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# NYFFA Speaks

## September 2013

IN THIS ARTICLE

### District Updates

Learn some awesome things about your districts and the districts around you. Reports come to you from the very special desks of our District Presidents.

## What's Up, NYFFA?

By Catie Rowe

It's that time of year again! Yep, that's right, school's back! Now I'm sure everyone had their first-day-back jitters and plans for this year but how many of us really (and I mean *really*) plan to embrace this school year? Whether you're a senior applying to your dream colleges or a first year FFA member who's still trying to find their niche; It's time to milk every opportunity that's handed to us for what it's worth! This can be done in so many different ways, too. Why not join a new CDE team this year, start practicing the creed for your first district competition or maybe even design a set list of things you want to accomplish to help make this school year awesome? What about making it *more awesome*?

The question you probably have spinning in your head is... "How do I be more awesome?" It's actually quite easy; we just need to find ways to make everyday aspects of our lives *better*. There's a book the State Officers really love called, "Love Does" by Bob Goff. In this book, the author recounts memories from his life- ranging from something he did when he was ten or something his children did. There's a chapter that is actually titled "Bigger and Better", creatively named after a game the

neighborhood kids would play. This game consisted of starting with a dime and trading with people around you for things that were bigger and better. Bob's son, Richard, plays this game and ends it by coming home with a dodge truck (no lie, it really happened!) But Richard did something really extraordinary with his trading skills, he took that truck and donated it to the local church because he didn't need it and he knew someone else did. Richard exemplified being more awesome that day. It's the small things, our small actions that have the biggest impacts on our lives and make the biggest difference. We don't need to copy what Richard did and start trading with the people around us but maybe, just maybe, if we set goals for ourselves that were specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely (SMART), we could be more awesome too.

Let's all set one similar goal this year; we should pledge that no matter what we do, whether that involves FFA, school in general or sports, let's be more awesome in those areas that we're passionate about by setting SMART goals and striving to be bigger and better. So, let's get up, get out there, and make this year *more awesome*!



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### Catch Up with The State Officers!

From Oswegatchie to State Fair and everywhere in between, we've had a great summer!



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# District Updates

## District 1

-Maria Martinez

### Member of the Month:

Isa Judd is currently a sophomore at John Bowne High School and a second year FFA member. Isa attended the 2013 NY FFA State Convention and his team won 3<sup>rd</sup> place on the team activity for Agriculture Sales. After State Convention Isa received his Greenhand degree at the John Bowne FFA banquet in May 2013. In June 2013 he was named Captain of the Agriculture Sales team at the JBHS FFA chapter and he plans on running for his chapter's officer team next year. For his SAE Isa currently works in the John Bowne High School exotic bird laboratory, he cares for 7 different species of birds and helps his co-workers clip nails and wings, and trim beaks. Isa has done great things for his chapter, and will continue to do more in the future. Keep up the good work!



Isa and the school's African Grey Parrot.



Winning Landscape Design Team and Maria.

### Summer Overview:

The John Bowne FFA Livestock team and Landscaping team attended The Great NY State Fair in Syracuse, NY this August to compete. The Livestock team placed second in the state and three out of the four members placed individually. The landscaping team placed first in the state and all four of the members placed individually. The landscaping team will be headed to National Convention in Kentucky this October to compete on the national level.

### September Events:

The John Bowne FFA Chapter hosted the National Officer Tour at their school on September 19, 2013. The State Officers, National Officer, Brennan Costello, National Officer Candidate Ryan Willits, a few local Assemblymen and three New Jersey State Officers were given a tour of the Land Lab, Aviculture Laboratory and Herpetology room. The chapter was also holding their first event of the year, Welcome back BBQ. CDE Teams manned booths to encourage new members to join the teams and become more active in the chapter. John Bowne students also manned a booth at the Queens County Fair on Saturday September 21 and Sunday September 22. Students competed with their vegetables that were grown on the Land Lab as well as sold corn snakes and had a bake sale.

