

Golden Slate

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Articles should be e-mailed to cata@calagteachers.org.

If you cannot submit the article electronically, please be sure your material is typed, double-spaced. Advertisements, graphics and forms must be camera-ready. ☼

Sacramento Scene

To Outlast Tough Times: Meet Student Needs, Communicate with Key People

By Jim Aschwanden, CATA Executive Director

Over the past several editions, my comments in this column have been pretty critical of the performance of our elected officials in dealing with the budgetary and fiscal crisis that has gripped California for the past several years. The annual state budget "dance" has taken on the aura of a carnival sideshow, complete with clowns, fakers and charlatans behaving as if the snake oil they churn out is really going to cure our ills. As a result, we now have nation-leading unemployment, record numbers of businesses leaving the state, and public schools experiencing the biggest "pink slip" avalanche in modern history.

My real frustration is that so many of the folks responsible for getting us into this mess don't seem particularly concerned about the real impact the havoc that they have helped create is having on people's everyday lives.

Business as Usual

In Sacramento right now, it's pretty much business as usual. Committees are meeting, legislators are holding fundraisers in anticipation of this November's election, Career Technical Education (CTE) bills are being whacked by the Education Coalition — you know the drill, same old, same old.

Everyone seems to be waiting for the release of the May Budget Revise, which typically

comes out in the middle of May. We are hearing that revenues are up slightly compared to last year, mostly in response to the temporary tax increase passed as part of the last budget "deal." Whether this bump is enough to stave off the full impact of the layoff notices and other draconian cuts proposed for education remains to be seen. In the meantime, the sideshow continues.

Threats to Funding

We are seeing ongoing threats to CTE funding, including proposals to grant total "flexibility" to districts on the use of Agricultural Incentive

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Officers' Corner

Bits and Pieces

By Larry Wright, CATA President

The title is just my way of saying that I have several things on my mind and I would like to just share those thoughts with you. The title also brings to mind my dad; he will be 92 on May 1, 2010. He used those words when people asked him, "Eldon what are you doing?" He would say, "Aw, just bits and pieces."

Family is, and has always been, important to me.... My family includes two brothers and a sister, but I have come to see the brothers and sisters I have in CATA as part of that family.

Will Rogers, one of my heroes, said, "If you want to be successful, it's just this simple. Know what you are doing. Love what you are doing. And believe in what you are doing."

I think that is what all of the CATA family is about. It is time for those of us who are nearing the end of our career to "tag our replacement." We all need to encourage those young people who we believe would make an outstanding agricul-

ture teacher to become an agriculture teacher.

Conference Benefits

In the October 2009 *GOLDEN SLATE* I wrote about the Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) conference in which I had the great pleasure of being a part. Take the time to get involved with what goes on around your community and area. Look for things that will be good for your peace of mind and the future of the young people you teach. I hope that the CTSO conference will be a continuing event that we all can take advantage of.

Jake Dunn wrote about the Delta Experience and how that conference provided the time

to look inside yourself, and your educational philosophies. I was a part of the original Delta and got so much out of the experience that I think I became a better, more complete teacher. Delta is a way to sharpen your skills and provide tools to engage your students. Just Do It!

New Curriculum Tool

I want to thank Angela Mayfield and all those nameless people who had anything to do with the Agriculture Biology and Earth Science Curriculum. I am a direct beneficiary of that new curriculum. I would encourage all of you to go online at www.calaged.org and check it out. I promise you

that this curriculum will provide fundamental labs and aid in your classroom teaching.

California State University, Fresno, with the funding by a grant from the California Department of Education made this all possible. The curriculum is a tool that we can add to our tool belts and help our students to "learn by doing."

Advisory Committee

Do you have an advisory committee? You need to make sure that you do and use that group to assist you in the operation of the agriculture department. They will provide you with the necessary community connection and will assist you in the development or revision of the program standards.

I have heard a number of times from various people that the agriculture program is the community's program and not the school's, teacher's or the district's. Put these community

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Sacramento Scene

To Outlast Tough Times: Meet Student Needs, Communicate with Key People

(Continued from page 1)

Grant funds. I have already met with key legislative leaders, and will continue to work to ensure that these funds are used for their intended purpose.

As we move forward toward a budget "deal," I'll keep you posted if we need to get our supporters to contact our elected officials. In the meantime, it is absolutely vital that you keep your Advisory Committees, booster organizations, parents, administrators and others informed about the positive things happening in your program, and that you continue to do all you can to involve as many students in those activities as possible.

Positive Impacts

We need to understand that

these are unprecedented and dangerous times, but much of what will keep our programs strong is what has kept us strong for over 80 years — caring and dedicated teachers working with motivated, enthusiastic students in a way that positively impacts their lives, families and communities.

We will outlast these tough times if we continue to meet the needs of our students, work with our supporters in the agriculture industry, and keep our administrators, school board members and other key stakeholders informed and supportive of the good things we do. Keep your chin up and keep moving forward, one step at a time!

Besides the ongoing legisla-

tive activities, we are also busy planning for our upcoming CATA Summer Conference in San Luis Obispo and looking forward to seeing all of you at Cal Poly in June. We have some exciting speakers lined up, as well as some in-service and professional development activities and programs that should be of interest to you.

