

AGGIE ANNEX

OCTOBER 2015

“BECOMING BEARD’S BEST”

THE SECRET TRADITIONS OF THE SOUTH COAST REGION

BY ANNA BATES

Each region has their ‘best traditions’ that they ‘hold true’ when they come together at their regional CATA meetings three times a year. The six regions in the state of California are vastly different in many ways, but we all share a common passion for agricultural education.

For the past 14 years, I have only really known what happens in one region. At times, I have often wondered if other teachers know what happens at our meetings that makes us celebrate, laugh, clap, and even do a ‘Beard belly slap’ for one another. Silly moments of celebration by our fearless leader are always focused by serious recognition of the 98 teachers that are blessed to call the South Coast Region home. These secret traditions are really just moments that make the time we have together matter. To the other regions, if you have ever wanted to know... here is the top ten list of what makes our regional meetings meaningful.

1. **Personal goals** – We are asked to write down our personal goals and we also reflect upon the ones written from the year before secretly placed to us in our folders. Some goals take years to accomplish and keep us motivated to make each moment matter.
2. **Pork loin and secret sauce** – If you have never eaten a meal that is prepared by Greg Beard, you should know that he always brings pork loin. Don’t ever forget his secret sauce, make sure it’s warm, and don’t ask him for the recipe.
3. **New teacher introductions** – For years we have had the tradition to welcome our new and student teachers by some ceremonious activity. It provides the best balance between support and embarrassment to ease nerves and make them feel welcome.
4. **Babies and weddings** - If you get married or

have a baby in our region, be prepared to make the march down to the front of the room to receive Dollar Tree specials as gifts to celebrate life’s magical moments. Sometimes this includes a tiny bottle of champagne.

5. **“I Can. I Will. I Did”** – The sectional presidents and secretaries are given this award for their collaboration with one another at sectional meetings. It includes a certificate and a bottle of wine.
6. **Silver dollar coin-toss** – The state winners are ceremoniously flipped a silver dollar coin across the room. You must catch it or you take bad superstitions to nationals!
7. **Senior graduation ceremony** - Each senior lines up at our last meeting held during state conference and they have their moment to announce their chapter name as well as what their future plans are after graduation. It is a powerful and emotional moment we look forward to each year.
8. **Thank you treats** – Often times it comes in the form of bags of candy or boxes of chocolate, but always appreciated. If you are lucky enough you will get home baked lemon bars or chocolate chip cookies, worthy of county fair blue ribbons.
9. **Weather vanes** - An emotional moment for our retiring teachers is when they are presented their personalized weather vane at our June meeting. They in turn, share final thoughts as they say goodbye to our regional family.
10. **Beard’s Best** – One of most prestigious awards you can win, is the coveted silver pasta bowl perpetual plaque for providing the best meal at a sectional meeting. This year’s Beard’s Best recipients are pictured with their personalized chef hats. It is always followed by a detailed description of the meal served and how it was prepared. It’s all in the details. Congratulations to the crew at Righetti FFA

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for winning this year's award. Pictured: Guillermo Guerra, Miguel Guerra, and Jim English

Next time you are gathering for regional meetings, make sure to reflect upon what makes your region special. What is your Top Ten List? Enjoy the traditions you make and the meaningful relationships you create with the members of your profession. Laugh, clap, and stand out from the rest, while you work together at *Becoming your Best*.



CENTRAL REGION NEWS

BY BECKY FREEMAN

Greetings CATA from the Central Region! Another summer has come and gone and we are well into the 2015-2016 school year. We hope that you have had a fabulous summer filled with county fairs, officer retreats, and of course, the CATA Summer Conference.

Delta-Cal Section

Merrill F. West Agriculture Department is thrilled to have Kate Bigelow join their ag staff! Kate has been teaching for two years and has many years of experience raising livestock and attending judging shows. *Bret Harte HS* would like to welcome Todd Ingalls to their campus as a part-time shop teacher. Welcome Todd!! *Sierra HS* in Manteca is pleased to announce that Michael Patterson was hired as the new ag mechanics instructor. Mike has previously taught at Linden and Ceres High Schools. *Lodi HS* is excited to welcome Miranda Forse to their agriculture department. *Manteca HS* would like to welcome Heather Nolan and Amanda Martinez to their staff. *Lathrop HS* has hired Ben Garrett to teach ag mechanics. *East Union HS* is excited to announce the addition to their department with the hiring of Tristyn Silva, formerly an ag teacher at Manteca HS. East Union ag staff are looking forward to the expansion of the program and excited for what is to come.