# District 2

-Ryan Sanok

## Member of the Month:

Austin LaBomard of Pine Plains and he showing Hogs and he received Hog showman at his county fair.



Austin at the Dutchess County Fair with other winners.



Tri-Valley FFA members with Ivy Reynolds, the State Secretary, at their school.

## Summer Overview:

This past summer, members of district two attended Camp Oswegatchie during week 2 and Hauk Boyes, a Tri-Valley FFA member received the Camper of the Week Award and was the president of that week's banquet. During the National Officer tour the mega-van that the state officers, the national officer candidate, Ryan Willits, and the National Officer, Brennan Costello were traveling in made a stop at Tri-Valley! The students and officers enjoyed a delicious lunch of Hot Beef Sundaes and a presentation by Brennan on how to make their chapter even better! The students at Tri-Valley were extremely excited to meet Brennan and hang out with the officers! It was evident how proud the students were of each other, their program, and what they had all accomplished! After lunch the officers were taken on a tour by the Tri-Valley advisor, Miss. Berescik of the phenomenal facilities that Tri-Valley high school has to offer!

# District 3

-Gabby Jordan

## Member of the Month:

Kaylah Gulley is a sophomore in her fourth year of FFA, and is currently serving as the treasurer of Greenwich FFA. Kaylah's SAE involves working on her family's farm where she helps raise and show her Brown Swiss cattle. This past July, Kaylah earned the title of Master Showman at the Tri-County Holstein Show. Kaylah also placed first in the Dairy Handlers competition the State Fair last year, and went on to earn a silver award at the National FFA Convention. Kaylah will be returning to National Convention after winning at State Fair with her Dairy Judging team and placing first individually. Kaylah competed in the Jr. Creed CDE last year at State Convention and took second place. She is planning to continue her success this year by competing in the Parliamentary Procedure and Job Interview CDEs as well as taking on new leadership opportunities. Kaylah's achievements truly demonstrate her strong work ethic and commitment to success.



Kaylah and one of her winning Brown Swiss cows

## Overview of the Past Month:

This past month, members of District 3 were busy competing and getting back to the school routine. At the end of August, southern District 3 members came together to set up for and run the FFA Farmland at the Washington County Fair. The next week members travelled to the State Fair to compete in CDEs, and then to Harrisburg at the World Dairy Expo. We ended the month of September with a district-wide meeting of the State Officers and a National Officer, Brennan Costello, on the National Officer Tour at Liberty Ridge's corn maze.

## Upcoming District Events:

- National Convention: October 30-November 2
- District 3 Meeting and Rodeo: November 8



District 3 members help set up the FFA Farmland at the Washington County Fair.

# District 5

-Kait Isaac

## Member of the Month :

President of the Vernon Verona Sherrill FFA chapter, Sarah Peavey, had the opportunity to get interviewed at State fair for the chapter's success on their willow and maple projects! Sarah not only kept up with VVS's display with other members, but she also helped out with running the trams throughout the fair. Sarah's leadership and teamwork shines through everything she does. Hard work pays off, and VVS is proof of that. Great job!

## Upcoming Events :

- .October 18 Barnyard Olympics held by VVS high school
- National Convention October 30-November 2



Sarah Peavey talking about VVS's willow program at State Fair.

## Summer Overview :

Members from District 5 traveled to the State Fair in the end of August where they competed in CDE's and some even got interviewed! What a finish up to their summer. Now that school is back in session, members are busy preparing and getting into their school routines. National Officer Brennan Costello and the State Officers stopped at VVS high school and Stockbridge Valley high school for National Officer Tour. September has been a blast!

# District 6

## Member of the Month:

Casey Porter (South Jefferson FFA) has been doing great things for the South Jefferson Chapter, this past summer her father was in a farm accident, but Casey still remained heavily involved in all of South Jefferson's events and she is serving as a fantastic president for the chapter. She even did very well at the State Fair in the Dairy Evaluation CDE by placing 2<sup>nd</sup> individually.



