
❖ Aggie Annex ❖

May 2009

Southern Region News

By Rob Norwood

The Southern Region is excited to be hosting the conference banquet this year. We are busy planning out the details and preparing a fantastic banquet, with Southern Region style.

Meanwhile the Southern Region folks have been quite busy since September with standard fall and winter activities like Greenhand and Chapter Degree ceremonies, back to school FFA/Ag Department open houses, volley ball tournaments, Sectional Leadership conferences, Greenhand conferences, and MFE & ALA conferences. Add to that, chapter meetings, the San Diego Section Field Day, Norte Vista Field Day, Warner Springs Field Day, the Southern California Fair, the Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival, Eastern San Diego County Junior Fair, the California Mid-Winter Fair, and the list just keeps going on.

The recently passed state budget has started to take its toll on ag programs and teachers in the Southern Region. Many new and veteran teachers have received RIF notices and we are hearing of more programs that are fighting hard to maintain their existence. This has become one of those times where we can't ignore our Regional Supervisor's admonition to keep our Ag Advisory Committees strong and viable.

San Diego Section

Other news around the region includes the *El Capitan and Mountain Empire FFA Chapters* chartered a bus that allowed students to attend the World Ag Expo in February, thanks to community member Keith Anderson. The students enjoyed an educational and successful field trip to the farm show at a nominal cost due to the generosity of their sponsor. The two chapters also just successfully finished work for the fundraising BBQ and auction for the Eastern San Diego County Junior Fair. Through this fundraising event, all monies raised are utilized to operate the fair in May. The BBQ and auction earned over \$25,000 for the fair.

Fallbrook had a red-ribbon-cutting ceremony to dedicate their new greenhouse

and to recognize horticulture industry members who have contributed to the horticulture program at Fallbrook as well as donations to the greenhouse fundraiser. And.....George Kreutz was recognized for his thirty-one years as a horticulture teacher; fifteen years in the San Diego Section, eight years in the Riverside Section, three years in the Citrus Section, three years in the LA Section, two years in the Sacramento Section, and he did his student teaching in the Southwest Section. If he hadn't been laid off twice from ag teaching for a total of five years, he would have had thirty-six years in the biz! His last FFA assignment will be the Del Mar Fair Landscape, CATA Summer Conference, and then George and his wife are off to Hawaii.

Riverside Section

The *San Jacinto FFA* is still growing and they are very excited about their brand new school truck! They are also still trying to expand the horticulture program on campus and have had several notable accomplishments at this year's Indio Fair! Congratulations to their dedicated students for winning the Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion lambs, 1st place in both novice and advanced FFA sheep showmanship, and also 1st place for pen of three lambs. Two of their novice FFA students also made it to the final round of swine showmanship, and one of their juniors was awarded a \$500 Magic Carpet Scholarship. They also had three kids earn money for their educational displays. Considering they do not have a school farm and this is only the second year that San Jac is back, this is all a huge accomplishment! The kids worked very hard and deserve the recognition for their outstanding display of leadership, citizenship and exemplary showmanship. Yeah, San Jacinto FFA!

Hertiage FFA will be hosting a Poultry Education Day and Lawn Show on May 30. Contact Chris Maddalena for more information.

At *Jurupa Valley* and *Rubidoux* they have been busy convincing the school board that two programs are better than one. It took two school board meetings, late hours commuting from Indio Fair to

board meetings, countless letters, phone calls, speeches from students, parents, community members, and ag teachers, and a lot of budget juggling, but they dodged the bullet for next year. They all hope they don't have to go through this again. In the midst of it all they had a great fair.

Jurupa Valley HS is excited to celebrate its 20th year as an FFA chapter this year. How time flies when you are having so much fun!

Orange Section

After a year long battle, we are pleased to announce that the *Chino HS* ag program will remain open. Thanks to amazing community support and student presentations, the board voted in February to keep the program open for a minimum of three years. They are all very excited and have already begun improvements at the school farm which has been virtually untouched over the past year. Laurie McCormick is expecting again in May, hopefully she makes it through San Bernardino County Fair.

Imperial Section

At *Southwest HS* in El Centro they finished up a very productive California Mid-winter Fair in March. Supreme Champion swine, FFA Grand Champion Lamb, Grand Champion Dairy Heifer, and six out of the thirteen in Round Robin were from *El Centro FFA*.