If you haven't yet registered for conference or made your hotel reservations, take a few moments to get that done. Advance reservations make life much easier for both you and Kerry, and we appreciate your cooperation in getting those materials completed in a timely manner.

Have a great spring. See you in SLO! ☼

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Officers' Corner

Student Activities... An Ag Program Tradition

By Darol Fishman, CATA President-Elect

One of my favorite quotes of all time belongs to Mark Twain: "Don't let school get in the way of your education." There is some relevance to this statement and we as educators can take it one step further by adding the words "the classroom" to it.

Many of the life and job skills we try to teach or expose our students to take place *outside* the regular classroom setting regardless of the level of the institution. A school's agriculture staff, be it high school or community college or CSU/UC, is dedicated to making these activities happen.

It doesn't matter if it's FFA or college club activities... they are as important as the everyday teachings in the formal classroom, if not more so. There are many students whose motivation to do well in school is the "other things" that happen outside of the regular classroom setting. With that said — and some who are reading this know I *loved* my college career — you are probably imagining a beer-swilling John Belushi from the movie *Animal House*... please read on.

Future Farmers of America

The FFA... Future Farmers of America to us old skool dudes... is a staple on many high school campuses with many activities planned by and for agriculture students at school, and in the community.

FFA has been active since 1928 with many former members owing success within the community of agriculture in your town, county, state and nation to activity and leadership in the FFA. Just look at our current National President Levi Randolph... WOW.

This organization is responsible for getting many of our students involved in those special out-of-classroom times that help them grow socially. They might start by planning and organizing the monthly meetings. Or maybe they coordinate social activities such as bowling nights, ski trips or farm days to get our students out and about to meet others with the same interests.

And the driving force behind all of it is you the adviser, whether or not you have the title after your name in the directory. We make it all happen with the guidance and vision to make things succeed. I'd use the term wisdom, but that doesn't come along until an activity fails, which some do, and we learn from our mistakes just like our students. How many times have we told others "I only had to do THAT once to know I didn't want to do it again."

Collegiate Agriculture Leaders

At the post-secondary level we don't have FFA but we are still actively involved in many social and leadership activities to build confidence and responsibility in our students. They have access to the Collegiate Agriculture Leaders (CAL) at the state level.

The CAL leaders plan and organize fall and spring state-

wide leadership conferences under the watchful eye of Advisor Steve Amador at Modesto Junior College. Our Ag Ambassadors participate on the national level with a conference hosted by a volunteer college/university each year, including the University of Florida, Sam Houston State in Texas, and most recently our own UC Davis.

Although not officially in the FFA, our groups are involved in the activities of the Blue and Gold. At Merced College, the Ambassadors are key to seeing that our FFA Field Day happens as well as the Merced/Mariposa Section Project Competition Banquet. Without our students being willing and able to step up to the plate and get involved, we as teachers couldn't get these two major activities done.

Worldly Experience

Students and schools are formally measured by their per-

formances on bogus standardized testing of trumped up standards. However, they should also be measured by their worldly experiences offered outside the classroom setting. These are the ones that will prepare them for the successes and failures they will encounter in life.

Organizational skills and the ability to plan are keys to life and we all try to offer as many as we can regardless of the level or organization. The trick is to offer something other than "just school" so they can do more than just test.

Keep up the great work you do on weakened budgets. My boss at Beauchamp's Welding had a poster "We have done so much with so little for so long, we feel we can do almost anything with nothing at all." All of us must keep our students apprised of the real world and if not us, then who? Just keep livin' the dream. ☼

Bits and Pieces

(Continued from page 2)

people to work for you and the students. The use of the local media is a way that you can get the word out about the success of your students and activities that are taking place in the local school.

National Advocacy

Hugh Mooney, the North Coast regional supervisor for the California Department of Education, asked the question, "What Is the Next Step?" He is currently the Region I vice president of National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE). His term ends in December 2010.

I think that we all are better off because brother Mooney has been a part of the NAAE. He has a presence about him

that allows people to know that he is very serious about advocating for agricultural education. I think that he has provided to the NAAE Board a breath of fresh air and a view from the West that was, and still is, badly needed on the Board.

We here in California have a great advocate in Hugh. He has answered the call on numerous occasions for our profession and for individuals. I believe he is the right person to help lead the NAAE into an era of advocacy for all agriculture teachers across the nation. He has vision and is determined to see things through to the end. He has articulated his belief in a coordinated effort to do what is right for agriculture

education. We need that type of influence and dedication at the national NAAE. He has brought that to the Board.

As president-elect, he would continue to work for the future of our profession. The NAAE might just live up to the CATA way of doing things.

Goals for NAAE include becoming more involved as an advocate for agriculture/FFA in the U.S. Congress and Senate.

Don't wait for something to happen; be prepared. California has the largest state membership in our region, but we have only about 25 percent of our teachers as members of NAAE. That, we can change. So, tell Hugh to run for president-elect of NAAE. ☼

Officers' Corner

Share Programs with Colleagues to Impress, Encourage, Motivate

By Jake Dunn, CATA Secretary

Getting to know our colleagues across the state is sometimes difficult. Even with the great technologies that are at our fingertips, it is still hard to make contact with teachers in other parts of the state. Heck, sometimes it is hard to talk with the teachers in the neighboring town or school. We are ag teachers — somehow the time seems to slip away.

