

Convention Proceedings

92nd Annual State FFA Convention Montana FFA Association



Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana

State Officers

Joe Lackman, President
Forsyth
Colton Young, 1st Vice President
Stillwater Valley
Dani Horan, 2nd Vice President
Moored
Riley Prather, Secretary
Big Timber
Matthew Slivka, Treasurer
Winifred
Cody Johannes, Reporter
Huntley Project
Allison Denton, Sentinel
Lewistown
Sydney Kirschten, Parliamentarian
Baker

Special Guests

Mallory White – National FFA Eastern Region
Vice-president

Cortney Zimmerman – National Central Region
Vice-president



State Staff

Jim Rose, State Advisor

FFA Foundation

Gwynn Simeniuk- Executive
Director
Katharine Taylor - Program and
Office Manager
Payton Wilson – Communications Coordinator
Jacob Martin - Marketing and Development
Coordinator
Saralyn Standley - Program and Events
Coordinator
Curt Robbins - Foundation President
Columbus
Scott Aspenlieder - Vice-President
Billings
Belinda Darlinton - Secretary
Great Falls
Mark Sinnard - Treasurer
Wilsall
Jay Meyer - Director
Stevensville
Jack Larson - Director
Miles City
Elle Patritti – Director
Sheridan
Mike Tuszynski - Alumni President
Broadview
Matthew Slivka - State Treasurer, Winifred

Alumni Association

Kelsey Kraft, Past President

Laurel

Mike Tuszynski, President

Broadview

Amanda Brandt, Secretary

Helena

Emily Evans, Treasurer

Fairfield

Ken Johnson, Glacier District Rep.

Conrad

Nicole Senner, Big Muddy District Rep.

Richey

Judith Basin District Rep.

Unfilled

Sandy Evenson, Western District Rep.

Kalispell

Lori Kraft, Southeastern District Rep.

Laurel

Mike Tuszynski, Southern District Rep.

Broadview

Scott Lackman, Eastern District Rep.

Hysham

Kristen Swenson, Southwestern District Rep.

Livingston

Matt McKamey, ALC Director

Cascade

Jim Rose, State Advisor

Bozeman

Colton Young, State Officer Rep.

Stillwater Valley



Convention Facts

This was the first unrestricted convention in three years. The pandemic attendance, spacing and mask mandates were all lifted.

Career Development Events (CDE) Results

Agriscience Fair Winners:

Animal Systems: Faith Berou and Kara Conley
– Missoula

Power and Technology Systems: Matthias
Reifer - Simms

Environmental Sciences and Natural Resources:
Emily Barcus - Corvallis

Plant Systems: Theodore Van Deren -
Beaverhead

Food Products and Processing Systems: Brogen
Zumbrun and Ayden Estes - Simms

Agriculture Communications

1. Wibaux
2. Corvallis
3. Shepherd

Agriculture Issues

1. Corvallis
2. Gardiner
3. Cascade

Agricultural Sales CDE

1. Gardiner
2. Wheatland
3. Missoula
4. Kalispell
5. Opheim

Ag Sales Individuals

1. Lance Rutledge – Big Sandy
2. Cole Taylor - Opheim
3. Gus Turner - Missoula
4. Nik Pierson - Park
5. Phillip Prewett – Park City
6. Isaac Cantlon – Mission Valley
7. Ryleigh Plovanic - Beaverhead
8. Kamryn Jones - Stevensville
9. Morgan Dawson - Gardiner

10. Addie Shephard – Kalispell

Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems CDE

1. Big Timber
2. Kalispell
3. Mission Valley
4. Huntley Project
5. Beaverhead

ATMS Individuals

1. Guildy Browning – Big Timber
2. Jake Chulyak – Big Timber
3. Jack Gibson - Beaverhead
4. Kole Hill – Ruby Valley
5. Kolby Lechner – Huntley Project
6. Cameron Seymour - Kalispell
7. Kaiden Batzler – Ruby Valley
8. Isaac Cantlon – Mission Valley
9. Avery Durfee – Big Timber
10. Colter Cornwell – Mission Valley

Agronomy CDE

1. Joliet
2. Kalispell
3. Stevensville
4. Miles City
5. Missoula

Agronomy Individuals

1. Ethan Bay - Kalispell
2. Thaddeus Miller - Joliet
3. Isaac Amezcua - Stevensville
4. Jesse Isaacs – Miles City
5. Gus Turner - Missoula
6. Kayla Haigh - Stevensville
7. Jenny Harris - Joliet
8. Wyatt Isaacs – Miles City
9. Shaun Billingsley - Missoula
10. Maya Roginske – Joliet

Creed Speaking CDE

1. Brylinn Olstad - Shepherd
2. Colton Harris - Stevensville
3. Ian McKamey - Cascade
4. Cole Waldusky - Conrad

Jr. Creed Speaking CDE

1. Riley Jones – Miles City
2. Addy Webb – Park City
3. Joel Standley - Missoula
4. Macy Witt – Park City

Conduct of Meetings LDE

1. Joliet
2. Shepherd
3. Corvallis
4. Miles City

ENR

1. Corvallis
2. Missoula
3. Shelby

Employment Skills

1. Katelyn Anderson - Shepherd
2. Cole Taylor - Opheim
3. Emelia Schairer - Corvallis
4. Abby Begger - Wibaux
5. Elaina Peterson – Miles City
6. Breanna Blain - Joliet
7. Layne Johnson - Plentywood
8. Audrey Erbaugh - Corvallis
9. Mackenzie Serrano – Roundup
10. Kyleigh Render - Belgrade

Extemporaneous Speaking LDE

1. Claire Murnin - Shepherd
2. Layne Johnson - Plentywood
3. Hannah Fussell – Mission Valley
4. Brianna Blaine - Joliet

Farm Business Management CDE

1. Kalispell
2. Bainville
3. Miles City
4. Big Timber
5. Belgrade

FBM Individuals

1. Ethan Bay - Kalispell
2. Evan Heupel - Kalispell
3. Rudy Kummer - Bainville
4. Cole Taylor - Opheim
5. Kailey Brimmer – Miles City
6. Jake Chulyak – Big Timber
7. Colter Fleming – Big Timber
8. Wyatt Iverson – Miles City
9. Braeden Romo - Bainville
10. Robert Knotts - Lambert

Farm Bureau Speaking Contest

1. Journey Browning – Gardiner
2. AJ Sharkey – Missoula
3. Grace Fritz - Missoula

Floriculture

1. Miles City
2. Joliet
3. Froid
4. Hinsdale
5. Plevna

Floriculture Individuals

1. Sophia Schumacher - Plevna
2. Olivia Collins - Joliet
3. Claire Standley - Missoula
4. Kinzie Brimmer – Miles City
5. Kailey Brimmer – Miles City
6. Cadence Anderson – Miles City
7. Paige Shaw – Miles City
8. Jaeda Paul - Plevna
9. Emelia Schairer - Corvallis
10. Breanna Blaine – Joliet

Food Science CDE

1. Missoula
2. Richey
3. Belgrade
4. Roundup
5. Shepherd

Food Science Individuals

1. Claire Standley - Missoula
2. Gus Turner - Missoula
3. Alexa Woods - Gardiner
4. Shaun Billingsley - Missoula
5. Mataya Veverka - Richey
6. Fiona Collins - Belgrade
7. Clair Haag – Ruby Valley
8. Matthew Ellerton - Richey
9. Tessa McNeil – Park City
10. Aspen Sanderson – Shields Valley

Forestry CDE

1. Mission Valley
2. Belgrade
3. Kalispell
4. Missoula
5. Beaverhead

Forestry Individuals

1. Joey Teselle - Belgrade
2. Alex Tatarka - Belgrade
3. Logan Lahaug – Mission Valley
4. Ethan Bay – Kalispell
5. Gus Turner - Missoula
6. Everett Lozeau – Mission Valley
7. Joshua Hoskinson – Mission Valley
8. Kyri Uhrich – Mission Valley
9. Gavin Garrison - Beaverhead
10. Lance Vranish - Belgrade

Horse Evaluation CDE

1. Kalispell
2. Mission Valley
3. Miles City
4. Gardiner
5. Big Horn

Horse Evaluation Individuals

1. Paige Shaw – Miles City
2. Wyatt Dooley - Gardiner
3. Jaeda Paul - Plevna
4. Danielle - Kalispell
5. Rylee Glimm - Kalispell
6. Kara Conley - Missoula
7. Johanna Zeise - Shepherd
8. Cloe Hoover – Mission Valley
9. Katie Johnson - Beaverhead
10. Coleton Sherman – Mission Valley

