

# California FFA NEWS

WINTER 2017

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### *We want to hear from you...*

We are always looking for great stories about members and alumni around our state. Know of a story that we should feature in CA FFA News? Please email [news@californiaffa.org](mailto:news@californiaffa.org).

Submission deadlines:  
Fall..... June 1st  
Winter ..... September 1st  
Spring ..... November 15th  
Summer ..... March 1st



### *Stay in touch...*

*"California FFA"*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**JANUARY • 5-6** Made for Excellence (MFE) and Advanced Leadership Academy (ALA) - Sacramento  
**12-13** MFE and ALA - Redding **19-20** MFE and ALA - Monterey **21-22** MFE and ALA - Monterey **26-27** MFE and ALA - Ontario

**FEBRUARY • 3** Winter State Finals **9-10** MFE and ALA - Modesto **13-15** World Ag Expo - Tulare **16-17** MFE and ALA - Visalia **18-19** MFE and ALA - Visalia **18-24** National FFA Week **20-23** Sacramento Leadership Experience

For a list of current FFA events please visit [www.CalAgEd.org](http://www.CalAgEd.org)

## OUR APOLOGIES...

*In the Summer 2017 edition of California FFA News, we mistakenly stated that Manteca provided the floral arrangements for the FFA Foundation's Blue & Gold Gala - when, in fact, it was Lathrop FFA!*



## Lathrop FFA's Floral Program is in Full Bloom

Days before the FFA Foundation's Blue & Gold Gala in February, a group of Lathrop FFA members were busy creating the floral arrangements for the evening. With flowers donated by the California Cut Flower Commission, Lathrop FFA members created various centerpieces, large sprays and accent floral arrangements for the Foundation's largest fundraiser!

Lathrop FFA Floral is by no means a novice within the competitive floral industry. Students regularly serve customers seeking arrangements from bridal bouquets to balloon arches and events from baby showers to school graduations. Most recently, Lathrop FFA Floral students competed at the California State Fair, taking first, second and sixth in the Student Floral Competition. If you would like information on Lathrop FFA's Floral services, please visit their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/lathropffaflowers](http://www.facebook.com/lathropffaflowers) or call (559) 779-5662. •





## Donor Highlight...

### FARM CREDIT ALLIANCE GATHERS AT FFA CENTER TO CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS.

Longtime supporters, the Farm Credit Alliance recently gathered at the FFA Center to host their quarterly meeting, while acknowledging their role in the recent completion of the FFA Center sign. The sign was a much needed, and highly anticipated symbol for the FFA Center given the building's prominent presence along Highway 99. Debuting in July, the sign prominently displays iconic the FFA emblem and Farm Credit green biostar.

"We are very grateful for Farm Credit's ongoing dedication to the California FFA, and firmly believe that their investment in FFA members will pay dividends for generations to come" said Dennis Albiani, California FFA Foundation Chair.

The Farm Credit Alliance membership collectively includes American AgCredit,

**"We are very grateful for Farm Credit's ongoing dedication to the California FFA..."**

*Dennis Albiani,  
California FFA Foundation Chair*

Colusa-Glenn Farm Credit, Farm Credit West, Fresno Madera Farm Credit, Golden State Farm Credit, Yosemite Farm Credit and CoBank, which are separate cooperatively-owned lending institutions, providing agriculture and rural communities with reliable and consistent credit throughout the state of California, as

well as nationwide. The Farm Credit Alliance members have maintained an ongoing commitment to the 87,000 members of the California FFA. Their support offsets expenses for leadership development opportunities, including Greenhand, Made for Excellence and Advanced Leadership Academy. In addition, they support proficiencies and leadership awards. Most recently, the Farm Credit Alliance survived as a Platinum sponsor at the Blue and Gold Gala this past February.

In addition to their support at the state level, Farm Credit Alliance members support many of California FFA's 330 high school chapters at their county fairs, field days and with projects at the local level. •

### HOW FFA FOUNDATION SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE



Sectional, Regional and State awards are provided for 48 Proficiency categories, 36 Career Development Events, and eight Leadership Awards.



376 FFA jackets have been gifted to California FFA members through our Giving Tuesday campaign.



Over \$235,000 in conference and academic scholarships are provided annually.





