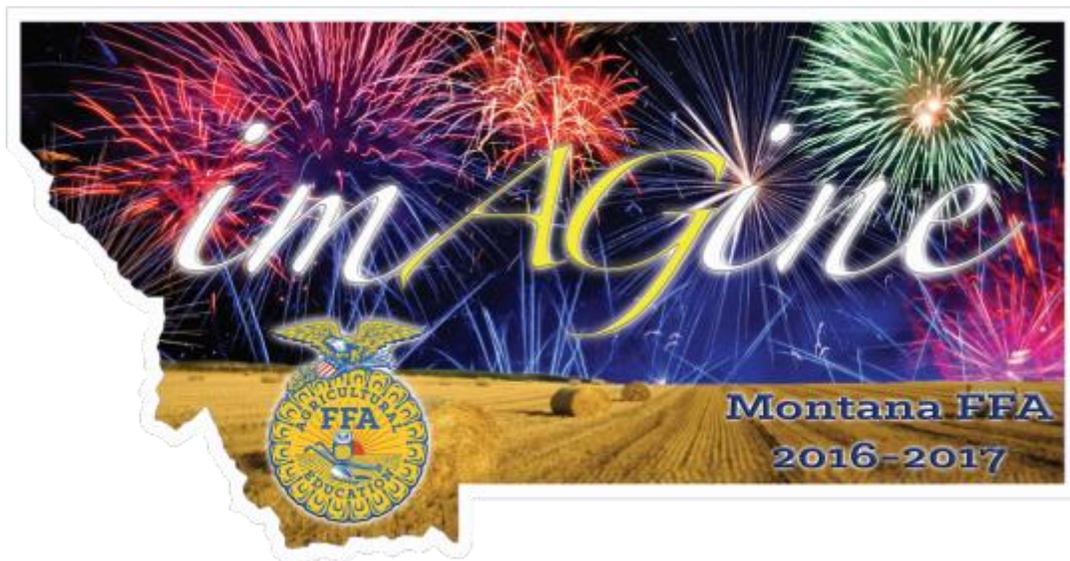


Conference Proceedings

87th Annual State FFA Convention

Montana FFA Association



March 22 – 25, 2017
Montana Expo Park
Great Falls, Montana
Convention Proceedings

State Officers

Albert Koenig, President
Belgrade
CJ Stevenson, 1st Vice President
Moore
Jon Andres, 2nd Vice President
Missoula
Ashley Koenig, Secretary
Belgrade
Josh Meyer, Treasurer
Electric City
Kacie Cummings, Reporter
Cascade
Brock Reiner, Sentinel
Flathead
Jake Michaels, Parliamentarian
Shepherd

State Staff

Jim Rose, State Advisor
Bozeman

Special Guests

Bill Sarpalius – Keynote speaker
Valerie Earley - Region V.P.



FFA Foundation

Jaime Edmundson, Executive Director
Rita Blair, Office Coordinator
Allie Nelson, Foundation Assistant
Cody Boyce, Foundation Assistant
Meghan Brence, Foundation Assistant
Curt Robbins, President – Columbus
Bill Jimmerson, Vice President – Bozeman
Belinda Darlinton, Secretary – Great Falls
Mark Sinnard, Treasurer – Wilsall
Jay Meyer – Stevensville
Jack Larson – Miles City
Becky Nelson – Great Falls
Scott Aspenleider – Billings
Rik Miller – Bozeman
Kristen Swenson – Silver Star
Josh Meyer – Electric City

Alumni Association

Kristen Swenson, President – Silver Star
Lane Nordlund, Vice President – Bozeman
Susan Standley, Secretary/Treasurer –
Missoula
Taylor Brown, Director of Student
Development – Bozeman
Todd Lackman, Director of Publications –
Hysham
Sandy Evenson, Director of Alumni
Development – Kalispell
Cathy Rose, Director of Young Alumni –
Bozeman
Bill Jimmerson, Bozeman – Foundation
Rep.
Albert Koenig, Belgrade – State Officer
Rep.

Convention Facts

1,265 members & advisors from 80 chapters attended plus and estimated 400 parents and other guests for a total attendance of 1,665.

Delegate Business Meeting



For Office Use Only #1	Title: National Officer Selection Committee membership
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Submitted by: 2016-2017 State Officer Team

46 For
0 Against
Motion Passes

Motion:

It is moved to amend the Montana FFA Association bylaws by adding Section E to Article V as follows:

Section E.

The National Officer Selection Committee shall be composed of up to three Montana FFA ~~students~~ *members in good standing* and up to four adults with either an FFA background or expertise in the agriculture industry. It is required that the total number of Committee members must be odd.

ent Rationale:

Against

ent Passes

Whereas there is no clear outline of the Montana FFA National Officer Committee member requirements and whereas the ratio between student members and adults has fluctuated in the past years and whereas students have a unique and valuable opportunity when selected to serve this committee. Therefore, be it resolved that the Montana FFA set the ratio between FFA student members and adults in the National Officer Selection Committee.



For Office Use Only #2	Title: Inclusion of 7th & 8th grade members into Career Development Events
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Submitted by: 2016-2017 State Officer Team

40 For
5 Against
Motion Passes

Motion:

It is moved to amend the Montana FFA Association Bylaws by adding Section E to Article VIII which would read as follows:

Section E.

If a 7th or 8th Grade participant wins an individual contest or is on a winning team, they are eligible for National FFA competition.

Rationale:

Whereas the Montana FFA bylaws do not have a clause including 7th & 8th Grade members as possible National competitors. Therefore, be it resolved that the Montana FFA bylaws include a clause solidifying 7th & 8th Grade participants at the National level.

For Office Use Only
#3

Title: American Degree National Alignment

Submitted by: 2016-2017 State Officer Team

40 For
3 Against
Motion Passes

Motion:

It is moved to amend the Montana FFA Constitution by striking out Section E lines 5-6 and inserting the National FFA Constitution Section F lines 5-7 that read:

5. A student after entering agricultural education must have:

- a. earned at least \$10,000 and productively invested at least \$7,500; or
- b. earned and productively invested \$2,000 and worked 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time. Any combination of hours, times a factor of 3.56, plus actual dollars earned and productively invested must be equal to or greater than the number 10,000. Hours used for the purpose of producing earnings reported as productively invested income shall not be duplicated as hours of credit to meet the minimum requirements for the degree.

6. Have a record of outstanding leadership abilities and community involvement and have achieved a high school scholastic record of "C" or better as certified by the principal or superintendent.

7. Have participated in at least 50 hours of community service, within at least 3 different community service activities. These hours are in addition to and cannot be duplicated as paid or unpaid SAE hours.

Rationale:

Whereas the Montana FFA State Constitution requirements for American Degree Recipients do not align with the National FFA Constitutional Requirements. Therefore, be it resolved that the Montana FFA State Constitution be amended to match the National Requirements regarding American Degree Recipients.

For Office Use Only
#4

**Title: Alignment of Degree & Privileges of Active
Membership**

Submitted by: 2016-2017 State Officer Team

**42 For
1 Against
Motion Passes**

Motion:

It is moved to amend the Montana FFA Constitution by inserting a new Section B into Article IV that reads as follows:

Section B.

Discovery FFA Degree - To be eligible to receive the Discovery FFA Degree from a chapter, the member must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Be enrolled in agricultural education class for at least a portion of the school year *or in a summer program* while in grades 7-8.
2. Have become a dues paying member of the FFA at local, state and national levels.
3. Participate in at least one local FFA chapter activity outside of scheduled class time.
4. Have knowledge of agriculturally related career, ownership and entrepreneurial opportunities.
5. Be familiar with the local FFA chapter program of activities.
6. Submit written application for the degree.

Rationale:

Whereas the Montana FFA State Constitution requirements for Discovery Degree recipients do not align with the National FFA Constitutional Requirements. Therefore, be it resolved that the Montana FFA State Constitution be amended to match the National Requirements regarding Discovery Degree Recipients.

**Amendment
54 For 5 Against
Amendment Passes**

For Office Use Only
#5

Title: Nomination Committee Members

Submitted by: 2016-2017 State Officer Team

36 For
0 Against
Motion Passes

Motion:

It is moved to amend the Montana FFA Association Constitution Article VI Section C Line 2 Part D by inserting "No more than" in front of the words "Two Chapter Advisors..." so would read as follows:
No more than two chapter advisors, with one selected annually to serve a two-year term as consultants (non-voting members).

Rationale:

Whereas it is hard to get an advisor to take time out of their state convention to serve in the nomination committee, and whereas it becomes hard to find advisors willing to serve in this committee. Therefore, be it resolved that the nomination committee does not require two chapter advisors, however can only have up to two.

For Office Use Only
#6

Title: Nomination Committee Members Application Date

Submitted by: 2016-2017 State Officer Team

40 For
3 Against
Motion Passes

Motion:

It is moved to amend Article VI Section C Line 1 Part E of the Montana FFA Constitution by striking out the words "by March 15" and inserting "by a date determined by the state advisor no later than September 1st the year prior to convention" so that Part E reads "Current FFA members shall be chosen from applications submitted to the state advisor by a date determined by the state advisor *which must be determined no later than September 1st the year prior to convention.*"

Rationale:

Whereas the date that state convention occurs changes from year to year and whereas an unchanging date makes processing applications unmanageable in certain cases. Therefore, be it resolved that the date for these applications can be set by the state advisor.

Amendment
49 For 0 Against
Amendment Passes

For Office Use Only
#7

Title: Definition of Chapters in Good Standing

Submitted by: 2016-2017 State Officer Team

39 For
0 Against
Motion Passes

Motion:

It is moved to amend the Montana FFA Association Constitution Article X by substituting all of Section A with the following:

A chapter to be in good standing in the Montana FFA Association must meet all of the following:

Submission of Program of Activities in the format outlined in AET or at <https://www.ffa.org/resources/chapter.resources/program-of-activities> by November 1st

Submission of Chapter Roster by November 1st

Submission of Form #2 Final Report on Students Supervised Agricultural Experience Programs by February 10th

Chapters can at anytime up to 2 weeks prior to any state competitino have the ability to recover their chapter in good standing status

Rationale:

Whereas the original Section A had many errors regarding dues and whereas a requirement for Chapter Roster submissions was not set anywhere in the constitution. Therefore, be it resolved that the Montana FFA Constitution has date requirements for the Program of Activities, Chapter Roster, and Form #2 to be considered in good standing.

Amendment
26 For 19 Against
Amendment Passes

For Office Use Only
#8

Title: State Officer Representation

Submitted by: Columbus FFA

35 For
5 Against
Motion Passes

Motion:

Delegate business from the chapters be turned in to the State Office by Feb 15 for non constitutional changes so that the delegate business from the State Office be presented to the chapters by March 1.

Rationale:

In order for the delegate business to be properly dealt with by chapters it is reasonable that the chapters receive the delegate packet before their March meeting. Many chapters have their monthly meetings early in the month. Delegate packets received by March 1 can be discussed and voted on at the chapter level at a regular monthly meeting. The chapter delegates can then represent their chapters more accurately.

Realizing that there are many other items and applications due in early February, we admit that this motion would cause more stress during an already stressful time. However, we feel it would be a better way to demonstrate the legislative process. Currently the delegate packets are received a week or so prior to state convention. This doesn't leave time for the chapters to discuss the items without holding special meetings.

