



The Alabama FFA NEWS

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CECIL GANT JOINS STATE AGRIBUSINESS-FFA STAFF

Cecil M. Gant, Jr., 34, Agribusiness Education teacher at Section High School for the past 9½ years, has been selected for the position of Public Information Specialist with the State Agribusiness Education Staff. One of his duties will be to assume the editorship of "The Alabama FFA News." Mr. Gant will transfer to his new position in mid-January.

A native of Jackson County, Mr. Gant attended Pisgah High School where he was enrolled in vo-ag classes for three years. While in high school he served his FFA chapter as president and reporter, won state awards in Public Relations and Dairy Farming, was chosen Alabama's Future Farmer of the Year (1955), and earned State Farmer and American Farmer Degrees.

Mr. Gant received both his B. S. and M. S. Degrees from Auburn University with a major in Agricultural Education and minors in Agricultural Science and English.

During his college career Mr. Gant was vice-president and reporter of the AU Collegiate FFA Chapter and served as assistant editor of the "Alabama Future Farmer," official magazine of the state FFA association at that time.

Upon graduation from Auburn University in 1961, Mr. Gant assumed the position of Vo-Ag teacher at Georgiana High School. The next year he moved back to his home county and began teaching at Section High School.

During the 9½ years that Mr. Gant has taught at Section the FFA chapter there has won

many honors. These include: 92 State Officers, two State Star Farmers (1968 & 1970), one Alabama Future Farmer of the Year (1969), three National Proficiency Winners (Electrification, Natural Resource Development, and Poultry Production), a gold emblem in State Chapter Award competition every year since the chapter was chartered, six gold emblems and two silver emblems in National Chapter Award contest, four placings in National Safety Award program, one team in National Livestock Judging Contest, and 47 various placings in the state FFA contests and awards programs.

The Section FFA Chapter, under advisorship of Mr. Gant, has conducted numerous community service projects (such as an extensive mailbox post improvement program) and was the state's first top winner in the FFA "Building Our American Communities" program. The chapter helped organize and still co-sponsors the feeder pig sale at Section.

Mr. Gant has also attained many personal honors. He received the Jaycees' Young Educator Award (1969), the Honorary American Farmer Degree (1966), and the Pfizer



CECIL M. GANT, JR.

National Vocational Agriculture Teacher Award (1969).

He served as Section City Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem for four years, charter president of the Section Jaycees, vice-president of the Section Civic Club for two years, church clerk, Sunday School teacher, Baptist Training Union director, church choir director, United Fund community chairman, and 4-H Club advisor. In addition, Mr. Gant was public relations officer, secretary, and treasurer of the Northeast Alabama Feeder Pig Association.

Mr. and Mrs. Gant and their two small sons, Monte and Russ, will reside in Auburn since Mr. Gant will be assigned to the Agribusiness Education Field Office there.

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STATE FFA LENDS HELPING HAND



The Alabama FFA Association and the Lonicera Garden Club of Montgomery recently co-sponsored a beautification project at the Garrett Coliseum in connection with the Keep Montgomery Beautiful program.

The two organizations were responsible for the planting of 50 cherry trees in the Coliseum area during December. The State FFA purchased the trees and the garden club supervised the arranging and planting of the trees.

Shown planting one of the cherry trees are: (L-R) Clay Murrell, vice-president, Wetumpka FFA Chapter; Mrs. Aubrey Fleming, Beautification Chairman, Lonicera Garden Club; Johnnie Wood, State FFA vice-president, Wetumpka; Mrs. L. G. Nichols, president, Lonicera Garden Club; and Marshall Putnam, president, Sidney Lanier FFA Chapter, Montgomery.

It's A Long Way From The Farm... (or is it?)

There are almost as many city people working in agriculture as there are in rural areas. They are a part of the mammoth agri-marketing industry that provides the goods and services needed by today's farmers.

Opportunity is unlimited in agri-marketing for the young man or woman with a farm background and a college degree. Scientists, marketing specialists, journalists, economists, engineers, accountants, crop or livestock specialists . . . all are needed in the fast growing field of agri-marketing.

So, if you have a farm background, and are planning your future, stay with agriculture.