On Presidents weekend, David Pritchard and his wife decided to do a little R&R in the mountains before the fair and while going up Mountain Springs Grade in a wind storm part of their siding blew off, so they had to stop and duct tape up the hole. After finding out how much it cost to repair, he bought a new trailer and took that to the fair. Mike Campbell from *Imperial* enjoyed David's new digs when he was lucky enough to spend two nights in it and not have to drive home.

A fantastic agriculture mechanics exhibit at the fair was the product of *Holtville HS*, *Calexico HS*, and *Southwest HS*. The ag mechanics sweepstakes went home with Calexico HS. *Imperial Valley College* had its first field day this year after being dormant for almost 20 years. There was a large turn out for being their first in quite a while.

Central Region News

By JessaLee Goehring

The Central Region is well into the second half of the year and has been quite busy with spring field days and the upcoming anticipation of the CATA Summer Conference. We hope you enjoy reading about our busy year, exciting news and additions to our growing agriculture family!

Weston Ranch HS has a new addition to their agriculture department! Tristyn Silva and her husband Bret welcomed their new bundle of joy, Trenton Joseph Silva on February 18. He was 7 pounds, 4 ounces and 20 inches long. Also, Amanda Koslow is recently engaged to Mario Martinez and they are planning a wedding in March 2010. Congratulations to you both! The agriculture department has been doing well. February means lots of flowers for the floral class. They sold numerous arrangements to teachers and students on campus, and even a local business. The welding classes have been busy making and selling horseshoe and BBQ projects on campus and to the local community.

Lodi HS would like to congratulate Rebecca Lima on her recent engagement to Mel Freeman. The two plan to wed this October!

Lathrop HS is going strong! They have their first set of officers and almost sixty students received their Greenhand Degrees this past December. They are looking forward to a full spring where they can compete for the first time in contests and expose their students to new and exciting adventures. They hosted a Chapter Exchange at Strike Out, their local bowling alley and in the spring will host a softball tournament for all Manteca schools. Their goal is to have all of the students in Manteca come together and be proud they are in the FFA. They are looking forward to their first county fair in June and have quite a few students taking animal projects, plus every student will have a project of some kind at the fair. Since the school only has freshman and sophomores, there is much room to grow and expand. The next few years will be filled with exciting experiences as their students grow into a program they want to create and shape.

Manteca Unified School District has much to be proud of! Their Montadale Sheep Project has been asked by the California State Fair to be this year's Showcase. They are very proud of this honor to showcase their school district project of 13 years!

Through their Montadale Sheep project, they average at least five State Degree Recipients a year. The showcase will have a special place in the barn with a big public display of their school farm. Projects range from pumpkin patches, vineyards, alfalfa fields, trees and the big part they play in the San Joaquin County Ag Venture Program that hosts over 3,500 third graders. Congratulations to Manteca Unified on this great honor!

Newman HS is having a fun and exciting year with giant leaps toward success. January was a very busy month, starting off with a dinner benefit for their school farm hosted by their Advisory Committee, followed by State Degree applications. They are proud to announce that nine of their members received their State Degree! Newman FFA also conducted two fundraisers; their annual crab feed which brought in \$5,000 profit and the annual SWAP meet that brought in \$3,000. They took 19 students to State Conference their biggest group ever! Good things are happening in Newman!

Congratulations to Holly Johnson at *Pioneer HS* and Donnie Whitworth at *Winters HS*, on their recent marriage on February 15 in Lake Tahoe! Donnie and Holly have made their home in Dixon where they raise club lambs! Word around Winters Ag Department is that Donnie has been in a great mood lately!

Krista Vannest - *Pitman HS* and her brother Brian Mortensen - *Ceres HS*, along with their spouses and parents, have been doing some traveling, or as they call it Vacat-showing! During their winter break they drove to Phoenix, Arizona to show their cattle at the Arizona National Livestock Show. Their family hobby is raising Shorthorn and Angus cattle at their farm in Modesto. They also love to travel and own a timeshare that has a beautiful golf resort 15 minutes from the Phoenix fairgrounds. Krista, Brian and Krista's husband, Daniel, all showed and remembered showing at the fair in their youth. Since they all began teaching, they have spent more time training their students how to show and they haven't had the opportunity to do it themselves. They were excited to earn Junior Calf Champion with their Shorthorn bull calf. This was a whole family project with everyone taking part in the cleaning, feeding and grooming. Four year old Taylor (Krista's daughter) grabbed a blower and helped dry off cattle after the show. Even her 18 month old son Carter got in on the action by car-

rying buckets and showsticks around. While they were there they ran into another California ag teacher, Scott Layne and his family who were there exhibiting. The trip gave them many fun memories and reminded them about the fun they have had while showing livestock. For them, raising and showing livestock is what got them interested in teaching agriculture. Sometimes you have to get back to your roots in order to grow more. They are all on board for another Vacat-show next year.