Career Development Events (CDE) Results

Agriscience Fair Winners:

Animal Systems: Bo Rost, Baker

Social Systems: Makayla Dines, Laurel

Power and Technology Systems: Megan Greiff, Baker

Plant Systems: Ayelliah Brown, Sweetgrass

Food Products & Processing Systems: Jack Marshall and Rodie Keyes, Shields

Environmental/Natural Resource Systems:

Madison and Mackenzie Wiegand,
Taylor Jones, Simms

Agriculture Communications

1. Cascade
2. Corvallis
3. Saint Regis
4. Bainville

Agriculture Issues

1. Corvallis
2. Gardiner
3. Electric City
4. Roundup

Agricultural Sales CDE

1. Broadwater
2. Shepherd
3. Missoula
4. Laurel
5. Big Timber
6. Joliet
7. Moore
8. Choteau
9. Fairfield
10. Beaverhead

Ag Sales Individuals

1. Dalton Lemberg, Shepherd
2. Cole Lunceford, Big Timber

3. Andy Ferrat, Broadwater
4. Megan Ogle, White Sulphur Springs
5. Ethan Turner, Missoula
6. Deva Bascom, Melstone
7. Sheridan Johnson, Conrad
8. Zachary Proue, Laurel
9. Saralyn Standley, Missoula
10. Gustav Wenza, Shepherd

Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems CDE

1. Missoula
2. Joliet
3. Laurel
4. Kalispell
5. Choteau
6. Ruby Valley
7. Fergus of Lewistown
8. Huntley Project
9. Richey
10. Miles City

ATMS Individuals

1. Nathan Wildeboer, Missoula
2. Zac Zimmerman, Missoula
3. Ethan Turner, Missoula
4. Cole Dykhuizen, Kalispell
5. Cotton Meyers, Joliet
6. Max Andres, Missoula
7. Stephen Hamilton, Ruby Valley
8. Clay Smith, Fergus of Lewistown
9. Ryan Robertus, Laurel
10. Kyle Deines, Joliet

Agronomy CDE

1. Missoula
2. Joliet
3. Clark's Fork

4. Choteau
5. Stevensville
6. Kalispell
7. Wheatland
8. Conrad
9. Shields Valley
10. Miles City

Agronomy Individuals

1. Nathan Wildeboer, Missoula
2. Russell Zentner, Clark's Fork
3. Jacob Rasmussen, Missoula
4. Noah Grewell, Joliet
5. Jerod Songstad, Joliet
6. Sheridan Johnson, Conrad
7. Katie Aisenbrey, Clark's Fork
8. John Power, Wheatland
9. Caroline Roeder, Choteau
10. Saralyn Standley, Missoula

Creed Speaking CDE

1. McKenna Quirk, Missoula
2. Gracie Tooke, Forsyth
3. Gracie Smith, Victor
4. Chase Drange, Miles City

Jr. Creed Speaking CDE

1. Taylor Bogden, Electric City
2. Colton Young, Stillwater
3. Joe Lackman, Forsyth
4. Ethan Schlepp, White Sulphur

Conduct of Meetings CDE

1. Shepherd
2. Plevna
3. Missoula
4. Fergus of Lewistown 1

ENR

1. Missoula #1
2. Missoula #2
3. Conrad

Employment Skills

1. Kolby Dietz – Shepherd
2. Nathan Wildeboer – Missoula
3. Kylee Billingsley – Missoula
4. Kala Bertolino - Joliet

Extemporaneous Speaking CDE

1. Kaitlyn Koterba, Electric City
2. Mary Brown, Electric City
3. Nathan Wildeboer, Missoula
4. Chase Kilzer, Culbertson

Farm Business Management CDE

1. Belgrade
2. Missoula
3. Clark's Fork
4. Choteau
5. Kalispell
6. Broadus
7. Roundup
8. Moore
9. Ruby Valley
10. Corvallis

Farm Bureau Speaking Contest

1. Gracie Smith, Victor
2. Lilly Challenger, Victor
3. Joe Lackman, Forsyth
4. Kimber Kornell, Melstone

FBM Individuals

1. John Tatarka, Belgrade
2. Joe Tatarka, Belgrade
3. Nathan Wildeboer, Missoula
4. Anthony Tatarka, Belgrade
5. Russell Zentner, Clark's Fork
6. Krystal Sutton, Kallispell
7. Lucas Riley, Broadus
8. Jacob Rasmussen, Missoula
9. Jole McRae, Colstrip
10. Carolin Roeder, Choteau

Floriculture

1. Hinsdale
2. Joliet
3. Missoula
4. Rosebud
5. Conrad
6. Electric City
7. Big Sandy
8. Miles City
9. Wheatland
10. Richey

Floriculture Individuals

1. Allie Blain – Joliet
2. Mickayla Johnson – Hinsdale
3. Kyla Andres – Missoula
4. Sheridan Johnson - Conrad
5. Morgan Harris – Joliet
6. Casity Boucherer – Hinsdale
7. Jerrica Bursik – Park City
8. Jacob Rasmussen – Missoula
9. Sarah Boucher – Hinsdale
10. Riley Matthews - Conrad

Food Science CDE

1. Missoula
2. Conrad
3. Corvallis
4. Choteau
5. Richey
6. Electric City
7. Forsyth
8. Belgrade
9. Bainville
10. Shepherd

Food Science Individuals

1. Caroline Roeder – Choteau
2. Sheridan Johnson – Conrad
3. Ivane Buller – Richey
4. Isaac Sponheim – Richey
5. Kyla Andres – Missoula
6. Mackenzi Butikofer – Bainville
7. Saralyn Standley – Missoula
8. Steph Rollins – Electric City
9. Garrett Lowham – Chinook

10. Ethan Turner – Missoula

Forestry CDE

1. Missoula
2. Belgrade
3. Wheatland
4. Corvallis
5. Kalispell
6. Stevensville
7. Big Timber
8. Joliet
9. Huntley Project
10. Laurel

Forestry Individuals

1. Ethan Turner – Missoula
2. Nathan Wildeboer – Missoula
3. Jarrett Bowman – Missoula
4. Jacob Rasmussen – Missoula
5. Anthony Tatarka – Belgrade
6. Joe Tatarka – Belgrade
7. Matthew Hoskinson – Missoula
8. Maddison Milliman – Corvallis
9. John Tatarka – Belgrade
10. Zac Zimmerman – Missoula

Horse Evaluation CDE

1. Missoula
2. Kalispell
3. Joliet
4. Rosebud
5. Wheatland
6. Belgrade
7. Electric City
8. Roundup
9. Conrad
10. Valier

Horse Evaluation Individuals

1. Natalie Arnott – Missoula
2. Danni Nardinger – Joliet
3. Kyle Glenn – Missoula
4. Thomas Beeler – Rosebud
5. Zac Zimmerman – Missoula
6. Averie Olson – Kalispell
7. Mckenna Quirk – Missoula

8. Kaydee Teselle – Belgrade
9. Devi Knutson – Mission Valley
10. Rebecca Stroh - Chinook

Livestock Evaluation CDE

1. Big Timber
2. Shepherd
3. Kalispell
4. Missoula
5. Mission Valley
6. Broadwater
7. Hobson
8. Miles City
9. Clark's Fork
10. Colstrip

Livestock Evaluation Individuals

1. Courtnee Clairmont, Mission Valley
2. Jess Moody, Big Timber
3. Dylan Laverell, Big Timber
4. Kaleb Flowers, Shepherd
5. Maddie Sutton, Kalispell
6. Danni Nardinger, Joliet
7. Abby Leachman, Broadwater
8. Kristen Vincent, Hobson
9. Ruth Knobloch, Colstrip
10. Trenton Braaten, Broadwater

Marketing Plan

1. Victor
2. Cascade
3. Missoula
4. Electric City
5. Richey
6. Big Sandy
7. Little Big Horn
8. Wheatland
9. Melstone

Meats Evaluation CDE

1. Missoula
2. Kalispell
3. Belgrade

4. Shepherd
5. Fergus of Lewistown
6. Grass Range
7. Deer Lodge
8. Corvallis
9. Rosebud
10. Broadwater

Meats Evaluation Individuals

1. Krystal Sutton, Kalispell
2. Saralyn Standley, Missoula
3. Kyla Andres, Missoula
4. Isabel Reh, Missoula
5. John Tatarka, Belgrade
6. Meghan Levanen, Kalispell
7. Whitney Levanen, Kalispell
8. Justice Betts, Missoula
9. Zac Zimmerman, Missoula
10. Dallas Flowers, Shepherd

Parliamentary Procedure CDE

1. Joliet
2. Shepherd 1
3. Shepherd 2
4. Missoula

Prepared Speaking CDE

1. Claire Stevenson, Hobson
2. Kaitlyn Koterba, Electric City
3. John Power, Wheatland
4. Diego Figuerra, Hysham

Vet Science CDE

1. Kalispell
2. Missoula
3. Fergus
4. Grass Range
5. Corvallis
6. Big Timber
7. Conrad
8. Park City
9. Wheatland
10. Electric City

Vet Science Individuals

1. Cassidy Wiley – Kalispell
2. Nathan Wildeboer – Missoula
3. Meghan Levanen – Kalispell
4. Krystal Sutton – Kalispell
5. Jessica Horan – Moore
6. Alex Greer – Red Lodge
7. Grant Finkbeiner – Grass Range
8. Caitlin Pelan – Roundup
9. Lauren McCaffree – Missoula
10. Caroline Roeder - Choteau

Team Sweepstakes Winner

1. Missoula
2. Kalispell
3. Choteau
4. Joliet
5. Clark's Fork
6. Laurel
7. Big Timber
8. Miles City
9. Bainville
10. Broadus

Individual Sweepstakes Winners

1. Nathan Wildeboer – Missoula
2. Sheridan Johnson – Conrad
3. Ethan Turner – Missoula
4. Zach Zimmerman – Missoula
5. Saralyn Standley – Missoula
6. Kyla Andres – Missoula
7. Caroline Roeder – Choteau
8. John Tatarka – Belgrade
9. Morgan Weidow – Corvallis
10. Jacob Rasmussen - Missoula

State Talent Contest

1. McKenna Quirk, Missoula

Star Chapter – GOLD AWARDS

1. Electric City
2. Kalispell

3. Missoula
4. Beaverhead
5. Richey
6. Park City
7. Broadwater
8. Fromberg
9. Joliet
10. Cascade
11. Corvallis
12. Hysham
13. Ruby Valley
14. Chinook
15. Sidney
16. Broadus
17. Columbus

Star Greenhand

Glacier– Amber Johnson, Choteau
Western– Max Andres, Missoula
S. W. – Brooke Mehlhoff, Twin Bridges **STAR**
Southern– Dacey Robertson, Fromberg
Judith Basin– Rachael Stevenson, Hobson
S. E. – Lexy Dietz, Shepherd
Eastern– Katy Cardwell, Forsyth
Big Muddy– Cordell Younkin, Hinsdale

Star in Agricultural Placement

STAR Nicholas Lunnie, Electric City
Dallas Flowers, Shepherd
Leah Aigner, Shepherd
Colton Anderson, Cascade

Star in Agriscience

STAR Morgan Weidow, Corvallis

Star in Agribusiness

STAR Abbey Dunn, Corvallis
Brandon Hetrick, Roundup
Martje Plaggemeyer, Big Timber

Star Farmer

STAR Logen Mydland, Joliet
Natalie Arnott, Missoula
Charali Wetherbee, Ruby Valley
Krystal Sutton, Kalispell

FFA/American Indian Program

1. Little Big Horn

Hall of Chapters

1. Roundup
2. Cascade
3. Belfry

Reporter Event

1. Michael McKay, Corvallis
2. Cassy LaFromboise, Cascade
3. Makayla Paul, Electric City

Secretary's Book

1. Tyler Thompson, Broadwater
2. Cassidy Wiley, Kalispell
3. Reanna Shular, Electric City

Scrapbook

1. Cassidy Storrusten, Electric City
2. Molly McRorie, Cascade
3. Abbie Smith, Richey

Treasurers Book

1. Meghan Levenen - Kalispell
2. Mason Best - Custer
3. Larisah Moreland - Hysham

BOMC Awards

1. Park City
2. Kalispell
3. Columbus

Scholarships Awarded

Pat Cavey ALC Scholarship

Justice Betts – Missoula
Margret Thompson – Deer Lodge

Dr. Brad King ALC Scholarship

Matthew Wolsky – Corvallis
Amber Johnson – Conrad

MT FFA Alumni ALC Scholarship

Emily Seifert – Corvallis
Mia-Kilanna Moreland – Missoula
Dacey Robertson – Fromberg
Caitlin Pelan – Roundup