Casey Porter showing one of her Jersey's.

## Upcoming Events:

- Upcoming Events: National Convention (October 30<sup>th</sup> – November 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Annual Land Judging Contest (Early October-Jefferson- Lewis County)
- Chapter Fruit Sales (Late October)

-Missy Whiting

## Summer Overview:

This past month, District Six had many of our chapters competing at the NYS Fair in various Career Development Events. Our district would like to recognize some winners from our chapters that excelled in these contests. In Vegetable Crops/Horticulture we had our Carthage team place 1<sup>st</sup> at the NYS Fair and Kailegh Brown from Carthage placing 1<sup>st</sup> individually. In Poultry Evaluation, we had our South Lewis team place 2<sup>nd</sup> and our South Jefferson team place 3<sup>rd</sup> at the NYS Fair with Jason Martin from South Lewis placing 1<sup>st</sup> individually. In Small Engines, our Lowville team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and our Belleville Henderson team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> at the NYS Fair with Tyler Birchenough from Lowville placing 1<sup>st</sup> individually. In Diesel Troubleshooting, our Lowville team place 2<sup>nd</sup> at the NYS Fair. In Ag Electrification, our Lowville team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> at the NYS Fair. In Dairy Foods, our Carthage team placed 1<sup>st</sup> and our South Lewis team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> with Elizabeth Skaags from Carthage placing 1<sup>st</sup> individually. In Horse Evaluation, our Lowville team placed 1<sup>st</sup> and our Belleville Henderson team

placed 3<sup>rd</sup> at the NYS Fair. In Tree Identification, our Alexandria Bay team placed 1<sup>st</sup> and our South Jefferson team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> with Dean Swanson from Alexandria Bay placing 1<sup>st</sup> individually. In Wildlife Identification, our Alexandria Bay team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> at the NYS Fair with Alex Swanson placing 1<sup>st</sup> individually. In Environmental Science, our Alexandria Bay team placed 1<sup>st</sup> and our South Jefferson team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the NYS Fair; however, the South Jefferson team will be the team continuing on to National Convention. August has been very busy for District Six with many of our teams participating and winning at the Great NYS Fair.



1<sup>st</sup> Place Horse Evaluation team from Lowville FFA

# District 7

-Mackenzie Murphy

District Seven helped kick-off National Officer Tour on September 15<sup>th</sup>! The Southern Cayuga FFA chapter did a great job planning the event, which was held at King Ferry Bowling Center in King Ferry, NY. The president of Southern Cayuga, Logan LaFave, gave a brief speech thanking all of the chapters, advisors, and State Officers for attending. Logan is a senior this year and has worked hard to be an active member and good leader in his chapter. He and Ms. Ackerly, the Southern Cayuga advisor, stepped up to plan the National Officer Tour stop and made it fun for everyone!

District Seven was also represented by members and advisors from the Homer, Moravia, and Tully FFA Chapters. A diverse group of members attended, with a mix of junior chapter members, chapter members and chapter officers. Students from each school split into groups to bowl, eat pizza, and make new friends.



District 7 members at their bowling event in Kings Ferry!

The NYS Line Officers, Ms. Tolosky, National Officer Candidate Ryan Willits, and Central Region National Vice President Brennan Costello joined the four chapters in the fun. Brennan spoke briefly to the group and all of the officers had a great time interacting with members and getting to be friends with them. The start to National Officer Tour in District Seven was a success!