The Delta-Cal Section is happy to welcome *Ripon Christian HS* into the ag education world! The teacher leading this program, Allison Hoover, is very excited to begin this new adventure with a very supportive community and administrative staff behind her. Allison is

from Pennsylvania and spent the last year in Ghana as a member of AgriCorps where she was teaching science and ag to middle school students. She looks forward to chartering the Ripon Christian FFA Chapter. Another new addition to the Delta-Cal section is *Delta Charter HS*, which is located in Tracy and has 287 students, 120 of those students are in ag. They offer ag biology, ag earth science, ag science, ag construction, ag leadership, and ornamental horticulture. They have a small school farm started that currently has a poultry barn with 35 laying hens and four ducks. There are 20 planter boxes utilized by the OH and ag science classes. In the first year the plan is to add a fruit tree orchard, grape vines, and a greenhouse. There are currently two ag teachers, Rex Mendonza and Anne Havens.

Escalon HS has hired Gypsy Stark to teach plant science, floral design, farm management, animal science, and ag business. Additionally, Dan Rovig has returned to ag education, and is now the full time ag mechanics teacher. Tiffany Trexler from *Bear Creek HS* would like to announce her engagement to her fiancé, Chris. They plan to wed in October of 2016. Congratulations Tiffany and Chris!! We would also like to congratulate Suzanne Perrin of *Bear Creek HS* on the birth of her beautiful baby boy, Dustin Stephen Hillan on June 21. Dustin waited to meet the world until the last day of fair!

Stanislaus-Tuolumne Section

Gregori HS would like to announce the hiring

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of Cal Poly graduate Brittany Hamrick. *Pitman HS* is excited to welcome new ag mechanics instructor, Luke Gocke. His witty humor and friendly banter has already won over the ladies in the department! We are all looking forward to celebrating his wedding in November.

Modesto Junior College Agriculture: MJC classes started August 24, with some notable changes to the program and a few pending board approval changes to come in the near future. Topping the list is the retirement of Mark Anglin after 18 years of service to MJC. He is not completely retired, he has accepted a position with the Central Region to guide and direct the recently awarded Central Region Agricultural Education Pathways Consortium Grant. The department wishes Mr. Anglin the best in retirement. With that, the YCCD Board confirmed Don Borges and his official start date as Dean began August 1. Dean Borges brings a variety of expertise to the department and looks to continue building on the traditions of MJC. Other changes confirmed include Julie Haynes, former vet tech program coordinator and adjunct faculty instructor has become Instructor of Agriculture Registered Vet Tech Program Faculty. These two changes have created two openings within the program that they have been actively recruiting replacements to fulfill these positions. Other programs continue to grow, Steve Amador has been developing irrigation classes and a degree program. Recently he was awarded the NSF Ag Irrigation Technology Grant to develop this program. This has also opened a new position as an Irrigation Instructional Lab Technician. A new recruitment

video was produced and will be available this fall on their website.

<http://www.mjc.edu/instruction/agens/>

Merced-Mariposa Section

Livingston HS would like to announce the hiring of Briana Vincent and Brianna Ellis.

We would like to thank those individuals who worked on the Central Region Grant over the last year. We look forward to building partnerships between employers, schools, and community colleges in order to better prepare students for the workplace of the future, and to improve student transition into post-secondary education, training, and employment. If you need to get in contact with Mark Anglin, please email him at manglin@calagteachers.org.

Many of our Central Region teachers were recognized this year at the CATA Summer Conference Banquet. Some of the highlights are: **Teacher of Excellence:** Sam Meredith (Atwater), Buzz Arnold (Mariposa), Kelly Larson (Hughson), and a special Teacher of Excellence award was presented to the family of Beth Knapp-Williams (Atwater). **Outstanding Young Teacher:** Natalie Borba (Atwater). The Central Region would also like to congratulate Natalie for being awarded the NAAE Region 1 Outstanding Young Teacher! Way to go Natalie!! Congratulations to all of our amazing programs and teachers!