I have logged onto Communities of Practice through NAAE, I have attended road shows and other in-service activities, but I tend to go to the ag mechanics or agriscience sessions and stay in my own bubble. So this past February when my teaching partner, Krista, said that she had met Jessica Weisbart from Buena Park and had made plans to have dinner with her while we were in Anaheim for the Educating for Careers conference, I was excited to meet another ag teacher in a part of the state that I rarely visit.

Visit to Buena Park

We all met for dinner. As any ag teacher would do, Jessica invited us to come by and visit her program. It was here that I was totally blown away. In my mind we were in the "OC." What could she be doing that I have not seen already? Were my eyes opened.

Jessica is the ag teacher at Buena Park High School; Buena Park is located in the "Entertainment Zone" of Orange County. From the top of the stadium at Buena Park you can see the Matterhorn, smell the jam at Knott's Berry Farm, while looking at the thrill rides.

Krista and I were equally impressed with what Jessica was telling us about her program. So the next morning we finished up our preparations for the workshop we were to present that afternoon, and then headed over to Buena Park for a visit. Jessica said it was easy to find the school: Head north on I-5, take the exit for Buena Park, and look for the Farm Store signs — they will lead you to the ag department.

Urban But Familiar

This school is in an urban

Some things don't change, however; the ag department sits as far away from the rest of campus as possible.

environment. Some things don't change, however; the ag department sits as far away from the rest of campus as possible, back behind the football stadium, far enough away that the students get a few extra minutes to make it to and from the rest of their classes.

We saw the signs to the Farm Store, and found the agriculture department. The first thing we noticed was the brand new greenhouse that had just been finished and had yet to be released for full operation.

The area was immaculate: new pavement, green grass, not a piece of trash or anything out of place. Jessica met us and we began our tour.

First stop, the ag department lawn, a beautifully landscaped area including a custom-built water feature that we were informed was the backdrop for their annual banquet, hosting about 200 members and guests.

Livestock Facilities

Krista and I were intrigued by the livestock facilities that we could easily see were the next stop on our tour. The Buena Park program sits on four acres and every inch is being used for positive instruction. The livestock facilities were awesome, all covered under steel roof, expandable for large and small livestock, including drains and clean-outs, and room for up to 100 animals.

Jessica explained that they were in the process of updating the pens and had added

exercise arenas and show rings for practice.

Chicken Coops

Across the driveway from the livestock barns are the chicken coops, nine of them — large coops with flush drains in the back and roosting boxes in the front. Jessica had set up an awesome SAE with her students, 18-layer projects with each student caring for 10-15 hens and marketing their eggs to friends, staff and family.

This project has become so popular there is a waiting list and some tough rules that have to be followed to stay involved. Krista and I were very impressed and jealous; our school farms are off campus.

Garden Plots

Next we headed to the orchards, one with avocado trees, all donated, all just coming into production, another with citrus and stone fruits, 350 trees in all.

Continuing on, we saw the student garden plots, all of which had winter crops in various states of harvest.

Making our way back to the classroom building, we saw the old greenhouse, small but usable, and the brand new "Cadillac" greenhouse that was built with grants that Jessica had written.

Class Computers

Once inside the classroom, we noticed that the ageconomics class was in session and all the students were working on computers, laptop computers, a whole class set!

No doubt Jessica has been successful in writing some big grants to help fund the changes she has begun at Buena Park, but it was easy to see that with all of that writing there has been just as much elbow grease going into making some first class facilities for some student that may never have seen a lamb or a steer prior to stepping onto the grounds of the Buena Park Agriculture Department.

That Farm Store that pointed us in the right direction — yes, that happens too. The students of the Buena Park FFA market direct to the public two nights per week. They sell the eggs from the chickens, meat from their livestock, fruits from the trees, and vegetables from the garden plots.

What a great tool to market a program. Krista and I went back to visit during the Farm Store's operating hours. During our brief visit, we saw numerous shoppers, all of whom were praising and thanking the students for the fresh produce and products.

Outstanding Program

Jessica is very proud of what is happening in her program and she should be! Jessica and the Buena Park Agriculture Program were recognized as the 2009 Outstanding Single Person Department in the state, CATA Outstanding Program and the NAAE Region I Outstanding Program. Check out the latest edition of "New Horizons" with a great article on this program or visit www.buenaparkffa.com.

I know that Jessica's is not the only program out there that would impress me. I know you

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Resources Available

What on Earth Is a PCA?

By Shannon Douglass, Coordinator

The PCA career is one you and your students should know about because there currently is a shortage of PCAs in California as the industry has aged. The shortage is severe enough that more than 30 companies together contributed over \$250,000 to fund the Pathway to PCA program.

Pathway to PCA was established by the California Association of Pest Control Advisers and the Stanley W. Strew Foundation in order to encourage more people to consider career opportunities in agriculture and elect a pathway to becoming a PCA. We believe that your students, if made aware of the opportunities available in plant science, will be some of those considering this challenging and fulfilling career.

Pest Control Adviser

What is a PCA? A PCA — not to be confused with a CPA — is a Pest Control Adviser. PCAs are licensed by the state of California and work advising farmers and ranchers on crop protection. They make written recommendations for the agricultural use of restricted crop protection materials along with sustainable and integrated pest management alternatives.