Livestock Evaluation CDE

1. Big Timber
2. Missoula
3. Corvallis
4. Mission Valley
5. Hobson

Livestock Evaluation Individuals

1. Shaun Billingsley - Missoula
2. David Hathaway – Big Timber
3. Tyeson Gravenhof - Roundup
4. Gracie Orem – Nelson Online Ag
5. Hannah Fussell – Mission Valley
6. Chloe Tudor - Plevna
7. Sydney Wolsky - Corvallis
8. Lilli Meigs - Missoula
9. Sydney Kostecky - Stevensville
10. Ashton Deegan - Hobson

Marketing Plan

1. Park City
2. Wheatland
3. Shields Valley

Meats Evaluation CDE

1. Missoula
2. Big Timber
3. Kalispell
4. Corvallis
5. Fergus of Lewistown

Meats Evaluation Individuals

1. Morgan Anderson – Big Timber
2. Claire Standley - Missoula
3. Shaun Billingsley - Missoula
4. Kody Skaggs - Missoula
5. Weston Sondeno – Big Timber
6. Rylee Swartz – Big Timber
7. Mollie Ruth – Big Timber
8. Evan Heupel - Kalispell
9. Ethan Bay - Kalispell
10. Emma Habbitts - Missoula

Parliamentary Procedure LDE

1. Shepherd
2. Kalispell
3. Cascade
4. Broadwater

Poultry Evaluation Teams

1. Hobson
2. Miles City
3. Grass Range
4. Mission Valley
5. Missoula

Poultry Evaluation Individuals

1. Riley Obert – Hobson
2. Joe Lewis – Hobson
3. Ali Erickson – Hobson
4. Rabecca Lynn – Hobson
5. Lauren Deegan – Hobson
6. Jady Frank – Hobson
7. Mason Thom – Hobson
8. Adlai Leischner – Miles City
9. Brady Bantz – Grass Range
10. Lilli Meigs – Missoula

Prepared Speaking LDE

1. Brighton Lane – Huntley Project
2. Gus Turner - Missoula

3. Jake Chulyak – Big Timber
4. Cole Taylor - Opheim

Vet Science CDE

1. Beaverhead
2. Stevensville
3. Kalispell
4. Red Lodge
5. Corvallis

Vet Science Individuals

1. Dakota Abbey - Beaverhead
2. Kylee Lewis - Beaverhead
3. Audrey Erbaugh - Corvallis
4. Everitt Mauler - Stevensville
5. Bree Sampson - Beaverhead
6. Bailey Binando – Red Lodge
7. Peyton Abbey - Beaverhead
8. Jordyn Greene - Kalispell
9. AJ Opperman - Kalispell
10. Audette Rodolph - Stevensville

Team Sweepstakes Winner

1. Kalispell
2. Big Timber
3. Missoula

Individual Sweepstakes Winners

1. Ethan Bay - Kalispell
2. Gus Turner - Missoula
3. Shaun Billingsley - Missoula
4. Evan Heupel – Kalispell
5. Claire Standley - Missoula

State Talent Contest

1. Theresa Baird & Goddy Bandola – Judith Gap
2. Lindsey Summers - Geraldine
3. Emily Coles - Roundup

Star Chapter – GOLD AWARDS

1. Beaverhead - **STAR**
2. Missoula
3. Wibaux
4. Gardiner
5. Fromberg

Star Greenhand

Big Muddy District: Kade Strommen - Hinsdale

Eastern District: Paige Shaw – Miles City

***Southeastern District: Claire Murnin - Shepherd**

Southwestern District: Paige Wertheimer – Big Timber

Western District: Leah Nelson - Missoula

Glacier District – Morgan Feist - Simms

Southern District – Logan Young – Stillwater Valley

Judith Basin District – Katie Martin - Moore

Star in Agricultural Placement

***STAR* Mackenzie Serrano - Roundup**

Colton Noyes - Broadwater

Jesse Isaacs – Miles City

Lenora Shoemaker - Fromberg

Star in Agribusiness

***STAR* Delaney Modderman - Kalispell**

Azzia Rowland – Geraldine

Jordyn Whitmus – Fromberg

Star Farmer

***STAR* Claire Standley - Missoula**

Kyelynn Coombe - Joliet

Laney Jones – Miles City

Sydney Kostecky - Stevensville

Hall of Chapters

1. Gardiner
2. Huntley Project
3. Simms

American Indian Presentation

1. David Dust – Little Big Horn
2. Little Big Horn team 1

Reporter Event

1. Dylan Brunner - Missoula
2. Tobyn Petronek - Simms
3. Rudy Kummer - Bainville

Secretary's Book

1. Zora Holt - Hinsdale
2. Brooke Edgerton - Broadview
3. Emma Hibbitts - Missoula

Scrapbook

1. Missoula
2. CJI
3. Park City

Treasurers Book

1. Hudson Rohrer - Simms
2. Ryan Eggert - Richey
3. Christopher Jungers - Chinook

BOMC Awards

1. Shields Valley
2. Gardiner
3. Fromberg

Scholarships Awarded

LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIPS:

Pat Cavey ALC Scholarships:

Jordan Leach - CJI

Jordyn Beeson – Deer Lodge

Brad King ALC Scholarship:

Lexi Lunceford – Deer Lodge

Weston Sondeno – Big Timber

Montana FFA Alumni ALC Scholarships:

Katie Jackson – Corvallis

Doris Robinson Scholarship:

Sarah Lombardi – Deer Lodge

Brandon Hilder – Deer Lodge

Sam Cornthwaite Memorial WLC Scholarship:

Savannah Kostecki – Stevensville

Jordan Leach - CJI

WLC Scholarships:

Katie Jackson – Corvallis

Rylee Pederson – Wibaux

Ian Danielson – Shields Valley

Irene Andres Memorial National FFA Convention Scholarship:

Jordan Leach - CJI

Holt Family and John Bliss National FFA Convention Scholarship:

Katie Jackson – Corvallis

Zoe Aller – Big Timber

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS:

AMTOPP (*Association of Montana Turf, Ornamental, and Pest Professionals*) Scholarship:

Olivia Collins - Joliet

Stockman Bank Next Generation Scholarships:

Lainey Kitzman – Billings

Rudy Kummer - Bainville

Dr. Max L. Amberson Scholarship:

Hollie Estey – Kalispell

Sydney Kostecki - Stevensville

Vern Dahlstrom Memorial Scholarship:

Grayce Siderius - Kalispell

Murdoch's Scholarship:

Emma Day - Victor

MABA/MGEA Scholarship:

Cole Taylor – Opheim

Layne Johnson - Plentywood

Blue Shows Through Scholarship

Jack Gibson - Beaverhead

Trails West Bank Scholarship

Trent Peterson – Red Lodge

Darin Shallenberger – Carter Co.

Servant Leadership Scholarship

Nora Goodwin - Victor

John J. Kozlowski Memorial Scholarship

Grace Aisenbrey – Clark's Fork

Luther Family Scholarship

Cody Carson - Kalispell

Leave a Legacy Scholarships:

Mackenzie Serrano – Roundup

Brighton Lane – Huntley Project

Colton Noyes – Broadwater

Dakota Abbey – Beaverhead

Rory Cozzens – Fairview

Leah Aye – Broadus

Breanna Blain – Joliet

Daniel Martin – Beaverhead

Kyelynn Coombe – Joliet

Wyatt Dooley - Gardiner

Big Muddy Legacy Scholarship

Wyatt Iverson - Bainville

SAE Grants

Lance Vranish – Belgrade

Selwyn Hackett – Stevensville

Ivory West – Missoula

Madisyn Evelo – Mission Valley

Joey TeSelle – Belgrade

Annika Birrer – Fromberg

Danica Tucker – Red Lodge

Hailey Miles – Corvallis

Sydney Wolsky – Corvallis

Alexia Towell – Corvallis

Mya Zeiler – Corvallis

Rosalyn Daniel – Corvallis

Hallie Iverson – Bainville

Deegan Tvedt – Miles City

Shayla Russell – Stillwater Valley

Bulls for Blue Grant

Weston Sondeno – Big Timber

Madelynn Albin – Red Lodge

Molly Gilman – Ruby Valley

CDE Scholarships

ATMS – Guildy Browning – Big Timber

Agronomy – Ethan Bay - Kalispell

FAM – Ethan Bay - Kalispell

Livestock – Shaun Billingsley

Star Greenhand – Claire Murnin - Shepherd

Most Inspirational FFA Member

1. Calla Donnelly – Three Forks

2. Brooke Burnett - Colstrip

3. Hannah Fussell – Mission Valley

State Officer Nominating Committee

Luke LaLiberty (Facilitator), Matt McKamey (Facilitator), Leah Graf (Facilitator).