## FEATURED CHAPTER

# Firebaugh FFA

In January of 1977, a group of agriculture advocates in Firebaugh, California, were able to bring a dream to life. A handful of farmers wanted agriculture at the high school site in the agriculturally driven town. With a lot of hard work, an unrelenting spirit and passion for agriculture, instruction in the Firebaugh Agriculture Department was created. It was not easy, but nothing worthwhile is. Without the passion of individuals 40 years ago, Firebaugh FFA would not be thriving as it is today.

From flora to fauna, we have it all at two fairs each year. The fairs have become an integral part of not only showcasing Supervised Agriculture Experiences, but also showcasing

students in a platform that the community can see - from earning the 2016 Madera District Fair FFA Champion Market Goat to having students continuously place in rabbit showmanship. The 2017 Chowchilla Fair rabbit exhibitors also did exceptional, won Best in Show and had several students place in novice, intermediate, and advanced FFA showmanship. We also had an extensive showing of still exhibits, including floral and agriculture mechanics. At the 2016 Madera District Fair, a student won Outstanding Youth Floral Exhibit and Best In Show for her America-themed wreath.

Supervised Agriculture Experiences do not end at the fair. Firebaugh FFA also had success



in proficiencies and degrees. The chapter had five sectional proficiency participants, and two individuals represented the chapter and competed at the state level. Student recognition is a cornerstone of Firebaugh FFA. Forty-four students earned the State FFA degree this year and eight students earned the American FFA Degree.

Firebaugh FFA continues to make strides in their involvement in Career Development Events. From September to May, we have students on numerous teams who compete in an array of events from cotton judging to vine pruning, and even a little farm business management. In the end, we were able to celebrate with a third-place finish of the Farm Business Management Team at the 2017 California FFA State Finals at California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo.

*{ Continued on page 5 }*







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Our chapter is lucky to have robust community support. The Firebaugh FFA Boosters and Firebaugh Agriculture Boosters helped six students continue their course of study at the collegiate level by awarding \$5,000 in scholarships. In addition, the members were also awarded scholarships at the regional, state, and national level. It is exciting to see student success and we could not be more proud of Mayte Magallon and Dalton Stuhr, who were awarded \$3,000 in scholarships from two different National FFA Scholarship Sponsors.

It is electrifying to see students grow and prosper to serve the organization at higher levels. We had eight members participate in the State FFA Band and Choir, but even more exciting to have a student accepted into the 2017 National FFA Band. We cannot wait to see what Eliberto Rivera does

during his time in Indianapolis! We will also have representation on the delegate floor as Rocio Berber, the chapter president, serves as a National Delegate from the great state of California. The continued involvement of the entire Firebaugh FFA Chapter led them to a 2017 Two Star National Chapter Award for the second year in the row. The students continuously challenge themselves to try new things and provide new learning opportunities. These students demonstrate that, with passion and commitment, anything is possible.

The Firebaugh FFA has been around for 40 years with a plethora of successes and losses, but most importantly, the chapter continues to be a beacon of hope for the agriculture community of 7,500 people on the Westside of Fresno County.

*Photo Captions (starting opposite page, upper left, rotating clockwise): The Firebaugh FFA chapter had 80 senior completers this year*

or 50% of the senior class of 2017 at Firebaugh High School. The Impromptu speakers celebrate their success at the 2017 West Fresno Madera Sectional Speaking Contest. The 2017-18 Firebaugh FFA Chapter Officer Team spent three days planning and preparing for an amazing year ahead, they even stopped at the boardwalk for a little California sun. The electric light parade is always a hit in Firebaugh, the chapter even brought home a first place finish in the school category. The students struggled to remain standing at the ice rink, but still had a blast trying to skate. The 2017-2018 Fire FFA Officer Team hiked down to Shark Fin Cove near Santa Cruz to capture their chapter officer team photos. Students prepared 50 complete Thanksgiving meals for the community of Firebaugh. The turkeys are even raised by members as an SAE Project. The animal science class took a behind the scenes tour of the Fresno Chaffee Zoo. •







## *Our Diary Story*

**A story is not just a story,  
but a journey to who you are today.**

*By Jill and Jana Scott*

My family has always told my sister and I to go and tell our story. Sometimes it is as simple as telling a classmate about a day on the farm or as complex as explaining to a school board member why they should keep vocational education in our schools. Regardless of when or where, we have always been eager and excited to share our story with anyone who would listen, because our story is why we are who we are.

