James Paul Bailey
State President

WOW! What a year this has been. June 8th, 2007, I was sitting in the convention center full of emotions and scared to death. It was on that day that I was elected to serve as an Alabama state FFA officer! Since that day I have traveled countless miles throughout the country and met some of the coolest people in the world. From meeting the President of the United States to hanging out with a national FFA officer in Helen, Georgia, at a time when I should have been in bed. As I look back on my year, there are so many stories to tell. Like the time I acted like I didn’t have any form of identification when entering the U.S. Department of Education. Thankfully, I didn’t get into a lot of trouble. I just received a warning from a national FFA staff member that you don’t joke around in a place like that. There was also the time that Scottie and I took basically everything out of Brendon’s VERY organized suitcase. We don’t suggest that to any of you. Through all of the fun times, I have had various learning experiences. These trips have all prepared me for the 79th Annual State FFA Convention! I hope that you are making plans to attend this year’s convention. The State Officers and I are extremely excited about this year’s convention and hope that you will have a great time at beautiful Auburn University!

And with that courage comes great power, the power it takes to do anything imaginable. Go jump off an airplane, we can! Go swim with the sharks, we can! Be President of the United States of America, WE CAN!

Each of us has a purpose. We were sent here for a reason, and we are members of this great organization to help us achieve something.

I have come to the realization that it is important to do what is important to you. For example, as I was sitting in my chemistry class I started to think about all the homework that we had been given the night before and thought to myself, “teachers just don’t understand.” But what do the majority of teachers not understand? I ask my friends this often and the usual reply is “because they don’t have a life and don’t want us to have one either.” But what we sometimes forget is that maybe our teachers are looking past books, maybe they are looking to develop our special qualities that help us to shine our own unique brilliant light among our fellow classmates. I firmly believe that school is meant to give us important life experiences, not so much as to teach us subjects (although they are important, too). My history teacher always makes comments like “it’s all part of the high school experience.”

McKenzie Crabtree
State Vice President

“Do you ever think about how lucky we are?” I asked. “Depends on what you mean.” “Well, I was thinking today about how truly lucky we are to be alive, how truly lucky we are that we were raised to be good and decent people, and most important how truly lucky we are that we get an opportunity to do things other people dream about.” “I think about that all the time,” was the reply I received.

The great thing about this conversation between my friend, Sam, and I is that I honestly realized that I have power. It is not because of an office I have held or which district I came from or even who my parents are, it is because I realized that each one of us has found the courage to start heading down the path toward our futures.
When you look back on high school at your 20-year reunion, will you remember how to balance chemical equations or will you remember the friends you made and the mistakes that you learned from?

As members of the greatest youth leadership organization in the world, what is it that we are called to accomplish? Nothing at all. FFA, like high school, is meant to give you valuable experience needed to fulfill the your personal goals.

The convention theme makes me think even more, Blue Jackets/Bright Futures. Blue Jackets unite individuals to one organization that has the same goal but is reached in different ways. You have to search within yourself to discover what is important to you and go after it with all of your might. Use the experiences you were given through the FFA and through the thirteen years of schooling to make your dreams a reality.

This year at the Alabama FFA State Convention you will make new friends; learn from your mistakes; and, most importantly, experience it. Experience the way your heart jumps when you hear the songs blaring through the speakers. Let yourself not just hear the words spoken but listen to the words that are spoken. Take the time to take things slow and relax. Do not walk away from this convention wishing that you should have taken more time to experience the convention after all, life is too short not to enjoy yourself.

One day my principal started talking to me in the hallway about his high school days. He said one thing that has stuck with me throughout this year. He told me that his favorite t-shirt said, “Sleep when I’m dead.” My mind immediately went to the song by Bon Jovi but then he went on to say, “McKenzie, when you look back on your years you’re not going to wish you took more time to sleep.” So I leave you with his words of wisdom. I hope that you use them to make the most of your convention and the most of your life as well. “Like sand through an hour glass, these are the days of our lives.”

