

Corduroy Connections

Minnesota FFA Alumni Association

Fall 2014

Minnesota FFA Alumni Officers

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Region Representatives

Region I: Open

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Region IV: Cara Soper

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Region V: Lynn Suter

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Region VI: Open

Region VII: Jim Burns

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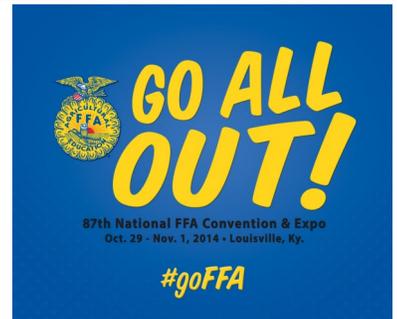
Region VIII: Stacy Fritz

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Member At Large: Nate Janssen

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2014 National FFA Convention Highlights



FFA members from across the nation, gather in Louisville Kentucky to celebrate agricultural education and FFA. National Convention brought over 64,000 members and guests together for various events and opportunities. Many young FFA members experienced National Convention for the first time and gained a new excitement for their future in FFA. National Convention brings together the best of the best in CDE contests, proficiency, Star Finalists, and National Chapter Award recipients. 3,765 FFA members received the American Degree for their commitment to FFA. 126 of these students were from Minnesota.

The theme for the 87th National Convention was “Go All Out.” This theme encouraged students to give their best effort towards the things they do in their lives. The National Officers and inspiring guest speakers encouraged students to make a difference, take action, and go all out.

FFA Alumni members also have a chance to meet during National Convention. A business meeting is conducted, awards are presented and members have a chance to visit and network with others who value and support the FFA.

National Convention is an excellent opportunity for everyone from high school freshman to alumni members and award recipients to guests. It is a time to celebrate FFA and everything and everyone who makes it the organization it is. 2015 National Convention will be October 28-31st!

Learning to Do

FFA Alumni Region Representatives

One of the critical roles on the State FFA Alumni Council is that of Region Representative. Each of the eight regions has one representative who serves as a liaison between the State FFA Alumni and the affiliates in the region. These individuals are contacts that can answer questions, assist in beginning new alumni affiliates and serve in many other ways as the need arises.

Currently serving as Region Representatives are Aimee Brichacek, Charles Erickson, Cara Soper, Lynn Suter, Jim Burns, and Stacy Fritz. Thank you for all the work you do for MN FFA Alumni and for the FFA Alumni members in your region.

Regions 1 and 6 are currently open and in need of region representatives.

From the President: Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve.

Judy Barka, Litchfield

Our son Alan was selected as one of the National Star Farmer Finalist for 2014. Because of this we had the opportunity to do some things at National Convention that were different from previous years. During the STAR luncheon Alan and I visited with two people from CSX Corporation, (CSX together with its subsidiaries is based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation suppliers.) Both people spoke about why CSX supports FFA.

They talked specifically about coming to National Convention to recruit FFA members for positions with CSX. They both felt it was the strong work ethic and commitment to a job that made FFA members great candidates for positions with CSX.

We heard this same message from other sponsors throughout the luncheon. Many said if young people are applying for a job and they put FFA involvement on their resume it gets them noticed.

I was reminded of that again this week, when I visited with the newly formed Upsala FFA Alumni Affiliate. Agriculture instructor Mrs. Schleper was looking for Alumni members to come into her Ag Leadership class and do interviews with students. She explained how the students had already developed resumes and cover letters and were learning about job applications. The experience of doing interviews prepares them for the real world.

FFA prepares young people for the "real world" in so many ways and as Alumni we can be assisting in that preparation. Now is the time when FFA members and advisors are practicing for a variety of Career Development Events.

Do you have expertise to share or a willingness to help? Could/ would you be willing to coach a team? Can you listen to a speech and give comments? Can you help with a job interview?

Our son Alan has never wanted to do anything but milk cows. That did not come from growing up on a dairy farm. Al's love of cows came from wonderful people that supported and encouraged him starting at a young age. Throughout his life Alan has had people that have taken the time to answer questions, encourage him and help him. He has been very fortunate.

Alumni members are making a difference in the lives of young people. How are you making a difference?



Doing to Learn

National Officer Prep Day

Dassel-Cokato FFA hosted their National Officer Prep Day on September 27th.

This year, fourteen candidates from various states traveled to Dassel-Cokato high school to participate in an intensive interview process that replicates what they will experience in the actual interviews at National Convention.

FFA members, teachers, and many other individuals help to conduct the interviews and facilitation activities, give feedback, and score the candidates. FFA members and alumni members host candidates in their homes during the weekend. They also provide an evening of fun and food for candidates and people on the interview committee. Candidates leave with experience as well as feedback so that they can make changes before their actual interviews. Thank Dassel-Cokato FFA and Alumni, and Mr. Sawatzke for working hard to provide this opportunity!

Smithsonian to Display FFA Jackets

The blue jacket represents different things for different people. It stands for tradition but also for the future. It represents opportunities as well as the ability to overcome challenges. Everyone who has worn the jacket has had different experiences, memories, and journeys in the blue corduroy. Regardless of the differences, the blue jacket unites everyone who has worn it.

The first FFA jacket was worn at the Sixth National FFA Convention in 1933 and ever since, members have continued the tradition. In 2015, the blue jacket, will be shared with the people who visit the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History as part of the American Enterprise exhibit in Washington, D.C.

