



North District FFA Newsletter

Spring, 2015

GERALDINE FFA CHAPTER VISIT BY IVY HARBIN

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New CDEs at Alabama FFA

By Ethan Mobley

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The Alabama FFA Association CDE list has been updated for 2015 with two new career development events. Envirothon, an environmental and natural resources event, and veterinary science, are added for the 2015 year.

Envirothon is a team-based competition that is all about problem solving and the environment. It is one of many FFA CDEs that takes place outdoors (weather permitting) and one that is very serious in its environmental impact. As a competitor you will develop knowledge of natural resources in five environmental areas: aquatic ecology, forestry, soil/land use, wildlife and a current environmental issue (CEI). "The mission of Envirothon is to develop knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated citizens who are willing and prepared to work towards achieving and maintaining a natural balance between the quality of life and the quality of the environment." To learn more please refer to the Alabama FFA Contests and Awards Booklet at: <http://www.alabamaffa.org/> on the Forms and Applications page.

Veterinary Science is a CDE that is purposed with promoting college and career readiness and developing skills and technical knowledge in the field of veterinary science. Participants will demonstrate technical knowledge with small and large animals in the areas of anatomy and physiology, clinical procedures, identification, health and safety, and medical terminology. The Veterinary Science CDE takes place with most other CDEs at Auburn, before the state convention and is also a team event. The competition consists of four phases: a written exam, scenario questions, identification, and math practicum. To learn more please Refer to the Alabama FFA Contests and Awards Booklet at: <http://www.alabamaffa.org/> on the Forms and Applications page.

What Makes a Great Ag Teacher?

By Hunter Paff

It is ever so important to know what options you have when thinking about a career, but what are your options and what can you do to prepare yourself when deciding to become an agricultural education instructor? So who better to ask besides an actual ag teacher! I decided to ask my new advisor, Mr. Travis Allred, who is young, up and coming, and very devoted to his field of work.

I asked Mr. Allred if he would mind if I "interviewed" him for this article, and of course he was ever so willing by answering any and every question I asked him. He had many influences in his life when deciding to become an ag teacher, but two of the most important factors were going to the National FFA Convention and seeing how the FFA affects every state, and his ag teacher Mr. Rusty Roden from West Point High school. Both his ag teacher, and trip to the National Convention proved to him that he wanted to impact young people's lives through his work. He told me that one of the most important things to consider when deciding is to make sure that you could be very dedicated to what you would do for a career in agriculture education. To me, extreme dedication requires some form of love and that is exactly what most ag teachers have for their job.

I also asked him what were some things a student in high school, or even college, could do to help prepare themselves for a career of being an ag teacher. He said it would be best to get in contact with a professor at a school that has an agriculture education program, such as Auburn University. It is very important to have as much hands-on experience as possible so that you actually get a feel of what it is like to be an advisor. Something else every person should consider is: Did you have fun and have good experiences in any ag class or event? Mr. Allred stated that the one thing that pays back more than money is witnessing a student grow in ag throughout the year, seeing how agriculture has changed them for the better, and how they have begun to love agriculture just as he does.

When you do decide to pick a career for your future, think to yourself about what you will be doing more than just fixing machines or typing on a laptop. Will you be impacting people and bettering lives? And if it does impact people, will it impact young people and students who are the future of our amazing and great country? If you want to help our country and impact lives, then you should consider being an agricultural education instructor.

All About Us: Part Two

By Shelby Atwood

This is the second installment on your 2014-2015 North District Officers. In the last article, you learned what our sentinel and reporter were like. If you are reading this and have no idea who I am talking about you need to jump back and read the fall edition of our newsletter. This time you will gain knowledge on your treasurer, myself, and your secretary, Wade Gossett.

First, was the sentinel and reporter and now me, your 2014-2015 treasurer. I am seventeen years old. I attend Florence High School as a junior and have been in the FFA for five years. One thing that you come to learn being around me is that I love cows. This is crazy because I do not own any, but if I did, I would go crazy because they are the cutest things alive. After high school, I would like to attend Auburn University or Mississippi State and receive a degree in agriscience education to further my experience in the FFA as an Ag teacher and FFA advisor. I like to go by a quote from Johnny Cash that says "Life is rough, so you gotta be tough". Working toward goals is not always easy and life is full of hard work but hard work pays off.