WLC Scholarship

Caitlin Pelan – Roundup
Abbey Dunn – Corvallis
Morgan Weidow – Corvallis
Saralyn Standley – Missoula
Hans Lampert – Deer Lodge
Michael McKay – Corvallis

Kaleb Starr – Deer Lodge

Irene Andres Memorial Scholarship

Michael McKay – Corvallis

John Bliss Memorial Scholarship

Caroline Roeder – Choteau

Holt Family Memorial Scholarship

Justice Betts – Missoula

Vern Dahlstrom Memorial Scholarship

Meghan Levanen – Flathead

AMTOPP Scholarship

Logan Nickoloff – Culbertson

Lars Ronning Scholarship

Sierra Machart – Culbertson

Stockman Bank Scholarship

Austin Dobreceovich – Choteau
Caitlin Cunningham – Gardiner

MABA Scholarship

Cassidy Wiley – Flathead
Montana Land Reliance Scholarship
 Kelsey Kraft – Laurel
Blue Shows Through Scholarship
 Lauren McCaffree – Missoula

Mikayla Comes – Fergus
 Sierra Osborne – Sidney
 Jenna Barker – Conrad
 Kara Hanna – Gardiner

Murdochs Scholarship
 Krystal Sutton - Kalispell

Leave a Legacy Scholarship
 Kaitlyn Koterba – Electric City
 Abbey Dunn – Corvallis
 Chase Kilzer – Culbertson
 Sara Malesich – Beaverhead
 Natalie Arnott – Missoula
 BreElle Wacker – Melstone

State Officer Nominating Committee

Luke LaLiberty (Facilitator), Matt McKamey (Facilitator), Leah Graf (Facilitator). John Teini, Great Falls; Mike Honeycutt, Helena; Lyle Hodgekiss, Choteau; Lyle Benjamin, Shelby; Joan Sinnard, Wilsall; Katy Sparks, Bozeman; Mattie Tucek, Grass Range FFA; Shay Adler, Hysham FFA; and Paytyn Wilson, Bainville FFA.

Officers Selected: **Sheridan Johnson**, Conrad - President; **Seth Rekdal**, Shepherd - 1st Vice President; **Abbey Dunn**, Corvallis - 2nd Vice President; **Mikayla Comes**, Fergus of Lewistown - Secretary; **John Power**, Wheatland - Treasurer; **Kelsey Kraft**, Laurel - Reporter; **Shelby Morris**, Missoula - Sentinel; and **Jessica Horan**, Moore - Parliamentarian.

Proficiency Awards

X = State Winner

(P) = Placement

(E) = Entrepreneurship

<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>E OR P</i>	<i>G/S/B/P</i>	<i>State Winner</i>
Evan	McGonigal	Cascade	Agricultural Communications	P	Gold	X
Sierra	Osborne	Sidney	Agricultural Communications	P	Bronze	
Kelsey	Kraft	Laurel	Agricultural Education	P	Gold	X
Taylor	Potts	Electric City	Agricultural Education	P	Silver	
Nathan	Wildeboer	Missoula	Agricultural Education	P	Silver	
Dallas	Flowers	Shepherd	Agriculture Processing	P	Gold	X
Jessica	Duffy	Missoula	Agriculture Sales	Ent.	Gold	X
Mikaela	Trang	Beaverhead	Agriculture Sales	P	Gold	X
Treyton	Marquis	Cascade	Agriculture Services	P	Silver	

Chloe	Williams	Electric City	Agriculture Services	P	Gold	X
Kelsey	Lappier	Cascade	Agriscience Research - Animal Systems		Gold	X
Abigail	Dunn	Corvallis	Beef Production	Ent.	Silver	
Kaleb	Flowers	Shepherd	Beef Production	Ent.	Gold	
Kyle	Glenn	Missoula	Beef Production	Ent.	Bronze	
Ashlynn	Harrington	Victor	Beef Production	Ent.	Silver	
Kelsey	Kraft	Laurel	Beef Production	Ent.	Gold	
Kelsey	Kraft	Laurel	Beef Production	P	Gold	
Logen	Mydland	Joliet	Beef Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Kelli	Ober	Cascade	Beef Production	P	Gold	
Jaydon	O'Hair	Park	Beef Production	Ent.	Gold	
Makayla	Paul	Electric City	Beef Production	Ent.	Gold	
Abigail	Stevenson	Joliet	Beef Production	Ent.	Gold	
Kyle	Tintzman	Corvallis	Beef Production	P	Gold	X
Tyler	Barnett	Electric City	Diversified Agriculture Production	P	Silver	
Jessica	Horan	Moore	Diversified Agriculture Production	E/P	Gold	
Treyton	Marquis	Cascade	Diversified Agriculture Production	P	Bronze	
Lauryn	Pfaffinger	Hysham	Diversified Agriculture Production	P	Gold	
Saralyn	Standley	Missoula	Diversified Agriculture Production	E/P	Gold	X
Kyle	Deines	Joliet	Diversified Crop	P	Silver	
Kyle	Tintzman	Corvallis	Diversified Crop	P	Gold	
Cassy	LaFromboise	Cascade	Diversified Horticulture	P	Gold	X
Dalton	Booth	Park	Diversified Livestock Production	E/P	Silver	
Nicholas	Lunnie	Electric City	Diversified Livestock Production	E/P	Gold	
Sara Beth	Malesich	Beaverhead	Diversified Livestock Production	Ent.	Silver	
Lauren	McCaffree	Missoula	Diversified Livestock Production	E/P	Silver	
Charali	Wetherbee	Ruby Valley	Diversified Livestock Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Morgan	Weidow	Corvallis	Environmental Science and Natural Resource Mgmt	P	Gold	X
Natalie	Arnott	Missoula	Equine Science	Ent.	Gold	
Elizabeth	Brennan	Missoula	Equine Science	Ent.	Silver	
Haelee	Essebaggers	Electric City	Equine Science	Ent.	Gold	X
Calder	Ludvigson	Cascade	Equine Science	P		
Martje	Plaggemeyer	Big Timber	Equine Science	Ent.	Silver	
Trent	Cox	Cascade	Forage Production	P	Gold	X
Wade	Schneider	Chinook	Forage Production	Ent.	Silver	
Spencer	Drange	Laurel	Goat Production	E/P	Gold	
Savannah	Spurzem	Cascade	Goat Production	P	Silver	
James	Whitmus	Shepherd	Goat Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Garrett	Depner	Choteau	Grain Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Austin	Dobreceovich	Choteau	Landscape Management	E/P	Gold	X
Michael	Roach	Cascade	Landscape Management	P	Gold	
Colton	Anderson	Cascade	Outdoor Recreation	P	Bronze	
Tyson	Hatch	Electric City	Poultry Production	Ent.	Silver	
Kyle	Topp	Sidney	Poultry Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Charali	Wetherbee	Ruby Valley	Poultry Production	Ent.	Gold	
Kyla	Andres	Missoula	Sheep Production	E/P	Silver	
Kolby	Dietz	Shepherd	Sheep Production	Ent.	Gold	
Becca	Gerard	Cascade	Sheep Production	Ent.	Bronze	
James	Kramer	Beaverhead	Sheep Production	Ent.	Gold	
Kaycie	Mikunda	Beaverhead	Sheep Production	Ent.	Gold	
Josh	Pepos	Cascade	Sheep Production	P	Silver	
Abigail	Stevenson	Hobson	Sheep Production	Ent.	Gold	X

Krystal	Sutton	Kalispell	Sheep Production	Ent.	Gold	
Katherine	Achilles	Electric City	Small Animal Production and Care	E/P	Gold	X
Spencer	Drange	Laurel	Speciality Animal Production	P	Gold	X
Jacob	Rasmussen	Missoula	Speciality Crop Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Natalie	Arnott	Missoula	Swine Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Rhianna	Ballenger	Missoula	Swine Production	Ent.	Bronze	
Bailee	Doering	Beaverhead	Swine Production	Ent.	Gold	
Kristian	Landis	Beaverhead	Swine Production	Ent.	Bronze	
Charali	Wetherbee	Ruby Valley	Swine Production	Ent.	Gold	
Colton	Anderson	Cascade	Turf Grass Management	P	Gold	X
Piper	Robison	Hysham	Turf Grass Management	P	Gold	
Kaitlyn	Koterba	Electric City	Vegetable Production	Ent.	Gold	X
Autumne	Poling	Missoula	Veterinary Science	E/P	Gold	X

State FFA Degrees

<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Chapter</i>
Mackenzie	Butikofer	Bainville
Abby	Reidle	Bainville
Austin	Romo	Bainville
Carl	Kambich	Beaverhead
Kristian	Landis	Beaverhead
Luke	Peterson	Beaverhead
Kate	Indreland	Big Timber
Trever	Klein	Big Timber
Jess	Moody	Big Timber

McKenna	Moore	Big Timber
Martje	Plaggemeyer	Big Timber
Nicole	Halfpop	Bighorn
Dalton	Amsden	Broadus
Brooke	Billing	Broadus
Dauson	Fruit	Broadus
Christen	Johnson	Broadus
Kaycee	Layne	Broadus
Cheyenne	Perry	Broadus
Avery	Smith	Broadus

Haley	Wilson	Broadus
Kimberlee	Elmore	Carter County
Kylee	Kennedy	Carter County
Colton	Anderson	Cascade
Glen	Ferguson	Cascade
Mateo	Ferrara	Cascade
Treyton	Marquis	Cascade
Evan	McGonigal	Cascade
Zach	Riphenburg	Cascade
Cody	Turan	Cascade
Wade	Wombold	Cascade
Michael	Warburton	Chinook
Con	Crary	Choteau
Garrett	Depner	Choteau
Austin	Dobrecevich	Choteau
Maria	Murnane	Choteau
Alyssa	Oyler	Clark's Fork
Fallon	Pelican	Clark's Fork
Ryan	Zentner	Clark's Fork
Justin	Cape	Colstrip
Colton	Hoppe	Colstrip
Michael	Awtrey	Conrad
Jenna	Barker	Conrad
Nicole	Erickson	Conrad
Kennith	Habets	Conrad
Sheridan	Johnson	Conrad
Parker	Larson	Conrad
Cale	Ostrom	Conrad
Joseph	Padgett	Conrad
Abbey	Dunn	Corvallis
Maddison	Milliman	Corvallis
Morgan	Weidow	Corvallis
Danielle	West	Corvallis
Cassidy	Westbrook	Corvallis
Chase	Kilzer	Culbertson
Macy	Kirkaldie	Culbertson
Tessa	Larsen	Culbertson
Sierra	Machart	Culbertson
Logan	Nickoloff	Culbertson
Braden	Olson	Culbertson
Mason	Best	Custer

Beti	Lombardi	Deer Lodge
Kordell	Carpenter	Denton
Riley	Donaldson	Denton
Julia	Grubb	Denton
Lane	Hathaway	Denton
Skyler	Miller	Denton
Katherine	Achilles	Electric City
Tyler	Barnett	Electric City
Mackenzie	Benedict	Electric City
Josh	Brooking	Electric City
Devin	Cichosz	Electric City
Haelee	Essebaggers	Electric City
Cheyenne	Hall	Electric City
Benjamin	Kaul	Electric City
Nicholas	Lunnie	Electric City
Hayley	Nelson	Electric City
Makayla	Paul	Electric City
Reanna	Shular	Electric City
Cassidy	Storrusten	Electric City
Carter	Storrusten	Electric City
Brooklynn	Etwiler	Fairfield
Claire	Ruckman	Fairfield
Annie	Townsend	Fairfield
Cassidy	Bawden	Fergus
Traci	Choate	Fergus
Mikayla	Comes	Fergus
Abigail	Gatz	Fergus
Teal	Luther	Forsyth
Riley	Sorenson	Forsyth
Dylan	Sorenson	Forsyth
Lily	Agar	Fromberg
Breanna	Kinn	Fromberg
Dalton	Lindgren	Fromberg
Caitlin	Cunningham	Gardiner
Brooke	Dreyer	Gardiner
Jack	Hafer	Gardiner
Kelsey	McDonald	Gardiner
Kara	Orser	Gardiner
Wyatt	Phillips	Gardiner
Andrew	Hale	Geraldine
Erik	Nielsen	Geraldine