Scottie Hunter
State Treasurer

Wow! It doesn’t seem like a year has gone by since the 78th State FFA Convention. It seems like just yesterday that my name was called out at the 5th Session of that convention, and I embarked on an amazing adventure that was my year as the 07-08 State Treasurer. I have had the time of my life serving you, and as I look back on this year, I can remember nothing but constant laughs, inside jokes, late nights, and early mornings.

The State FFA Convention is always the highlight of the year for me. There are GREAT SPEAKERS, TALENTED PERFORMERS, CDEs, newly elected state officers, and not to mention all the LOUD MUSIC that you can handle. This year’s convention will be bittersweet for me because at the close of the 5th session, I will embark on another adventure that will be my life as a PSO. This adventure will not be a lonely one, because I will embark on it with five of the most influential individuals that I have ever met, the 07-08 Alabama State Officer Team.

Leah Blalock. She is so much fun to be around. She always has a funny story to tell and a ring tone to share. The party doesn’t start until Leah arrives.

Melody Murrell. Some may know her as Pocahontas, but I know I speak for Brendon and James Paul when I say that she will always be known as towel girl. Melody is always kind and is the best awkward turtle maker that I know.

McKenzie Crabtree. She is very inquisitive and is always up for learning something new. You can always get McKenzie to make you a flip chart when no one else wants to do it. She always has waitressing tips to share with anyone who will listen, and you can always find her in her matching, pink “jammers” as she calls them.

Brendon Boyd. What can I say? Brendon is THE COMPETITOR. Whether it is battling out a football game on the PS2 or having an Orange Juice drinking race, you can always find Brendon competing. He is also known as MR. STRUCTURE or THE ORGANIZER. I would have to say that he is THE neatest person on the team. He’s the kind of person that believes that everything has its place, which means that there’s a lot of National FFA Organization has definitely made a positive difference in my life, and will continue to have the same impact in the lives of countless others.
## Wednesday, June 4

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<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>OPENING SESSION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Opening Ceremony&lt;br&gt;Presiding Officer – James Paul Bailey, President&lt;br&gt;National Anthem - Auburn Pep Band&lt;br&gt;Invocation – Salora Wright, Clements&lt;br&gt;Greetings – Becky Sullivan, National FFA Secretary, Spring Hill, Kansas&lt;br&gt;Introduction of 07-08 State &amp; National Officer Candidates&lt;br&gt;Introduction of 07-08 District Officers&lt;br&gt;Wall of Honor Inductees—Roger Waller&lt;br&gt;CDE Awards – Parliamentary Procedure, Prepared Public Speaking&lt;br&gt;1st Place Public Speaking Winner&lt;br&gt;Keynote Speaker – Patrick Grady&lt;br&gt;Awards - String Band Contest&lt;br&gt;Entertainment - 1st Place String Band&lt;br&gt;Closing Ceremony&lt;br&gt;Adjourn</td>
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Delegate Business Session immediately following the opening session on the convention floor.

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<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>SECOND SESSION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Opening Ceremony&lt;br&gt;Presiding Officer - McKenzie Crabtree, Vice President&lt;br&gt;National Chapter Awards&lt;br&gt;Honor Parents of State Officers&lt;br&gt;Future Farmer/Agribusinessman of the Year Award&lt;br&gt;Retiring Address - Scottie Hunter, Treasurer&lt;br&gt;Mindy Stringer Memorial Scholarship Award&lt;br&gt;Honor Advisors of State Officers&lt;br&gt;Retiring Address - Brendon Boyd, Secretary&lt;br&gt;Hypnotist Show - Patrick Grady&lt;br&gt;Closing Ceremony&lt;br&gt;Adjourn</td>
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## Thursday, June 5

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## Friday, June 6

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<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>FIFTH SESSION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Opening Ceremony&lt;br&gt;Presiding Officer – Melody Murrell, Reporter&lt;br&gt;State Officers’ Report&lt;br&gt;Retiring Address - James Paul Bailey, President&lt;br&gt;Election of Officers&lt;br&gt;State FFA Degree Ceremony&lt;br&gt;Installation of State Officers</td>
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of fun to be had by giving his things a new place.

James Paul Bailey. James Paul and I are practical joke partners in crime. Wherever there is a practical joke to be played, there’s a James Paul Bailey. From messing with Brendon’s things to pretending that we ate all of the marshmallows before our workshop at JLDC, James Paul and I are always eager to play a practical joke and get a good laugh.