Carol Peterson – Wilsall, Todd O’Hair – Livingston, Mark Rose – Emigrant, Bryce Allbright – Cody, Wyoming, Bruce Samson – Three Forks, Sara Rhoades – Missoula, Weston Sondeno – Big Timber, Taylor McKinley – Victor, Hailey Reynolds – Shepherd.

Officers Selected: **Brighton Lane**, Huntley Project - President; **Olivia Collins**, Joliet - 1st Vice President; **Phillip Prewett**, Park City - 2nd Vice President; **Jaylea Lunceford**, Mission Valley - Secretary; **Riley Larson**, Conrad - Treasurer; **Mackenzie Serrano**, Roundup - Reporter; **Kyelynn Coombe**, Joliet - Sentinel; and **Anthony Hernandez**, Little Big Horn - Parliamentarian.

Proficiency Award Winners

Wyatt Iverson, Bainville – Ag Mechanics Repair and Maintenance

Halle Mitchell, Chinook – Agricultural Sales

Josie Boyd, Shields Valley – Agricultural Services

Laney Jones, Miles City – Beef Production Entrepreneurship

Ella Robbins, Richey – Beef Production Placement

Colton Noyes, Broadwater – Diversified Crop Production Placement

Jaylyn Klempel, Richey – Diversified Livestock Production Entrepreneurship

Perry Dominick, Shields Valley – Equine Science Placement

Jordyn Whitmus, Fromberg – Goat Production

Carson Crary, Choteau – Outdoor Recreation

Adaline Reilly, Forsyth - Sheep Production Entrepreneurship

Cole Taylor, Opheim – Specialty Animal Production Placement

Shaun Billingsley, Missoula - Swine Production

Steven Schubarth, Simms - Wildlife Management Placement

State FFA Degree (185)

| | | |
|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Wyatt | Iverson | Bainville |
| Rudy | Kummer | Bainville |
| Peyton | Abbey | Beaverhead |
| Cord | Hahnkamp | Beaverhead |
| Tauryn | Hankinson | Beaverhead |
| Brock | Hansen | Beaverhead |
| Weston | Hansen | Beaverhead |
| Madelyn | Kirkpatrick | Beaverhead |
| Daniel | Martin | Beaverhead |
| Emily | Matamoros | Beaverhead |
| Emma | Mitchell | Beaverhead |
| Chase | Pulliam | Beaverhead |
| Cole | Raymond | Beaverhead |
| Daisy | Rhodes | Beaverhead |
| Breeonna | Sampson | Beaverhead |
| Austin | Schuett | Beaverhead |
| Luke | Sherwood | Beaverhead |
| Theodore | Van Deren | Beaverhead |
| Asher | Voss | Beaverhead |
| Whitney | Herden | Belfry |
| Kenzie | Herden | Belfry |
| Kyleigh | Render | Belgrade |
| Joey | Teselle | Belgrade |
| Lance | Vranish | Belgrade |
| Emma | Donald | Big Timber |
| Avery | Durfee | Big Timber |
| Cody | Prather | Big Timber |
| Coulter | Rein | Big Timber |
| Lainey | Kitzmann | Billings |
| Lea | Aye | Broadus |
| Alexander | Edwards | Broadus |
| John Aidan | Kenelly | Broadus |
| Seth | McDowell | Broadus |
| Oliveah | Schaffer | Broadus |
| Rheanna | Schroeder | Broadus |
| Colton | Noyes | Broadwater |
| Darin | Schallenberger | Carter County |
| Kenzie | Tooke | Carter County |

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Shyla | Benzing | Chinook |
| Christopher | Jungers | Chinook |
| Halle | Mitchell | Chinook |
| Carson | Crary | Choteau |
| Cooper | Frank | Clarksfork |
| Jacob | Stringari | Clarksfork |
| Rod | Zentner | Clarksfork |
| Felicity | Brooks | Corvallis |
| Jayna | Jackson | Corvallis |
| Gabriele | Krueger | Corvallis |
| Hailey | Miles | Corvallis |
| James | Kirkaldie | Culbertson |
| Autumn | Bergum | Culbertson |
| Kyler | Kempton | Culbertson |
| Tige | Purvis | Culbertson |
| Wyatt | Synder | Culbertson |
| Dalton | Duncan | Custer |
| Keira | Lackner | Custer |
| Caden | Rhoads | Custer |
| Hannah | Yochum | Custer |
| Hannah | Beach | Dawson |
| Justin | Swanson | Dawson |
| Hailey | Wolf | Dawson |
| Tyler | Ellsworth | Dutton/Brady |
| Rory | Cozzens | Fairview |
| Adaline | Reilly | Forsyth |
| Cloe | Kalanick | Fort Benton |
| Bode | Miller | Froid |
| Javonne | Nesbit | Froid |
| Brett | Stentoft | Froid |
| Devan | Birrer | Fromberg |
| Lenora | Shoemaker | Fromberg |
| Jordyn | Whitmus | Fromberg |
| Wyatt | Dooley | Gardiner |
| Mariah | Henry | Gardiner |
| Keena | Lewis | Gardiner |
| Abigail | Dines | Geraldine |
| Ian | Moline | Geraldine |

| | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Azzia | Rowland | Geraldine |
| Lizzie | Summers | Geraldine |
| Kaden | Siroky | Grass Range |
| Aiden | Albus | Hinsdale |
| Montaya | Idler | Hinsdale |
| Trey | Johnson | Hinsdale |
| RyLee | Mix | Hinsdale |
| Brighton | Lane | Huntley Project |
| Daniel | Hopf | Hysham |
| Breanna | Blain | Joliet |
| Olivia | Collins | Joliet |
| Kyelynn | Coombe | Joliet |
| Wyatt | Finley | Joliet |
| LilyAnna | Lavers | Joliet |
| Thaddeus | Miller | Joliet |
| Nya Barber | Castro | Kalispell |
| Faith | Eberhart | Kalispell |
| Hollie | Estey | Kalispell |
| Chance | Jorgenson | Kalispell |
| Jenessa | Levanen | Kalispell |
| Delaney | Modderman | Kalispell |
| AJ | Opperman | Kalispell |
| Ella | Rauch | Kalispell |
| Libby | Reiner | Kalispell |
| Atlanta | Waltman | Kalispell |
| Paige | Carda | Lambert |
| Brett | Mullin | Lambert |
| Haylee | Adams | Laurel |
| Hannah | Adams | Laurel |
| Anthony | Hernandez | Little Big Horn |
| Jordan | Jefferson | Little Big Horn |
| Tyressa | Pretty On Top | Little Big Horn |
| Kaleb | Dejaegher | Melstone |
| Kailey | Brimmer | Miles City |
| Jesse | Isaacs | Miles City |
| Laney | Jones | Miles City |
| Makaila | Learn | Mission Valley |
| Kiara | Sherman | Mission Valley |
| Ashlie | Welker | Mission Valley |
| Dylan | Brunner | Missoula |
| Hunter | Curtiss | Missoula |

| | | |
|------------|-------------|----------------|
| Justin | Dickhaut | Missoula |
| Baynne | Hagestad | Missoula |
| Emma | Hibbitts | Missoula |
| Aiden | Hyatt | Missoula |
| Lillian | Meigs | Missoula |
| Anntonetta | Ochsner | Missoula |
| Jace | Riska | Missoula |
| Claire | Standley | Missoula |
| Zach | Fauth | Opheim |
| Haley | Rigler | Park |
| Phillip | Prewett | Park City |
| Layne | Johnson | Plentywood |
| Jaeda | Paul | Plevna |
| Chloe | Tudor | Plevna |
| Stella | Hahn | Red Lodge |
| Trent | Petersen | Red Lodge |
| Kaden | Roberts | Red Lodge |
| Ashton | Salt | Red Lodge |
| Shawna | Eggert | Richey |
| Nevin | Kelly | Richey |
| Jaylyn | Klempel | Richey |
| Layne | Meek | Richey |
| Ella | Robbins | Richey |
| Brady | Hetrick | Roundup |
| Mackenzie | Serrano | Roundup |
| Carter | Pendergrass | Roy |
| Kaiden | Batzler | Ruby Valley |
| Noah | Caldwell | Ruby Valley |
| Caitlyn | Galiger | Ruby Valley |
| Brooke | Grow | Ruby Valley |
| Faith | Larsen | Ruby Valley |
| Jorien | Verhow | Ruby Valley |
| Carter | Jasper | Saint Regis |
| Harold | Miller | Shelby |
| Aidan | Torgerson | Shelby |
| Sophia | Kelly | Shepherd |
| Dwayne | Mord | Shepherd |
| Hayes | Nydegger | Shepherd |
| Hailey | Reynolds | Shepherd |
| Langdon | Smith | Shepherd |
| Brooklin | Baukol | Shields Valley |