# District 10

-Lena Young

This month District Ten had a district event during National Officer Tour. Everyone was outside, having fun, while playing some backyard games. It was so great to see everyone at a social event, so no one was worried about their "competition". The Clymer FFA Chapter harvested the first grapes from their vines. There weren't very many grapes, but as the years go on the harvest will be more bountiful. The Sherman FFA chapter just introduced a new officer, Junior Adviser, serving this year is Jessica Morton. Jessica has been very excited and active in teaching the junior members of the Sherman FFA chapter exactly what FFA is all

about. Jessica also serves as the chapter secretary, and is a great role model to all of the junior members. She is attending all of the junior meetings to provide. All of the chapters in District 10 that are going to Nationals in October are busy preparing for their competitions.



District 10 members at their regional event hosted by Cuba-Rushford FFA!

# Meet the State Officers!

What have the State Officers been up to since Convention, you may ask? Well, since elections, we have attended two conferences sponsored by National FFA. Blast Off! Which is the first official conference for SO's as a full team, we learn proper workshop and speech development and we learn how to make our year of service more beneficial for the people who matter most, the members. NLCSO or National Leadership Conference for State Officers is the second conference we attended this summer, Oswegatchie housed officers from New York, Connecticut, Maine, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. For a week, officers learned what it took to be efficient advocates for FFA, how to communicate the brand of FFA and how to effectively deliver workshops. Then this past summer, the officers worked anywhere between one and three weeks in the Adirondacks at Camp O. Here, we got to connect with many of you, enjoy the ambiance of camp life and deliver the message about what it takes to be an effective team player. Dan, Catie, Brady, Jake and Ashley attended Empire Farm Days with Ryan Willits (the 2012-2013 State Treasurer and the 2013 New York National Officer Candidate). At EFD, the officers were able to meet with past FFA members who remembered their jackets from 50 plus years ago, talk to some aspiring members and sell raffle tickets for the tractor that was restored by Southern Cayuga FFA! From EFD, all of the officers headed back to Camp O for our final full-team training, properly named August Training. Here, we set goals for the year and figured out how to make sure that we didn't waste our potential. Next up was State Fair, where we had about 800 members compete in CDE's over the 12 days! Our most recent event was National Officer tour, where we took nine people (including Brennan Costello, our Central Region Vice President and Ryan, NY's National Officer Candidate) into a van, with all of their luggage and traveled around the state to visit our members where they are the most comfortable- their home districts and chapters. It was absolutely inspiring to see how passionate all of our members are! Currently, the officers are gearing up for Nationals, but we took the time to answer some questions about ourselves and our favorite events so far!

Here's what the officers were asked:

1. What was your favorite event this past summer as an officer?
2. What do you do in your free time?
3. What was your dream career as a child? Do you still aspire to do that?
4. If you had to describe yourself in one word, what would it be? Why?

***Answers from the Officers are continued on the next page!***





## Ashley Willits

*State President; Lowville FFA*

My favorite activity as a state officer this summer was going to State Presidents Conference in Washington, DC. This experience allowed me to learn how to better serve the members that I was elected by and serve as an effective advocate for the agriculture industry. In my free time I love to play tennis, hang out with my friends, and listen to the girly-est pop music I can find! But, my favorite thing to do is participate in my school's "Backpack Program". In this program we fill back packs with food, for an entire weekend, and then send those back packs home to students whose families are food insecure. As a child I dreamed of growing up to be a princess. However, my grandmother never came to tell me that I was royalty in Genovea, so needless to say I do not aspire to be a princess anymore. Actually, at this point in time I hope to be an agriculture teacher. I have been inspired by people who invested time into me by educating me about agriculture, teaching me how to enhance my public speaking skills, and helping me to be my best self. One word to describe me would be competitive. I love to compete with others and work hard to be my very best.

