

The Alabama FFA REPORTER

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Once In A Lifetime

by *Eddie Blizzard*

"You only go around once in life; live it with gusto!" Ever hear that before? It does make a point, doesn't it?

It is indeed a privilege to be able to look back on a part of my life and identify one event and know that no matter how much longer I live or regardless of what comes to me, nothing can surpass this one tremendous experience. For me that memorable event was being the national champion in the FFA public speaking program in 1975. As is true with most things that are really worthwhile, the accomplishment was not made without price. But the harder the sacrifice, the more glorious the triumph.

I did not start in FFA public speaking as a natural born winner—far from it! No one from my chapter had ever entered the public speaking contest, but our chapter officers determined that this needed changing. We managed to get seven participants in the chapter contest in 1974. I was one of the seven. My advisor stressed the benefits of public speaking. I had hopes of being a state FFA officer. Experience in talking before crowds was essential, I was told repeatedly. "Better do well in the FFA public speaking contest," said Elton Boudlin, my district officer representative, "if you aspire to be a state officer."

But writing acceptable composition was to me a chore; my English teacher had to be a charitable person to pass me. Farming and grammatically correct sentences are often not too compatible.

My advisor suggested I write about my greatest interest in agribusiness. For me that had to be farming so I entitled my composition, "I Want to Be a Farmer!" In retrospect, I treasure that humble composition but I must label it a feeble effort. I borrowed too much from the encyclopedia and used too much valuable time with a poem whose best function was mere filler.

As we practiced for the chapter

eliminations I got the "shivers." "Slow down!" said Mr. Gant, my advisor, but I was in a race. The faster my words, the fewer the bruises I got as my knees knocked together.

Then catastrophe struck! I got the flu the day before our chapter speaking contest. With the help of Excedrin, I delivered—but not very well. I managed a disappointing fourth-place finish. First-place went to a Yankee transplant who had recently enrolled in our school.

Our FFA chapter was getting in the news now and being the president of my chapter, I was put down as the leader of the "cow and plow" group. Working with farmers myself as a part of my work experience project, I noted the dejection and shame that farmers displayed. What a paradox! The farmer, as I observed him, was the "backbone of our economy" and the "helping hand" of our society.

My challenge came into focus. Now I had reasons for speaking. The proudest of all callings had been downtrodden long enough. Farmers themselves needed more pride in their occupation and more self respect. Somebody needed to encourage somebody else to go into farming if we are to continue to eat! And, too, that Yankee would be a repeater in the speaking contest next year. His ribbings were terrific stimuli. "It will be shameful," he chided, "when the state FFA vice president (I had been successful in my bid for state officer) cannot so much as win his own chapter's speaking contest. Isn't the state officer supposed to be the best in his district?"

(Continued on Page 3)



Eddie Blizzard

About Eddie Blizzard

In our feature article, Eddie Blizzard, National FFA Public Speaking winner in 1975 gives his reflections of a National winner.

Eddie was active in state, county and local FFA activities. Eddie was a State officer in 1974-75 serving as First Vice President. He was president of the Jackson County Association. Eddie served as President of the Scottsboro chapter for two years.

At the present time, Eddie is a part-time farmer and is employed in an agribusiness firm in Scottsboro.

Eddie is the son of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Blizzard of Hollywood. Mr. Cecil Gant served as Eddie's FFA advisor at Scottsboro High School.

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FFA Wins State Environmental Award

The Alabama FFA Association was recipient of first place in the Youth Division of the eighth annual Governor's Environmental Quality Awards Luncheon, held in Montgomery, and hosted by the Alabama Environmental Quality Association. The group was cited particularly for its high priority on environmental science, which includes the Soil and Water Management Program, Fish and Wildlife Management Program, and the "Building Our American Communities" project. Pictured accepting a trophy from Gov. George C. Wallace is Marvis Futral, Vice President of the State FFA.