Wendell	Stephens	Geraldine
Logan	McColly	Hinsdale
Cache	Younkin	Hinsdale
Bailee	Stenger	Huntley Project
Brooke	Eves	Hysham
Lauryn	Pfaffinger	Hysham
Piper	Robison	Hysham
Allie	Blain	Joliet
Kyle	Deines	Joliet
Ashley	Dworshak	Joliet
Noah	Grewell	Joliet
Morgan	Harris	Joliet
Justin	King	Joliet
William	Kramer	Joliet
Shane	Milton	Joliet
Logen	Mydland	Joliet
Cotton	Myers	Joliet
Danni	Nardinger	Joliet
Jerod	Songstad	Joliet
Shalee	Unger	Joliet
Meghan	Levanen	Kalispell
Jayde	Nail	Kalispell
Krystal	Sutton	Kalispell
Weston	Taylor	Kalispell
Cassidy	Wiley	Kalispell
Emily	Carda	Lambert
Casey	Watson	Lambert
Jared	Craig	Laurel
Kelsey	Kraft	Laurel
Zachary	Proue	Laurel
Brett	Robertus	Laurel
Toby	Wisecup	Laurel
Isiah	Brown	Little Big Horn
Gabrielle	Plenty Hawk	Little Big Horn
Alanis	Doney	Malta
Michael	Knudsen	Malta
Julia	Meisdalen	Malta
Caleb	Meisdalen	Malta
Rheanna	Messerly	Malta
Colter	Salveson	Malta
Riley	Pinkerton	Melstone

BreElle	Wacker	Melstone
Natalie	Arnett	Missoula
Maverick	Davis	Missoula
Jessica	Duffy	Missoula
Matthew	Hoskinson	Missoula
Tanner	Kammerer	Missoula
Lauren	McCaffree	Missoula
Autumne	Poling	Missoula
Nathan	Wildeboer	Missoula
Jessica	Horan	Moore
Clayton	Busby	Park
Lauren	Emter	Park
Matthew	Francis	Park
Claree	Tecca	Park
Barrett	Neal	Park
Breanna	Anderson	Park City
Brandon	Flemmer	Park City
Heidi	Froelich	Park City
Ally	Bummer	Plentywood
Aleecia	Eggen	Plentywood
Alexandra	Greer	Red Lodge
Cierra	Bireley	Richey
Sydney	Brost	Richey
Seth	Brown	Richey
Tanner	Schipman	Richey
Ellie	Volbrecht	Richey
Bryce	Dines	Roberts
Thomas	Beeler	Rosebud
Joelle	Arthur	Roundup
Brandon	Hetrick	Roundup
Juan		
Pablo	DuPond	Ruby Valley
Janie	Smart	Ruby Valley
Charali	Wetherbee	Ruby Valley
Austin	Taylor	Shelby
Leah	Aigner	Shepherd
Bailey	Dougherty	Shepherd
Dallas	Flowers	Shepherd
Caitlyn	Moran	Shepherd
James	Whitmus	Shepherd
Cheyenne	Darkow	Shields Valley

Zane	Lannen	Shields Valley
Kyle	Topp	Sidney
Clay	Merwin	Stevensville
Katrina	Feddes	Stillwater Valley
Trever	Cullen	Sweet Grass Hills
Meagan	Hesla	Sweet Grass Hills
Caitlin	Lerum	Sweet Grass Hills
Cierrah	Farbo	Sweet Grass Hills
Lance	Carlson	Twin Bridges

Jennifer	Hobbs	Twin Bridges
Beth	Huttinga	Twin Bridges
Ashlynn	Harrington	Victor
Alexis	Scichilone	Victor
Rowen	Tracy	Victor
Daven	Woodard	Victor
Kaitlin	Lane	Wheatland
Jacob	Misner	Wheatland
John	Power	Wheatland
Keelan	Taber	Wheatland
Kaylie	Carlstrom	Winifred

American FFA Degrees - 2016

Arlie Armbrister from the Hinsdale FFA
Danette Becker from the Plentywood FFA
Richards Becker from the Plentywood FFA
Brent Beley from the Big Timber FFA
Caleb Bowey from the Ruby Valley FFA
Cody Boyce from the Fergus of Lewistown FFA
Meghan Brence from the Miles city FFA
Chase Gerer from the Denton FFA
Nick Haag from the Ruby Valley FFA
Ryan Handley from the Missoula FFA
Sidney Hathaway from the Denton FFA
Jordy Hereim from the Wheatland FFA
ShayLe Hildebrand from the Joliet FFA
Riley Horigan from the Big Timber FFA
Colter Kenworthy from the Ruby Valley FFA
Cheyenne Kisler from the Plentywood FFA
Kalvin Kunda from the Big Timber FFA
Todd Lackman from the Forsyth FFA
Bethany Lacock from the Hinsdale FFA
Dan Lavy from the Clark's Fork FFA
McKenzy Lee from the Kalispell FFA
Mekdes Lombardi from the Deer Lodge FFA
Carter Lynch from the Broadus FFA
Mariah Machart from the Culbertson FFA
Mikal Mavencamp from the Hinsdale FFA
Micah McClure from the Mission Valley FFA
Lauren Mehlhoff from the Twin Bridges FFA
Trevor Motley from the Stevensville FFA
Levi Mydland from the Joliet FFA
Emily Nielsen from the Culbertson FFA
Laina Raisler from the Miles city FFA
Meaghan Raw from the Shields Valley FFA
Carlie Rembold from the Big Timber FFA
Laurel Rigby from the Mission Valley FFA
Jacqueline Schauble from the Kalispell FFA
Taylor Schroeder from the Fairfield FFA
Shiloh Skillen from the Robison-Hysham FFA
Charlie Smart from the Ruby Valley FFA
Faith Stevenson from the Hobson FFA
Cole Torgerson from the Shepherd FFA
Holden Vandivort from the Shepherd FFA
Michael Walsh from the Twin Bridges FFA
Sam Wood from the Ruby Valley FFA
Zachary Wright from the Wheatland FFA

Distinguished Service Awards

Jay Meyer

Jack Larson

Josh Doely

Honorary State FFA Degrees

Rodney Braaten, MAAE President

Bonnie Stensvad, Melstone FFA Supporter

Dusty Perry, MSU Ag-Ed Department

Tracy Dougher, MSU Ag-Ed Department

Shannon Arnold, MSU Ag-Ed Department

Shawn and Shelly Koenig

Tom and Shelly Andres

Jack and Angie Meyer

Rick and Nanette Cummings

Nathan and Melanie Reiner

Fred and Loretta Michels

Darrell and Sara Stevenson

Friend of the Foundation Award

Mountain Sky Guest Ranch

State Convention Sponsors

Event Sponsored	Company	Contact
Ag Marketing CDE	Billings Farmhand	Brian Hansen
Ag Mechanics CDE	Tri State Trucking	Willie Widhalm
Ag Sales CDE	Montana Agribusiness Association	Krista Lee Evans
Ag Sales Contest & Ag Mechanics Contest	Walter Wichman	Wichman Ag Supply
Ag Teacher Luncheon	Montana Dept of Ag	Walt Anseth
Agronomy CDE	Bayer Crop Science	Matt Smith
Agronomy CDE	Montana Grain Growers	Lola Raska
Agronomy CDE	Montana Seed Growers	Heather Rimel
Agronomy CDE	Montana Seed Trade	Mike & Heather Devries
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Extemporaneous Speaking	Miles Community College	Jessie Dufner/Kim Gibbs
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Greenhand Contest	Lyle Armstrong	
Greenhand Contest (with brother Lyle)	Jay Armstrong	
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Job Interview/Ag Issues	Farmers Union Insurance	Kerri Bekker
Livestock CDE	Neal Family	Lyle & Dianna Neal
Livestock CDE	Northern Livestock Video	Joe Goggins
Livestock CDE Scholarship	West Feeds	Jerry Begger

Meats CDE	Randy Bogden Farm Bureau Financial	Randy Bogden
Meats CDE/Workshop	Pioneer Meats	Brian Engle
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Parliamentary Procedure	Montana Farmers Union	Justin Locke
Prepared Speaking	Northern Broadcasting System	Taylor Brown
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Star Awards: Agriscience, Agribusiness, Star Farmer, Star Green Hand,	Curt & Ardona Robbins	
State Degree Dinner	Montana Farm Bureau	Scott Kulbeck
State Officer Fund	Folkvord Family/Wheat Montana	Dean & Hope Folkvord
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Thursday General Session/ Day of Service	Northwest Farm Credit Services	Shawn Fladager
Tradeshow/Talent	Montana Silversmiths	Callie Freeman
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Vet Science CDE	Cottonwood Veterinary Hospital	Heidi Jakob
Vet Science Scholarship	Origen	Jared Murnin
Wednesday General Session Sponsor	Tractor and Equipment Company	Melisa Frazee
Workshop	Caroline Davis	Caroline Davis
Workshop Sponsor	First Interstate Bank	Ashley Forde

Jake Michels, Shepherd State Parliamentarian



“The Backseat Middle”

Sorry I’m late I was just getting back from a little road trip.

I love road trips. They take me far away from home, playing games like I-spy, truth or dare, never have I ever, and the classic 20 questions. When I was little, our family would all pile into the car to go on vacations. Now the one thing you had to be sure of if you piled into that car was to not end up in the backseat middle. Smushed in between two others, you could never find a seatbelt. You had no window, your legs were up to your ears, and you were sitting on top of a hump. No matter what it was always an argument in my family on who had to sit in the backseat middle. Typically, being the oldest, I would use my seniority to make my brothers give me a window seat.

When I arrived at my freshman year of high school my youth group advisor Brian had a different solution to this simple problem. He developed an award, calling it the Backseat Middle Award. Now initially I was taken aback by this award. I mean giving an award to the person who chose to sit in the backseat middle every time we got in the car? Seriously? Like that is so easy! Slam dunk award right there. But the more I learned about the award the more I began to appreciate it. You see it wasn’t just about sitting in that crummy seat. The backseat middle award is for the person on the retreat that put others first, Brian designed award that cultured kindness amongst the students and encouraged people to look for ways to help others. The award changed the dynamic of how we treated each other on those retreats. It was the only award Brian ever gave out, because it was the only characteristic that he felt was worth recognition. Tonight, after session, for those Chapters that rode up here in vans, I hope that one of you jumps at the opportunity to take that backseat middle. Keep your eyes peeled, and find something that can help out another person. Flashback to my 7th grade year I had the privilege to join the Shepherd FFA Chapter. Back then, I wore a fedora, had transition lenses in my glasses, and you could never get me to stop jabbering about Apple Computers.

I was weird, and beyond a doubt in need of some guidance. I had no idea that day I walked into Mrs. Dietz’s classroom what would happen. What surprised me the most was the help I received from the upperclassmen. Names like Brady Ostermiller, Morgan Brumfield, Tyler Parker, and Abbie Goggins were big names to me. When I became an FFA member, those older upperclassmen saw my potential. They helped me develop speaking skills giving me self confidence in myself to achieve the goals I had set. I joined because of the mechanic’s contest, but they saw more in me than that. They were leading by the examples set before them. As FFA members we must also lead by example, bringing knowledge down from the generations before us. Go out and take others under your wing and inspire. Give them the self-confidence to achieve their dreams, wherever their dream will take them.

Scot forward to My 8th grade year. That particular year I tore my ACL playing football. Now what I didn't realize was how much I was going to be hindered, but the doctors told me I should avoid any quick motions, swimming, running, jumping, but the one that really tore at my heart was no dancing. The doctors said it was impossible to come back from that injury unless I managed to weight train every day for at least full year.