Why become a PCA? This can be a financially rewarding career for people with an interest in sales/marketing and for those with an entrepreneurial spirit who want to become



crop consultants and work outside contributing to the stewardship of our natural resources.

PCAs spend the majority of their day interacting directly with farmers/ranchers and the research community. PCAs have an important role in keeping our nation's food supply safe and healthy. PCAs enjoy their career; they work with great people in an important industry. The PCA license also gives a person more opportunity for positions in farm and ranch management and production.

How to Become a PCA

There are two ways to become a PCA.

✓ Most of the four-year ag colleges have adapted their crop science/plant science programs to meet the state-mandated minimum educational requirements to become a

PCA. With the four-year degree and after passing the PCA exam, a new PCA can go right to work.

✓ Students who begin working in the crop protection industry can combine two years of work experience and 42 units of coursework to meet the requirements to take the PCA exam. Many of the courses are offered by community colleges and some can even be taken online. After the educational requirements are completed and work experience met, a

person is eligible to take the PCA exam.

Pathway to PCA

The Pathway to PCA program is here to help your students along this career path. The program can help students get their questions answered about the career and to help connect them to the scholarships and internships available. We have posters for your classrooms and would be happy to participate in your career fairs and events.

You can check out the program at www.pathwaytopca.com or follow us as a fan on Facebook. You can also reach me directly at shannon@capca.com or (530) 680-4545.

I look forward to visiting with you and helping more of your students take the Pathway to PCA! ☼

Officers' Corner

Share Programs with Colleagues to Impress, Encourage, Motivate

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are doing great things in your community and departments as well. Why not share with us around the state to impress, encourage and motivate all of our members to do the best that they can with not only what they have, but what they could have with a little hard work and community support.

Apply for regional, state and national awards. I am sure Jessica would agree there has been tremendous support of her program thanks to the publicity garnered by her successes with state and national accolades!

Lastly, reach out and seek advice from your fellow teachers, visit programs to see what else is happening! ☼

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News and Views

Unique Opportunities for Students at Our Community Colleges

By Steven Rocca, CATA Post-Secondary Division Secretary, Assistant Professor, Agricultural Education, CSU Fresno

As we near the end of the academic year we tend to reflect on all our experiences. As I thought back on my first year as a Post-Secondary Division officer, I realized my most memorable experience had to be the Community College Mid-Winter Institute. This year the event was hosted by West Hills College in Coalinga.

Now you may be thinking, "How exciting could it have possibly been in Coalinga?" Well, I have to tell you the West Hills staff did a fantastic job and Harris Ranch is a great place to stay, eat and have meetings.

Learning from Colleagues

But the delicious Harris Ranch beef wasn't why I'm telling you this story. What I really found memorable about this event was the new knowledge I gleaned from my colleagues about what their programs had to offer.

For example, our hosts from West Hills College had some of their heavy equipment on display at the hotel so that we could learn more about the unique opportunities they offer in their Heavy Equipment Operator program. This is the kind of program that would motivate interested students to relocate so they can get training on this equipment. More important, graduates of this program are in very high demand by employers.

Unique programs like this are not just found at West Hills though; many of our community colleges have programs that cannot be found at other colleges.

Why not encourage your students to do a little research about these programs? One of

these programs might be the career preparation and motivation they are looking for.

Butte College

If your students are looking for a heavy equipment program in Northern California, have them check out Butte College. Butte offers its own Heavy Equipment Operator Technician program. They work closely with local businesses so their students are familiar with current technology used in the industry.

If heavy equipment doesn't interest your students, have them consider Butte's natural resources program. A unique feature of this program is the partnership with the California Department of Fish and Game. Together they offer a Fish and Game Warden Academy where students study natural resources and peace officer training for the development of prospective wardens.

College of the Redwoods

On a similar note, if you have students considering natural resources, recommend they look at College of the Redwoods. Redwoods offers an associate's degree in Forestry along with Agriculture and Plant Science. They also have several certificate programs to choose from, including one in

Geomatics. Those graduates must be very sought after in industry.

Modesto Junior College

If your students are looking for a more traditional program that offers a wide variety of agricultural programs, they might consider Modesto Junior College (MJC). MJC's program offers 37 associate degrees, 25 certificates and over 20 skills recognition awards!

Modesto students don't only benefit from the vast list of career preparation programs; they also find great opportunities to help pay for their education.

A recent National Science Foundation grant has provided MJC with 20 \$3,500 renewable scholarships, which are available to high school seniors planning to enroll full-time in their agricultural science program. After successful completion of a two-year program, students are eligible to apply for a transfer scholarship to continue studies in an agricultural pathway.

What a fantastic opportunity to help students pay for their education!

College of the Sequoias

Another program offering a wide array of degree and certificate options is College of the Sequoias (COS). Most sec-

ondary agriculture teachers have probably heard about the COS program, but did you know that they have a Vet Technician Program which is partnering with the Tulare County Animal Shelter? Students in this program learn in a very "hands-on" manner, including assisting with small animal surgeries at the shelter's clinic. Another unique aspect of the COS program is its Women's Equestrian Team. COS has been competing in Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) events for many years and is the leader among community colleges in IHSA honors. The equestrian team travels statewide, competing against four-year colleges and universities in the area of horsemanship and equitation.