Finally, we would like to wish all FFA members and Advisors the best of luck competing in various CDEs at the National FFA Convention.

SUPERIOR REGION NEWS

BY ANDREE EARLEY

From the Shasta District Fair to the Trinity Alps Wilderness, students from the *Anderson FFA* had a fulfilling summer. More than 75 Anderson FFA students exhibited their projects at the 2015 Shasta District Fair, in ag mechanics, beef, sheep, swine, meat goats, dairy goats, dairy cattle, rabbits and poultry. In July, ten Anderson FFA members, along with Advisor Katy Teixeira, travelled to Granite Lake to clear trails with the Back Country Horsemen Shasta-Trinity Unit. The group hiked five miles into the wilderness and for eight days learned

about the natural resources and surroundings of Granite Lake. The trip was planned for the purpose of improving a stretch of trail just above the lake where the under tread had been washed out by the paralleling creek. The students moved rock, gravel and soil by hand to build up the trail. In some places, they cleared back hillsides by 10-12 feet and raised the trail nearly 8 feet. The trip would not have been possible without a generous grant from the Back Country Horsemen, and without their support during the week with mules and

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horses to carry in tools and food for the student work crew. In August, the 2015-2016 Anderson FFA Officer Team headed out to Shasta Lake for the annual officer training camp. The students worked on planning out the calendar for the upcoming year and also participated in team building activities. Finally, on August 8-11, the top achieving Anderson FFA members based on activity points headed up to Carter Meadows Horse Camp for the annual point of awards trip. Students got to ride horses and mules up to the surrounding lakes and went fishing and hiking as well.

The *Del Oro HS* has embarked on its first year of their farm to fork pathway. They are working with the culinary program on this capstone class where students will work on the school farm to raise the produce and meat that will also be prepared and marketed by them and finally presented at various venues on campus each month. Del Oro is super excited to bring this venture to fruition and are thrilled that their students, administration, and community are showing great support. The program will begin by feeding the varsity football team at their regular Thursday night team dinner, move into brunch offerings to the student body, and hopefully reach the ultimate goal of serving lunch to the student body once a month! The Del Oro students will also spend a third of their time at local farm to fork restaurants and on a working farm as an intern, learning the in-depth workings of this up-and-coming local food movement. The school farm features projects that have been built and maintained by students for the past 18 years and is home to a livestock facility, orchard, gardens, chickens and a greenhouse that houses a large aquaponics growing system complete with blue gill and catfish! Del Oro believes this is a great way to reach across curriculum areas, offer unique classes, and experiences to their students, and use that wonderful CTE grant money!!

Renee Reed is now teaching at *Fall River HS*. She has been out of FFA and agriculture teaching for a couple of years but has joined the staff and worked over the summer with students and staff expanding McArthur FFA's program. She, her husband Kevin and three boys Colton, Colby, and Cal are a great addition to the Inter-

mountain area.

Fall has brought changes to the Agriculture and Natural Resources program at *Shasta College*. The long standing Dean, Eva Jimenez, has moved to head up the Economic Workforce Development Team at Shasta College. Michael Sloan from Peoria, Illinois joined Shasta College on August 10, as the new dean. He comes with 15 years experience as a Dean of Agricultural & Industrial Technologies at Illinois Central College. Currently in the process of hiring a new NR/Forestry Instructor, and the Logging Sports Team continues to grow and be recognized as a competitive team at the various regional contests. The 132nd Army National Guard, mobile bridge deployment unit stationed in Redding used the six acres heavy equipment operators training grounds at Shasta College for ten days in June. Working with Shasta College saved this group having to travel clear to Camp Roberts. Shasta College's Heavy Equipment Operators Certification program has started a commercial drivers licensing class in partnership with Sierra Pacific Industries Lumber Corporation. SPI donated a truck to the program as well as partnering the students with their drivers. A boar was donated by Ottenwalter Show Pigs from Colusa. The boar brings great genetics and adds to their ability to collect and sell semen. Ag Leadership students help manage the Medford Harvest Fair sale and jackpot show. In addition, Shasta College will show and sell several show quality steers and heifers. And, students are planting close to 2,000 poinsettia plugs for the annual Country Christmas Fair.