Now it just so happened that during that freshman year the Physical Education teacher, Mr. Barta put together a morning lifting class for upperclassmen only in athletics. Knowing this existed, I eagerly went to Mr. Barta and begged him to let me sign up. He didn't even hesitate to let me in... Now to be honest I didn't know what I had gotten myself into, early mornings, lifting every single day Monday through Friday. But every morning Mr. Barta was there, motivating us to work harder. He had to wake up earlier than the rest of us making the commute from Billings each day. Along with the class Mr. Barta had been slowly developing a grant application to improve our pitiful weight room facilities. By 2014 he had gotten that grant and more, building our weight room at Shepherd High School to rival that of the big AA schools in Billings and across the state. I wasn't the only one to benefit from the weight room either. The girl's and boy's basketball teams the next two years won the district and divisional tournaments. Now our teams didn't just have astounding crazy athletes. These were athletes that worked hard, not by talent, but by practice. None of which would've have been possible without the help of one man. However, we didn't know that shortly after receiving the grant, Mr. Barta was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer. My entire junior year and the following senior year, Mr. Barta battled cancer, and through chemo treatment still continued to show up early every morning to open that weight room for us students. Mr. Barta even continued to show up most of this year, waking up early and opening up that weight room. Motivating with a smile, high school students who as we all know, just love getting up early. He empowered us in his own way, took that backseat middle every morning, even when it was tough just to simply get out of bed that day. He has served as an inspiration for the entire community, and we are going to miss him as he moves into retirement. I look into the crowd tonight and I see a group of individuals who can use their position and talents to empower others. Find a need in your community and empower those around you to do the best that you can do. When I see that blue jacket, I see that senior who helps the 7th grader learn how to check spark plug gap. I see an advisor who wakes up early just to make sure every member has what they need to achieve their dreams. I see that sophomore who is good at math, and teaches a junior who is struggling, or a Freshman who knows how to dance taking on the task to teach his whole chapter. In FFA we are called to serve others. What better way to serve others than to teach them your talents? This doesn't mean you give them the answers, it means to give them the abilities and the confidence to do it themselves. There is an old saying that states "If you give a man a fish, he will eat for a day, if you teach a man to fish, he will feed himself for a lifetime." This is basis of why FFA was formed, not just for farming, or ranching, but to inspire and empower.

Because when you look to help others, use your skills and positions to empower, and when you lead by example, you give those members who have not yet found their place the feeling of being part of something bigger. Wake up early for something. Motivate the unmotivated. Shatter the norms. Imagine a world of people who all look to take the backseat middle. Someday, when you look back on your life and reflect, like me you might just see that you have been empowered by others too. So, will you be the one to take the backseat middle?

Brock Reiner, Kalispell State Sentinel

“Authentic Leadership”



10 and 2, 10 and 2, 10 and 2... This is the Rhythm I learned to use in casting a fly rod. When you cast a fly rod you need make a cast at that angle of 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock. If you go too far forward your fly and line slaps the water and scares the fish away. If you go too far back, you will cast too short from where you want to land your fly. To catch the fish, you need to have an authentic cast every time. As leaders, we need to be authentic in everything we do. We need to cast perfectly as much as we can to show people that we are authentic and are willing to sacrifice sometimes. How we do that is by rejecting passivity, accepting responsibility, accepting the greater reward, and leading courageously.

Passivity... it is an interesting word. The definition of passivity according to the dictionary is simply: not participating readily or actively; inactive. An example of this I can demonstrate for you is the Story of the Good Samaritan. If you have heard of this story can you give me a *oh yeah*?

And if you haven't it's ok I will tell you about it! So, way back 2000 years ago there was this guy named Jesus. He lived in what we now call Israel and he often told stories or parables to help people to understand what he meant in the big picture. Anyway, so it goes like this: "There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way, robbers attacked him. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man. (now to be clear Samaritans were in Jewish culture the bad guys or weird kids of the time) A Samaritan, traveling the road came upon him. When he saw the man's condition, his heart went out to him. He gave him first aid, disinfecting, and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable. In the morning, he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I'll pay you on my way back.'" The Samaritan rejected passivity by helping the man on the road and lead authentically. This is part of something we can do in our lives to be authentic leaders by helping those to make the world better even when we want to be passive in our hearts.

How many of you raise market hogs? Can I get a *wasup*? So, I have raised market hogs since I was in 5th grade. At my home in Kalispell, the Pig pen was below our house at that time and so you had to go down the hill to feed and such. I believe it was 6th grade and our Hogs just happened to get out, one rainy day and I mean it was POURING! So, my friend and I, put our muck boots on and ran out there. Three hours later the hogs still wouldn't go inside. They ran back in forth up the hill and down around the house almost across the busy road and did everything except go in. We were tired, wet and annoyed. Then my sister Amber skipped down the hill with a bucket of feed and they went right in... We almost gave up but we knew we had to bring them in to keep them safe and healthy. We knew we had to accept responsibility. In life, we can learn from this and know that we have to accept responsibility to authentically lead others and in daily life.

With accepting responsibility to be authentic leaders we need to accept the greater reward. I heard it said once "Sometimes you have to die a little to live a lot!" Occasionally I have had to die a little to live a lot. Such as: When I was a kid I may have not wanted to eat broccoli (mostly because it was one of my nicknames) but I lived a lot because it helped me stay healthier. Or maybe I needed to do chores and even though I may have wanted to be lazy I had to die a little to make sure I respected my parents and I lived a lot by gaining their trust and maybe some allowance money. Another example in our own FFA lives you may have to die a little by maybe sitting by another FFA member who is sitting by themselves. You will live a lot from this by knowing that you made someone's day better. Maybe you do not want to put that journal entry in AET but you live a lot when you are caught up and can do other things! Or maybe you really want hangout with your friends but you know you have to study for the meats contest. But you live a lot by maybe pulling off a win! You See? To be authentic leaders we need to make sure we are courteous to everyone as the president always says at the end of every FFA meeting and do those things that may benefit us or others in the end.

To Accept the Greater Reward, we need to Lead Courageously. How do we lead courageously? A great example of this was the Battle of Iwo Jima. How many of you have seen the Photograph of the American Flag being Raised on top of Iwo Jima? Raise your hand? Wave it to the right. To the Left. Many of you may not know but the Battle of Iwo Jima had two flag raisings. With 6,831 Americans who had lost their lives and over 19,000 wounded. Many of the soldiers still fighting, really needed some courage to conquer the Island. The Commanding Officer of the American Forces on Iwo Jima ordered that the American flag be raised on top of the hill. The Original flag was too very small that they were given and the Commanding officer requested a larger flag be placed on top of the mountain. This was so that every soldier would have to courage to know that reaching the top wasn't impossible and this inspired them to fight harder and lead courageously. Sergeant Michael Strank, Corporal Harlon Block, and Private First Class Franklin Sousley. Three out of the Six men who raised the flags died later the next few days. These men were them...Just as these soldiers fought, died, and suffered for us by leading courageously. They can inspire us to make sure when we are discouraged, we turn ourselves around and take courage and lead.

When you get that perfect cast and the trout comes up to feed. There is a gap of about a second before you quickly pull up to set the trout on the hook. *Clap* Like that! When you lead authentically you get the reward of knowing that you are being real and leading effectively. Just like when you catch that trout. You just know that you have it and it can't escape your hold. Throughout my time this year I have really seen these qualities in all of you! I have seen you reject passivity and sacrifice some of your time for someone else. I have seen you be responsible and just getting the work done. You have maybe died a little by maybe working hard at a contest and seen great success! You all lead courageously everyday by fighting to advocate for agriculture. I am not perfect at all when it comes to be an authentic leader, but I try to make it my guideline to be a great leader. We must Lead Courageously and inspire people to not give up. We must Accept the Greater Reward and show we are willing "to die a little to live a lot!". We must Accept responsibility and help others to be patient and to never give up! We must Reject Passivity to do what is right in a hard situation when no one else wants to. We Must All be Authentic Leaders! Montana FFA are you going to Authentically Lead?

Kacie Cummings, Cascade State Reporter

“Living Today”



Picture this: It's a cool September morning on a small golf course in central Montana. There's frost on the grass, and your breath can be seen like a cloud of smoke. This was the day of my very first high school cross country meet. Now for those of you who haven't had the privilege of participating in cross country, when you move on from junior high to high school competition, the distance you run, goes from about one and a half miles, to three. Looking back, this doesn't seem like that big of a deal, but at the time, it was huge. When the varsity girl's race rolled around, I was dragging my feet, both literally and metaphorically. As we lined up, a flood of thoughts ran through my mind. My shorts were too big, my shoe was coming untied, and I was a

little thirsty. It was kind of cold, but not cold enough to wear running tights so I didn't wear them, but I see some girls wearing them, so maybe I should too, is it too late for me to go change? As these thoughts raced through my mind, I suddenly recognized something: I had never actually run 3 consecutive miles before. There I was, ready to compete in a 3-mile RACE, and I had never even run that far before. I stood in shock for a moment, then became even more scared for the race to start. While we all took off our sweats, I did some quick math; I'd never ran 3 miles before, but I figured even I could average 10 minutes per mile. My thought was, no matter how bad this sucks, at least I'll be done in 30 minutes. If I can at least survive these next 30 minutes, everything will be okay. Before I knew it, the gun went off and the race was on. Parents and friends of the athletes lined the sides of the course, cheering on the pack of runners as we made our way down the first stretch. I felt okay, but all I could think about was how dreadful the next three miles would be. I saw a couple girls running about my pace, so I sat right behind them for the rest of the race. One foot after the other, and soon enough I'll be done. Before I knew it, the race was over. I stumbled across the finish line, honestly a little bummed. I ran fine, and I wasn't sick, but I felt like I missed out. I was given the opportunity to compete against great athletes from across the state, but I didn't care enough to train hard and try my best. We ran on a beautiful course, but I didn't even look up to enjoy it. I ran against a hundred other girls, and I didn't take the time to meet any of them. Looking back, I wish, in many aspects of my life, that I would have made the most of all the time I had. I'm sure you've heard it before; life goes by so fast. Before you know it, high school will be over. Sooner than that, this year will be over and even sooner than that, state convention will be over. So, treasure it; live today.

Now when I tell you to “live today” I'm not trying to preach some fairy tale, carpe diem attitude, I know it can't be that simple. I realize that simply by you, sitting there, looking up at me, listening to me talk, is not likely going to invoke some magical inspiration that changes your life. What's tricky about living

today, is it's all in your hands. No one can do it for you, you have to make a conscious decision that you care deeply enough about your life to make something meaningful out of it. To really "live today," you need to do two things: live courageously and choose happiness.

Live Courageously

How many of you sell fruit to raise money for your FFA chapter? (**woohoo**) In my chapter, you are required to sell a certain amount of fruit to be member in good standing. Now fundraising never really has been my strong suit, and I could usually get away with the bare minimum. But this time, it was different. There was no getting out of it. I was going to sell that fruit one way or the other. I absolutely dreaded calling my friends and family, asking them if they'd like to support our fundraiser. Even worse than that, was going door to door. I remember the very first house I decided to approach to sell fruit. I started in a pretty nice neighborhood, where I knew a couple friends who lived nearby. After sitting in my car for a solid 5 minutes gathering my courage to talk to strangers, I slowly approached the door, order form in hand. I noticed, as I walked up, that the Seattle Seahawks game was on, so I knew I was at the right house. I knocked on the door, and I was greeted with two huge smiles from an elderly couple, who turned out to be two of the nicest people I've ever met. They shook my hand, and were eager to hear what I had to say. Even looking back now, I'm blown away by the kindness they showed when they saw a shy little sophomore trying to raise money for FFA show up at their front door. After stumbling through conversation nervously, those two strangers bought a couple boxes of fruit and I was on my way to reaching my goal.

These past couple years I've truly learned the value of coming out of my shell. Living courageously, and moving out of your comfort zone, is so valuable to our personal growth. It's OKAY to be shy. It's OKAY to not be front and center all the time, but you must recognize the importance of taking charge of your life: putting yourself out there, and living courageously. When you're at that dance tonight, ask someone to dance. When you're on stage tomorrow, placing in the top ten, congratulate the member who wins. As you walk around convention this week, say hi to someone you don't know. We're all human. We're all wandering around life trying to find our way. There's no reason to be intimidated by anyone.