Write to your State Land Grant College Admissions Office, or Agricultural Communications Department for more information.

Consider a Career in Agri-Business



SPOTLIGHTING

JOHN CRUM SESSIONS

John Crum Sessions, 18, a member of the Evergreen FFA Chapter, was named national winner of the Placement in Processing Award during the 44th Annual National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri, October 14.

A recent graduate of Evergreen High School, John is the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Sessions and his FFA advisor is D. C. Fleming.

John hopes to someday become manager of the Conecuh Quick Freeze Meat Packing Plant. In his effort to reach that goal John has already spent more than 5500 hours working at the plant as part of his supervised occupational experience program.

Over the last four years he has increased his knowledge and ability to handle operations of the plant. His duties now include buying livestock and dispatching orders, as well as operating machinery in the packing plant.

In addition to working at the packing plant, John raises 92 acres of corn and has an 18-sow herd. He raises pigs to market weight and butchers them in the meat packing facility. "My long-range plans are to increase my hog herd and feeding facilities so as to have more market hogs to butcher in the plant," says John.

This fall John entered Jefferson Davis State Junior College in Brewton which is just 25 miles from home. "This way I'll be able to carry on my meat processing and farming operations," John notes. "I plan to major in business administration so that I'll have some training in business and management as well as in meat processing," he adds.

John was Star Chapter Farmer and a member of his chapter' land judging team. His other activities included being secretary of his senior class and a member of Conecuh County Wildlife Club and of the Alabama Farm Bureau.

ROBERT LELAND GOSSETT

Robert Leland Gossett, 17, a member of the Pell City FFA Chapter, received the second-place national proficiency award in Agricultural Electrification at the national convention this year.

A senior at Pell City High School, Leland is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fate Lee Gossett and his FFA advisor is James E. King.

Leland's interest in electricity, which was developed through his high school vocational agriculture program, has expanded into a promising business for him. In addition to completely wiring five houses in the last three years Leland has wired several chicken houses and hog barns for farmers in the area. Last year he completely wired the vo-ag department's new greenhouse which had been constructed by students at his high school.

"A good wiring system is safe, adequate, convenient, and economical," says Leland, who likes to take his electrical jobs from start to finish. This includes planning the wiring layout and selecting the proper materials according to the distance the wiring must be run and the expected load.

Leland has developed his knowledge of electricity to the point where he now assists his instructor in teaching the units on electricity. A demonstration board which Leland built for the classroom shows proper wire sizes, fuses, circuits, and switches. He often works with students in small groups while the instructor explains wiring techniques.

When he's not wiring houses or installing an electrical outlet for a new piece of equipment, Leland can usually be heard on the local radio station where he broadcasts a daily program. Even at the radio station he uses his knowledge of electricity; he built and installed the broadcasting console used by the station.

Leland has served as Chapter Reporter and delegate to the state FFA convention. His other activities include being a member of the Community Improvement Committee and his church choir.

VAN SMITH

Van Smith, 18, a member of the Billingsley FFA Chapter, was presented with the second-place national award for proficiency in Forest Management during the national convention.

A recent graduate of Billingsley High School, Van is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ivan W. Smith of Prattville. His FFA advisor is Billy M. Martin.

Since enrolling in the vocational agribusiness program Van has gradually increased his forest management program on 160 acres of home farm woodland. In his first year Van planted 6000 seedlings. The second year he planted another 6000 seedlings and harvested 50 cords of pulpwood; he also began a hardwood control program on 20 acres to rid the land of trees that had no value.

In his third year Van harvested 15 acres of pulpwood and planted 6000 new seedlings. During his Senior year Van harvested 150 cords of pulpwood, planted another 5000 seedlings, and clear-cut 40 acres of woodland.

Within the last four years Van has planted over 20,000 pine seedlings and by using good management practices has achieved an 85% liveability. Being a firm believer in fire-prevention, Van has established over two miles of firebreaks for protection. He also prunes his pine trees to improve the quality of the wood.

In addition to the instruction he received in the agribusiness program, Van has attended a forestry short course where he learned to select and mark timber. Van does his own thinning when pines are about 11 years old.