There are no new babies on the way, but *Merced College* does have three new trucks to add to their stable to update their Diesel Equipment Program. Some are calling one "bright pink" but Darol prefers to think of it as "safety purple.....sort of". The Annual Plant Sale was held on April 25. Students are getting geared up and ready to show at the Great Western show, which by the time you read this will already have passed, along with the anxiously awaited FFA Field Day. Lastly, Darol and Teresa Fishman are the proud parents of a new cat named Sid. Congratulations!

The *Sacramento Section* is crawling with baby news. Matt and Tracy Kempen welcomed Harper Louise into the world on April 24. Mandy Garner and husband James are expecting a baby boy in May. Amber McDowell and husband Michael will welcome their new addition in July.

Galt has been busy preparing for the opening of a second high school, Liberty Ranch which will open for the 2009-2010 school year. Mandy Garner and Mark Feuerbach are slated to open the agriculture program at the new school. Speaking of Mark, he is recuperating from his second hip replacement. He is ornery as ever and is back in the classroom along with a very big cane. Galt has also enjoyed the addition of a student teacher from Chico State this spring, her name is Jackie Ioimo.

North Coast Region News

By Lindsey Bugbee

Mendo-Lake Section

Anderson Valley FFA has recently had the farm manager position eliminated which is advisor, Beth Swehla's, summer employment. The program is receiving great student and community support, however the chapter is unsure how the summer will unfold.

Things are good in the *Ukiah FFA!* Currently two local businesses want the chapter to grow seedlings for them. Before

this can happen the chapter will be moving it's greenhouse again. The school is feeling stable for next year and is receiving no program cuts.

The *Upper Lake FFA* continues to have many firsts this year! The chapter has two State Degree recipients, a Regional Specialty Animal Proficiency winner, a member selected for the State FFA Band and another member selected to serve on the nominating committee. This is the fourth year of the agriculture program at Upper Lake. This year will boast the first program completers from Upper Lake!

In the *Kelseyville FFA Chapter* things are great. Currently the chapter is working on placing a new roof on the greenhouse, hopefully in time to house plants this year! The agriculture metal shop is doing great!

Middletown FFA has four State Degree recipients this year. The chapter also has several landscaping projects being completed on the farm. Life is good in Middletown!

Covelo FFA is getting ready for their Annual Field Day on Mother's Day. This year the school went to a six period day causing the agriculture department to lose a few numbers. The department is fighting the county takeover and ROP pilfering.

Sonoma Section

The *Santa Rosa FFA* is working on a summer fundraiser and gearing up for market animals. This year the chapter has seven state degrees and five state scholarship finalists! In addition, the chapter has four state proficiency finalists and the chapter was also proud to nominate our regional star administrator!

Petaluma FFA just wrapped up their annual dinner dance fundraiser. It was the most successful dinner dance in the history of the chapter! This year the chapter has three state degrees, one state scholarship finalist and one state proficiency finalist!

El Molino-Forestville has two state degrees this year, a state scholarship finalist and a state officer candidate, Victoria Hamilton. Next year all five agriculture courses being offered will be college preparatory.

The *St. Helena FFA* has eight state degrees this year. They held their annual FFA rib feed fundraiser which was a huge success. The chapter is proud to have it's first ever state officer candidate, Laura White. The on campus livestock facility is moving forward. This is the first time the St. Helena

Parli-Pro Team qualified for the state finals contest!

The *Healdsburg FFA* has four state degrees this year! Next year, the department is adding a section due to increased enrollment. Healdsburg is enjoying traveling in style in the new suburban donated by the Ag Boosters!

Elsie Allen recently met with architects and are moving forward on a modernization of their facility and agriculture mechanics shop.

Sonoma FFA is currently getting animals for the fair as livestock project numbers are increasing this year. The chapter has three state degree recipients and a state officer candidate, Trevor Smith!