A lot has been going on at *Loyalton HS*. They have had two farm days with ten stations each including vermiculture, orchards, greenhouse, beef, sheep, swine, poultry, goat, horse and metal shop. Included, of course, was fresh popcorn and a hay ride! The first farm day was only Loyalton Elementary. The second farm day was Truckee, Tahoe City and Spanish speaking students from Kings Beach. Loyalton High School utilized all ag students, as well as others, for translators. 160 kids attended the first day then 140 the second day. Plumas-Sierra County Fair was very successful in August for Loyalton FFA members. They had ten sheep,

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seven pigs, one goat, two steers, one turkey, two horses, and a plethora of chickens and a ducks.

The *Orland FFA Chapter* has started the 2015-2016 year strong with enthusiastic members and advisors. The activities calendar has expanded to include 15 different community service opportunities for the members which will strengthen personal growth and career success. With permission from the Orland Chief of Police, the Volunteer Fire Department, and OHS administration the chapter will resurrect a long forgotten tradition of a bonfire during football season. The chapter members are jumping through all of the logistical hoops and look forward to reestablishing this tradition for future generations.

Maigen Matteucci is the new teacher at *Surprise Valley HS* in Cedarville.

Lincoln HS is expanding and has brought on an additional agricultural welding educator, Morgan Perry from Cal Poly, SLO. In addition to the expansion of the welding program, the department continues to expand the power mechanics pathway and has entered into a partnership with the American River College Diesel Technology Department. In the next year, Lincoln will also show additional facility improvements to the 405 acre farm site for the Center for Agriculture Technology and Environmental Sciences. This program and facility expansion has been made possible by the CCPT grant program.

Lassen HS welcomes Sandy Fortin as an ag teacher. Sandy received her credential student teaching with John Mendes and Joe DiGrazia in 1989 and then taught at Livingston HS for three years. Sandy has been involved in the strawberry nursery industry in Susanville and has three daughters all who have been involved in the FFA.

Central Valley FFA in Shasta Lake has hired their first fulltime ag instructor in eight years. They have also hired a part time position at *Mountain Lakes FFA*. Central Valley is teaching two new courses this year, ag biology and floral design, and because of these

factors enrollment is at capacity! They are also starting a new poultry enterprise; 30 red bourbon turkeys that will be student-raised projects and will be sold at their first farm dinner fundraiser in November. Central Valley also just approved and payment was sent on a brand new livestock trailer for the school farm facility. The purchase was granted from the McConnell Foundation money in the amount of \$12,000. Lastly, CV was granted \$2,700 from the Redding Rancheria Community Fund for the purchase of new horticulture supplies and materials.

It is an exciting time at *Red Bluff Agriculture Department*. They have grown from a three person department to four!! The school hired their Chico State student teacher, Devin Munro, at the end of last year. They are thrilled to have her enthusiastic, progressive approach to ag teaching as a part of the team! Red Bluff is also offering new courses this year: the new ag and soil chemistry course and a farm class.

Times are good at *Colusa HS*. This past spring they received extra Perkins funds that allowed them to purchase a new livestock trailer and popper, farm fencing, and new welding equipment for the shop. In last year's election the community passed a bond, and construction of the new 5,000 square foot barn facility will begin around November 1. Colusa Unified is also purchasing the ag department their own van for chapter transportation. Colusa County Fair was one for the record books. The Livestock Auction netted \$1.5 million, and Colusa FFA did a tremendous job. Colusa FFA members exhibited Champion and Reserve Market Hog, Supreme Champion and Reserve Supreme Champion Steer, Supreme Meat Goat, Champion and Reserve Doe, Reserve Champion Gilt and Champion Heifer. Members also won all the Junior Division Showmanship contests and the Overall Beef, Sheep and Swine Showman wore a Colusa FFA jacket. The three went on to compete in Master Showmanship and were 1st, 3rd and 4th. Colusa FFA was also proud to win Supreme Pen of Three Steers and Meat Goats as well as Champion Pen for the FFA Market Hogs.