Shasta College

Another area of study that your students may consider is that of sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture degree options are soon to be offered at Shasta College, where students will benefit from an integrate curriculum offered across disciplines within their AG/NR department.

Santa Rosa Junior College

Your students will also want

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Corporate Membership

Corporate Membership 2009-2010

Our Corporate Members are listed with a brief description of their products on the next few pages.

We encourage your patronage of our Corporate Members, as they have shown a commitment to supporting agricultural education in California. If you are aware of any others who may be interested in this type of membership, call (916) 714-2970 or e-mail cata@calagteachers.org so we may send pertinent information.

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News and Views

Thank You

By Hugh Mooney, Consultant, California Department of Education

Thank you to the visionaries who created the Agriculture Incentive Grant. Thank you to those people of influence who secured funding for the Agriculture Incentive Grant. Thank you to the many friends of agriculture education who have fought to keep this important funding source for our students. We should all be thankful to those people of influence who were able to have our funding moved to "tier two" so that those funds became subject to zero flexibility. Where would we be without them?

The year after I graduated from high school, 1978, voters of the State of California approved Proposition 13. This changed forever how schools are funded in our state and caused devastating cuts to education. Not many of you can remember 1978. More than half of you likely were not even born. I have heard of the difficult times from veteran teachers.

Agriculture Incentive Grant

To fill a need, Senate Bill 187, which created a statewide advisory committee to identify program standards for high school agriculture programs, was created. These program standards were adopted and the Agriculture Incentive Grant was created to provide

matching grants to fund those programs that met the identified standards.

The first year of funding was the 1983-84 school year. At that time the total allocation for the Agriculture Incentive Grant was \$3 million. Over the years the funding grew to nearly \$5.2 million. Following the cuts from the last budget bill, the total funding is now \$4.134 million.

School districts are finding it difficult to plan their budgets for the coming year. It is a challenge when the law requires school districts to submit a balanced budget by June 30 each year while the State of California often will not have an approved budget until the

fall. Administrators subsequently are looking for every dollar they can find to use for the many needs the district has.

Best Source of Help

As I have written previously, when you are having a difficult time communicating with your administration, your best source of help is your Agriculture Education Advisory Committee. If you have an effective committee, the members are people of influence in the community. Those are the people who will have an impact with members of the board or your administration. The program belongs to the community.

If the only voice heard advocating for your program is an agriculture teacher, you have

a problem. Thank your advisory committee for fighting for your program.

Contact Your Legislators

Over the years you have read many articles about advocacy and the value that building relationships between leaders and your program will have toward providing opportunities for your students.

I encourage you to contact your member of the Assembly and state Senate and thank them for their support of your program. Invite them to attend your activities. You never know, they may actually attend. Trust me, there are few people at the Capitol that hear those two words. So go ahead, tell them, "thank you." ☞

Unique Opportunities for Students at Our Community Colleges

(Continued from page 6)

to take a look at Santa Rosa Junior College, where they can find degree and certificate programs in Sustainable Agriculture. While they are on the Santa Rosa JC website, have them learn about the Wine Studies Program. This is a unique program that offers students degrees and certificates in the areas of wine and vines, enology, wine evaluation and service, wine business and marketing, and also winery machinery mechanics.

Monterey/Woodland

A couple of other programs your students may not know about are at Monterey Peninsula College (MPC) and Woodland Community College.

MPC has just completed work on a new greenhouse and nursery facility. Students in

this program have the opportunity to learn from and work with Cathy Haas, department head and professional horticultural photographer.

Students at Woodland Community College have just completed their first Ag. Leadership course which included leadership development activities and competition through the CAL organization.

Cayamaca, Santa Barbara, Southwestern

If I haven't mentioned anything that interests your students yet, it may be because I haven't said anything about horticulture programs.

There are many programs throughout the state for your students' consideration, but if they are looking for something unique, have them consider one of the new "sustainable"

horticulture programs that have been developed at institutions like Cayamaca College, Santa Barbara Community College and Southwestern College.

Cayamaca College and Southwestern College, both in the San Diego area, have new degree programs in Sustainable Landscapes. In fact, this past March, Cayamaca hosted its 2nd Annual Sustainable Urban Landscape Conference where participants learned about green roofs, innovations in pesticides, grey water use, water conservation, and sustainable tree selection, to name just a few.

Southwestern has added a new course that supports students studying in the new Sustainable Landscape/Water Auditor degree program.

Santa Barbara also offers a Sustainable Landscape program where all courses have a focus on newer "green" technologies. Topics include composting, natural pest control, earthworks for soil retention, water-efficient plants, food forests, rainwater harvesting, permeable hardscaping, and many more relating to sustainable landscaping are infused into the curriculum.

Sample

Well, this has been just a small sample of the opportunities that abound in our state for your students. I'm sorry I couldn't include a summary of every one of the programs in our state, but I hope it is enough to pique yours and your students' curiosity to explore the unique programs at our community colleges. ☞

News and Views

Meet California FFA Advisor Legend Bill King

**Bill King, Retired Agriculture Teacher and “FFA Coach”
Petaluma High School (1966-2005), Santa Rosa Junior College (1981-2003)**

Bill dominated the Agriculture Mechanics judging team (California Department of Education) world. He had 285 State FFA Degrees, 48 American Farmer Degrees, 7 State Proficiency Awards, and 19 State Championship Teams.