Our family's legacy began with a cattle car, a handful of cows, and a man with a dream. Our great-great-grandfather, Ira J. Scott, left his home in Iowa to pursue dairy farming in California. Little did he know that his small business would blossom to so much more than just a small dairy farm. His two sons Leonard and Millard owned and operated two locations in Chino, California, with their own sons, beginning the name "Scott Brothers." The dairies eventually merged into a dairy and a creamery, and in the late 70's the dairy was moved to San Jacinto, California and the creamery stayed in Chino, about an hour's drive apart.

When the dairy moved, Stan (Leonard's son) moved his family from Chino to live and work on the farm. His three kids, Bruce, Debbie and Brad, all worked on the dairy in their free time and were active members of the 4-H and FFA. During his show career, our father Brad met our mother Sally at the local fair. Later on, they would eventually marry and have my sister and I. Through FFA, our father was drawn to leadership and served as a chapter and section officer, as well as participated on the livestock judging team. After college, he joined Young Farmers and Ranchers and became very active in the farming community. Today he is involved in many local and national boards, working to help improve the dairy and agriculture industry.

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My sister, Janna, and I followed our parent's legacy and joined FFA our freshman year. We both stay very active in our chapter and section by competing in speaking competitions, showing livestock, and serving as chapter and section officers. When we are not in school or at an FFA event, we help on the farm. We have been helping on the dairy since we were old enough to walk, just like our parents before us. Growing up working and living on the dairy has become a way of life for us, and we wouldn't change it for the world.

Ask any farmer or rancher and they will tell you that there are always challenges when working in agriculture. Several years ago, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board decided that they wanted to limit and cease the application of cow manure to forage fields to prevent the leaching of salts into the water table. Although this mandate had the environment's best interest in mind, it was going to hurt all the local dairy farmers. By not being able to apply the manure to their fields, the farmers would have to pay for it to be transported and disposed, a cost that would put most dairy farms out of business. Upon hearing about this, our Uncle Bruce went searching for a solution and founded Ag Waste Solutions (AWS). This company is a pilot project that would turn cow manure into diesel fuel, potable water, and a soil additive called biochar. The dairy decided that they would build the project on the farm in hopes that the new process would help others in the area.

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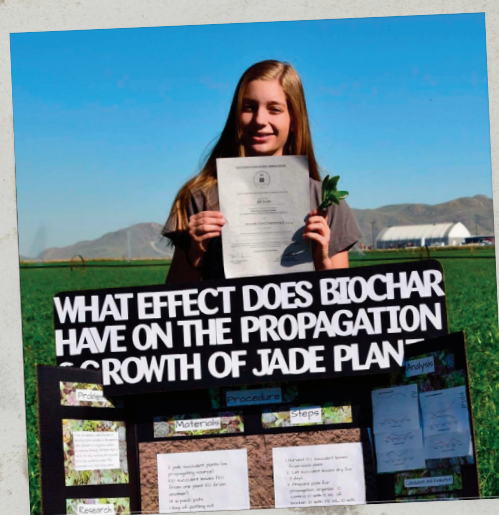
## Our family's legacy began with a cattle car, a handful of cows and a man with a dream.

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Having the opportunity to see this ground-breaking science being built in our own backyard was really intriguing. It was something that you don't get to see every day. The thing that interested me most was the biochar. Biochar is a soil additive that helps prevent leaching, holds water, and replenishes carbon. I was interested in how it could benefit growers and have based an ongoing science project on discovering its benefits and disadvantages. So far, I have found results in a greenhouse setting and am continuing my experiment to find results in real-world situations. I took the results from my first experiment and entered the school science fair. Little did I know that my project would place at the school level, district level, and county level, where I placed second in Environmental Science and received the Yale Young Scientist Award. This kind of innovation excites me, and I can't wait to see where the next phase of my project takes me.

The dairy's mission is to not only make progress through technical innovation, but also to advocate for the dairy industry and modern agriculture. Our family makes it our personal mission to advocate for agriculture whenever we can. The dairy has a transparency policy that means we don't try to hide anything from the consumer. The dairy was featured on an episode of *Undercover Boss*. In this episode, the owner of Menchie's Frozen Yogurt came to the dairy to see how the cows that provide the milk for his yogurt were being treated. During the episode, the boss followed around the dairy's herd manager as he treated cows, milked cows, and even helped give birth to a baby calf who he later named Allen. Being on the show was an amazing opportunity for the public to see how cows are treated on modern dairy farms. Although our family was a bit nervous about being on national TV, we received a lot of positive feedback from the viewers and believe that the show was a success.