Van owns his own pulpwood truck with mechanical loader. "I've more than paid for the truck by doing my own hauling," he says. He also owns a welder and other tools for repairing his logging equipment.

A firm believer in good records, Van has kept accurate records of all his activities in the forestry business. "I learned the importance of keeping good forestry records in vocational

(continued on page 4)

NATIONAL FFA WEEK
FEBRUARY 19 - 26

- - - CHAPTER NOTES - - -

Boykin FFA Chapter's livestock judging team gained much experience at the Greater Gulf State Fair this year. The team included James Coates, Rayfield Bendolph, and Curtis Nicholson. Curtis won second place in the individual judging contest.

The chapter's 1200-pound Black Angus bull was judged Grand Champion at the fair. The prize bull had been presented to the chapter by the Sears, Roebuck Foundation and will be used to improve the quality of stock in the Boykin area.

In December, members of the Fairhope FFA Chapter cut Christmas trees from Mickey Johnson's farm in Silverhill and distributed them to various families in the Eastern Shore area. The chapter members also donated a variety of canned goods which were presented to needy families in Fairhope.

These projects are only two of the many activities that make up Fairhope's BOAC program. Anthony Bishop was recently elected as chairman of the BOAC program. Jimmy Hardy and Ricky Stephens were selected to help direct the program so as to make it more beneficial to the community.

The Straughn FFA Chapter's BOAC Committee recently asked each member to list what he thought needed improving around his community. Some of the things that were brought out by most of the students were: too few available jobs, dumps that can be seen, not enough recreational facilities, and people throwing trash out of cars along the highways. They also determined that the area needed more road signs--both directional and "Do not litter" types.

Clifford Aldridge, forest ranger for Lauderdale County, recently commended the Waterloo FFA Chapter for its success in extinguishing a forest fire on November 18. The fire, which is thought to have been started by a dropped match or cigarette, was burning near the Lauderdale County Wildlife Management Area.

Aldridge said that assistance from the FFA group undoubtedly saved many acres. He said tools used to bring the fire under control had been purchased by the North Alabama Conservation Club and presented to the FFA chapter. Damage was limited to 10 acres of timber, wildlife, and cover.

The occasion for the commendation was a recent meeting of the Waterloo FFA Chapter at which Aldridge was the guest speaker. The program, third in a series dealing with all phases of conservation, included a discussion on land reforestation. FFA members were encouraged to plant Loblolly pines on non-fertile soils. They were told that in a short period of time non-productive soil could be covered with young trees which would provide shelter for wildlife.

Aldridge also showed a film, "Then It Happened," which revealed the many careless ways in which erratic fires begin.

William Walker, Agribusiness teacher and FFA advisor at Waterloo, said that members had set out 26,000 pine seedlings in the area last year and are planning to set out about the same number again this year. He mentioned that the seedlings would be set where nothing else can grow, that within 20 years the trees can be sold for pulp, and that, in the meantime, the trees will help build the soil and provide a shelter for wildlife.

The Millport FFA Chapter has established a forestry demonstration plot on five acres of land which they leased. The chapter is preparing the land and plans to plant "Superior Trees." These trees will be used in comparing growth rates with Loblolly pines.

The chapter will erect a sign on Highway 17, indicating the test plot area.

The Five Points FFA Chapter recently had Bobby Newton, game warden for Chambers County and the surrounding area, as their guest speaker. Mr. Newton discussed the safety rules for hunting and briefly explained the main uses and safety of firearms used by hunters.

The Montevallo FFA Chapter recently harvested 150 bushels of pine cones and sold them to the Kimberly-Clark Company for \$2.50 per bushel.

The chapter also sponsored the sale of subscriptions to "The Shelby County Reporter." Over \$100 was realized from renewals and new sales.

Due to the lack of activity during the holiday season, "The Alabama FFA News" was not published for the month of December.

(continued from page 3)

agribusiness," says Van, who plans to be a agribusiness teacher some day.

Van's FFA activities include being Star Greenhand, chapter president, a member of the Land Judging team, and delegate to the National FFA Convention. He has also participated in football, basketball, and baseball; served as president of his class; and been a member of the Junior Cattlemen's Association.