| | | |
|---------|-----------|----------------|
| Josie | Boyd | Shields Valley |
| Perry | Dominick | Shields Valley |
| Aspen | Sanderson | Shields Valley |
| Kaleb | Bean | Simms |
| Steven | Schubarth | Simms |
| Makayla | Bossen | Stanford |
| Hunter | Edens | Stevensville |
| Kayla | Haigh | Stevensville |
| Blake | Henderson | Stevensville |
| Sydney | Kostecki | Stevensville |
| Kameron | Lescantz | Stevensville |
| Orion | Masar | Stevensville |
| Eric | Merwin | Stevensville |
| Audette | Rodolph | Stevensville |

| | | |
|--------|---------|-------------------|
| Taylor | Weigle | Stevensville |
| Haylee | Baver | Stillwater Valley |
| Nila | Dawson | Stillwater Valley |
| Justin | Heimer | Stillwater Valley |
| Bailey | Kornick | Stillwater Valley |
| Trevor | Zumbrun | Stillwater Valley |
| Pablo | Babcock | Twin Bridges |
| Zane | Carter | Twin Bridges |
| Lilly | Grabel | Twin Bridges |
| Tyler | Pancost | Twin Bridges |
| Emma | Day | Victor |
| Nora | Goodwin | Victor |
| Laura | Power | Wheatland |

2021 American FFA Degrees

Max Andres - Missoula, Jacob Crowder - Culbertson, Nicole Green - Big Horn, Alyssa Nicole Gruszie - Chinook, Luke Heupel – Kalispell, Harleigh Johnson - Beaverhead, Hannah LaBree - Carter County, Heather LaBree - Carter County, Bethany Lyford – Kalispell, Taylor Noyes – Broadwater, McKenna Quirk – Missoula, Dacey Robertson – Fromberg, Isaac Sponheim – Richey, Alyssa Thormahlen – Belfry, Logan Turner – Missoula, Tyler Wilbanks – Culbertson, Callie Williams – Broadus.

Honorary State FFA Degrees

Scott and Audrey Lackman – Hysham
 Dan and Carla Horan - Moore
 Shane and Erin Slivka - Winifred
 Corey and Jennifer Denton - Lewistown
 Luke Laliberty - Helena
 Emily Standley – Lewistown
 Linda Boatman – Great Falls

Brian and Mindy Young - Absarokee
 Gilbert and Amber Prather – Big Timber
 Clint and Cheri Johannes - Worden
 Dave and Nicole Kirschten
 Leah Graff - Missoula
 Logan Standley – Lewistown
 Norm Asbjornson – Winifred

Senator Steve Daines - Bozeman

DELEGATE BUSINESS

Agronomy CDE State Participation Limit

Item#: 1

Submitted by: Bainville FFA

Motion Passed
For: 85 Against 21

Motion: We move that participation in Agronomy and Farm Agribusiness Management be limited to the top half of teams in each Montana FFA district.

Rationale:

- State Convention should reflect the highest level of competition in Montana FFA.
- Space is limited at the venues typically used for the state agronomy CDE.
- Participation for other state-level CDEs is restricted to the top half of each district.
- The CDE's coordinator from the past several years (Emily Standley) requested that participation be restricted in agronomy to match Livestock Evaluation, ATMS, and Ag Sales.

Notes:

- As with the other CDEs limited to the top half, this would be the "larger half" for districts with an odd number of chapters (e.g. a district with 13 chapters could send 7).
- As with other CDEs limited to the top half, a chapter would be eligible to compete if an individual places in the top 3 at their district CDE, even if the team is not in the top half.
- As with other CDEs, a minimum of two members of a chapter must compete at the district CDE to be eligible to compete at State Convention.

State CDE Participation Limits

Item#: 2

Submitted by: Bainville FFA

Motion Failed
For: 20 Against 87

Motion: We move that participation in the state Agronomy, Ag. Sales, Farm Agribusiness Management, ATMS, and Livestock Evaluation CDEs be limited to no more than four teams per district

Rationale:

- State Convention should be a representation of the most competitive teams in Montana's CDEs.
- Qualifying for a State CDE should be a challenge that chapters strive for, working hard to prepare to be competitive.
- Basing the number of teams that are eligible to compete at State Convention proportionally on the size of districts disadvantages programs in smaller or more competitive districts.
- Due to space, material, and time constraints, having a larger number of participants, particularly those with minimal experience in an event, negatively impacts the quality of the CDE experience for competitors at the state event.
- A higher barrier to entry for state CDEs will encourage districts to prepare high-quality district-level events to ensure that the top teams are the ones that move on.
- Limiting the number of participants in State CDEs will encourage students to explore other opportunities for participation in State Convention, such as Proficiency Awards, increasing the number and quality of applications in those events.
- Leadership Development Events held at State Convention limit each district to two competitors/teams, establishing precedent for a numerical limit.

Directions for State CDE Bids (Continued)

Item#: 3

Submitted by: Big Timber FFA

**Motion Passed
For: 87 Against 7**

Motion: We move that when selectin bids for state CDEs and LDEs, the Montana FFA Board of Directors use the following guidelines when readily applicable:

Rationale:

- CDEs and LDEs that select state winners and national participants should be of the highest possible quality
- This motion gives direction not currently outlined to the board of trustees when evaluating bids received.
- By hosting high-quality contests, similar to nationals, and selecting the most competitive teams, we should be more competitive as a state association on the national stage.

National Western Stock Show Participation

Item#: 4

Submitted by: Big Timber FFA

**Motion Passed
For: 94 Against 3**

Motion: We move to create the following guidelines for selecting Montana FFA representatives for the Western National Roundup competitions that exist at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS):

Guidelines:

- The Northern International Livestock Exposition (NILE) will serve as the official qualification event to select the FFA Livestock Evaluation team.
- The Montana FFA Ag Expo (JDAE) will serve as the official qualification event for the Meat Evaluation and Horse Evaluation teams.
- Winning teams must meet all Western National Roundup requirements.
- If winning teams do not meet Western National Roundup requirements, the next highest placing team should be contacted by the state association until a team is found that meets requirements.
- No more than one member per team may be substituted between the qualifying event and NWSS
- If qualifying events are canceled, it is the Montana FFA board of directors' responsibility to select a team for each event that will best represent Montana at this national event.
- Financial support of traveling teams is encouraged, when possible, through the Montana FFA Association and Montana FFA Foundation.

Advancing Teams from Districts

Submitted by: Stevensville FFA

**Motion Passed
For: 58 Against 38**

Item#:
6

Motion: We move that each FFA District advance half of the qualifying chapters in their district plus one additional team for each standard deviation of the population above 12.5% (one-eighth) of the total Montana FFA membership, where the standard deviation data is evaluated and released on a biennial basis (odd years only) by January 31 to compete at State level C/LDE's that require a pre-qualifying district event and aren't limited to one/two chapters/competitor(s) per district.

Rationale:

Currently, this idea would primarily benefit the Western District which has 22% of total membership as it is the only district at least one full standard deviation above the average. However, as populations continue to increase the Southwestern and Southeastern Districts would be close to being able to advance more chapters with just over 100-175 more members needed to bump up one standard deviation. Additionally, this will encourage chapters to have an accurate roster submitted to the State Association to take full advantage of Montana's affiliated membership program.