All of this has been part of our family's mission to share our story. From a tiny farm in the early 1900's to appearing on national television, our great-great grandfather couldn't possibly have imagined that his business would go so far. As a family, we still hold our love for agriculture near and dear to our hearts and will continue to support the industry for the rest of our days. •





# REGIONAL UPDATES

## North Coast Region



Crescent City to Half Moon Bay, North Coast Region ALL THE WAY! North Coast Region has been off to an amazing start this year! The North Coast Region is proud to announce that our very own Genevieve Regli was elected the 2017-18 California FFA State Secretary, our first state officer in nine years! Our region is so incredibly proud, as she has restored passion and hope in the North Coast. This year we want our members to get back to the origins of the FFA Organization and agriculture. We also want members to stay rooted in their values and stick to their morals. Therefore, this year our theme is **Rooted in Agriculture!** The North Coast Region Officer Team has decided that we will be implementing the NCR Chapter of the Month. We hope

that we can highlight accomplishments that chapters have made within the region through our Instagram account. Just around the corner is our COLC! This year, we are excited to add agriculture industry tours to our conference. This experience will give members the opportunity to see the foundation of the agriculture industry and jobs that drive our economy. We can't wait to watch our members learn and grow as individuals and as officer teams during our time together at COLC. Thank you for the excellence our members bring to the North Coast Region, and we look forward to the achievements our members make this year. Have an amazing year and remember to remain Rooted in Agriculture!

## South Coast Region



Since the Regional Officer Leadership Conference, where the newly elected South Coast Regional Leaders learned the importance of being "Anchored" in service, values, and agriculture, they completed their first endeavor together as a team: The 2017 Sectional Officer Leadership Conference. The conference, themed **Be a Wave of Change in an Ocean of Opportunity**, was centered around the ideals of finding the distinction in one's own abilities to create the largest impact in a world full of possibilities. The leaders each identified people in their own lives who had been such a "wave" for them, as examples for the attendees. They shared leadership qualities such as selfless, compassion, persistence, determination, and courage. Encompassing the theme of the conference, the members attended workshops in where they learned various aspects of running a successful sectional meeting. The workshops identified five important steps: Prior Organization, Promotion, Agenda,

Activity/Recreation/Awards Presentation, and Thank You's. Throughout their time at the conference, the sectional leaders had the opportunity to practice opening and closing each session. In addition to participating in the regional leaders' planned workshops, the members also engaged in team-building activities facilitated by the 2017-18 California State Officers, while later having time to bond individually with each leader. To celebrate a long day of learning, the night ended with a themed dance for everyone in attendance. The conference hall started the morning filled with an ocean of blue and gold but finished with a sea of dancing floral prints. When the time came to say goodbye the next afternoon, the regional leaders were confident the members left with the leadership skills necessary to make their year ahead very successful and were looking forward to the accomplishments ahead!

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NORTH TO SOUTH - EAST TO WEST, REGIONAL OFFICER TEAMS ACROSS THE STATE ARE PREPARING TO LEAD AN INCREDIBLE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR. WHAT DOES YOUR REGION'S TEAM HAVE PLANNED FOR YOU?

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## Southern Region



Even our smallest actions can make a huge difference for the people around us. With this in mind, this year the Southern Region officer team chose the theme **Small Acts, Big Impact**. At our officer retreat, we were able to learn the value of teamwork as we began planning out our year of service. By participating in an Escape Room, workshops, and picking berries, we learned the value of leading in and out of our blue corduroy jackets. Soon after, we had the opportunity to grow as a team at ROLC, where we were able to embody our role as leaders and learn the importance of staying anchored to our values. Through four days of leadership development, industry tours, and facilitation training, our officer team was ready to put our ideas into action. Likewise, our

sectional officers had the chance to learn a little more about the diversity in our region's heated deserts and sunny beaches at the Southern Region Sectional Officer Leadership Summit. Sectional officers were able to complete their training and learn new ways to keep their sectional events interactive. As of right now, we are finalizing plans for our Chapter Officer Leadership Conference in November. Expect a great skit, meaningful workshops, and an officer team eager to teach and learn from the region's members. We cannot wait to demonstrate that everyone's actions accumulate to make a huge impact, not just in this organization, but with anyone who crosses our path.

