the new agriculture/career technical education center to be built on the current site.

Warner Springs is planting grapevines in the vineyard, repairing fences at the farm, and cleaning up the swine unit in preparation for the opening of their outdoor education program.

El Camino is excited to be going to Indy to get an Honorary American Degree. (Way to go Terry Leach!). Their numbers are up in animal production.

At *Vista*, they are very proud to have three American Degrees this year! Enrollment is up and they have a new greenhouse in the construction stage.

At *Orange Glenn*, the gardens are going in nicely and they are looking forward to installing a new greenhouse.

San Pasqual's greenhouse was full of Christmas poinsettias and their fall gardens are thriving.

Escondido held their pumpkin festival-steak fry while celebrating their 80th year anniversary of agriculture at their school.

Riverside Section

Martin Luther King FFA worked hard promoting the chapter's rush week and completing their chapter website.

Norte Vista is proud to welcome back Kelsey Finnicum to the staff. They are excited about the new ag mechanics program started this year.

At *Elsinore*, they are most proud that their enrollment doubled this year! They've been busy welcoming new babies to the school farm.

San Jacinto has a new ag truck on order. They hosted a kiss the pig contest at their homecoming pep rally.

La Sierra is in the process of revamping the ag facility to include a 30-tree diversified fruit orchard and new tables in the greenhouse. They will be going to SoCal Fair for the first time in 10 years with turkeys (no, not the student kind!).

Norco is currently under construction as all the ag rooms are being remodeled.

The *Hemet* program started construction in October to include a new small engine/welding shop, greenhouse, shade house, and an access road to the facility.

West Valley is proud to welcome Megan Adams from Colorado as the new ag teacher.

Indio is proud to welcome a fourth teacher, Kami Johnston, to their staff. Over 125 attended their parent/student meeting for the Date Festival!

Heritage welcomed their new ag teacher, Aaron Nering, to the program this year. They just installed a new floral walk-in and had the farm released from construction. Over 400 members attended the annual Greenhand Dinner.

Hamilton-Anza is working hard to get back on track. They just installed a new greenhouse and are working on getting the water and electricity hooked up.

At *Jurupa Valley*, Jeff Rhiner developed a blood clot in his leg and was home on doctor's orders to stay off his feet. Jeff was bored to death but returned back to school after a week.

For the first time, *Rubidoux* did not have to move any classrooms from one school site to another. Their ag chemistry class is up and running and they have articulated three ag courses with Mt. SAC.

At *Perris*, Amanda and Maria both got married in July. The program is getting a new livestock barn installed and enrollment has increased to 420. *

South Coast Region News
By John Avila

Los Angeles Section

Canoga Park is off to a fresh start with two new teachers, Carina Ramirez and Sarah Ishida. Both also happen to be graduates of Canoga Park, which makes it more exciting.

Santa Barbara Section

Mike Clifford's classes at *Lompoc* are loving the ducklings they incubated and are using for a feed trial in vet science. Gretchen Flaherty will be leaving at the end of the year to have her third child. The department is driving a new truck and getting familiar with using the Qwizdoms they just purchased.

Arroyo Grande had an excellent start with a successful beach chapter meeting. The chapter also participated in the 71st annual Arroyo Grande Harvest Festival by preparing a float and an information booth.

Santa Maria would like to welcome student teacher Travis Wyrick. Twelve boys and twelve girls from their chapter were picked for their annual trip to the Hungry Valley Recreational Park in Gorman for an ATV certification training

course and a wildlife/biology workshop. Fun was had by all students, even those that did not stay upright on the ATV's.

Monterey Bay Section

King City is happy to have Natalia Bahena as a student teacher and are enjoying her energy and expertise in ornamental horticulture added to the department. Debbie Benson is looking forward to completing the online classes to get the clear CLAD credential. Jessica Wright is busy planning her summer 2009 wedding. Natalia has two future FFA members who are excited about pigs and chickens with her daughter recently winning the pee wee pig showmanship at the San Benito Fair and her son placing 4th.

Everett Alvarez just received word that they will serve as a "Mentor Academy" to new academies for the next two years.

Soquel FFA started the year off with a bang, first at the Santa Cruz County Fair with over 30 members creating a blue ribbon feature booth and 25 members participating in their best ever corsage demonstration and community outreach. The ag science winter gardens are in the ground with plans to share their bounty with the Grey Bears.

North Salinas FFA is doing well with its new three person department. The first chapter meeting saw a turnout of nearly triple that of previous years.

Santa Clara Section

Campbell FFA's ag mechanics program has completed a trailer and power coating project, as well as replacing all waterers in the beef and sheep units.