Golden Slate (GS): What is student achievement?

Bill King (BK): Performance beyond their perceived ability.

GS: What is “winning”?

BK: Meeting your goal!

GS: How do/did you motivate students?

BK: Lead by example. Show successes of former students.

GS: Who/ How do/ did you ask for help?

BK: Everyone. Peers, tradesmen, friends, enemies, past students, current students, anyone. I was never afraid to say I didn’t know... but I will find out so we both know.

GS: What is a coach?

BK: Someone who provides guidance. Tom Landry, former coach of the Dallas Cowboys, said it best: When you score a touchdown, act like it has happened many times before and merely hand the ball to the referee. (I am a 49er fan!)

GS: How do you coach?

BK: Hard as nails. Be on time — I am on time. Be prepared — I am prepared. Be committed — I am committed. Be the best you can be — I was. I was criticized for being stingy with praise. But when I did praise, the student knew they had done something special. They would work harder to gain my praise.

GS: How do you get students motivated?

BK: Challenge them! “What are you going to do when the umbilical cord gets cut?” ...



Bill King

On your own — have to provide own food, shelter and clothing.

GS: How do/did you supervise projects for success?

BK: Many students were placed in work experience projects that they could grow in. Examples of students who were hired to sweep floors and became part owners.

GS: Why didn’t you ever quit or stop?

BK: I believed that what I was teaching provided job entry-level skills and knowledge for non-academic students.

GS: What is passion and how do you acquire it?

BK: I can do it! And I will practice over and over until I get it.

GS: How do you prepare for practice?

BK: Practice preparedness.

GS: Commitment — how do you get students committed?

BK: You get student commitment by being committed yourself. I gave up many opportunities to attend family and friends’ social events.

GS: How do you get students qualified and ready and/or elected to become a State FFA officer?

BK: I failed. Students who I thought would do an excel-

lent job as a state officer were not interested because they were committed to their post-secondary education.

GS: Who wins when a student wins?

BK: Everyone!

GS: How did you and your students acquire discipline?

BK: Live by example. As their teacher/coach, you give up other activities to help students excel: lunch hours, before and after school, weekends, holidays....

GS: How do you gain/give respect?

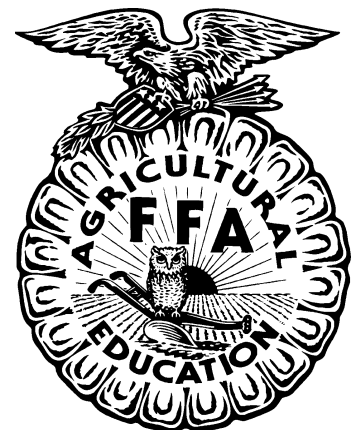
BK: Act in a professional manner: dress, manner of speech, use the rules of kindergartens. What were the rules you learned in kindergarten? Embrace your students — but keep them at arm’s length!

GS: How/why did you do “it”?

BK: By doing something I believed in.

GS: Advice to FFA advisors?

BK: “Don’t let the bastards grind you down!” ☘



News and Views

2010 Curricular Code Changes

The following contests will be up for change this year:

- ✓ Agricultural Mechanics
- ✓ Agricultural Pest Control
- ✓ Agricultural Welding
- ✓ Agronomy
- ✓ Computer Applications
- ✓ Cotton
- ✓ Dairy Cattle Judging
- ✓ Farm Record Book
- ✓ Floriculture
- ✓ Fruit Tree Pruning
- ✓ Grapevine Pruning
- ✓ Job Interview
- ✓ Light Horse Judging
- ✓ Marketing Plan Competition

Requests have been received to open the following contests:

- ✓ Agricultural Sales
- ✓ Meats
- ✓ Poultry
- ✓ General Rules

If you want to make any changes to the existing contest, you must adhere to the following format:

- 1 All changes must be in to the CATA Executive Director's Office by June 1.

- 2 Changes must be submitted in Microsoft Word, as an attachment, and e-mailed to cata@calagteachers.org.

- 3 These changes should include what is to be deleted and/or inserted, and include a rationale for the change.

- 4 All electronically submitted changes will be posted on the website at www.calagteachers.org.

- 5 Changes can also be submitted through fax and mail. However, due to time restraints, these changes may not appear on the website and may not be made available until the review meeting on the Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo campus, **June 20**, beginning at 1 p.m. All mailed/faxed changes should be sent to:

Jim Aschwanden
P.O. Box 834
Elk Grove, CA 95759-0834
Telephone (916) 714-2970
Fax (916) 714-2973

* Only those changes submitted by **June 1** will be allowed to be made to the contest. No other changes allowed.