## San Joaquin Region



The San Joaquin Region has been working hard on introducing members to new ideas, challenging them physically and mentally, as well as preparing them for what the year has to offer. From SOLC all the way to Bootcamp and even several COLC's the SJR Team has worked hard to prepare the members and officers in order to enhance their passion for the FFA Organization. Starting with SOLC, the team developed several workshops for the officers. The Fresno State University cooperated as well, and helped us go through the process of the E.D.G.E. Challenge, in which the officers participated in various activities where they had to overcome challenges by stepping out of their comfort zones. The San Joaquin Region also works on an Army Base Camp and hosts what we call SJR Bootcamp. At this camp, the officers help facilitate, as chapter officers go through the obstacles and challenges. There are three courses: the Ropes Course, Obstacle Course, and Leadership Reaction Course. Each course has skills to focus on. The Ropes Course is a more

competitive ground where there are obstacles that the officers have to face as a team. The Obstacle Course contains physically challenging army-based obstacles. Finally, the Leadership Reaction Course challenges them mentally. The SJR team decided that we should focus on the members and their success, as well as attend several COLC's besides those of our own personal chapters. At these COLC's the team saw how engaging the officers were. We focused on what the members wanted and needed to know, instead of teaching them what they already knew. Activities such as community service workshops and icebreakers were planned for them. Overall, the San Joaquin Region Team has worked very hard, learned with the members while teaching, and engaged with everyone to make them realize how powerful FFA and the agricultural industry can be. •

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CALIFORNIA FFA  
FOUNDATION

CALIFORNIA FFA  
ASSOCIATION

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL  
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

# EXPLORING THE ENTITIES WITHIN THE CALIFORNIA FFA CENTER

## The implementation of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917 provided for vocational agriculture to be taught in all public secondary schools in the United States.

The California Agricultural Teachers' Association (CATA) was formed in 1920 with the purpose to promote and improve the teaching of agriculture in California and foster the welfare of those engaged in this work. Upon its formation, teachers developed the organizational structure of the CATA and elected officers to serve the organization.

In the early 1920's, agricultural education faced many challenges from administrators and others. In an attempt to meet these challenges, sectional, regional, and statewide CATA meetings were held on a regular basis so that teachers could share teaching techniques ideas for improving curriculum in agricultural education. This peer support and cooperation has been a trademark of agricultural education and has continued to serve as a strength of the CATA organization.

In 1928, the California Association of Future Farmers of America was organized, and the leadership development of young people involved in agricultural education became an important consideration of the CATA. Over the next several years, the CATA would develop a series of contests and activities to assist the FFA Organization in a leadership development program. A set of rules governing these contests and activities would be developed, which we fondly refer to today as the CATA Curricular Code.

Over the next several decades, there was continued growth and expansion of agricultural education throughout California. The Junior/Community College agricultural programs had a slow start, but began to develop rapidly in the 1960's. Leadership by agricultural instructors at the Junior College level has contributed tremendously to the success of the total educational effort in agricultural

education. The close communication and cooperation between high school and community college programs has benefited thousands of students enrolled in agriculture.

Throughout its history, CATA has maintained a strong tradition of leadership and involvement in other state and national organizations. CATA members have dramatically influenced the structure, policies, and practices of organizations like Association for Career and Technical Education, and the National Association of Agricultural Educators. Several CATA officers have served on national committees and boards of related organizations, contributing to the overall success of agricultural education.

In the early 1980's, CATA members recognized the need to amplify their voice in state and national policies affecting agricultural education. Members voted to increase the level of dues paid to the organization to create the position of Executive Director and establish a state CATA office adjacent to the State Capitol in Sacramento. Ken Harris served as the first CATA Executive Director and guided the organization over the next several years, to having a dramatic influence on several key initiatives, including the formation of the Agricultural Incentive Grant program, which greatly increased funding for secondary agricultural education programs in California. Upon Harris' retirement in 1992, Jim Aschwanden assumed the position of Executive Director.