APPLAUDING - - - -

**Chapters with
Membership over 100%**

School	Advisor		
Albertville High	Hodges	Fyffe High	Galloway
Alexander City Jr. High	Campbell	Geraldine High	Sisco
Ashville High	Carlisle	Hokes Bluff High	Bazemore
Baldwin Co. High "Gold"	Hoffren		Millander
Baldwin Co. High "Blue"	McCants	Holtville High	Gibbons
Belgreen High	Todd	Kennedy High	Karr
Berry High	Potter	Lawrence Co. Voc.	Britnell
Bibb Co. AVC "Gold"	Brothers	Lexington High	Hankins
Boaz	Jackson	Limestone Co.	Thompson
Brookwood	Cunningham	Marengo Co. High	Pritchett
Calera High	Thornburg	Mellow Valley High	Estes
Camden Middle	Patterson	Millry High	Crawford
Carbon Hill High	Gober	Mt. Hope High	Sibley
Chambers Co. High	Bishop	Neal, W. S.	Ellis
Clarke Co. High "Blue"	Garrick	N. Sand Mountain	Smith
Clarke Co. High "Gold"	Kiel	Oakman High	Hyde
Clay Co. High	Bennett	Oneonta High	Gibbons
Concuh Co. High	Ward	Pennington, J. B.	Jones
Crossville High	Hamilton	Ranburne High	Ottis
Danville	McCay	Randolph Co. "A"	Heard
Daphne Middle	Barnes	Rehobeth High	Ezell
Douglas High	Williams	Robertsdale AVC "Blue"	Walters
Eastern AVS	Swaffield	Rogers High	Holland
Elmore Co. High	Porter	Sand Rock High	Mosley
Falkville High	Bryan	Section High	Holcomb
Foley High	Carver	Skyline High	Wallingsford
		Spring Garden High	Teague
		Stanhope Elmore "Gold"	Crenshaw
		Sylvania High	Butler
		Woodland High	Moncus

Sweetheart



Miss Annette Wilson, a sophomore, is the 1976-77 Bibb Graves FFA Sweetheart.

Annette is in the FHA and serves as song leader. She is secretary of the Sophomore class and belongs to the 4-H Club, Beta Club, Science Club, and Pep Club. After high school, she plans to pursue an education and occupation in secretarial science.

FFA Dates To Remember

January 1	_____	Future Farmer of the Year
January 15	_____	FFA Contest Entry Survey
February 1	_____	Chapter Public Speaking Manuscript
February 15	_____	State Farmer Degree Application
February 19-26	_____	National FFA Week
March 1	_____	Ag. Mechanics, Building Const., Power Mechanics, Horticulture Contest Entry
April 1	_____	Proficiency Awards
April 1	_____	Final list of members
April 1	_____	M. K. Heath Award
April 9	_____	Southeast-Southeast Central Bi-District Contest
April 15	_____	Safety, BOAC and Chapter Awards Entry
April 15	_____	Southwest-Southwest Central Bi-District Contest
April 23	_____	Northeast-Northeast Central-Bi District Contest
April 30	_____	West-Central North Bi-District Contest

1976 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PROFICIENCY AWARDS

ALABAMA WINS FIVE



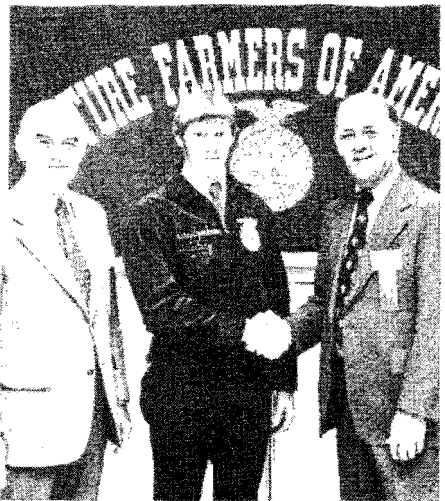
NATIONAL POULTRY PRODUCTION WINNER — Sam Spruell, 19, of Mt. Hope, is congratulated by Mr. Don Staheli, President, Allied Mills, Inc., at the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. The FFA Poultry Production Proficiency Award program is sponsored by Allied Mills, Inc., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc. Sam is the son of Mr. Hershel Spruell.



FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT — John Summerford, 19, of Falkville, is congratulated by Mr. Donald McDowell, Executive Director of the National FFA Foundation Sponsoring Committee, at the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. John was a regional winner in the FFA Fish and Wildlife Management Proficiency Award program sponsored by the National FFA Foundation, Inc. John is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Summerford.



PLACEMENT IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION — Danny McKinney, 18, of Russellville, is congratulated by Mrs. LuArchillis Wall, Executive Assistant to the President, Hesston Corporation and Mr. Paul D. Hartmann, Omaha District Manager, Agricultural Chemicals, Shell Chemical Company, at the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Danny was a regional winner in the FFA Placement in Agricultural Production Proficiency Award program sponsored by Shell Chemical Company and the Hesston Corporation as a special program of the National FFA Foundation, Inc. Danny is the son of Mrs. Beatrice McKinney.



LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION — Larry Sparkman, 18, of Hartselle, is congratulated by Mr. Harold Davis, Director of Marketing, A. O. Smith Harvestore, and Mr. Harold Coons, Director of Advertising and Sales Promotion, Keystone Steel and Wire, at the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Larry was a regional winner in the FFA Diversified Livestock Production Proficiency Award program sponsored by A. O. Smith Harvestore and Keystone Steel and Wire. Larry is the son of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Sparkman.



DAIRY PRODUCTION — Stanley Brown, 18, of Citronelle, is congratulated by Mr. R. W. Engle, Vice President and General Manager, Avco New Idea Farm Equipment, and Mr. Ray Reiker, Director of Marketing, Farm Division, the DeLaval Separator Company, at the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Stanley was a regional winner in the FFA Dairy Production Proficiency Award program co-sponsored by the DeLaval Separator Company and Avco New Idea Farm Equipment Division as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc. Stanley is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Brown, Sr.

Once in a Lifetime (Continued from Page 1)

I sought a good title. Finally amid the psychology, the purpose, and the resolve emerged: "Not Just a Farmer." I liked the title because it was catchy; it was short.

"Not Just a Farmer" and a thousand rehearsals took me through chapter, county, area, district, state, tri-state, regional and national competitions. I enjoyed appearing before my school's assembly to declare that the farmer has a new image. I told them emphatically, "The farmer's not a hayseed in intellect. He's highly specialized and mechanized—a far cry from the Old McDonald of yesteryear." What a thrill to represent my state and the South before an audience of 20,000 at the national FFA speaking finals! What a satisfaction to appear before farmers to say, "This is the message I've carried all over America for and about you. You're not just a farmer, you're a super citizen. We're proud of you. Be proud of yourself and your labors."

"You only go around once in your lifetime."