Choose Happiness

I'll always remember when I was young, and I would be in a crabby mood, my mom would always say, in her oh so endearing voice, "Kacie, don't be a negative Nancy!" Now maybe this overused vernacular wasn't the best way to steer me out of my negative ways, but looking back now, I know what she meant. What bothered me more than my mom's negative Nancy comment, was when people around me, would say "be positive!" Don't get me wrong, I'm no advocate of negativity, but I'm sorry, there's no way telling me to "be positive!" will make me be bright and chipper at 6 a.m. on a Monday morning. I must admit, Monday mornings really do kind of suck, but I'm going to let you in on a little secret: happiness is a choice. Those people you know, who always have a smile on their face and enjoy everything they do, they choose happiness. They wake up every morning, face the challenges of the day, and rather than dwell on the bad things, they CHOOSE happiness. People tell you to see the glass as "half full" rather than "half empty," but how about rather than accepting your class is half full, find things that fill your glass. Rather than being miserable, dragging yourself through a contest that doesn't interest you, find the

contest that does. Rather than dwell on your failures, spend your time working for a success. This is your time to do with what you want. It is your right, your responsibility, to take your time, your efforts, and when you're on your way home from convention, I want you to ask yourself one simple question, am I settling for my glass being half full, or am I working to fill my glass? I want, more than anything, for each and every one of you to live today: to live courageously and to choose happiness. These two things are a powerful duo, and can really take you places if you let them. It's not easy, but it's worth it. Find things that fill your glass. Live courageously and choose happiness. Montana FFA, I dare you, to live today!

Josh Meyer ***State Treasurer***

“What is Your Next Jacket”



If you're anything like me, you had that dream job growing up. For most boys it could be a cop, firefighter, or soldier. For most girls it could be a veterinarian, teacher, or a chef. Whatever you wanted to be to be growing up, we all had a dream. For me, I had two. I wanted to be a cop, and someone in the military. I didn't really understand the difference in branches, I just really wanted to serve. Some of my biggest role models growing up served in the military. Like my Grandfather and my Uncle who each served over twenty years in the United States Air Force. The older I got I had different ideas that popped in my head but I always went back to my original goals when I thought about my role models. They had talked to me about how it had made them a better person and how they liked to help others by serving. Moving forward in life I realized what I was really passionate about helping others. Serving

others. I wanted to serve others in everything I did. Helping others truly made me happy. Learning to do, Doing to learn, Earning to live, Living to serve. Something I would learn very well in my time in FFA. There was one part that stood out to me, it was my foundation as a person. "Living to Serve". I remember the first time I put on that blue jacket. While I didn't know how it was going to change my life. I later found out it was a jacket of happiness, belonging, and especially of service. That blue jacket was the foundation of my many jackets I will wear throughout my life. That one blue jacket was life changing. When I began participating in CDE's and leadership conventions I knew this would be a place of belonging, and a place I could serve. I looked up to those chapter officers and state officers. I didn't

know anyone in FFA but they welcomed me in like i was family. That FFA Family we all are a part of. They helped me meet new friends, find contests, and find some of the best food I've ever had! With their guidance, they put me on a good path in FFA, something that is important to all of us. They reminded me of my role models. Putting others before themselves and helping others in every way they could. After starting to understand FFA I knew that I could serve others in not only my chapter and school, but the rest of my community, and my state. I studied FFA as much as I could. I wanted to know what more I could do. That jackets was the beginning of an adventure. I began competing in everything, and going to every event that I could...well except the dances..... Being a young high school boy with NOO dance skill WHAT SO EVER, it was pretty intimidating, my chapter members told me that I had to go up to the girls and ask them to dance. Yeah, NO way that was going to happen. EVER! Girls were waayyy too intimidating, but with the guidance of my chapter officers, and by guidance, I mean being forced to go to a dance and asking those girls to dance, I actually had a lot of fun just like they were. They were having fun while helping others break out of their comfort zone just like they were helping me. They pushed me to take that step out of my comfort zone and it wasn't just about dancing. It showed me that I never know if I'm going to like something without trying it, and not to underestimate myself. They gave me the true courage to take that chance and run for a chapter office, even though I had only been in for less than a year. The courage I got through them pushed me to who I am today. Through this courage, I decided I was going to run for a state office after only being in for less than two short years. The officers before me took action, they saw something and made it happen, they saw potential in me and pushed me to be my best. They helped me so now I can help others. I would like to think that because they helped me it has enabled me to help you, the members of Montana FFA. They took the step, they took action! Taking action is important. People can say they want to help, people can say they want to serve others, but it doesn't really matter until they take action. A particular person comes to mind with this, someone that a lot of us know or have heard many great things about. Sam Cornthwaite... a man that took action and served others selflessly. On a trip to China he saw orphans that needed help. Sam took action and went over to change lives by founding Goodworks. Goodworks began selling coffee and donating the profits to support orphans, who were pushed from housing at the young age of 14. He had a vision to serve others and he made his vision a reality. We all need to take action and leave that legacy. Find your next step, find in your heart what makes you, a servant leader. We all need to live a life of service like Sam did. Come this saturday, I will take off my FFA jacket for the very... last time. This jacket has been a jacket of service. When I take this jacket off, I won't stop serving others. Just like Sam, I have a vision and see a need for service. I will go from THIS, blue jacket, to my next jacket in life. The Uniform of a United States Marine. I have taken the next step in service and have enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. I will ship out at the conclusion of my State Officer year, because I saw a need to serve my country. This beautiful country of ours that I love so much. I took action and made my childhood dream and my vision for service a reality. We all need to find our vision, and act on it! Make it a reality! FFA members, advisors, and guests, as you sit here today, think of how you want to serve others! What is your next step? Put others before yourselves and leave a legacy. While we will all have to take off this jacket, we can always find another jacket to serve in. Regardless of what it is. Live that life of service. And think to yourself, "What is your, next Jacket?"

Ashley Koenig, Belgrade State Secretary



“Just Temporary”

Almost a year ago today, I was just like you: An FFA student attending the Montana FFA State Convention, and I had one thing on my mind. I wanted to dance! Unfortunately for me, it was Saturday. The infamous State Convention dance had passed, and it looked like I was out of luck. However, just as I thought all hope was lost, an announcement from pre-session brought my hopes back to life. As soon as they announced that they were going to have a dance contest, I started looking around for potential partners. Just as I looked to my left, I saw my friend Rowen, who also happened to be a good dancer. As I caught Rowen’s attention, I said “Hey, let’s enter the dance contest!” Rowen gave me a puzzled and somewhat confused look, before saying, “But, Ashley, you’re not good!” While that statement is certainly not false, I rolled my eyes and finally persuaded Rowen to be my partner, even though I’m not the best dancer out there. As the contest began, we danced about as well as usual: I knocked Rowen’s

glasses off, we laughed, and proceeded to attempt to look like we knew what we were doing. As the song began to wind down, I prepared to go and take my seat. Just as I turned around to head back... something strange happened. I heard Rowen’s name announced and then my own. What?! I thought this must be some sort of mistake... But no, the judges must have been looking during just the right times, and somehow we had made it to the final three teams that then danced on stage. The finals went okay, and a few people even clapped for us at the end, and while we weren’t the best or most talented team up there, it didn’t matter. You see, this was more than just a dance contest to me. This was one of the very last memories I made as a high school FFA member. Thinking back, I truly believe that I wouldn’t have gotten out of my chair during my first three years in high school, but something changed during my senior year.

I learned how to ask myself three important questions; questions that would allow me to have experiences that I could have never imagined, just like competing in this dance contest. The first question I began to ask myself, was “why not?” Why not take every opportunity, while it was still available? Granted, I wasn’t always so successful. In high school, I missed out on a lot. I rarely attended school sports functions unless I was playing, didn’t really go out of my way to meet or get to know everyone, and I never attended my school’s prom. Looking back, maybe I did miss out. Maybe I should have taken advantage of some of those high school functions. However, because I missed out on those, I could take other opportunities. Since I didn’t go to prom, I could go to another rodeo that weekend. Since I didn’t attend many sporting events, I could go on more FFA trips. You see, life is all about decisions and sacrifices. Often, I was asked by my peers in school if I wished that I had an ordinary high school life. I never had to think more than a second before replying with a “no, not really.” To me, living an extraordinary life was worth giving up those “typical” high school experiences that supposedly make up the life of an ordinary high schooler. Why not be a little extraordinary? By being an FFA member, you all are extraordinary. Out of the 15 million high school students in the United States, just under 650,000 are FFA members, or less than five percent. In my opinion, that makes all of you extraordinary. While others are out living that “typical” high school life, you all choose to put yourselves out there, whether that’s through FFA competitions or volunteering with your chapter. For you to be here, you must have seen something that pushed you to be extraordinary. Something about FFA that drew you in, and made you want to be a part of it, and give up the ordinary.

In turn, FFA members know how to draw in others, and teach them how to see themselves as extraordinary. This year, I got to hear many of your stories and experiences, but one conversation in particular stands out to me. I was attending the Melstone Invitational Contests in February, and I struck up a conversation with my friend Gustav. Gustav and I talked about FFA, wrestling, and his recent involvement in the Big Brothers and Big Sisters program. I asked Gustav what his little brother was like, and he said, "Well, I have two. One of them is super smart, really well behaved, and he loves to read, so he's okay I guess." I respond, "I see, well that doesn't sound so bad, what about the other one?" Gustav then tells me, "He thinks he's a bad kid, but he's not. I'm not really sure why, but he's just convinced that he's not a good kid. When I go and spend time with him, he acts like he doesn't want me there. It's getting better though. I found out that he likes to draw, and I really like to draw too. Last time, we just sat and drew together. He looked over at what I was doing, and he asked me how I learned how to draw so well. I told him that I started learning when I was his age and that I just taught myself. He asked me if I thought that he could draw like that someday, and I told him that I think he could; he's pretty good! I think that gave him a little bit of hope, you know?" Gustav doesn't know it, but this conversation made me tear up because I was so proud. Just like Gustav, I've learned to ask the question, "Why not me?" Every day, we have the chance to make a difference in someone else's life. So often I hear people saying, "I feel sorry for so and so" or "I wish there was something I could do." But that's the thing... you CAN do something. Gustav easily could have written this young man off, focused on the easier of the two boys, and just done the bare minimum: But he chose not to. He chose to be the positive influence for this boy, he chose to see the potential in someone with so much self-doubt, and that is what being a leader is all about. Leaders don't turn people away, just because they're difficult. Leaders see the best in others, and help them learn to see the best in themselves.

I had one of these "why not me" experiences a few years back. Ever since I was 14, I have gotten to serve as a camp counselor for younger kids at the Gallatin Valley Rodeo Bible Camp. From teaching goat tying to leading devotions, I loved it all. You see, Rodeo Bible Camp is a place of learning, laughter, but most importantly, love. It doesn't matter if you have lived in the United States your whole life, or speak four words of English, everyone is welcomed at Rodeo Bible Camp. One of my fondest memories of camp came in the summer of 2015. On one of the last days, I was talking with one of my goat tying students, Kamryn. She was sad, because this was her last year of camp; next year she would be too old to be a camper. Kamryn asked me if I thought she could come and visit next year, as her brother would still be young enough to attend next year. I smiled, and reassured her that of course she was welcome to come back to camp and visit next year. You see, Kamryn was one of the students that I always admired. She didn't have the most expensive horses, or the fanciest tack or trailer, but she always worked incredibly hard. Kamryn was also on my high school rodeo team, as a junior high member. At practice, I would always do my best to help her when she was having problems with a difficult horse, because I'd been through that too. I knew how it felt to be struggling and frustrated, and how much I appreciated when someone would help me out. I wanted to be that person for Kamryn. Why not me?

