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**Special points of interest:**
- Alumni Store
- Extemporaneous and Creed Speakers in the Exhibition Hall
- Electric City Coffee
- Trade Show

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**Dance Workshop**

*By: Taylor Potts*

This year’s dance workshop taught the basics of jitterbugging. From tabletops to crossovers, members were willing to try anything. Members started with the basics and switched partners as they worked their way up to more difficult steps. Different partners brought different skills and a new style of dancing. Members had to work up the confidence to ask others to dance as they worked together to learn the steps. They had lots of fun despite making a few mistakes and missing a couple turns. The workshop was a great way to interact with members from other chapters and meet new friends during State Convention. Members can’t wait to practice their new dance skills at the dance after tonight’s session.

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**2nd General Session**

*By: Cassidy Storrusten*

At last night’s session there were the retiring addresses of Kacie Cummings, State Reporter and Jon Andres, Second Vice President. They shared with us stories of how they got to the position they are today. At session they also honored all of the Ag teachers for all that they do for FFA. There was a beautiful song called “You Rise Me Up” that was sung by one of the new Ag teachers that were being recognized it was truly a memorable moment. They also had the FFA members running for state officer positions introduce themselves with their name and what chapter they were in. Toward the end of session Valerie Earley told us of the things she went through to get where she is today as a national officer. She told us of how she fell down and felt like she wasn’t good enough but how she rose from that experience and changed her outlook it was truly an inspiring speech. Next at session they announced the placing of chapter Reporter, Thresher, Historian Books, and Hall of Chapters.
MaltEurope
By: Mary Brown

Plenty of people do not understand just how many things are ag related. Beer production falls under this scope as well. This alcohol is produced by fermenting barley. As a result the drink that so many people enjoy is created. A group of students went to MaltEurope, a company that produces beer. Despite the bad smell, the students enjoyed touring the area and learning about the process involved. The tour was started with students getting to see the cold grain being put into the space where it will later turn into alcohol. It was an amazing experience and those who got to see it had a blast going there. Bridger Essabeger’s favorite part was walking over the malt mixers and watching the process take place. This was just one interesting tour open for students this state convention.

From Student to Judge
By: Victoria Brown

I was in FFA starting my freshman year and I competed in many competitions such as Sales, communications, and food science. All of these competitions were fun to participate in but I never knew what the judges would think. After I graduated I quickly signed up to be a judge. After seeing all of those wonderful presentations from the teams I have learned as a judge I look for preparation, respect, and confidence. Mistakes happen and it happens to all of us but how you handle a mistake shows how prepared a team can be. If I can pass anything on as a judge I would say be sure to be confident in yourself. You have made it to states and that doesn’t usually happen just by waking up and deciding to go to the competition. You know your materials to some detail and be sure that you show the judge you know your stuff. I was honored to judge and work with this organization again. All of you have done great. Good luck with the rest of your competitions and convention.

Montana Air National Guard
By: Taylor Potts

The Montana Air Guard is a major supporter and sponsor of Montana FFA. But why is the Air Guard so interested in Montana FFA members? Staff Sgt. Asmussen stated that “FFA students are intelligent, speak well, and are put together. Those are the qualified people who we want in the Air Guard”. He also stated that education and raising leadership skills were a common goal between FFA and the Air Guard, “FFA raises up young people and helps with their education and that’s similar to what we do”. During convention the Air Guard offered tours of their nearby base to anyone interested in learning more about what goes on in an Air Guard base and what the duties of the men and women who work in the Air Guard. They are willing to offer a private tour to any chapter who would like one if you email nikolas.a.asmussen.mil@mail.mil

4th Delegate Session
By: Katrina Roberts

The fourth and final delegate session went great! The first two delegate sessions were dedicated to debating and amending the proposed motions. The third session was canceled due to lack of amending the motions. The fourth session was for voting on the motions. All of the motions were passed and had few, but important, amendments attached with them. The delegate sessions were very informative. There were eight motions passed. The first motion was about the National Officer Selection Committee membership. The second was about including seventh and eight graders to national CDE events. The third was about the American degree and aligning it nationally. The fourth motion was aligning the degree and privileges of active members. The fifth motion was about nomination committee members. The sixth was for the nomination committee members application date. The seventh motion was about chapters in “good standing”. The eighth and final was about state officer representation. It was a great experience and I hope I am able to contribute in the years following.
Montana Army National Guard
By: Taylor Potts

At last night’s session the Montana Army National Guard presented the colors at the start of session and SFC Todd Carver introduced CPT Corey Dailey to speak about the opportunities the Montana Army National Guard can offer. SFC Todd Carter stated that “So many people don’t know what the Guard is about so we really wanted to talk about what we do”. When asked about why the Montana Army National Guard took an interest in FFA members he stated “We share a lot of the same values, and try to instill those values in our soldiers such as loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. We believe FFA also tries to instill those values”. SFC Todd Carver also spoke to the work ethic of FFA members and commended them on being able to handle the long days and put in the hours required of them to compete and participate in State Convention.

State Degree Dinner
By: Taylor Potts

Tonight’s State Degree Dinner will honor those members who have put in the hours and the effort to earn their Montana State Degree. To receive a degree members must have received a chapter degree, be an active member for 2 years at the time of reception, completed 360 in-class hours of agricultural instruction, earned and productively invested at least $1,000 or worked 300 hours in excess of scheduled class time or have a combination thereof in a SAE, demonstrate leadership abilities by performing 10 procedures of parliamentary law, giving a six minute speech on a topic related to ag, and have served as an officer or committee chair, have a good scholastic record, have participated in planning a POA, have participated in at least 5 different FFA activities outside the chapter, and lastly have participated in at least 25 hours of community service within at least 2 different activates. As you can see, recipients of the Montana State degree put in years of hard work and effort into meeting the requirements to earn the sought after gold State Degree pin. It is the highest degree a state can give to an FFA member, as American degrees are awarded on a national level.

Inside the Hot Box
By: Mary Brown

With the hustle and bustle of competition, it is easy to forget that there is one contest that is ongoing. This is the way of the state officer candidacy. But between the interviews and other CDE’s or LDE’s going on during the convention these individuals spend time in the “hot box”. The hot box is just a basic location where they know students can be found. Inside the room is as devoid of stress and a fun environment for the candidates. The best part of being in the hot box was, “definitely the dance part we had this morning” Colton Hoppe said. They have all grown closer together in the hot box and have made a lot of friends. One of the greatest parts of being in the room is how much everyone strives to keep people comfortable. They play games, eat food, and chat when they aren’t busy with their interviews. They asked for us to extend a big thank you for them to the Flowers family and Ranch House Sausage Company for providing meat sticks for their enjoyment. They also thank you to Leah G. for being so kind and helpful while running the hot box. They also were all grateful of the fact that the hot box was not actually hot. Even if they do not get an office many of the candidates agree with Sheridan Johnson when she says, “I appreciate the learning experience”. This year was the first year of the Montana State Convention where cuts were made for the people who could be your next state officers. These cuts went from 37 kids to 19 kids, nearly halving