Friend of the Foundation Award

Matt McKamey – Cascade

Lee Boyer Lifetime Achievement Award

Ann Newhouse – Bainville (now in Iowa)

State Convention Sponsors

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Advisor Success Workshop | Tractor & Equipment Company |
| Ag Communications CDE Scholarship Sponsor | Opportunity Bank of Montana |
| Ag Communications CDE Sponsor | AgriSampo North America |
| Ag Sales CDE Scholarship Sponsor | Bank of the Rockies |
| Ag Sales CDE Sponsor | Montana Agribusiness Association |
| Ag Sales CDE Sponsor | Tractor & Equipment Company |

| | |
|--|--|
| Ag Sales CDE Sponsor | Wichman Ag Supply |
| Agriscience Fair Awards Sponsorship | MSU College of Agriculture |
| Agriscience Fair Scholarship Sponsorship | MSU College of Agriculture |
| Agriscience Fair: ENR/Natural Resource Systems | BASF |
| Agriscience Fair: Plant Systems | Montana Seed Growers Association |
| Agronomy CDE Scholarship Sponsor | Montana Seed Growers Association |
| Agronomy CDE Sponsor | MaxAg of Montana |
| Agronomy CDE Sponsor | Montana Grain Growers Association |
| Agronomy CDE Sponsor | Montana Seed Growers Association |
| Agronomy CDE Sponsor | Montana Seed Trade Association |
| Agronomy CDE Sponsor | Simplot |
| American Degree Awards Sponsor | Stockman Bank |
| ATMS CDE Scholarship Sponsor | General Distributing |
| ATMS CDE Sponsor | TC Energy |
| ATMS CDE Sponsor | Tri-State Truck & Equipment |
| ATMS CDE Sponsor | Wichman Ag Supply |
| Career Success Workshop 1 | Montana Seed Growers Association |
| Career Success Workshop 2 | AgriSompo North America |
| Career Success Workshop 3 | Montana Agri-Women |
| Career Success Workshop 4 | University of Wyoming College of Ag & Natural Resources |
| Convention Host Sponsor | Montana Farmers Union |
| Convention in Review Highlight Sponsor | AgriStudios |
| Creed Speaking LDE Sponsor | Ann Newhouse |
| Day of Service Sponsor | Northwest Farm Credit Services |
| ENR CDE Sponsor | Montana Range Days |
| Extemporaneous Speaking LDE Sponsor | Miles Community College |
| FAM CDE Scholarship Sponsor | Montana Farm Bureau Foundation |
| FAM CDE Sponsor | Anderson ZurMuehlen |
| FAM CDE Sponsor | Stockman Bank |
| General Convention Sponsorship | BNSF |
| General Session Co-Sponsor - Thursday | Montana Army National Guard |
| General Session Co-Sponsor - Thursday | Northwest Farm Credit Services |

| | |
|---|--|
| General Session Co-Sponsor - Wednesday | Local Bounti |
| General Session Co-Sponsor - Wednesday | Pioneer Meats |
| General Session Sponsor - Friday | Montana Game Wardens Association |
| General Session Sponsor - Saturday | Opportunity Bank of Montana |
| Keynote Speaker Co-Sponsor | CKP Insurance |
| Keynote Speaker Co-Sponsor | Montana Contractors Association |
| Livestock CDE Scholarship Sponsor | Hubbard Feeds |
| Livestock CDE Sponsor | Hubbard Feeds |
| Livestock CDE Sponsor | Neal Family |
| Livestock CDE Sponsor | Northern Livestock Video Auction |
| Most Inspirational/Friendship Challenge | Colleen Barnard |
| Native American Indian Presentation Sponsor | Native American Agriculture Fund |
| Native American Indian Presentation Sponsor | Stockman Bank |
| Past State Officer Reception Sponsor | Pioneer Meats |
| Pre-Session Saturday | Collegiate FFA of MSU |
| Pre-Session Wednesday | MSU Collegiate Young Farmers & Ranchers |
| Prepared Speaking LDE Sponsor | Northern Ag Network |
| Proficiency Sponsor - Animal Systems | NutraLix |
| Proficiency Sponsor - Plant Systems | MaxAg of Montana |
| Stage Sponsorship | Alpha Gamma Rho |
| Star Farmer Awards Sponsor | Montana Grain Growers Association |
| Star Greenhand Awards Sponsor | Jay & Lyle Armstrong |
| Star Winners Buckle Sponsor | Curt Robbins |
| Star Winners Buckle Sponsor | Kristen Swenson |
| State Degree Dinner Sponsor | Montana Farm Bureau Foundation |
| Talent sponsor | University of Wyoming College of Ag & Natural Resources |

2021-2022 STATE OFFICER RETIRING ADDRESSES



Sydney Kirschten - Baker

State Parliamentarian

Finding the People - Be the Person

Everyone has a favorite movie. Personally, mine is a movie about hard ship, friend ship, family, love, and it has an A+ sound track. My favorite movie of all time is Spirit. Yes, the horse movie. This has been my favorite movie since before I can remember when I was little, we watched the movie at least 3 times a day. And yes, you can verify that with my parents because they GOT to sit and enjoy the best movie. And it's not just the movie the soundtrack is some of the most beautiful music I have heard and I listen to a lot of music, this last year I listened to a total of 161, 732 minutes on Spotify, that is longer that 111 days, and roughly a quarter of that was from this soundtrack alone. So, thank you to Hans Zimmer and Bryan Adams

Throughout the movie we follow a wild mustang that is captured by the US Calvary. This horse is narrated by none other than Matt Damon and we follow this horse as he protects his heard by sacrificing himself so they can get away. When spirit gets to the army base the solders take turns trying to break him. Something many if not all of us are familiar with. Weak, emotional, ditsy, unfocused, all words that have been used to describe me in my life. When I was deciding to run for a state office, I had asked someone I thought highly of, someone I trusted if I should run. They hesitated and said, "hmm I'm not sure" and cue the subject change. This almost made me not run. This comment alone had torn down my self-confidence. It took almost a year for me to get back my self-worth. When Spirit was at the base, he met a person that was captured by the soldiers named Little Creek. And together they were able to escape. Spirit was at his lowest and Little Creek was the person that helped him. But spirit also helped little creek. And that is what one of my people did for me. My best friend Faith whom I have known since my sophomore year. When the person I trusted made these comments about me she was the person I trusted she was the person that told me, "Syd, it doesn't matter what they said because in 15 years you won't remember it, you'll remember what you do after".

After spirit and Little Creek escape spirit thinks his journey is done and it's time for him to return home but not quite yet Little Creek brings him back to his home and this is where we meet rain, a paint horse and she shows spirit a new way to live, her way. and spirit realized that he actually liked this way. This past year I have met some of the most amazing people I could ever hope to meet in and out of FFA each one has a different story, a different look at life. I was at the Montana ag expo and I was just hanging out waiting to answer any questions anyone had when someone walked up to me and asked if They could talk to me, they had just gotten out of an event and they didn't feel the best about it. This person is From the Conrad FFA Chapter Kimmie. And what Kimmie didn't know is I was incredibly stressed out that day and the fact that she asked to talk to me made me feel amazing. Even though I wasn't feeling 100% that day I was able to help Kimmie release some stress and just talk about what was going on. We all have bad days everyone no matter who they are. Even though I was having a bad day I was able to be the person I was able to help someone. We can always make time to make

someone feel better even if it's just a quick complement, "Your shoes are really cool", "I love your hair today it looks really good". So, I challenge you even if you are having a bad day, aren't feeling 100% to try to make someone's day better because chances are they could be feeling the same way.

After realizing Spirit will never be broken Little Creek decides to let him go although he hesitates he does leave. On his way home Spirit finds rain and tries to convince her to leave with him. Before they can leave to calvary finds little creeks tribe and attacks. Rain runs back and tries to save her people and is shot spirit tries to save her and gets captured. This is the absolute lowest we ever see him. After the highest spirit is when we see him with rain be is broken, defeated. Something that I am all too familiar with. Your 2021 2022 State FFA Parliamentarian from the Baker FFA chapter, Sydney Kirschten. I did it, I worked so hard to get here. I found my why. I found my people to push me forward I was on the top of the world I could not be any more excited for my year. Then September 10 I got life changing news. I had not gone in for an eye appointment in 2 years so it was time to go in. My family was coming up for the MSU gold rush game so I scheduled our appointments. Let me tell you I felt so mature I scheduled my entire families' appointments for them. Keep in mind I had never scheduled a doctor's appointment before in my life. And mine was first. I went in sat in the chair looked through the eyes at the letters on the screen and told the doctor which one looked better. I thought everything was going smoothly until he said, "I'm going to take you to the back to get a better look behind your eye." "You should call one of your parents in." what? I just came in for an eye appointment. Hydrocephalus, water on the brain. "Your brain is not moving the cerebral spinal fluid through your body because of a tecta glioma blocking where it is supposed to be leaving your brain." Hydrocephalus, tecta glioma, cerebral spinal fluid, words I only knew because of science research papers and projects, all now things I actually have to worry about. On September 11 at around 2 in the morning I found out I was going to have to get brain surgery. This could not be happening. Me, a person who hadn't even broken a bone now has to make decisions like if I didn't make it out of surgery, if I wanted to be an organ donor, if I wanted them to resuscitate me. At 18 years old, at my first doctors' appointment I had ever been to when my parents weren't in the room, I found out I had to have brain surgery. The first thing I thought about was my friends, my teammates and how I might have to take a step back, not do everything I wanted to do. As someone that was always overlooked, thought of as weak I started to think this of myself. When I had my first follow up MRI after surgery, I didn't even tell 7 of my best friends, I didn't tell them how truly terrified I was about it. My dad had to reach out and tell them because I thought that if I told them if I asked for help, I was weak. But those 7 individuals even when I was at my lowest were able to make me laugh, smile, and forget about how I was feeling even just for a moment. I never agreed with the statements made about the past, that you shouldn't look back, your future is in front of you so that is where you should focus. Personally, I look back, I think about all the good times I've had, how amazing life's been, and how amazing it still is. Yes, I had brain surgery, yes, I have to get MRI's done every 6 months, and yes, I will never be the same. But if anyone were to ask me if I regret going in to that appointment, truthfully no. I don't regret it because it is a part of who I am, it has made me stronger, more resilient, more confident in my own ability to get through anything. Spirit is able to escape once again for the final time. He sees rain again and realizes that she survived and Little Creek lets both of them go to live out their lives. Because of everything Spirit went through he was stronger than ever before, and because of the people, the friends he met he was able to get back to his family.