At *Sobrato HS* in Morgan Hill their enrollment is higher than ever with over 300 students in the program. Last year they finished an extension to their barn and purchased a new greenhouse which they are in the process of building. They are prospectively looking to hire a full time ag mechanics teacher in January.

Live Oak HS is in the process of building a new greenhouse and the school farm will house some of the schools new solar panels on the tops of the barns.

The students at *Hollister FFA* are very excited about having a student teacher, Miss. Anderson from Cal Poly, and they have been keeping her extremely busy. They are still waiting for reports to be approved from the state to start their new farm.

At *Gilroy FFA* the numbers are high with 165 students in a single person department. They opened their farm up to the community for their Harvest Celebration which was a great success. They are gear-

ing up for a busy spring with all their ewes and does bred.

Ventura Section

Camarillo's D-1 Grant was put to good use building a new swine unit and two teaching greenhouses.

This holiday season *Carpinteria FFA* grew and sold over 500 poinsettias in their greenhouse. Customers were very excited to see where their plants were grown and are looking forward to purchasing their tulips for Valentine's Day. If you had the chance to see the Rose Parade, Bobbi Roderick supervised the installation of the flowers on the Alaskan float. The ag mechanics tractor restoration program is going stronger than ever. The students have restored and sold five tractors this school year. Currently, they are working on their very first tractor-pull tractor.

Santa Paula FFA conducted a livestock demonstration (petting zoo) every weekend in October at the local pumpkin patch sponsored by the Rotary Club. This activity generated about \$4,000 for their chapter.

Ventura FFA has over 3,000 ornamental plants in full production year round due to the unique climate in Southern California. The chapter has completed six gardens on campus and the garden stage designed for all assemblies uses plants grown by the FFA students. They received 1st place in the Ventura County Fair Landscaping competition, with over 75 gardens in the competition. *

Superior Region News By Tamsen DeForest & Ryan Bentz

The Intermountain Section Administrators Night was held in September at the Brass Rail in Alturas. The meeting consisted of a wonderful Basque meal, awards, and an agriculture identification contest.

The McArthur FFA chapter received the Star Program award. Liz Ammon, of the Susanville chapter was recognized as the Star Young Teacher for the section. The Speak out for Agriculture award was given to the Westwood FFA chapter and Henry Bietz, of Westwood, was honored as the Star Administrator for the section. Along with the awards and dinner, the administrators, spouses, and secretaries who attended the meeting took part in an identification contest similar to some of the Career Development Events that the students compete in. They identified

around thirty objects including cuts of beef and pork, flowers, weeds, shop tools, and breeds of cattle and pigs.

Another recent event attended by most of the chapters in the Intermountain Section was the 12th Annual Surprise Valley FFA Field Day. West Valley FFA took 1st in Advanced and Novice Welding. Susanville FFA earned 1st in Advanced Land Judging and Big Valley placed 1st in Novice Land Judging. In Advanced Livestock Judging, Big Valley was 1st and in Novice Livestock Judging Westwood FFA was 1st.

Hamilton City FFA members teamed up to provide a day of fun for local students. Kindergarten and first grade students from Hamilton Elementary arrived with a smile as they visited the school farm to pick out a pumpkin of their choice. Other activities included a petting zoo, story time, face painting, coloring, snack, and a bounce house which was the favorite of the day. This past year, agriculture students joined with River Partners to grow 5,000 oak trees for a restoration project and the final trees were just shipped out this fall.

Maxwell FFA has been busy! At the beginning of October an FFA Ice Cream Social was held for members and parents. Maxwell showcased its many events, teams and activities for the parents to see, followed by banana splits and ice cream sundaes. Maxwell Livestock Judging team competed at the Shasta College Field Day and placed 2nd High Team with Kelsey McKinley placing 1st high individual. On November 8, Maxwell FFA held their annual Pheasant Hunter's Breakfast Fundraiser. FFA members were there bright and early to start cooking pancakes, sausage and eggs. It was a great success! On November 16, Maxwell FFA had a night at the Kings game. GO Kings!

Foothill HS is beginning the process of constructing a school farm on campus. The farm will include a fully functional livestock and horticulture unit as well as a student run store where FFA members can sell plant and agriculture mechanic products. In the past two years the staff and students completely remodeled the shop and had a 30'x40' awning constructed, doubling the amount of useable shop space. Students are also experiencing some success outside of the classroom. The students placed 1st in the vet science competition and agriculture bowl at the Shasta College field day and won both the novice and advanced opening and closing contest for the Shasta Section. Luke and Becky Browning also welcomed their new daughter Taylor on November 6, 2008. Congratulations! *