Tomales FFA sent six students to the sectional speaking contest. Two of those students moved on to the regional level and both of those qualified for the state speaking finals! This year the chapter had two regional officer candidates. Tomales had a fantastic FFA week including a petting zoo, FFA rally, milk chug contest and egg toss. Recently, the chapter purchased two new MIG welders and two new plasma cutters!

Humboldt-Del Norte Section

The *McKinleyville FFA* had five state farmers this year. The chapter is working on an artichoke and potato garden. Members are planning a tri-tip drive through fundraiser. It looks like there will be at least three ag classes at the school next year, maintaining similar numbers to this year!

Fortuna FFA's teams are in full swing with over 50 students participating in a competitive event. This includes the addition of an agriculture mechanics team this year, coached by Mrs. Dale! The officer team is maintaining FFA meeting attendance with over 90 kids signed in to every meeting so far this year! Next year's regional secretary, Zach Jadro, is from the Fortuna Chapter! The department has over 250 students signed up for next year!

Del Norte FFA will have their first regional officer since Mrs. Williams came aboard two years ago. The department is proposing two new agriculture classes through ROP funding, while also fighting to keep their agriculture teacher employed.

The *Ferndale FFA* greenhouse is full of artichokes! The plants will be used in

Mr. Fales' garden and for students SAE's. Three students from Ferndale were slated for regional office and two students are running for State FFA Office. The school is excited to be facing no cuts in the agriculture department!

Arcata FFA has nine state farmers this year! This small, but mighty, chapter is taking 25 students to state convention this year! Between 40-60% of members attend each chapter meeting!

The *Eureka FFA* program has grown to 250 students! The chapter took a group of thirteen to the National FFA Convention this year and will have eighteen students at the State FFA Convention. The new greenhouse has been used extensively this year to improve student classroom lab interaction.

Superior Region News

By Ryan Bentz

On February 7, the *Arbuckle FFA* held its 11th Annual Field Day at Pierce High School. 650 FFA members from 52 schools competed in 16 different contests including four new contests, forestry, nursery and landscape, dairy products, and fruit trees. After competition everyone was treated to a delicious tri-tip lunch followed by the awards ceremony. All in all, the day was a complete success. Thanks to everyone who attended and special thanks to Reedley College, Lassen HS, Placer HS, Sutter HS, Colusa HS, and Mike Spiess for their help.

Butte College Agriculture/Environmental Sciences/Welding

Within the last two years they have hired two new FT faculty and three part-time faculty members in order to double the size of the welding program. Butte has built a new welding lab and increased the size of their original classroom. It is their second year with a maximum capacity of 60 students was met and exceeded at the same time. They turned away 56 students this fall, currently for the 2009-2010 school year they have 36 students on the waiting list.

In response to a critical need for qualified pipeline welders, program instructors are working with Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) to establish Butte College as PG&E's only outside welding training facility. This will provide our students with an employment path to a premier employer, and will provide a source of grant funding for further program development. Two other large power generation and petrochemical companies, TIMEC and ARB, are also in-

CATA Idea Show

Tuesday, June 23

Share your brilliant ideas and win cash prizes.

terested in our welding program as a training facility as well as a source of potential employees. Due to its timely expression of interest TIMEC is also incorporated into the federal grant proposal being prepared by PG&E.

Ten graduates were hired by PG&E this last August. This program is developing qualified welders that are entry level in the welding industry. Also with the partnership that has been developed with PG&E other companies from throughout the United States are interested in Butte College Welding Technology Program graduates.

Bruce Hicks spends most of his time teaching agriculture business and agriculture science courses. In early January of 2008 he was on a USAID funded project in West Africa (Ghana) teaching small farmers about integrated pest management, post harvesting handling, and marketing.

Bruce also teaches a couple sections of a course entitled "World Food and Hunger", in which he shares his experiences from traveling to developing countries. He is also involved with a CCOF certified organic lettuce project that is student managed, selling lettuce to local retailers and the Butte College Cafeteria. The focus is on cost-effective, locally produced, high quality lettuce.

Over the last two years the Heavy Equipment Operator Program has increased by forty percent. The program is impacted and they have had to turn away over ten students each year since making the change. Butte is currently working with business and industry to develop a certificate-endorsement program that will be designed and approved by the industry. Their one year certificate program currently serves forty-four students. The biggest challenges are keeping up with technology.