Montana FFA find those people that are going to support you, push you forward no matter the circumstances, but also push the people around you forward, Montana FFA find the people, be the person.



Allison Denton – Fergus of Lewistown *State Sentinel*

Make It Matter

It's 2017 and sophomore Allison has a major dilemma: go out for cross country or play golf. Being a firm believer that there is no such thing as running for fun, I made the obvious choice, play golf. Now, let me tell you, I knew next to nothing about golf. The extent of my golfing experience was playing Wii golf with my siblings in our family room. I walked into the first practice and pulled my coach aside to say, "Keithon, I have no idea what I'm doing, I don't know what the numbers on these clubs mean and I don't understand why there's 9 holes". My coach just laughed and told me it was going to be okay. I

had played softball since I was a little girl, so I pretty much had the swing part down. I had to transition from a ball this big to this big. But after a while I started to get the swing of things – no pun intended.

By the end of the season of my sophomore year, I was sitting on the bus with the girls' varsity team headed to divisionals to compete. You might be asking yourself, "how the heck did this girl go from not knowing the difference between the 14 golf clubs to qualifying at the divisional tournament?" Don't worry, I asked myself the same question. Even my coaches and teammates were surprised by my progress. Wrapping up my senior year, I got to finish my golf career with a metal around my neck after qualifying as an individual and as a part of a team at the state level.

So, what's the answer to how I went from not knowing the first thing about golf to competing at the state level? Hours and hours of hard work. I was always the first one to practice and one of the last ones to leave. Quite literally, I put in the blood, sweat, and tears. Trust me, my hands (show) had the blisters to prove it. You might be asking yourself, "why on earth would anyone put themselves through that, it sounds miserable". The answer is easy, I found something worth working for. I simply fell in love with the sport and wanted to push myself to be better each and every day. All of the hours I spent on the practice range and on the course trying to improve finally paid off because it was worth it to me to work hard. When passion pairs with persistence, hard work pays off.

Let's all take a minute to think about the things we've been working on. Am I excited to go to practice? Do I look forward to working with my show animal when I get home? Is what I'm choosing to invest my time in something that I love? If the answer is no, then I have a question for you: why are you spending your time doing anything other than what you're passionate about? Step one, find a passion worth working for.

We all deserve to have something in our life that is so worthwhile we would go above and beyond to make it happen. Something that gives us a reason to get out of bed in the morning. Something that is worth working for. Maybe you have already found that passion, but if you haven't, let this be your sign: go find it. I promise you it's worth the search.

One hot summer day at a swim meet, I learned how important the power of community is. There I am, behind the timers pushing in my goggles and shaking my hands. I can definitely tell you the nerves were kicking in at that point. As I am looking down walking up to the blocks, I can see the bottomless water in front of my toes. I look up to see the lane in front of me with my stomach fluttering and legs slightly shaking. That annoying voice creeps into my head telling me that I'm probably not going to win this race. Just as the jitters start to get

the best of me, I look up to see familiar and calming faces: my parents. There they were, on the edge of the pool deck to my right, my coaches to my left and my teammates at the end of the lane, and all of them are yelling my name. And just like that, the voice in my head quiets down as their encouraging cheers ride me of all my nerves, and a new wave of confidence settles in. With a big smile on my face, I was ready to race.

The first thing that comes to my mind when I think of a community is the support I received when I was a competitive swimmer on my hometown swim team. That day, their cheers were the only thing that kept me from being overwhelmed by the fear and nervousness. They reminded me that I had people who believed in me and loved me, regardless of whether I won the race. So, who are the people at the edge of the pool deck in your life? The ones that remind you that you are more than any accomplishment or fear, the cheerleaders that give you a wave of calmness when you feel the nerves taking over. I hope each of you has someone that comes to mind instantly. For me I have several important people in my life that constantly encourage me no matter what. Having an unconditional support system in our lives can help us reach our goals when we are working on something that is worth working for. Our goals and dreams won't be handed to us on a platter, as easy as that would be. There will be days when you don't want to keep working, when you just don't feel motivated. On those days, the cheerleaders who encourage us and value us can remind us that we are lucky to have something worth working for. Step two, find who your cheerleaders are.

My community of supporters reminds me that if they believe in me, then I owe it to them to believe in myself. I have this metal bracelet on my wrist that I haven't gone a day without wearing for three whole years. It says, "she believed she could, so she did". When I started believing in myself with the help of the supporters in my life who cheer me on, I realized that the secret behind every success is simple: work hard, surround yourself with people that support you, and most importantly: believe. Without supporters, it can be hard to push through the difficult times. In those moments, ask yourself, "do I believe in myself?" If your answer isn't a yes now, hopefully it will be soon. With a team by our side, a goal that matters to us, and the power of believing in ourselves, we can learn to work for it more than we want it.

When I think of someone who has perfected finding passion, community, and confidence, I think of my FFA Advisor, Mr. Long. He absolutely loves the meats evaluation contest. Naturally, he was passionate and excited to teach my teammates and I about it and was willing to prepare us for future competitions. I decided that it was worth a shot to try something new. Mr. Long told us that we have a chance to win the state meats contest in January, but it would take more than hard work, it would take passion. Ever since that moment, it was drilled in my mind that I would need to study a lot during the upcoming months before KMON in Great Falls. He saw the passion in my eyes and the drive we had in preparing for this competition. He pulled me aside and said "Allison, you're going to have to work for it more than you want it, if you want to win".

That was a light bulb moment. Right then and there, I realized that everyone wants to win, because no one likes to lose. Individuals who work hard create talent. Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard. Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard. I made it my top priority to study whenever I could. In the classroom, at practices, at home, and even in the grocery store to look at the different cuts of meat. I really wanted to win, but knew I had to work harder than anyone else. So, I told my other three teammates about this new quote, and they instantly bought into it as it became our motto. Step three, work for it more than you want it.

Fast forward to when we were waiting for the awards after the contest. I was standing next to my teammates towards the back of the livestock barn. I remember saying "Ahh guys I am so excited I am feeling so good about this. I killed both sets of reasons, they literally couldn't have gone better. We totally got this". We put in the work and truly lived out the motto. My teammates and I were beyond excited, we couldn't wait for the results much longer. I kept thinking to myself that it would be so cool to win. With that image playing on repeat in my mind, I kept hearing a voice in my head saying, "and your first-place team for the meat evaluation contest is drum roll please... FERGUS OF LEWISTOWN FFA." I had a smile that reached to my ears and goosebumps down my arms. The announcer finally hops on to the mic where we find out we placed 2nd as a team.

I know you're thinking, "Allison... you didn't win". But in that moment, winning wasn't on my mind, it was that we learned something new in a short amount of time, worked extremely hard, and became passionate. I was genuinely happy with second place. "Work for it more than you want it" has been the quote I live by ever since then. Now, raise your hand if you've ever lost something when you worked hard for it. The amazing thing about winning and losing is that the road to each is the same. The same number of lessons, hard work, and passion go into both. Winning or losing isn't what matters, what matters is the purpose, people, and the process.