There are five jackets that have been donated to the Smithsonian and tell different stories of FFA and the individuals who wore the jackets. They represent history and milestones that agriculture and FFA has seen. The jackets will be on display beginning in July of 2015

There was a ceremony held this past summer where the jackets were presented to and accepted by the Smithsonian. The donors were recognized and thanked for their donation. Jackson Harris, one of the National Officers, spoke at the ceremony and reminded the gathering that FFA and the jacket

is not a relic that is history but a symbol of a bright future that will continue to make history. It was a great reminder of the long and outstanding tradition of FFA but also of the fact that FFA and the blue jacket will continue to have an impact on all who wear and support the blue corduroy.



Earning to Live

Convention Quiz

Test your knowledge of the 2014 National FFA Convention and Expo.

1. How many MN FFA members received their American Degree this year?
2. Where will National Convention be held in 2015?
3. Who was **not** a speaker at National Convention this year.
A. Nick Vujicic
B. Jane Herlong
C. Josh Sundquist
4. How many FFA members and guests were in attendance at this year's National Convention?
5. What is the name of the location where general sessions are conducted during National Convention in Louisville?

Answers: 1:126
2:Louisville 3:C
4:64,409 5:Freedom Hall

Minnesota FFA Alumni

Alumni Profile



Mark May Randolph FFA Alumni

Outstanding Alumni Member

Mark was an active member of the Randolph FFA chapter while he was an FFA member. Through the years he has been extremely supportive of the advisor and the members. All four of his children served as officers of the chapter and were very successful in their FFA careers. Over the years Mark has participated in the chapter's tractor parade, fruit sales, annual meeting, and member development.

Mark is currently serving as affiliate president. Prior to that he served as a board member for numerous years. As president he is easy to get along with, very well organized, and passionate about the chapter. This year he along with a number of other members hosted the 1st annual Tractor Pull, which raised over \$4,000 for the scholarship fund. He is the first to volunteer to work at the fruit sales disbursement, the tractor parade, the pork stand, and the annual meeting. He does very well in getting members to volunteer and has the ability to include everyone. His connections in the community make him a great resource for board members and chapter members.

Mark is not the kind of person who does things for recognition. He does them because they need to get done and he is dedicated to the success of the project.

Congratulations to Mark May for being selected as this year's Outstanding Alumni Member. Thank you for your dedication to FFA and for all of your hard work in your community. You set an example for others to follow. Thank you for your commitment to FFA!

Living to Serve

2015 Hall of Fame Nominations Open

The nominations for the 2015 Hall of Fame inductees is now open. Nominations will be closing on January 19th.

The Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame is made up of people who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to support, promote, and continue the tradition of agricultural education and FFA in the state of Minnesota.

Please think about people who have made an impact on FFA in your life. This could be a teacher, mentor, coach, college instructor or advisor, or any other individual who has been committed to FFA and its success. Consider nominating them for the Hall of Fame at the following link <http://bit.ly/190X2Dj>

Nominations are due by January 19th!

Passing the Baton: Welcome to Intern Katherine Wilts

Welcome to the new MN FFA Alumni Intern, Katherine "Katie" Wilts. Katie grew up on a farm raising corn, soybeans, and Charolais beef cattle near Kerkhoven, Minnesota. Katie has been an active member of the KMS FFA chapter. She has participated in the Farm Business Management and Ag Issues CDE contests. She has also served in various chapter leadership roles. She is currently a freshman at the University of Minnesota studying Agriculture and Food Business Management. She is in the U of M marching band and enjoys cheering on the Gophers. Welcome Katie!



Thank You MN FFA Alumni!

By: Lisa Roker

Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve as the MN FFA Alumni Intern. I have learned so much over this year and have met so many wonderful individuals who are committed to FFA and its members. I will be finishing my education by student teaching this spring at Plainview-Elgin-Millville high school. I will be graduating from the U of MN with a degree in Agricultural Education in May.

I have a story that I wanted to share with all of you. One of my classes asked us to think about why we do the things we do and why we give our time to certain things. I found my answer to that question while I was doing my fall observations at Howard Lake. During the freshman Intro to Ag class students were trying on school FFA jackets and deciding which size they should order. Then they wrote down the name they wanted on their own jacket and the correct size. I thought about the students and their newly ordered jackets. I thought about how the students don't realize all of the doors and opportunities that will come with that jacket. I thought about the potential of the students who will wear those jackets. Those jackets will be with the students through successes and challenges over the years. It will be there through the lessons and experiences. It will lead to friendships and memories. The jacket will be with these students as they learn who they are and who they want to become. I am excited to see what these students accomplish and the people these students become. This is why I do it! I can't wait to have a career in agricultural education so I can help students on their journey in agriculture and FFA. Thank you for all you do for FFA and for students who wear the blue jacket.

Upcoming Events

January 19, 2015	FFA Hall of Fame Nominations Due
February 21-28, 2015	National FFA Week
March 7, 2015	MN FFA Alumni Annual Conference

The FFA Hall of Fame is a collaborative effort between the Minnesota FFA Association, Minnesota FFA Alumni, and Minnesota FFA Foundation. A selection committee consisting of FFA members, alumni, agricultural educators and foundation representatives select the final inductees. The inductees are formally announced and recognized at the Minnesota FFA Alumni Association Annual Conference and have an induction ceremony during the State FFA Convention. Please nominate candidates for the Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame on the Minnesota FFA Alumni website or by clicking here: <http://bit.ly/190X2Dj>

Minnesota FFA Alumni Association

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**Minnesota FFA Alumni:
Supporting the Blue
Jackets since 1972!**

Newsletter created by
Minnesota FFA Alumni Intern
Lisa Roker.

FFA Alumni Mission

The mission of the Minnesota FFA Alumni Association is to secure the promise of FFA and agricultural education by creating an environment where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success.

FFA Alumni Vision

The vision of the Minnesota FFA Alumni Association is a world where people and communities can grow and develop to their fullest potential.

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