South Coast Region News

By John Avila

Carpinteria FFA is celebrating a very successful school year. Bobbi Roderick and John Avila just finished their ten years as ag teaching partners. Carpinteria FFA earned a \$130,000 grant to grow food for their cafeteria, which is great for student SAE's. Also, the chapter acquired 20 acres of farmland from their school district, which now brings the total to 34 acres.

Ventura FFA is finishing out the year with confidence! With next year's officer team already in training, they are preparing to enter the summer with a new found energy and focus. They are working on re-

establishing an Introduction to agriculture class for just 9th graders, to help meet the needs of our school and help keep the FFA strong. Thanks to the inspiration of their assistant principal Ms. Lorelle Dawes, they have written a grant for a new seedling house, and hope to install it over the summer. Andrew Moreno is extending their ROP Landscape program to include a Saturday program out at the Ventura County Juvenile Detention Center. Amy Lewandoski is working to ex-

and the course offerings of the agriculture program in a way that is in harmony with the administration. The ROP Floral Design students will be designing all the floral arrangements for Ventura HS and Foothill HS graduations. Individuals from the program also have two weddings, and one more floral design competition before the school year is out. Then it's off to the fair for landscape and livestock competitions!

Lompoc's ROP horticulture traveled to the botanical gardens in Santa Barbara and some local wineries.

Arroyo Grande has been working on the greenhouse and cleaning up the school farm so it is ready for livestock projects.

Nipomo parents raised \$20,000 this spring for chapter travel and scholarships.

Righetti had sixteen state farmers this year.

Santa Maria had twenty-three state degrees, seven sectional proficiency winners, six regional winners and a successful speaking contest.

Pioneer Valley is looking forward to apple tree grafting with Dr. Sabol and the oak tree project with Santa Barbara County Ag Department.

Santa Ynez is enjoying their new livestock barn and getting ready to graft their 1,000th apple tree with Dr. Sabol.

Soquel FFA is committed to their community service activities ranging from gleaned projects for Second Harvest to restoration and conservation projects that help protect their local watershed. The dog grooming and floral shops are hard at work marketing and managing their deservedly respected and successful businesses. Some members are ready to plant their spring gardens while others are preparing to create memorable boutonnieres, corsages and centerpieces for the formal while still others are receiving expert-

hands-on dog agility training experience right on the Soquel HS campus! The Santa Cruz Orchid Show and Sale was a tremendous success and Soquel FFA is grateful to the SC Orchid Society for working with us.

Greenfield is off to a great start for 2009 with over twenty students with animals for the Salinas Valley Fair.

Gonzales had a successful FFA week. Their activities included Greenhand initiation, FFA meeting, mud football, and their second annual FFA dance! Student partici-

ation dramatically increased for their events. They are looking forward to closing of the school year with a bang!

Everett Alvarez FFA has filled the barns with animals for

the Salinas Valley Fair. Ornamental horticulture projects are getting started and they are looking forward to having their plant sale the end of May. Dr. Sabol and his team of volunteers came to the school for the first time to teach students how to graft trees.

North Salinas has grown to three teachers. The new recruit came in at 8 lbs 20 inches and is named Rylyn McKensie Blodgett. Their district is solvent and all ag teachers are returning next year. They continue to offer ag science, ag mechanics, ag welding, horticulture, the school farm, and small animal services.

Soledad FFA, like every chapter has survived National FFA Week, which for them included an ice cream social, FFA movie night, chapter meeting, steak and egg staff appreciation breakfast, drive through chicken and tri-tip BBQ, and canned food drive. They have added a vegetable garden to their school farm and built raised beds.

Salinas High recently received a \$50,000 donation from a private organization. The money will go towards a new truck, trailer, science equipment, and shop equipment.

Watsonville Chapter continues to grow and expand with the award of a partnership academy grant and also with a newly established professional collaboration with UC Santa Cruz. They are in their second year of providing community internships for students with the local ag industry through an organization called CAFF (Community Alliance for Family Farms).

King City's FFA week was a success with a chicken BBQ raising \$2,000 and a meeting with over 150 members.

Proposed Curricular Code Changes

Due by June 1, 2009

For more information visit
[http://www.calagteachers.org/
 proposed_curricular_code_changes.htm](http://www.calagteachers.org/proposed_curricular_code_changes.htm)