For the past eighty years, the California Agricultural Teachers' Association has contributed greatly to the success of agricultural education efforts in California and beyond. This success can be attributed to the purpose, self-sacrifice, and vision shared by those involved in this tremendous profession. California's tradition of agricultural excellence is due in great part to those whose lives have been touched by the members of CATA - a legacy in which we can all be very proud. •

1917  
Implementation of  
the Smith-Hughes  
Act

1920  
Formation  
of California  
Agricultural  
Teachers'  
Association

1928  
California  
Association of  
Future Farmers of  
America formed

1960's  
Rapid development  
of Junior/  
Community College  
Agricultural  
Programs

1981  
Ken Harris, first  
Executive Director  
of CATA hired and  
Sacramento office  
established

1992  
Jim Aschwanden  
hired as Executive  
Director of CATA  
upon Harris'  
retirement

2017  
Jim Aschwanden  
retires after 25  
years as Executive  
Director





# STATE OFFICERS ON THE go

This year's State Officer's Team has had a busy schedule filled with new experiences learning about the agriculture industry. We had the opportunity to visit Maisie Jane's, a successful SAE project that is now a booming business. We also visited with A.G. Kawamura, California's former Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Kawamura is proud of California's urban agriculture, and we are excited and appreciative that he will be assisting us with the move to Anaheim.

We have been diving deeper into the agriculture industry across the state of California as we visited with many companies and industry leaders. Our visits to universities offering agriculture majors helped us develop our skills so that we could better serve the FFA members during chapter visit season. In addition to preparing for chapter visits, the state officer team also was able to attend various events, such as COLC and SOLC, across all regions. We are most excited to be able to meet the members of California FFA as we continue with chapter visits and prepare to facilitate Made for Excellence Conferences. We hope to see you at these conferences and the State Convention in April!



Top: State and Regional Officers at ROLC in Tamales Bay; Bottom clockwise from upper left: The State Officers assisting Full Belly Farms at the Marin County Farmers' Market; Full Belly Farm Tour put the officers to work picking onions; Touring Maisie Jane's a specialty nut company which started as a SAE project...now a booming business! Read more about Massie Jane's in the Spring 2018 edition; In July our state officer

team had the opportunity to work with the 4-H State Ambassadors at the California State Fair; All smiles after a visit to Scott Brothers' Dairy, featured on pages six and seven; Our team has had a blast making friendships with students across the state during chapter visits! Pictured with members of the San Luis Obispo FFA Chapter, our very first chapter visit! •





## GILROY FFA Sectional BBQ & Hangout

by Sierra Sanchez

On September 25, 2017, Gilroy FFA hosted the first ever Santa Clara Section BBQ and Hangout. Students and advisors from Sobrato, San Benito, Live Oak, and Gilroy High Schools line danced the night away at the Gilroy High School Farm. The chapters mingled with one another, practiced their roping and horseshoe skills, all while eating delicious hamburgers and munching on ice cold snow cones. John De Carlo from Gilroy FFA stated, "The hangout turned out really well and it was fun. There was a lot more people who showed up than we expected. I am really excited to do this again soon." Santa Clara's Sectional President Sam Van Rhijn, who attended the hangout, said we should host this event again soon. Gilroy FFA hopes to plan another event like this in the near future to bring the Santa Clara Section closer together.



## MADERA FFA Agricultural Academy

by Arthur Cuevas

Over the summer the Madera FFA chapter partnered with the Madera School District

to run the first ever Agricultural Academy. Out of all applicants, 57 seventh graders and FFA members toured local agricultural businesses, farms, the MSHS agriculture department and the local community college. After the tours, students participated in workshops developed by the officers and teachers about four of the pathways available through the Ag department. They built sprinklers in Ag mechanics, practiced vet skills in animal science, created boutonnières in floral, checked wine grape sugars in horticulture, and participated in FFA activities to close out the day. The week-long academy allowed students to see parts of the agricultural industry they had never experienced before and were introduced to career opportunities. At the end of the week all the academy members and businesses were honored at a banquet celebrating their success in completing the academy.



## LIVINGSTON FFA Sweet Potato Festival

by Jasmyne Gomez

Everywhere you looked during the Livingston City Sweet Potato Festival you could see an individual wearing a Livingston FFA t-shirt. That is because Livingston FFA has had the opportunity to give back to the community by being a vital part of the Sweet Potato Festival for the past five years. The Sweet Potato Festival is a three day event that take place during the third week in September. It requires over 100 Livingston FFA members to volunteer each day to help run the Kids Zone, petting zoo, and other attractions. The Kids Zone includes different games and activities that the younger festival goers could participant in, as well as educational activities centered around sweet potatoes.



## SUNNY HILLS FFA The Beginning of Another Great Year

by Malia Arpon

In August, Sunny Hills FFA students celebrated the beginning of the new school year at our Summer's Not Over beach social. In our courtyard, members enjoyed free s'mores, popsicles, hot dogs, and so many other foods you could enjoy at the beach! Members also had an opportunity to compete in a watermelon eating contest for a prize and play volleyball. Our officers worked hand-in-hand to put together an event that allowed the members to relax and have fun as they rung in the new year! All in all, the chapter was able to come together and have a great time with friends.

