

AGGIE ANNEX

JANUARY 2011

CENTRAL REGION NEWS

BY JESSALEE GOEHRING

The Central Region has been full of excitement this past fall and winter. With a successful trip to National Convention, we are ready for 2011. Happy New Year!

Yolo Section:

The *Delta HS* ag department is currently moving into its new facilities that were constructed from Prop. 1D funds. A self-contained barn and greenhouse were constructed on the school farm. A new laboratory was built for the floriculture program that consists of all stainless steel tables and a walk-in freezer and cooler. The wood shop received new equipment, including portable dust collection systems, downdraft tables, and table saws. The welding shop was expanded by 1,200 feet and purchased new welding equipment. Delta HS is very excited for this new addition and possibilities for their agriculture program.

Sacramento Section:

Congratulations to *Elk Grove HS* on their National Champion Marketing Plan Team and to their Reserve Champion Ag Issues Team! Additionally, they had numerous placings in the top three for the Agriscience competition and a 3-star National Chapter Award. Great job!

Cheryl Reece of *Galt HS* was awarded the Honorary American FFA Degree at the National FFA

Convention. Congratulations!

Students in the *Florin HS* FARMS program (<http://landbasedlearning.org/>) visited a dairy in Galt to learn about milk production as well as the management of a dairy. Students had the opportunity to assist in milking cows and observe a high tech management software program. Photos from the trip can be seen at www.science.room.net/florinfarms. Last year, the FARMS team members were participants in the SLEWS program through their partnership with the Center for Land-Based Learning and now they make up the FARMS Leadership Team. The team is working on a community action project in which they will teach local elementary school students about sustainable agriculture and specifically about worms. Last month three FARMS students from last year spoke at a ceremony honoring California Secretary of Agriculture A.G. Kawamura. Great job Florin HS.

Delta-Cal Section:

Congratulations to *Escalon HS* and *Lodi HS* for their 2-star National Chapter Recognition at the National FFA Convention. *Lodi HS* also had the third place Botany Novice Team Agriscience winner at National Convention.

Bret Harte HS came home from National Convention with their

student placing seventh overall in the Job Interview competition. Congratulations!

Escalon HS was proudly represented at National Convention with one of their students being named National Agriscience Student Finalist! They also brought home a National Champion Agriscience Fair participant in the area of Zoology.

Gregg Bridges of *Weston Ranch HS* in Manteca, and his fiancé are expecting their first baby together April 29. Their wedding is still planned for July 2, 2011. Congratulations!

Manteca Unified School District School Farm is nearing completion, students and advisors are very excited about that! The rabbit co-op projects are doing extremely well, and the Montadale sheep project welcomed several new students to the show team this year. The pheasant projects are expanding also. This year their school farm will be adding a new project - a Brahma Heritage Chicken Project, they are really excited about this new project opportunity for their students.

Sierra-Manteca FFA members just wrapped up another successful Drive Thru BBQ serving more than 500 dinners to the community. Ag Venture was another huge success, having more than 3,500 third graders visit their school farm on a single day! They are especially proud of

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their Sierra students as they did another tremendous job educating younger students about agriculture! *San Joaquin Delta College* just finished installing a Meadow Garden as part of the campus horticulture garden. It is 50 x 250 and contains native grasses, wildflowers, and a few trees.

Stanislaus Section:

Natalie Stevano of *Gregorio HS* had her baby boy on November 19, John Stevano, weighing 8 lbs. 15 oz. and 21" long. Congratulations Natalie and family!

Tri Rivers Section:

Congratulations to *Brian Mortenson* of *Central Valley HS* and his wife. They welcomed their first child into the world on 90210 or September 2, 2010! Her name is Payten Jeanise Mortensen and she weighed 7 lbs. 8 oz. and was 19 3/4" long.

Merced/Mariposa Section:

Congratulations to the *Atwater HS Horse Judging Team* on placing fourth high team overall at the National FFA Convention. *Beth Knapp* was also nominated by fellow ag teacher, Dave Gossman, as Modesto

Bee's Class Act for her passion in teaching agriculture to young adults! Congratulations Beth.

Atwater - Buhach Colony HS brought home the National Champion Dairy Cattle Evaluation Team at National Convention. Congratulations! *Steve Obad* of *Atwater- Buhach Colony HS* was also selected as the Merced-Mariposa cattleman of the year and recognized at their annual dinner\dance ag scholarship fundraiser. Steve has raised registered Angus cattle for 22 years and has been on the Cattlemen's Board for the past 16 years.