Fast forward into the summer of 2016, on June 9th. While I love teaching kids how to tie goats and compete in rodeo, I also like to compete myself. This day marked the first of my last State High School Rodeo, and I was plenty nervous. The first event of the day was the goat tying, and as I made my way through the gate, all the nerves were left behind. I ran down the arena on my horse, got off, tied up my goat, and put my hands in the air... in 7.9 seconds. At the time, this run was good enough to take the lead in the first round, and ended up second when it was said and done. The rest of the day's events went on, some successfully, and others not so much, but that's just how rodeo goes. As I started walking back to my trailer to take care of my horses and eat some dinner after a long day of competition, I got a text from Cheryl, the Adult President of my High School Rodeo Team. The message read, "Meeting back at camp, come as soon as you put your horses up." I figured this message must be an announcement concerning the rest of the week's events, but I would soon find out that I was terribly wrong. As I arrived at the meeting, silence filled the air. "What's going on?" I asked. I could not have been more unprepared for the answer that came next. "It's Kamryn, she was out riding on her four-wheeler today and got in a terrible accident. She's in a coma, and she's paralyzed." I had no idea what to say. I don't think there's anything to say in a moment like that.

My teammates and I continued to compete that week, and everyone made yellow ribbons with the words "Ride for Kamryn" scrawled on them, but it just wasn't the same. We all knew that we were getting the opportunity to do one of the things that Kamryn loved most, and she would no longer be able to. That week, I started asking myself the third and final question: "Why not now?" This question reminds me to do what really matters. I challenge you to think about this: What really matters to you? Find the people, hobbies, and passions that truly mean the most, and pursue them every single day that you can, because these opportunities are just temporary. We only have so long to influence the lives of others, and to live a fulfilling and valuable life for ourselves. As you sit in those plastic chairs, I ask you: what makes you want to get up and dance?

Jon Andres, Missoula State 2nd Vice President



"The Magic is in the Jacket"

I'm simple guy I like three things 4 for 4 from Wendy's, the Bozeman Bobcats, and magic tricks. I remember the very first time I saw a magic show. We were in Forsyth watching Jay Owen house, I watched him break out of boxes and feed steak to his pet tiger. My first magic show was filled with excitement and curiosity. Trick after trick defied my perceptions. It made me question what I knew yet challenged me to learn more. As I started to pick up magic, first with small slide of the hand tricks then with card tricks. I learned two essential lessons: magic works because people are so eager to jump to conclusions. And 2) magic works because each person brings their own perception of what is going on. It's because of this variety in perceptions that makes this organization, this room so great. On the other hand, jumping to conclusions can sometimes get you in trouble.... With your mom.

For most of my life I lived in Ashland Montana on the northern Cheyenne Indian reservation. Like many eastern Montana towns there really, wasn't much to it, it had one gas station one restaurant and one grocery store. Since there was only grocery store when we really need groceries we would pick them up in billings which is like 4-hour round trip, so we really only did this like once a month. So, if we ever needed something we either went to grocery store or waited for the Swan's man. You know the Swans man the guy who most kids love because they usually bring ice cream and like chicken nuggets to your house. And for a kid like me, life couldn't get better then having chicken nuggets in it. But there was a catch with the Swans guy, Neela and I had this irrational fear of him. Like I bet he was a great guy you know good family man volunteers for his church loves the environment you know the guy, anyways we hated him. Public enemy number one. I mean it got to the point where Neela

and I would make these corncob buzzards. Let me explain “you see corncob buzzards was our own invention so first take an old corncob the older the better, like what the pilgrims used. Then you take freshly plucked chicken feathers and you then put in the cork part of the corncob. BOOM now you got yourself a corncob buzzard. So, we just launch them at this guy like we would spend all day all night making these things just to throw them at this poor guy. Yeah, there wasn’t a lot to do in Ashland.

The point is it’s easy to jump to conclusions. It’s easy to think what you want to think. At 7 year’s old we wanted a life of adventure which entails an arch nemesis but in reality, we made an enemy out of a potential friend, I mean the man was just trying to bring us ice cream. All too often we jump to conclusions without knowing the facts.

It’s clear that at 7 I don’t always make the right decisions but I guy know that usually does is my grandpa.. My grandpa terry was in FFA back in the day. He was a good member pretty active, competed in his local contest. Well it was his senior year and he was finally able to go to nationals in Kansas City. The problem was he didn’t have the money to go, but my gramps isn’t easily discouraged so like any other FFA member he was ready to make the money somehow. Gramps was a simple Minnesota boy so he decided to make his money by some manual labor. So, gramps and a buddy jumped on a train to pick potatoes in North Dakota. Can we pull a picture up of where he sat? There right in that little thing! I don’t know about the rest of you but I wouldn’t have rode there 600 miles just to go to nationals. But he did and that week he picked spuds like a stud. Once grandpa had the money he needed he jumped back on a train and rode it home. The problem was he really didn’t tell anyone his plan he just kind of did it. So, when he got home his ag teacher thought that he was just skipping class and didn’t care about his education. He thought he was a hero because he wasn’t financially burdening his family. While his mom was probably thinking like where did my son go. The worst part of this story is that gramps couldn’t even go to nationals because he skipped school. His ag teacher had his own perception of what was going on he didn’t ask my grandpa what his reality was. Don’t make the mistake of jumping to conclusions without understanding someone’s motive and reality of the situation. (magic trick 2) Although his FFA career didn’t play out the way he wanted he wasn’t going to call it quits on FFA. Grandpa T understood the magic’s in the jacket, he wouldn’t have taken such a big risk if he knew it wasn’t such a large reward. Gramps later had 10 kids with 9 being in FFA 6 later became State officers and 3 got their ag-ed degrees. When I put on this jacket I’m reminded how this organization has shaped my family.

So, what have we learned let’s grab the domino one last time. We all know now that’s it’s just an optical illusion and we only perceived it had more sides but the reality is it doesn’t. But wait things aren’t adding up if there’s no such things as magic how can I tell you there’s magic in the jacket? As soon as we stop letting our perceptions of the world to influence our reality we can start unleashing the magic in each of us. So, when I show you this side we can really see three dots. And this next side actually has six. So, what’s on this side? Well if you guessed three you’d be right. And what about this side? That’s when the magic starts to show. Montana FFA what will you do with the magic?

CJ Stevenson, Moore

State 1st Vice President



“Find Why”

Good morning Montana FFA. Boy how time flies... what's this you ask? Oh don't worry about it, it's just my clock. God only knows I need it. The constant three years ago state convention was held in this exact same room. During the 1st Vice President's speech of the Saturday morning session there's a chapter sitting right in this row and there's a member sitting right in this very seat... sleeping like a rock. If you hadn't guessed it, that FFA member was me. And I don't know about you guys but I always thought it was some type of cruel and unusual punishment to start the only morning session of State Convention approximately 8 hours after the of the notorious FFA dance. I mean, come on? Back then, all I cared about was being successful and making a difference and yet here I was, sleeping my life away. I had the ambition and I had work ethic to accomplish my goals, but I didn't have the awareness to recognize my own mistakes. I had a dream, but I wasn't making the changes needed to accomplish that dream. I knew that legacy was, when it's all said and done the only thing that could beat a clock, but the legacy I was leaving was not one that I wanted to live on.

I had a football coach named Bub back in high school who always use to say, “Every day you wake up and you either get better or you get worse.” and looking back now I realize he was right. Some of the decisions I have made in my life have been nothing short of lazy. Even though sleeping through a general session is just one example of laziness. It's an example that serves as a weed in the grassy field that is my life. You see, laziness is like a noxious weed. Allowing for the existence of one is all it takes and before you know it you have a problem on your hands. I have chosen to procrastinate when I have stuff to do simply because it was easier and I am often late and not always because of my circumstances but because I didn't give myself enough time to arrive 5 minutes early. This was all fine and dandy until eventually people started to look at me differently and inquiries of my integrity began to blossom. After dropping the ball so many times, people started to question my commitment, my work ethic and the reason why I did what I did. And I hated that. After some serious thinking, I realized I didn't know why either, and that was the root of my problems. I had dreams of winning a state championship in football, basketball, and track, as well as one day traveling to Scotland. However, these dreams were never going to come true if I didn't change. Making changes can be difficult but that's the point. If it was easy to be successful everyone would be. That's exactly why we have to be able to recognize our inadequacies (no matter how small) and overcome them (no matter how hard it may seem).

Now I knew this girl a while back. To this day, I've never met a person in my life with a bigger heart. It's these people you'd hope nothing bad would ever happen to but unfortunately that's just not how life works. Well this girl had a dream, just like many of us in this room. In 2015, this girl had a dream of

winning the State 4H Horse show. So every morning she would be up before the break of dawn, feeding, raking, shoveling, grooming, saddling, unsaddling and saddling again all before the hour of breakfast. Later that summer, two months before the State 4H horse show, she was out moving bulls trying to get her horse across the creek when her horse suddenly jumped annnnd CRACCKK. Just like that this girl's life was instantly changed. She had broken her leg and all her chances of competing at the State 4H Horse show were out the window. All that time and all that work, for what, a trip to the hospital.

The doctors sat her down, looked at her severed tibia and fibula, and told her she'd need surgery to put 5 screws and a plate in and at least 6 months before she could even think about riding again. Needless to say, she was completely and utterly heartbroken, but she never let go of her dream. At this point she had a choice. She could sit and watch her dream slip through her fingers, or she could pour every ounce of heart she had left into her recovery. She hadn't put it all that time and effort just to let a little broken leg get in her way. So she went back to work, and every day little by little she began to progress. First she started by working her toes, back and forth, back and forth until eventually she did the same with her foot. Even though the movement was barely noticeable, it was enough. Before long she could put pressure on her foot. She got her hard cast replaced with an air cast and after just 2 months of rehab she was back on her horse. Not only did she compete the State 4H horse Show, she went on to win it. Now, I realize this is no ordinary story. But then again, Claire Stevenson is no ordinary person. Claire succeeded not because she won, but because she overcame all the odds. She recognized her inadequacies and made the changes necessary to accomplish her dream. I love my sister and even though I'm bigger than her, I still look up to her every single day. Her story taught me that toughness comes in all shapes and sizes and at the end of the day she reminded me that self-discipline was the only difference between those who accomplish and those who dream. Soon I began to fight the urge to sleep a little longer when my alarm went off and the morning and I got up. Soon I started to spend my time after practice filling out scholarships instead of watching Game of Thrones or playing online poker. It's the little things that have made the difference in my life and I promise you if you can make the changes in your life to accomplish your goal, you will not be disappointed.

Now this is not an "I've had some problems, I've identified them and now I live a flawless life kind of speech". No, I still struggle with staying disciplined almost every day, but that's the point. Adversity teaches us lessons and the lessons I have learned in the midst of my failures are what have ultimately lead me to the following conclusions on the topic of success. Success is not entirely defined by your achievements, but instead, success is defined by your ability to overcome adversity. Every person in this room will go through adversity at some point or another. For some of you it may just be that you came here expecting to place in a CDE and you didn't. For others, it may be physical imperfections or it may be problems with friends or family. Whatever your struggle is, I want you to embrace it and conquer it. Learn from your situation but don't let it define you. We only get so much time here on earth, and before we know it all that's left of us is a legacy.

Last week I walked into Grandma Ruby's Cafe in Hobson, MT to grab some lunch and I overheard a couple of old timers talking about a recently deceased member of our community. They said, "yeah she was great help on the ranch and always seemed to have a way of making your day better." That was when it hit me. That was a summary of that woman's entire life. We spend our lives worrying about accomplishing this and accomplishing that so that we can make a certain amount of money in such and such amount of time and when it's all said and done all that's left of our lives is a sentence or two that people remember you by. That's it. Everything I've done in sports and everything I've done in FFA and,

hell - even everything I say today - that will all be forgotten. I started thinking to myself what sentence people would remember me by and realized there were still changes for me to make. When I really dug deep into my heart and thought about it, how I want to be remembered is as “someone who was hardworking, and loved life to life to the point where it inspired other.” That’s my ‘why’. That’s my reason to live and I’ve got some changes to make before I’m on my path to progress but those changes don’t have to wait. Some of the changes will be harder than others but that’s the point. There’s nothing but improvement down the road of struggle, whereas mediocrity is all that lies down the road of comfort. Some dreams will be achieved, others won’t. For me, I never quite got that state championship in sports, however, I will be studying abroad in Scotland this coming summer. Take your victories in stride just like your failures and in the heart of your journey, don’t forget to take time to smile. It’s good for you. Montana FFA we only have so much time to make a difference and leave an impact in this world. How do you want to be remembered and will you make the changes necessary to beat the clock?