Curricular Code Committee Meetings are scheduled for Sunday, June 20, on the Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo campus with the first rotation beginning at 1 p.m. The contest rotation schedule will be available on the CATA website in June. ☼

PCA Ad

News and Views

Condensed Draft Schedule: 2010 CATA Conference

Sunday, June 20

- 8:30 Governing Board
- 12:45 Curricular Code General Meeting
- 1:00 to 4:00 Curricular Code Meetings
 - 1:00 - Rotation #1
 - 2:00 - Rotation #2
 - 3:00 - Rotation #3
- 1:15 Secondary Division Executive Committee Meeting
- 1:15 Post Secondary Council Meeting
- 3:00 New Teacher Meeting
- 3:00 CAFFA Adult Board of Directors Meeting
- 4:00 CATA Scholarship Judging
- 4:45 Pre-conference Registration Meeting
- 5:00 to 7:00 Welcome Reception & Conference Registration - OH Unit Arboretum

Monday, June 21

- 7:00 Registration at the Performing Arts Center
- 8:00 Opening Session
 - Keynote Speaker
 - New Teacher Introductions
 - Cooperating School Recognition
 - Introduction of State Officer Applicants
- 10:00 Late Registration - Room 10-241
- 10:00 Regional Meetings
- 12:00 Alumni Luncheons
- 1:30 Secondary Division Meeting
- 1:45 Post Secondary Division Meeting
 - Following above meeting -
 - Post Secondary Committee Meetings
 - Student Activities
 - Inservice
 - Curriculum
- 3:30 Farm & Idea Show Meeting
- 4:00 Operations Committee Meetings
 - Budget & Audit
 - Nominations, Bylaws & Professional Awards
 - Teacher Recruitment (if needed)
- 4:00 Post Secondary Division Directors' Meeting
- 5:00 Chico State Alumni Social
- 6:00 CSU, Fresno Conference Reception
- 6:00 3 on 3 Basketball
- 7:00 Bowling

Tuesday, June 22

- 9:00 General Assembly
 - Speaker
 - Teacher of Teachers
 - Greetings - State FFA Officer
 - Greetings - CAL
 - Greetings - California FFA Foundation
 - National FFA
 - NAAE Report
 - State Supervisor's Report
 - Community College Report
 - Executive Director's Report
- 9:00 Post Secondary Statewide Advisory Committee Meeting



Trent Loos, Keynote Speaker

- 12:00 Post Secondary Division Meeting & Luncheon
- 12:00 Farm & Idea Show
- 1:00 FFA Advisory Committee Meeting
- 2:30 Hack and Hoe
- 4:00 Softball on Campus
- 4:00 Volleyball, Dodge Ball, Horsehoes, Kids Games at Cuesta Park
- 4:30 Farm Show Clean-up
- 6:00 Family BBQ

Wednesday, June 23

- 6:30 5K run
- 7:00 Prayer Breakfast
- 7:00 Post Secondary Council Breakfast Meeting
- 8:15 General Assembly
 - Retiring Teachers
 - Hall of Fame Inductees
 - CATA Service Certificates
 - Nomination Speeches
 - Division Reports
- 9:00 Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting
- 12:00 20+/Past Pres/Retiring Teachers/Hall of Fame Luncheon
- 1:30 Professional Sessions
- 5:00 Pre-Banquet Social
- 6:30 Banquet

Thursday, June 24

- 8:00 Regional Meetings
- 10:00 General Assembly
 - Honorary American Farmers
 - Recreation Awards
 - Membership Awards
 - Idea Show Awards
 - Farm Show Report
 - Election Results
 - Officer Installation
- 1:00 Skills Classes Begin
- 1:00 CATA 2010-11 Governing Board Planning Session

What Federal Change Can Provide Better Opportunities for Agricultural Education Students?

By Hugh Mooney, Consultant, California Department of Education

After spending six days in Fresno for the State FFA Convention and related activities, I had the pleasure of traveling to Great Falls, Montana, for the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) Region 1 meeting. Suffering from sleep deprivation, I was off to a slow start. It is always a challenge to attend because it begins the day after our State FFA Convention.

There are challenges for members from many of the other states to attend as well. Several years ago we looked at possible dates that might work to hold this meeting. Our research determined that when there are members from 11 states, there is no great time to hold this meeting. When you try to balance conflicts with FFA dates and state meetings for those 11 states, it becomes impossible to find a convenient date for all. This date does seem to allow members to attend if they truly want. Hopefully, we will have more members make the effort to attend next year when the meeting is in California.

California Involvement

I began attending the Region 1 meetings in 2004. That was the year that President Bush first proposed that Carl D. Perkins funding be eliminated and those dollars be used to fund No Child Left Behind. I remember like it was yesterday that California had a posi-

tion paper that called for Region 1 members of NAAE to refuse to pay their NAAE dues until the Board made legislative advocacy a priority. At the time, though members from other states shared our concern, California had not developed relationships with teachers in other western states. This caused a lack of confidence in our position.

Through the years, California members have become more involved and many NAAE members see our state as a model in legislative advocacy. Several states have developed legislation that has been

signed into law and has provided additional opportunities for agricultural education students

National Agenda

The question now being asked by many agricultural educators is, what is our legislative agenda at the national level?

What if your congressman or one of your U.S. senators were to ask you what specifically you want from the federal government to improve agricultural education, what would you tell them?

We could always ask for more money. What specifically do we need more money for?