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# REGIONAL UPDATES

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## Central Region



Stand Up. Stand Out. Stand Together. 23,000 members - each and every one of them with a different story to tell. 23,000 voices to be heard, paths to be paved, and connections to be made. This is a year focused on the members of the association, and making sure they know the value in standing up, standing out, and standing together. The FFA encourages everyone to be themselves, whoever that may be. For a member to know who they are, they must know what they believe in. It is these core values that give a person the foundation to live their truth. We are looking forward to helping our members build on this foundation, so that they can stand up for what they believe in. The blue jacket may have been adopted by the organization, but the experiences that have been woven into every seam of it are up to the individual inside the jacket. These are what shape the members of the National FFA

Organization into the young men and women they become. No two of these experiences are exactly alike, and it is important to embrace those qualities that make a person stand out, rather than disregard them. From Yolo to Mariposa, the Central Region has a wide variety of members, all of whom have their own unique story. Instead of allowing diversity and a geography create a separation among the members, we want to use these to connect on a deeper level. We work toward coalition, in order to build strength, as well of a sense of community and family, so that as a region, we can stand together. California FFA, get ready for the 23,000 members who are ready to **Stand Up, Stand Out, and Stand Together** alongside the Central Region.

## Superior Region



Operation Superior has launched and is ready to influence our **Agents of Change!** This year's officer team has been busy with their officer retreat held in Bucks Lake, the Regional Officer Leadership Conference in Tomales Bay, and our Chapter Officer Leadership Conference in Shingletown. During their retreat, the team bonded with one another, even if it meant a couple of broken picture frames. They played volleyball, shopped for food, cooked meals, and discussed their vision for the year and goals for the Superior Region. By the end of their retreat, it was clear that the Superior Region officers worked extremely well with one another and they would use their close bond to build relationships with the rest of the FFA members in the Superior Region. At the Regional Officer Leadership Conference on July 8-10, the team

learned how to better serve the members of the Superior Region, as well as how to create and deliver workshops at COLC that would truly impact members and teach them the skills necessary to lead in their own chapters and communities. At the Chapter Officer Leadership Conference in Shingletown on August 26-30, chapter officers bonded with their teams and the regional team through team-building activities and reflections. They also attended workshops put on by the state officers about the Anchors we should all tie ourselves to; service, our values, and agriculture. When our chapter officers, or Agents of Change, left COLC they were better prepared for the year ahead of them, as well as closer with one another. Operation Superior is in full swing, and as Agents of Change we are going to influence the membership! •





## RIVERDALE FFA Ag Adventure Day

by Prestin Rollin

Each year, Riverdale FFA holds their *Ag Adventure Day* for the elementary students of their feeder schools. The event is meant to be educational with many hands on activities and fun for over 600 students! The intent is to create a love of agriculture and the realization that it is an essential industry. Members prepare lessons the month prior for their stations, which include: Welcome and safety in an agricultural setting, Dairy and Beef Cattle, Dairy and Meat Goats, Horses, Petting Zoo, Small Animals, Plants and Seed Planting, Ag Mechanics, Agricultural Equipment, Hayride, and Importance of FFA in Agriculture.



## CLOVIS FFA Farm to Fork

by Anthony Cortez

The Clovis Agricultural Center is a 21 acre fully operational farm laboratory where all

areas of the agriculture industry are emphasized, from livestock production and food science to mechanical engineering and plant production. Every year the Clovis FFA provides a unique opportunity for students to participate in a Plant Production Co-Op, where they learn the Farm to Fork concept first hand. This year, while working the weekly Clovis Farmers Market, the students struck a relationship with the local restaurant Rev's; their focus is to highlight locally grown fruit, vegetables, and protein. To date, Rev's has purchased peaches, plums, nectarines, watermelons, tomatoes, grapes, and hot peppers, which have all be uniquely used in their menu. Clovis FFA and Rev's are currently working on developing a recurring menu item where produce grown by the FFA members can be highlighted year round.