SOUTH COAST REGION NEWS

BY AMY LEWANDOSKI

San Luis Obispo Section:

Atascadero FFA was victorious for the second year in a row at the Sectional Go 4 the Gold Games. They were also excited to send eight students back to National Convention.

Coast Union has just under half of the student body as FFA members. *Darcy Dobrec* recently had a baby and *Cyndie* is really excited about helping with ASB for Darcy during her baby leave...NOT! They also have a new pole barn and are hoping to put six lamb and six pig pens in it before March!

Morro Bay FFA hosted one of their largest Opening & Closing Contests with close to 300 students participating! Their homecoming buttons were a sell-out and they had another fantastic Greenhand initiation.

Paso Robles FFA inducted their

newest members into the FFA at their annual Greenhand Potluck. Nine teams competed at the Opening & Closing contest. Five students participated at the National Convention, and were excited to share their new leadership skills with their chapter! The new ag department is under construction and they should start next school year in it.

San Luis Obispo FFA would like to welcome *Patrick Smith* and thank him for representing the advisors at the lip synch contest! They had a great time planning their week long trip to Washington, New York, and National Convention. They took a record 18 Opening & Closing teams to the contest at Morro Bay HS!

Shandon FFA is off and running with Always a Happy Ending as the Chapter Theme for the year. They competed at Go 4 the Gold Games and took five teams to Opening &

Closing – they actually needed a school bus! They had three students receive their American Farmer Degrees.

Templeton - The 2010-2011 chapter theme of Ride the Wave with Templeton FFA is making its mark on chapter members. The first drive-thru BBQ of the year was a huge success. Nearly 50 Greenhand members were initiated at the October pumpkin carving. Several members attended National Convention including their National Proficiency Finalist in Wildlife Production and Management. The school farm has received a much needed cleaning from the students.

Santa Barbara Section:

Righetti HS students have been very busy pruning and training their new vineyard on campus. Also, many students were involved with the growing and planning of their

annual pumpkin patch. All classes are busy with projects, fermentation, grape harvest, full greenhouses, and welding projects. Their ag advisory members are pursuing a new horticulture unit. And they brought home four game balls from a very exciting FFA Dodger Game. They also won Best Youth Float at the Los Alamos Old Days Parade.

Lompoc HS is happy to announce that after four years of pushing, the Ag. Government/Policies class has finally been approved and implemented with 33 students enrolled.

Pioneer Valley HS had a successful fair, with record setting sale prices and numerous awards! To kick off the year the leadership class had their annual Welcome Back Breakfast where they served more than two hundred excited FFA members! They also attended FFA Dodger Day, where the kids had the time of their lives as legend Fernando Valenzuela threw out the opening pitch!

Arroyo Grande HS has just finished some major repairs and planted their vineyard!

Nipomo HS had a successful golf tournament to fundraise for the National FFA Convention.

Santa Ynez HS added a part-time teacher to teach the increased level of freshmen enrollment!

Santa Maria HS started their year with the FFA hosting a welcome back Ranch Breakfast for the entire school staff. They are currently working with a new principal and vice principal and keeping them involved in the FFA program. They took 14 students to National Convention, seven out of their eleven American Degree recipients were

able to make it to Indiana. The Agronomy team competed at the national contest. In addition, the State Champion Soils team traveled on a rewards trip as well.

Ventura Section:

Camarillo HS has a brand new 40 x 90 greenhouse. They will be completing the irrigation and filling it with new plant material.

Carpinteria HS is turns 55 this year! In addition to excelling in showmanship at the Ventura County Fair, Carpinteria FFA members are doing many community service projects with organizations including the Avocado Commission, the National Forest Service, and the Santa Barbara Farm Bureau.

Fillmore FFA sponsored a Veterans pancake breakfast on the 4th of July and served nearly 500 people. Their fireworks booth made \$18,000. They also served their community by planting pumpkins for pre-school children and hosting a buyer's banquet for fair buyers. Plans are in motion to build a new meats lab.

Santa Paula HS hosted Opening & Closing ceremonies with more than 150 sectional FFA members attending. 54 students participated in the Ventura County Fair and won Grand Champion Steer, FFA Reserve Champion Steer, Reserve Grand Champion Heifer, FFA Champion Heifer, and FFA Reserve Champion Heifer. In October, they helped their community by conducting an FFA livestock petting zoo at the local pumpkin patch.

Ventura HS's landscape entry won second place, \$450 for their chapter, and plaques for Best Fair

Theme and Best Plant Material at the Ventura County Fair. All the plant material used in the 20 x 20 landscape was grown as student projects.

Monterey Bay Section:

Morgan Hill is going solar on the school farm, and is happy with their new and supportive administrative team. They are working with the Santa Clara Valley water district on a grant to get a greenhouse and an area for community gardens.