## Jake Ledoux

*State Vice President; Beaver River FFA*

My all-time favorite event this past summer had to be the Empire Farm Days in Seneca Falls. I got to see a lot of companies that make the products we use on our farm and everything that is new and cool in the field of agriculture also I got to see many fellow FFA members compete in my some of my favorite events to watch.... tractor driving and welding. In my free time I enjoy tending our livestock, attempting to fix machinery, read intriguing books, look up on the internet what my truck would look like lifted, eat, apply to colleges and enjoy the landscape of New York with my family. As a child I dreamed about being a farmer like my dad, I still want to make hay, herd cattle and harvest corn but I also want to help feed people in other countries as well so I want to be an International Agriculture Liaison or put in simpler terms a world traveling farmer that teaches people how to grow their own food. The only word I would describe myself with is diverse, when many people see my muddy and scuffed up work boots they assume that's all I am but in reality I also enjoy traveling and good books, interior decorating, playing farm mechanic, talking to legislators, baking cakes, working on trucks and doing many other activities.



## Ivy Jean Reynolds

*State Secretary; Cuba-Rushford FFA*

Well at the end of the school year/ beginning of summer I got to go to other FFA Chapters and sit in on their end of the year banquet! This was cool because I got to see other FFA Chapters show off their achievements to their community and some chapters even showed me the cool things their Ag programs did! Watching movies is one of my all-time favorite things, from sci- fi to fairy tales I love them all, and some of my favorites are the Princess Bride, Transformers and Batman the Dark Knight. My dream career was most definitely to be a princess and wear the most beautiful dresses. Although princess is certainly a career I would not turn down what I have decided to pursue as different career goal. The one word that I would choose to describe me would be driven. I like to have an idea of where I am going and do the most that I possibly can to achieve it.



## Brady Rogers

*State Treasurer; Tri-Valley FFA*

Personally, my favorite activity that occurred throughout the summer was specifically teaching the workshops in Leadership class. I felt I got on more of a personal level with all the students who participated and I loved seeing individuals shine throughout the class. Ha Ha Ha free time. If I had any I would probably spend it watching the sports channels, playing Pokémon, or searching interesting articles on the web to stay educated on what the issues are that currently exist not only in the United States but around the world! Don't worry I use .gov sites its accurate! Well, as a child I wanted to be an astronaut farmer who owned a pizza place on the moon. So far the farmer has been the only dream still standing. I may not necessarily want to own a farm but I would at least like to work on one throughout these next few years to experience production agriculture. Bold, I think I'm always willing to do something bold or to act bold in any situation. I know I have to get the task done at hand but am bold along the way.



## Catie Rowe

*State Reporter; John Bowne FFA*

My favorite event this summer was definitely Empire Farm Days, I had never been there before and it was so cool when people would walk past our booth and say "The Future Farmers of America? I was a member when I was young. I still have my jacket." It just goes to show that the blue and gold runs deep in our hearts. In my free time, I really like to read, go up to the dairy barn to milk or just be around my friends in general; it's always nice to laugh with friends! When I was little if you asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up I would have told you that I want to be a veterinarian because I love animals. Ten plus years later that answer still holds true- except now I'd tell you a large animal veterinarian instead of small. If I had to describe myself in one word, I would say that I am determined. I don't give up on things unless I'm one-hundred-and-ten percent sure it's impossible and even then I'll still try to find a way. I strongly believe that if you aren't determined to achieve your goals, you'll lose the incentive to get things done.

## Dan Truso

*State Sentinel; Granville FFA*

This summer my highlight was working at camp. I loved getting to meet new people and watch them come out of their shells as the week would progress. I watch a lot of old movies in my free time. The five dollar movie bin at Walmart and the three dollar movie bin at Big Lots are my favorite places to find great movies. When I was young, I aspired to be a maple producer; this is still a goal of mine. Maple production is even my Supervised Agriculture Experience area! In one word I would describe myself as "calm". I'm usually not very emotional or get worked up. I'm pretty good at getting through stressful situations and helping my team during those times too.



# Are you ready for...?



The National FFA Convention is being held in Louisville, Kentucky this year! There will be representation from each state and the sea of blue and gold will be more awe-inspiring than ever before. Are you ready to ignite your premier leadership, personal growth and career success? We sure are, see you in Louisville!