## KINGSBURG FFA The Start of New Beginings

by Brooklynn Young

Kingsburg FFA has kicked off this school year with energy and passion, bringing excitement to their members. The chapter has held an ice cream social for new members, an informational meeting for the parents of members, and a back to school barbecue for all members. The ice cream social had great attendance, and many freshmen are excited for what FFA has in store for them. The informational meeting for parents was a great time for parents to learn more about the FFA program and how they can get involved. Finally, the back to school barbecue was a huge hit among the members! Members met new friends, competed in Kunjabi Kan-Kan, and shared in a great meal prepared by one of our ag teachers. Kingsburg FFA is so excited for this next year of being Rooted In Community!



## NIPOMO FFA Students Experience Ag Industry

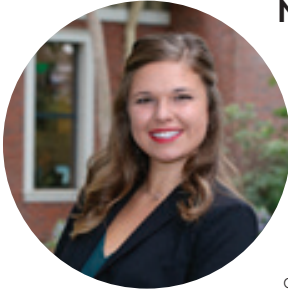
by Kayla Zalesny

Students in Nipomo FFA's Advanced Interdisciplinary Science for Sustainable Agriculture class will have the opportunity to visit a wide variety of local agriculture businesses throughout the coming school year as part of their agriscience pathway capstone class. The first of these tours took place on September 1 at a local horticulture plug producer, Ball Tagawa, a subsidiary of Ball Horticulture. During the tour, students witnessed commercial plug production from start to finish, and learned about production planning, merchandising, distribution, and career opportunities within the horticulture field. Horticulture production is a major contributor to the Nipomo economy, and students were able to get first hand experiences with this important industry. The classes look forward to many more interesting and educational tours to come.



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## NIPOMO FFA

### *Alumni Spotlight:* Riley Nilsen

Nipomo FFA Alumni and past California FFA State President Riley Nilsen continues to lead and succeed as a student at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. This year Riley is serving as the President of Cal Poly's Associated Students Incorporated (ASI). This elected position will allow her to influence campus culture, advocate for agriculture programs at the college and state level, and lead the Cal Poly Mustangs into a brighter future. One of her signature projects has been "Buck the Stigma," a mental health awareness program which encourages students to de-stress, and helps to decrease the stigma associated with mental health challenges. Nipomo FFA is proud of this outstanding alumni!



## LINDEN FFA Officer Retreat

by Irene Duran

We told our officers to take a hike this summer! The Linden FFA officer team traveled to Calaveras Big Trees State Park in Arnold, California, for a two day camping trip. The team got an opportunity to bond like never before, along with planning big ideas for this school year. First, the team had to figure out how to build a tent, which is harder than it seems. They reviewed the chapter constitution and their expectations for their roles. The officer team came up with their chapter theme, *Blue Jackets, Gold Standards*. During this trip, the team got to go on a hike, stargaze, sit by the campfire, and learn about the history of the park while having no cellular service. On the way back to Linden, the officers also got to visit Mercer Caverns in Murphys. The cave is 160 feet below the entrance and is composed of 440 steps.



## SANTA MARIA FFA Blue Jacket Bonaza

by Monserrat Nolasco

Fifteen Santa Maria FFA members volunteered at the annual Celebrate Harvest Dinner hosted

by the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau in early August. At the dinner various community supporters raised funds for Blue Jacket Bonanza Scholarship Program. Not only were thousands of dollars raised to support the various FFA programs in the county, but at the end of the night, Santa Maria FFA chapter received a big blue box. Within this box there were 10 new Santa Maria FFA Jackets! Jackets which the chapter will loan to students who do not have their own. "It was an awesome experience to see people from our community come out and support the FFA program and Blue Jacket Bonanza by giving donations and holding auctions," states senior and second year FFA member Leydi Rios. Santa Maria FFA is thankful for the continuous support that the local community shows.

## FIREBAUGH FFA

### Fired Up for the End of the Year Banquet

by Jacquelin Tinoco and Heidi Guzman

The banquet was the last FFA event that Firebaugh held. The banquet recognized students and staff for their extreme hard work and dedication to the Firebaugh FFA Chapter. Students were recognized for outstanding achievement, participating in CDEs, being part of officer teams, etc. Every member of the community was welcome to attend the banquet. They were served appetizers, dinner and dessert. Several members of the community attended this banquet, and were able to see members of the FFA be recognized and awarded for several different aspects of FFA achievement. We wished Mr. Gene Lieb luck in his National Advisor interview and recognized the top 20 FFA members. Lastly, the FFA Boosters and Ag Advisory board awarded scholarships to deserving individuals. Overall, the banquet was a success, because we had tons of community support and everyone was satisfied with the outcome of the banquet. •





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