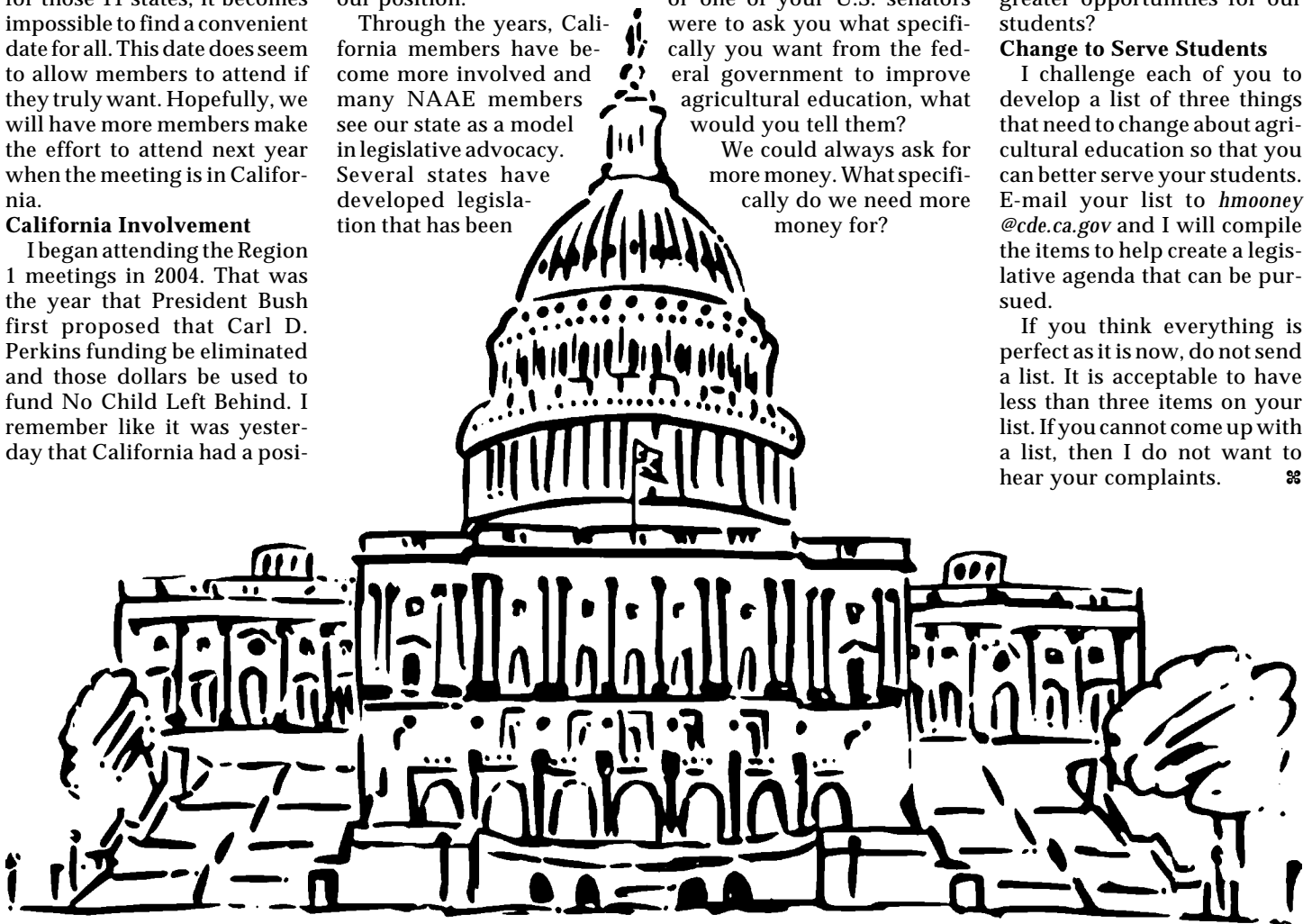
Now do not say that we need more money so that teachers are paid more. Though it would be helpful to our personal lives to have more personal possessions, we already have teachers unions asking for more dollars for salaries.

What specifically do we need from the federal government that will allow us to provide greater opportunities for our students?

Change to Serve Students

I challenge each of you to develop a list of three things that need to change about agricultural education so that you can better serve your students. E-mail your list to hmooney@cde.ca.gov and I will compile the items to help create a legislative agenda that can be pursued.

If you think everything is perfect as it is now, do not send a list. It is acceptable to have less than three items on your list. If you cannot come up with a list, then I do not want to hear your complaints. ☼



Important Tax Notice to CATA Members

Contributions or gifts to CATA are not deductible as charitable contributions for income tax purposes. However, CATA dues may be tax deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense. Please consult your tax advisor. ☼

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Calendar of Activities 2010

May 1	State FFA Judging Finals	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 19	Executive Committee Meeting	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 20	Pre-Conference Governing Board	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 20-24	CATA Summer Conference	Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
June 24	Governing Board Summer Retreat	San Luis Obispo

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The Cal Ag Special License Plates will be issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) upon the receipt of 7,500 paid pledges. The sale of these special plates will benefit agricultural education initiatives in California.

Plates may be reserved online at the website shown. Payments will be deposited into a special account until 7,500 paid pledges are received, at which point the payments will be turned over to DMV for processing.

After deducting a processing fee, DMV will forward the majority of the special license plate fees to agricultural education programs in California.

Cal Ag License Plates cost an additional fee above the normal registration fee.

A sequentially numbered set of plates (a random set of six numbers and letters selected by DMV) is \$50 (\$40 per year to renew).

Personalized license plates (six characters maximum) cost \$98 (\$78 to renew).