#igniteffa

# NYFFA Takes Kentucky!

Where can you find your fellow New Yorkers at Nationals this year?

## Competitors:

- **Ag Communications** – Tri-Valley
- **Ag Issues** – Tri-Valley
- **Ag Sales** – Cazenovia
- **Ag Mechanics** – Cobleskill Richmondville
- **Agronomy** – Pioneer
- **Creed Speaking** – Derek Pingrey, Pioneer
- **Dairy Cattle Evaluation** – Greenwich
- **Dairy Handlers** – Paige Demun, Jasper-Troupsburg
- **Environmental & Natural Resources** – South Jefferson
- **Extemporaneous Speaking** – Christina Kackos, Tri-Valley
- **Farm Business Management** – Granville
- **Floriculture** – Tri-Valley
- **Food Science** – Franklinville
- **Forestry** – GST BOCES
- **Horse Evaluation** – Lowville
- **Job Interview** – Clayton Stephens, Pine Plains
- **Livestock Evaluation** – Fillmore
- **Marketing Plan** – Pioneer
- **Meats Evaluation** – Pioneer
- **Milk Quality & Products**– Carthage
- **Nursery/Landscape** – John Bowne
- **Parliamentary Procedure** – Greenwich
- **Poultry Evaluation** – Schoharie
- **Prepared Speaking** – Ivy Reynolds, Cuba-Rushford
- **Vet Science** – John Bowne
- **National Proficiency Finalist** – Jake Ledoux, Beaver River
- **National Chorus**- Karen Fargo, Belleville Henderson
- **National Chapter Award Models of Innovation Finalists**- Pioneer, Tri-Valley
- **National Agriscience Fair Finalists**
  - Animal Systems, Division 4 - John Bowne
  - Food Products, Division 4 – John Bowne

## Other Not-To-Miss Opportunities:

NY FFA State Photo – Friday, November 1, 1:45 pm

*When you're not in sessions or at the State Photo, be sure to check out the amazing opportunities at the Expo! You can check out a college, sing karaoke, win tons of free stuff, attend workshops and meet great people. NY will be represented with three colleges there (Cobleskill, Cornell & Morrisville) so stop by and see what the best fit is for you and your future.*

## **NY FFA on Stage:**

**During all sessions** – Karen Fargo, Belleville Henderson – National FFA Chorus

### **Thursday, October 31, 2PM – General Session 2**

- Presentation of State Flags – Brady Rogers, Tri-Valley FFA member
- State Association Membership Awards – Ashley Willits, Lowville FFA member
- Brennan Costello's Retiring Address (Brennan joined us for National Officer Tour!)
- Model of Innovation Award Recognition (Watch for NY in all 3 divisions!) – Pioneer & Tri-Valley FFA members
- National Chapter 3 Star Chapters Awards – Pioneer, Tri-Valley and VVS FFA members

### **Thursday, October 31, 7:30 PM– General Session 3**

- Joenelle Futrell's Retiring Address (*Many of you may have met Joenelle at the Big E!*)

### **Friday, November 1, 8 AM – General Session 4**

- This session's keynote is a firefighter who served on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **Friday, November 1, 12 PM – General Session 5**

- National Officer Candidate Recognition – Ryan Willits, Lowville FFA member

### **Friday, November 1, 3 PM – General Session 6**

- Proficiency Awards – Jake Ledoux, Beaver River FFA member

### **Friday, November 1, 7 PM – General Session 7**

- Lindsey Anderson's Retiring Address (*Lindsey spent time with NY FFA at our convention in May*).
- Josh Sundquist is the keynote speaker (*he's definitely someone you'll want to listen to!*)

### **Saturday, November 2, 7:45 am – General Session 8**

- American Degree Recognition (*Students from all over NY will receive the highest degree you can earn in FFA in this ceremony*).

### **Saturday, November 2, 1:30 pm – General Session 9**

- Past National Officer Recognition
- Election and Installation of new National FFA Officer Team