Troy Sweethearts

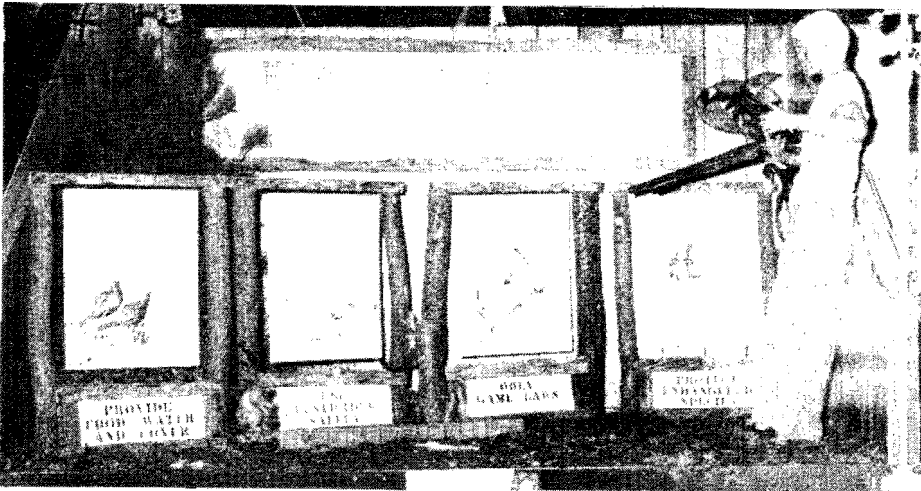


The Troy FFA Chapter recently elected sweethearts. Elected were **Anita Moses**, left, and **Gail Bland**, right.

Anita, a 17 year old senior at Charles Henderson High School, is the daughter of Mrs. Margaret Moses. She is a member of the 21 Club, Pep Club, yearbook staff and a Key Club little sister. Anita enjoys tumbling, reading, swimming and motorcycles.

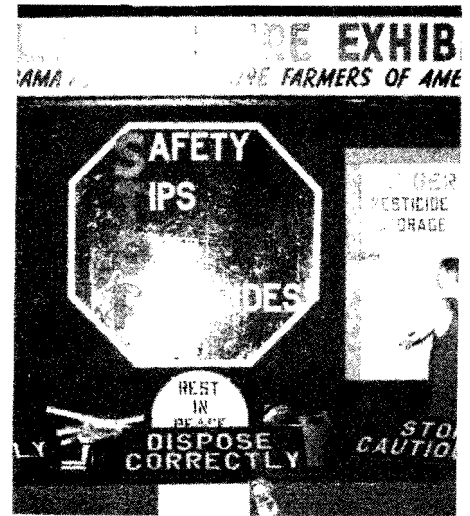
Gail, is also a 17 year old senior at Charles Henderson High School. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Lewis Bland, Sr. Gail enjoys sewing, cooking and playing the piano. She is a representative to the SGA and a member of the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church.

FFA Fair Exhibits

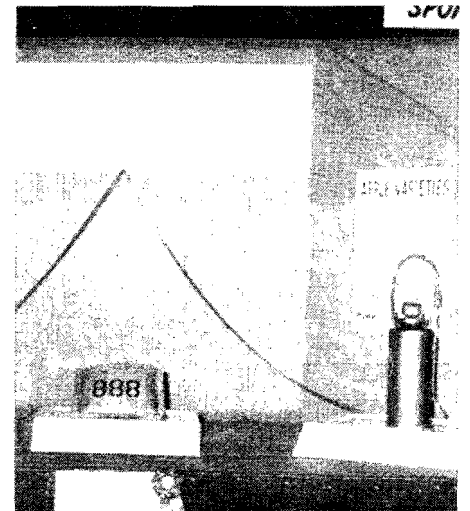


FIRST PLACE — The first place FFA exhibit at the Alabama State Fair was developed and constructed by the Rogersville FFA Chapter. A timely theme, "FFA Points to Wildlife Conservation", was used for the winning exhibit. The table below will show how other chapter fair exhibits were placed.

FAIR	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH
Ala. State Fair	Rogersville	Goodwater Chilton Co.	Gordo Anniston	
South Ala. Fair	Troy	Andalusia Chambers Co.	Elmore	
Selma Fair	Geo. P. Austin			
Ntl. Peanut Festival	Ashford	Cottonwood	Vernon, Fla.	
Greater Gulf State Fair	Semmes	Bay Minette AVS	Fairhope	Baldwin Co. McIntosh



THE CHILTON COUNTY HIGH FFA CHAPTER won one of the two second place awards at the Alabama State Fair with their educational exhibit entitled, "Safety Tips on Pesticides."



THE GOODWATER FFA CHAPTER selected "Apples" as the topic for their exhibit at the Alabama State Fair. They won the other second place award.



FFA — Agriculture's **NEW** Generation is the theme for this year's National FFA Week, February 19-26, 1977. What are your chapter's plans for celebrating National FFA Week?????