Hollister HS is offering Agriculture Earth Science this year to all freshmen. In addition, they have a new ag barn that was just finished. Congratulations to *Vera Gomes* for her Honorary American Degree and *Erica Bianchi* for being a National finalist for Diversified Livestock.

Gilroy added a section of small engines and is happy to have its Ag Science 1 class back. They have a great motivated freshman class who got first in Greenhand Opening & Closing and also had three Outstanding Officer winners.

Campbell steer projects are starting with eight steers. They are also beginning a commercial hog project. They are happy about having 75 new freshman, and classes which include Ag Science 1, Ag Biology, and Ag Mechanics.

Sobrato welcomes their new student teacher Anna Katuin. They started the year with two huge BBQs, one a drive through and the other to welcome their new freshman. They have a new greenhouse and also their first litter of piglets. This year they have their first American Degree recipient!

SOUTHERN REGION NEWS

BY DESIREE TRAPP

Well, Thanksgiving came and we stuffed our bellies, Christmas flew by and left us with comfort and joy. The New Year is here with a lot of potential. Happy New Year to all from the Southern Region! The region has been running full force starting with the LA Fair Judging Day to getting ready for the Road Show. Our teachers spent the last weekend of September in Huntington Beach taking tours to Los Alamitos Race Track and getting the experience of a lifetime or they were out kayaking at Newport Back Bay having a great time and as always learning something new. We also had our Regional meeting and of course conducted business. We are getting ready for the Road Show and our chapters are getting ready for their own activities and fun. Here is what some of them have to say.

Buena Park has jumped right into the year expanding their SAE opportunities to include: vermiculture, many different horticulture projects, many sponsored steer and pig projects, and increasing poultry projects with more than 300 birds. They are looking forward to increasing their farm land to grow pumpkins for their very own community pumpkin patch next year. Students are excited about participating at the farm store, getting more involved with production agriculture projects and the leadership activities. Buena Park's vegetable, specialty animal, and BIG teams are gearing up for the season.

Moving on over, things are in full swing at *Covina FFA*! Covina's farm is now home to three Boer goat breeding does; Jello, Triple C, and

Shine. They are due to kid in January and the students couldn't be more excited. They've also welcomed two dairy cows and calves to their family thanks to the California Dairy Council. Their members finished 2010 on a high note by participating in the 60th Annual Covina Christmas Parade as well as working with their campus Interact Club to decorate a Rose Parade Float.

Midway in Southern Region, *Bloomington FFA* is gearing up for a new face. Their facility is undergoing an overhaul of looks. Not only are they planning to fix up the farm but they are revamping their program. The students and advisors are building up membership, and getting involved in the community. They are excited to participate in the local parade and are preparing to plant their gardens so that the food grown can be sent to the local shelters to help out those less unfortunate.

Way down south, *Blythe FFA* has had a very fast paced fall. They led off with a fundraiser for the local Cancer Foundation - Steps for the Cure. Students got donations for walking laps around the school track on event day, and they hosted a snack shack with all proceeds going to the cause. Blythe FFA chapter was the highest earning group for this year's Steps for the Cure giving them \$4,494. They had their first annual pumpkin patch and corn maze as a fall fundraiser. This summer students planted their one-acre crop lab with field corn. During the first week of November the Plant and Soil Science class plotted out the maze then went into the field and cut it out. The chapter has voted to

apply the proceeds towards a new livestock trailer, which is greatly needed since their current trailer is 28 years young. On October 28 and 29 the Chapter hosted Ag Days at the high school farm for the four elementary schools and local preschools. The two day event saw 1,156 preschool thru first grade students. The students walked the corn maze; planted sweet peas to take home; saw a 250hp and 350hp John Deere tractor; were introduced to cotton and saw a six-row cotton picker; visited the petting zoo with sheep, goats, chickens, ducks, a Simmental heifer calf, and a miniature horse; walked the pumpkin patch; and were told about pumpkins by members of CWA. FFA members took the students through the six different stations giving them information and answering their questions.

All the while, *Brawley FFA* just returned from the National FFA Convention where two students received their American Farmer Degrees. While there they toured corn and pig farms, visited the Capital Building, and enjoyed the convention. They just finished up their annual pie sales and students sold more than 700 pies to the community. They have been involved in many community activities for their upcoming rodeo. Brawley FFA has started receiving animals and is getting geared up for their mid-winter fair.

So to all, the Southern Region hopes that you have New Year Resolutions that you can stick to and enjoy what the future holds. Good luck and a great year 2011!