To make our lives matter, we have to follow three steps. Step one, to make it matter, find what you are truly passionate about. Step two, to make it matter, find who your support system is. And step three, to make it matter, work for it more than you want it.

MONTANA FFA, when you commit to taking a step forward, you are making it matter.



Cody Johannes - Huntley ***State Reporter***

Devotion for Your Emotions

Courage is being scared to death... and saddling up anyway --John Wayne. Now aside from being one of the best quotes ever it is all about emotions... Courage is an emotion, fear is an emotion, and that saying—Finds Devotion for its Emotions. Finding Devotion for your Emotions if there is a piece of advice, and experience, or something I can leave with you, Montana FFA.

To tag along with that, we move back to Alumni Leadership Camp in 2018. If you haven't had the opportunity to attend ALC number one, you're missing out and I highly recommend it, but number two the events, activities, people, skills, and EMOTIONS you experience while at camp are unmatched. None, more eye-opening than the last night of camp or reflection, on that night along with writing a letter to

yourself a circle of sharing takes place. In that circle and throughout the night people open up their hearts and let out their thoughts, there are tears, hugs, smiles, and memories and through the hours we sit in that lodge people allow their emotions to take hold.

Now, what if we let those emotions not just create feelings or thoughts but what if they dictated our actions, well our heart would be to our hands and our words would be to our feet and we could truly find a devotion for those emotions. Now, in all my so wise 19 years I have learned mostly the hard way that people and their emotions have attachment issues, people don't want to talk about how they feel, what their thinking or how they can act on it, and I get it, "emotions mean too much and are too personal to share with just anyone, and even more difficult to act on". For me, I chalk this up to people's emotional bottle-coined and trademarked by Cody Johannes, people have a bottle and they throw all their baggage in to, all their uneasy feelings, their hurtful conversations, and experiences, and the rest of the baggage that life brings. No one's is bottomless, everyone's bottle fills up, and eventually, it overflows, so devote yourself to those emotions and change them.

Too often, in the people's lives I witness, and especially in my own life the mentality to just "get over it, or die mad" has been adopted especially when it comes to feelings — Now that phrase is coined by Clint Johannes

though funny and possible the most universal term I know, it doesn't really help anyone it just buries the problem, allows you to not think about it and makes it something you don't have to deal with. But a preferred method by myself or a more effective method and likely an opportunity to do yah better would be to view things with the mentality that "YOUR ATTITUDE DECIDES YOUR ALTITUDE"... think about that review your life and maybe evaluate yourself right now and listen again "your attitude decides your altitude", you see Montana FFA your feelings are part of you and sometimes those cards aren't always in your deck but your attitude that is always your decision but your attitude or your devotion, could change your entire altitude or emotions?

Emotions— I have used that word a lot and it is certainly a big one and a serious part of people's lives, and I have just evaluated emotions their role and their purpose in the context I see fit but reflecting on the joy that emotions provide and the (devotions) I have put into my emotions truly allows one to see the impact of their feelings. This statement and the value emotions hold has been made abundantly clear to me this past year, because for anyone who doesn't know me... and you should, it's nice to meet yah I'm Conrad Johannes. As if it wasn't clear already you will quickly learn I live off laughter and run-on fun, that mentality though never a dull moment often leads to some downsides. One I'm always flying by the seat of my pants and make plans moment to moment, I have a few hobbies such as agriculture, showing, roping, and my pickup that suck up all my time and not to mention money, and I've been known to cop and attitude especially when I'm hungry. But every part of my life, good bad and ugly is dictated by my emotions and what I devote to them and I hope overwhelmingly that perception of me is good, well because I think it is. Now, I am a firm believer that the term "hard work pays off" holds the secret to long term success and enjoyment but I also know the value of playing hard... and it turns out if you know Cody Johannes I try and work hard and play harder. But through every aspect of my life, from my start in agriculture, to my growth through junior high and high school, into some of my first steps of freedom and now somehow my start in college and all the people places, and opportunities along the way.... Every single moment involves emotions and every moment moving forward will include emotion as well. That mentality, that persona, that lifestyle, and those action make up you as a person and every day you live your life starts to add up to your life and I have discovered that life is way more fun when there's people around to enjoy it with you. Montana FFA my 7 teammates.... Scratch that family members and every other person important to me knows how crazy this past year has been for me, there have been so many laughs, so much laughter, many dumb decisions and even worse consequences, there were tears, there were smiles, hugs, fights, and the team knows there was some attitude but those people, those interactions the life I have chosen to live and the people I continue to choose to include in it make up my devotions, that's my legacy, the single most important part about my life is the people in it and believe it or not people involve emotions no matter what.

Nothing has ever been more true than when I talk about my team, Alli: Your undeniable love for this organization and your continual care for us all is something I hope everyone to possess, Sydney: Your attitude towards life and your actions everyday bring so much joy to those lucky enough to be part of them, and brain surgery or not your truly are a light everyone's life, Mathew: Your one of a kind man don't let that change and I hope to know only half of your knowledge someday and carry the outlook, and the aspects you do on your life and the people in it, regardless of tractor color. Riley: I hope you know my mother because you both seem to always be keeping me in line and caught up, I truly don't think I could have asked for a better sister I never wanted and your devotion for absolutely every single action you do is unmatched by all, Dani: You find yourself in the rare position of being one of the most influential people in my life, and believe me that job is not easy but you do it with so much passion, so much skill, and so much intention because that's Dani Horan and for that I will never be able to repay you no matter how many of your bags I carry, Oh Colton: Truly is no end to where I could start with us, the laughs oh boy the laughs, the cries, and memories, and all of the lines make up the best possible friend I could ask for and two of the least professional officers Montana has seen when were together, regardless they better keep track of us and be scared wherever we go in the future, and Joe: Absolutely my president, joking of course but putting that aside, everyone needs a rock to keep them grounded and lord knows I have needed one this year and you seem to fill that role for me and our memories will never be forgotten nor explained but just know the impact you make on me on MT FFA and in your life is profound. This team are some

of the best people in my life and some of my closest friends and I feel that I deserved them as much as they deserve me because friends are god's way of apologizing for your family but regardless the devotion given to those around you each day is how they will remember you and I am continually blessed to be remembered with your 2021-22 Montana FFA State Officers, So there's my story there isn't one singular moment I can share with all of you not just one interaction or even one line, but what I can share with you is my year and what I have learned through it and what I can say is to find devotions for your emotions.

That aspect and the presence of emotions stays constant but my ability and your ability to change, and our ability to provide devotion that changes, that develops, and that is a continuous battle. In FFA we are leaders, agriculture grows leaders and we can either "LEAD CHANGE OR BE CHANGED BY CHANGE" you see your future success and our industries success or failure for that matter lies in how you handle life day to day. We can't lead change, we can't continue producing, we can't be successful and we certainly can't develop our emotions if we don't start right now, Montana FFA I challenge you all to allow today's choices to impact tomorrow's outcomes, Montana FFA I challenge you all in OUR TIME to provide devotion for your emotions, Thank You!



Matthew Slivka - Winifred *State Treasurer*

What's in Your Wallet

Life is full of investments. As human beings, we are constantly making decisions about what car to invest in, if purchasing a new phone is justified, or if we really need that suspicious gas station corn dog; however, money isn't the only thing we make investments with in our lives. We make decisions every day on what to invest our efforts, time, and thoughts into. Whether it's sports, grades, family, FFA, hobbies, or your local competitive duck herding team, what we invest in truly does shape who we become. Now let me ask you a question, what do we hope to obtain through these investments? Happiness. That one wasn't really that difficult, but how do we obtain happiness through our investments? Oof! Now that is a loaded question. Maybe my man, Samuel L. Jackson can help me answer this.

Hey Mr. Jackson, how do I obtain happiness? "You tell me. What's in your wallet?" Oh, uh, well I have some 1's, uh, an Illumination Membership card, and uh, an Uno reverse card, but I don't see any happiness. Again, how am I supposed to obtain happiness through my investments? I am still drawing a blank.

I'm going to let that question tumble around in our heads for a while. In the meantime, do you want to hear a story? Let's wind our clocks back to 2015; I was a seventh-grader, a brand- new member of this novel FFA Organization. When I saw the blue jacket, I saw opportunity. Through this jacket, I could make a name for myself, experience success first hand, and stick it to my older siblings who were both largely successful in the blue corduroy as well. FFA was this challenge to me, and I wanted to win that challenge. I wanted to be the best.