So as you can see, I have truly enjoyed my year as an Alabama State Officer. I sincerely appreciate the opportunities that have been afforded me as an officer in this organization. I will never forget all of the wonderful memories that make up Alabama FFA’s 79th year.

Melody Murrell
State Reporter

From the moment I heard the words “Your 2007-2008 State Reporter is Melody Murrell,” I’ve been on a non-stop, life-changing journey. Being in this position of leadership is an amazing opportunity that I never dreamed could have happened. From the BLAST Off Leadership Conference, to the National Convention, every moment has been unforgettable. I’ve been able to experience so many incredible moments and opportunities, and it’s truly an honor to be able to offer my service to each and every member.

When you spend as much time with a group of people as I have with the five other state officers, you become more than a team, more than friends. You become a family in a way. There are great moments, and then of course there are always those moments when you just want to hit someone. But we’re always able to overlook the bad times and laugh. No person shall be denied employment, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of disability, sex, race, religion, national origin, color, or age. Ref: Sec. 1983, Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C.; Title VI and VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sec. 504; Age Discrimination in Employment Act; Equal Pay Act of 1963; Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972: Title IX Coordinator, P.O. Box 302101, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2101 or call (334) 242-8444.

So as you can see, I have truly enjoyed my year as an Alabama State Officer. I sincerely appreciate the opportunities that have been afforded me as an officer in this organization. I will never forget all of the wonderful memories that make up Alabama FFA’s 79th year.

Leah Blalock
State Sentinel

As my year as a state officer comes to an end, I can’t help but to reminisce on everything that has happened this year. While every single thing that I have done has made an extreme influence in my life, the one day that sticks out in my mind the most is the day that I met my fellow officers, or as I consider them now, my second family.

On June 8, 2007, I was the first to walk across that stage as a part of the 2007-2008 Alabama State FFA Officer Team. I will admit that I was extremely nervous when I learned who my fellow team members would be. But we all acted like we had lifelong friends. I knew to this instance that we would be closer than family, even though of the distance between each of our homes.

James Paul Bailey is the practical Joker. He is always working to make someone laugh and to meet new people. He is also an avid procrastinator as well as the most disorganized person I’ve ever met. He loves to get everything done at the last minute and make completely random phone calls to his fellow officers at 3 a.m.

McKenzie Crabtree, the outspoken one. When she gets an idea, she’s not afraid to run with it. She loves structure and making flip charts. Everyone also gets a kick when hearing her version of the word “VietNAAAAMMM.” She is also oh so proud of her southern heritage and her matching belt, cell phone holder, and purse.

Brendon Boyd, the organizer. He was the one all of the officers depended on to read over any speech and to get all our data organized. He was also the one I leaned on the most because he was my mumble and I took up for him every time there were opposing sides on an issue.

Scottie Hunter, the friend. Scottie was the one guy that I could always depend on to follow with my jokes and be there to listen to my problems. It was also great to hear Scottie’s phone inform all of us the night before National Convention that “Larry Case, Mother Theresa, and Leslie Applegate” were calling his phone.

Melody Murrell, the only one in the group that drives a car, but we love her regardless. She was the one that had the same interest in music, clothes, and shoes as I did. She always listened when I had a problem and was always there to help me out when I needed something. I also had the honor to introduce her to POM, a pomegranate juice in the coolest bottle ever, which she spilled in her purse on the first day.

Last but not least, Me, Leah Blalock, the loud one. I loved to make my team members laugh and keep them guessing with my hair color changing every time we got together for a meeting. I also loved to entertain with my funny stories, and it seems I was always the one bringing the hairbrush, gum, or pen to a meeting.

At the start of this year, I was so nervous to meet these new people and be on a team with them, and now as my year with them comes to an end, I am so sad that we will not meet up randomly anymore and have state officer quartet, and there will be no more times to joke about our many leather-bound books. But, to everyone that is a member this year, thanks for all of your support, and I couldn’t imagine representing another state. I love you all and look forward to meeting many more of you throughout convention. God Bless.

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one student at a time.

Teach Agriscience!