Albert Koenig, Belgrade State President



“Everyday Heroes”

Take a step back in time with me, to a rainy fall afternoon in the Koenig household that was pretty average, even a little boring. That’s how young Albert felt as I not-so-quietly complained to my mother about the day’s uneventfulness. My sister felt the same, and growing up where there weren’t many other children to play with, we had to find some way to entertain ourselves and FAST. So, like all young men who aren’t creative enough to think of something better to do with a girl, we watched a movie. In a time long before Netflix, (and when “chill” meant putting something in the refrigerator), the VCR in our family’s living room was set up and ready for action. The movie we picked was one of my favorites: Toy Story! Well, Toy Story 2 actually, and it was on VHS of course! Let me hear you if you remember watching VHS tapes...Yeah! So the movie starts and the opening scene is EPIC. It shows the heroic Buzz Lightyear flying across the universe, landing on a planet full of evil robots. Buzz effortlessly takes them out with his laser, then goes on to rescue his friends and save the planet. When this scene came on, little 4-year-old me would get

so excited that I couldn't contain myself. I'd race around the house going about Mach 10, "flying," shooting robots (which were actually just houseplants), and yelling out, "To infinity, and beyond!" Then I'd stroll back to the living room with a swagger that only a superhero could manage. This happened every time I'd watch that movie, until I reached the age where I began to realize that in reality, I wasn't much of a hero at all. I couldn't shoot lasers or fight evil, and Lord knows I couldn't fly (Trust me, I tried it). Seeing that powers like these were a little unrealistic, I decided to find out what makes a real hero, and try to become one. I might not have known it back then, but soon enough I'd find out that there were heroes all around me; I just had to know where to look. This is the story of how I learned that you don't need wings to fly high in life.

Ever since I was little, it seems like I've always tried to stand out. I mean, that's what heroes do, right? But for a long time, "standing out" felt a lot more like sticking out. From the day my sister and I were born, it was only natural that comparisons would be made between us. Everyone we met on the street, in the grocery store, or at the doctor's office would comment on our differences. Usually, it would go something like this. *Looking at Ashley* "Oh my goodness! What beautiful red hair you have!" *Looking at me* "Oh my goodness! What nice...eyebrows you have, and... is your head crooked?" Let's just say that if Ashley and I were a class of market steers, she would be the wide-chested Angus club calf and I...was a gangly Holstein. Growing up with a twin who was cuter, smarter, and worst of all, older than me, I wasn't doing so hot with all these comparisons in my life, and I sure didn't look very "heroic," so I'd try to compensate, and stand out in other ways.

As we got older, it became more than just physical comparisons. In school, athletics, activities, and even at home, the comparisons gave way to competition, and now it was between more than just my sister and myself. Whether it was with family, teachers, coaches, or friends, I was constantly searching for ways to distinguish myself, to make myself known as more than just Ashley's brother. I played nearly every sport, did every event at the youth rodeos, and tried every activity that my school and community had to offer. If there was a competition to be won and somebody to compete against, I was there. I approached everything I did like I had something to prove. I spent years feverishly practicing and preparing, trying to win belt buckles and blue ribbons, make every all-star team, hold every position, and have every title that was even remotely available to me. In a society that measures success in terms of awards, plaques, trophies, and titles, one that obsesses over personal recognition, I was determined to be the best and to have the most, and in doing such, I could be a hero for my school, family, and community.

Fast forward to one year ago. Like some of you, I was a senior at the last session of my last State FFA Convention. Up to this point, I'd had a relatively successful FFA career, winning some contests and more than my fair share of plaques, trophies, pins, and awards. I had thoroughly enjoyed my FFA experience; I learned a lot, made some great friends, and was well on my way to crossing off every goal on the checklist to success that I made my freshman year. I shuffled in my seat, anxiously listening to the speakers and presentations that morning, because I thought that this day would be the defining moment of my FFA experience, the day that would cement my legacy as either success or failure. Next up was the announcement of CDE winners, followed by the election of the new state officer team. The next hour or so went just as I had hoped. After placing high in my contests, leading my chapter to our best sweepstakes finish in 50 years, and hearing my name called as a member of the new officer team, I'd done it. Convention went exactly as planned and I could definitely classify my FFA memories as a great success. I walked the floor of the SUB ballrooms saying my goodbyes and accepting regards from parents, teachers, and friends, and it felt great. But after I got home that night and put the pins on my jacket and plaques on a shelf, I couldn't help but feel...confused. Don't get me wrong; I was extremely proud and grateful for all of the awards and honors I received, and they looked beautiful sitting there, but something just didn't feel right. I got everything that I wanted, but it didn't make sense. I should have been on top of the world, but for now I seemed to have more questions than answers. I asked myself, "Is this what success feels like? Is this leadership? Do these objects make me a hero?" Over and over I asked, but all the awards, honors, and titles in the world would do little to answer me.

Saturday, June 11th, 2016. In the time since State Convention, my competitive streak had taken me to another exciting place. On this day, I found myself all the way over in Baker, Montana for our State High School Finals

Rodeo. I had just graduated, and had my sights set on finishing my high school career with a bang, and maybe the State Championship that had eluded me for three years. I was confident that success here would finally fulfill me. By Saturday night, I had roped two calves and steers, and had put myself in good position to qualify for the short-go, and maybe even nationals, but my chance at a State Title looked to be slipping through my fingertips. After posting only a mediocre time that morning, I nervously watched each run as I slid down the leaderboard, one notch at a time. From behind the roping box, I was so focused on keeping track of points and placings that I didn't see what loomed in the distance. A massive wall of dark clouds had formed and was heading straight towards the fairgrounds. I paid little attention at first, I mean, we're tough Montana cowboys; we rodeo in a lot worse conditions than a thunderstorm. But I couldn't ignore it for long. In the blink of an eye, those clouds started to swirl and a funnel descended from the sky. Even though it was still a-ways out of town, the eerie silence that fell over the once lively rodeo arena said everything. It was only a matter of time until the storm, which had now turned into a full-fledged tornado, was right on top of us. As the cone moved across the land, it was eating farmhouses, outbuildings, and fences; sending sheetrock, tin, and insulation flying hundreds of feet in the air. Emergency sirens blared; people huddled in the storm shelter underneath the grandstands, but I didn't. As I watched helplessly from the horse barn, not really knowing what to do, I noticed the tornado slightly shifting its path. The cell drew close and the wind howled, but it looked like the funnel would miss the rodeo grounds. The town of Baker wasn't so lucky. Within minutes, the tornado had ripped through a major residential area, tearing off roofs, blowing apart houses, and leaving families with so many questions and so few answers. Thankfully, nobody was killed, but as my grandmother drove me into town to survey the damage, I was unprepared for what I'd see. Pickup trucks lined the littered streets, many of which I recognized as belonging to the rodeo families that were in town. I expected the destruction. But amid the chaos was something unexpected. Digging through the piles of broken timbers, twisted metal and scattered belongings were the owners of those flattened homes, many of them elderly. But right alongside them were teenagers in cowboy hats, who just minutes before were complete strangers to the residents whom they were now helping pick up what few pieces remained of their lives. When I saw my fellow competitors traipsing through trash and debris to help someone they might never see again gather a set of clothes for the night, I didn't have to ask myself any longer. These kids were heroes, but you'd never have known it by looking at them. They weren't all champions; some of them had never even won a buckle. With their dusty boots and dirty jeans, they hardly looked like anyone important. But it didn't matter. These high school rodeo riders chose to focus on building others up rather than beating the competition down. As soon as I got back to the fairgrounds that night, we started collecting donations for a relief fund, hoping to heal a community that made us feel right at home. One day and several thousand dollars later, my whole outlook had shifted, and at that moment I knew we weren't put in Baker to win championships, we were there to improve lives. Now that's heroic stuff.

Right beside me throughout this whole ordeal was a person who I have long considered one of my biggest heroes, my grandmother. At 75 years of age, she runs a daycare, maintains her real estate license, and drives hundreds of miles just to watch my sister and I throw ropes at a bovine. She has a love for humanity unlike any I've ever seen. She's even taken my entire chapter to the Conrad Crops & Mechanics contest when our advisor could not. I know that my grandma would go, in the words of Buzz Lightyear, "To infinity, and beyond" for me, my family and anyone who needed her. Whether it's her little kids at daycare or her big kids in the rodeo arena, her caring and selfless personality always shines through. I think it's only fitting then that the first memories I have of my grandma are of her caring for me and my sister. We loved when we got to go to grandma's house or when she came to ours. We baked cookies and sang in the kitchen, a song that embodies everything that she stands for. *Joy, joy, joy* In true grandma fashion, another activity we did together was try to spread a little joy to those who had no reason to be joyful. We would go to Bozeman Deaconess Hospital and visit patients in the cancer ward who were receiving treatments. We saw men, women, and children there fighting for their lives; just to have something we all took for granted. It wasn't an award, plaque, or trophy, but simply another day. One patient that my grandma had taken an exceptionally keen interest in was a woman in her mid-forties who was suffering from an advanced form of breast cancer. Cancer specialists predicted that she had less than 5

years to live, and her prognosis wasn't favorable, but somehow, she was still a beacon of hope every time we came in. We'd gotten to know her pretty well, so sometimes we would bring in sandwiches and have a picnic lunch with her in her hospital room. As we ate, she spoke of her husband and children. While she was receiving treatment, her husband was constantly on the road working, trying to support her and her family through this difficult time. A mother of 3, with two small children still at home, she spoke of her hopes and dreams for them and the people she wanted them to be. At this point, she was undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments, and had a mastectomy to remove the tumors in her breast. All of her hair had fallen out and she had lost a lot of weight, but she remained unshaken. Interestingly enough, she wasn't scared of her prognosis, or the treatments she had to endure. The only fear that she had was that her little kids wouldn't recognize her because she was bald, or wearing a wig to replace the golden locks that she had lost. But I quickly put those fears to rest as I climbed up in this woman's lap and softly whispered, "I still love you, mom." To which she calmly replied, "I know you do buddy, I know you do."

This woman was my mother, and it is because she chose to endure all of that pain and suffering, refused to give up, and overcame impossible odds that I am standing on this stage today. While I was gone visiting chapters, hosting workshops, and planning events, she was home feeding cows, breaking ice, and keeping my dad in line. I am blessed beyond measure to have her, my grandma, and many other everyday heroes to thank for the life I enjoy today. These people are the superheroes of life, who give relentlessly and love others unconditionally, expecting nothing in return. Whether you realize it or not, they are all around us, and no plaque, trophy, or award could ever do justice to the service they provide.

I have had an unforgettable year with you, Montana FFA, but in about an hour, I will take off this blue jacket for the very last time. I honestly thought I'd be sad when this time came, but thanks to you, I know that this is not the end. I've met everyday heroes in each and every one of you, from Bainville to the Bitterroot, and I am so happy to have learned and grown alongside you all. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your success this year. You have shown me that heroes come in all shapes, sizes, and colors, and the best part is, you don't need wings, a cape, or even a jacket to change the world for someone else. Sometimes, it is the people who nobody imagines anything of who do the things nobody can imagine. It doesn't matter if you're a crooked-headed kid, a cowboy with a mullet and scraggly beard, or a woman who nobody ever gave a chance, we can all be the everyday heroes that make this life one worth living. Montana FFA, you've been my heroes for the past year; whose life will you save next?