Then comes the 2014-2015 secretary, Wade Gossett. Wade is sixteen years old and he attends Hokes Bluff High School as a junior. He has been in the FFA for three years and loves it just as much as the rest of us. Wade has been around agriculture, mainly crops, all of his life being on a farm with his family. After high school, he would like to attend Auburn University and major in engineering. Later in life, he hopes to work at Monsanto. When you first meet Wade, you get an impression that he is very shy and does not talk much, but when you get to know him, you will learn that he talks the most out of all of us. Wade is optimistic and laid back, but to me he's the one always making sure a smile is on your face.



FFA Week

By Lane Bonds

FFA week was a week full of fun activities, muddy truck contests, and a bunch of FFA members dressed up as farmers. FFA week was a week that I will never forget. From taking "selfies" with all of my chapter members to teaching second graders about farm animals. FFA week is a week to wear the blue jacket proudly. FFA week is a week when you should take time to enjoy the time well spent with your chapter, district, and state. The FFA Motto states "Living to serve" and FFA week is a perfect time to serve your community, chapter, and school. The FFA is a wonderful organization and I would love to know what your chapter participated in during FFA week!



The 87th National FFA Convention

By Wade Gossett

National Convention is a time that every FFA member from across this great country looks forward to. With more than 60,000 members from all fifty states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands in attendance, this past year's convention was a huge success. New National Officers were announced, CDE competitions were won, and most importantly passion and excitement was shared through countless amounts of agriculture advocates.

The 2014-2015 National FFA Officers include Andy Paul (Georgia), Victoria Maloch (Arkansas), Kristen Schmidt (Colorado), Caleb Gustin (New Mexico), Stephen McBride (Tennessee), and Ruth Ann Myers (Kentucky). These six officers will spend the upcoming year serving the entire National FFA Organization by traveling the globe in order to spread the word of the importance of agriculture. Overall National Convention was a blast that will surely cause members to "Go All Out" this year for agriculture and the FFA!



Playing. Square.

By Ivy Harbin

As we enter into the last quarter of our FFA year, we begin what many consider the most satisfying time of year, competition time. With the North District and State Officer interviews on April 6th, North District FFA Eliminations on April 17th, and of course the State FFA convention June 8th through 12th it is time to put to work what we have been practicing all year long! But I am here to remind you how to properly play on this team, because Alabama FFA as a whole is in fact a team.

Some may ask why we have all of these competitions, and why can't we simply all just go to state? When we boil down these series of competitions they are simply designed to separate the "bulls from the calves," and hopefully the deserving team will become clear in the blur of its competitors. Please know that sometimes people make mistakes, and sometimes people get lucky, but majority of the time the person or team who has put in the most work over all is indeed the winner.

To win a competition it takes time and effort on everyone participating on the team. Even if you have participated in this area before there is always room for improvement. But the best advice I can give you is to know the contest that you are competing in, especially if your team is attempting a contest that you might not have advanced to a higher level with before. Knowing your contest does not only mean knowing what the contest is about, but most importantly the rules. There is a high possibility that the rules could be a little more in depth than you believed before.

Lastly I ask you the question, is it better to win and cheat or compete and loose? As elementary as it may sound this is a common aspect that gets over looked often. In the heat of competition sometimes we automatically assume that the winning team had an abnormal advantage and of course, only because they won and your chapter did not, they must have cheated. FFA members I encourage you to not have this attitude. Just because someone is a winner does not mean that they are a cheater, and just because someone is a cheater does not make them a winner. A true FFA member would never cheat because that member knows that years from now no one will remember who won the contest, but what is remembered is the competition itself and how it was completed, either honestly or dishonestly. The bigger picture is that we together are the North District in the Alabama FFA, and in the end we all will be cheering the winner on as they compete for Alabama at the national level.

I wish everyone the best of luck in our upcoming events, and I hope to see you all there. If there is anything that I can assist you with please do not hesitate to ask.