During my first few years in FFA, I invested all of my efforts to experience a taste of that great success, and I did succeed. I still remember the sheer amount of pleasure and excitement I had when I received my first gold pin at a district contest. I was so ecstatic that for the first few days of owning it, I refused to remove it from the packaging out of fear of damaging it. To me, this was what my journey in FFA was meant for. Over the next few

years, I continued to put all of my efforts into preparing for contests and placing the best I possibly could. Every time I heard my name announced, a rush of adrenaline and happiness came over me. But, by the time I heard my name announced for my 6th, 7th, or even 8th award in FFA, I should have been ecstatic. Right? Unfortunately, that rush of adrenaline each time began to fade. I was getting what I had hoped and dreamed for; why was I not getting the same feeling I had the first time I succeeded? While I did enjoy competing and placing well, sadly, it just didn't bring the same happiness it used to. My investments were no longer yielding what I expected.

So, if investing into my own success didn't work, what should I invest in? Let's look at my sophomore year in FFA. I was always trying to recruit members onto agronomy, range, and mechanics teams so we could compete at state. After convincing a seventh-grader to compete in our district range contest, I remember going through the whole range book with him on the bus on the way to our event. Joel Warneke from the Winifred FFA ended up blowing me away on how well he did at that contest. While it was likely not because of that last-second study session, I remember thinking to myself how much potential this member possessed. From then on, I made it an intention to further invest into this Joel's potential and help develop his skills. Over the next year and a half, I did what I could to mentor Joel and help him do as well as I had.

Flash forward to John Deere Ag. Expo of my junior year. Contests came and went and it was now time for awards (Sit in chair). My name was called a few times and I went up to the stage to be recognized. I was pleased to be recognized but felt rather mellow throughout the session. Then I heard Joel's name called to cross the stage for agronomy. I felt thrilled. It wasn't my award, yet that long-forgotten feeling of joy came yet again. I was proud. It felt so good to yet again feel that rush of happiness. Something changed in me that day. I remember telling myself that I was no longer going to focus solely on my success but dedicate my time towards helping others succeed as well.

Montana FFA, in that moment, I discovered the two aspects of happiness: pleasure and joy. Pleasure brings an extreme high but is short-lived. It only lasts for a few hours or even minutes. Almost like a drug, you require more of it the next time in order to get the same feeling. Pleasure comes from getting. Like opening that dream present at Christmas, receiving your first car, or in my case, receiving that CDE award. I was investing in pleasure. What I discovered watching Joel succeed that day at John Deere Ag. Expo was joy. While joy might not be as intense as pleasure, it is everlasting. Pleasure comes and goes, and can be taken away, but joy, joy will stand by you for years to come. Joy comes from investing in others and helping others succeed. Pleasure comes out of a self-centered mindset. How can I obtain happiness? What is in it for me? Joy is compassion. *Joy comes from serving others.*

Ever since I made that decision to invest in others, I have had joy. Montana FFA, being able to serve you this past year has been one of the most fulfilling times in my life. I am comforted by the fact that, if I were no more tomorrow, I would have put all of my efforts towards serving others and lifting others up, and I can find no guilt in that. That is what gives me joy.

Let us revisit that question I first asked: how do I obtain happiness through my investments? Montana FFA, invest in joy. Realize that it is not what you can take, but what you give that yields the true answer to this question. The gospel of Mark had it right when he said, "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Montana FFA, what are you investing in? What kind of happiness do you want? Pleasure or joy? Montana FFA, the opportunity to invest in a happy future is there.

What is in your wallet?



Dani Horan - Moore *State 2nd Vice President*

Walking in Grace

Grace. Grace. Oh, where are you grace? Has anyone seen grace? Sorry to the Graces out in the audience, but I am not looking for the person Grace. I am talking about the kind of grace that is given. Finding things is always easier when you know what you are looking for. So, what is grace? Grace is unmerited favor. Grace is giving kindness, unconditional love, and forgiveness that we don't deserve. Grace is freely given and often brings joy to its recipients. I was reminded of the importance of giving grace freely this year at the Montana FFA Alumni Leadership Camp in the Highwood mountains. Within the first day of ALC, I met many incredible members, but Manina from the Deere Lodge FFA Chapter taught me

an important lesson.

On the first day of camp, Manina was quiet and kept to herself, but on the second day, we got the opportunity to really connect. I learned a lot about Manina like she loves tik-tok dances. We even tried some together, but my dancing skills could use some serious work (insert cringy dance). Our time together was a blast. The rest of ALC passed by in a flash and before I knew it the last day was almost over. As I was talking with some members, I was handed a note, I did not read it at that moment but instead, I put it in my pocket. On the drive home, I pulled this note out of my pocket...in fact this very note here. (Hold up the note). I opened it up and it was from Manina. The note was filled with kindness, but the sentence that stood out to me was, "Thank you so much for being nice to me as you really didn't have to be." In that one sentence, she taught me something: **Grace is a choice.**

We don't have to be nice but we have the choice to treat others with unconditional kindness. Manina didn't have to be nice to me. She didn't have to put up with my cringy dancing, talk to me, or write me a note. Yet, she chose to do all those things. How many times in our day do we have the choice to say something unkind or hurtful to a peer, a friend, a family member or someone around us? How often do we have the choice to cheer on people around us even when they aren't returning the favor? We constantly face these situations. Everyone has the choice in what they say and do. Are you choosing to be kind and giving grace to those around you?

It's July 7, 2018: Picture a nice, warm, sunny day. Clouds in the sky, sun shining down...here at the Montana State University. Although the day was warm and beautiful, my attitude was not. I was in a dorm room at the North Hedges fretting about giving a prepared speech at 4-H Congress that was not prepared. I practiced my speech a couple of times then I walked over to the sub ballrooms where many of you have competed over the past week. When I got to the ballroom, I found a place to collect myself before I went to give my speech. Do you all know the power stance? If you don't, this is what it looks like (Perform with confidence). After standing in a power pose for two minutes your confidence is supposed to be boosted, but for me, that was not the case. Still, I went and gave my speech, and let me tell ya. It did not go well. I answered the questions that were asked by the judges and then left the room with my head hung low. There was a group of other high schoolers in the hall

at the time and I went and joined them, but I wasn't really paying attention. Instead, I was still focusing on how horrible the speech went and was upset with myself. And then a little seven-year-old girl, Brinkley, walked up to our group wearing a HUGE smile. She told the group that she was going to interview every one of us. She didn't know anyone in the group, and nobody knew her, but we decided to keep the peace and let her "interview" us. I mean, who wants to argue with an adorable seven-year-old? She took people one by one into a room. A few people went before me, and they came out stating that they were not hired. Then came my turn...I walked in not smiling, still focusing on the speech I had just given. Unbothered by my grim face, Brinkley smiled and walked me through the rules. She said if I could pass this interview I was hired. I know what your thinking, 'Dani is about to slay this interview, get hired by Brinkley, and her day will be so much better...Wrong, well partly at least. The "interview" consisted of a riddle, which I did not pass because there were a few tricks to it, so I was not hired. Yes, me, who is a master of riddle and joke-telling, was tricked by a seven-year-old. But she did make my day so much better. I walked back out of the room, but this time I had a huge smile on my face. With this one interaction, Brinkley changed my whole day.

She showed me amazing grace when I walked into the room with a bad attitude. Brinkley could have been upset when I walked into that room being distracted and grim. She could have mirrored my attitude. But, she didn't. Like Manina, Brinkley made the choice to show grace, but it was more than that. She chose to use her grace to spark joy in my life. To this day, I still perform that "interview riddle" among many other riddles and jokes, because it could bring joy into others' lives like it did mine. In what ways are you going to show grace to people as a method to bring joy? Will you smile at someone who you don't know? Tell a cringey dad joke or maybe perform a random act of kindness?

Okay, so grace is a choice, and choosing grace can bring people joy. Each and every one of you has received grace whether you know it or not. Maybe your teacher was patient when you turned in an assignment late, your friend forgave you when you got upset and said something you shouldn't have, your parents or boss didn't respond with anger when you forgot to do something. As I play a song, think of a time when someone showed you grace. How it made you feel. Remember Grace is giving kindness, unconditional love, and forgiveness that we don't deserve.

I play amazing grace on my violin

The beauty of grace is that it is given freely, brings joy, and requires nothing in return. That is what makes it so amazing. I want you all to stand up. There is a saying...never judge another person until you have walked a mile in their shoes. Look down at your shoes, your feet. Think of all the places where they have led you. What events have created who you are today? How many times have you received grace along the way? Are you giving others grace? Go ahead and have a seat.

As you go out of this field house for the last time at the 92nd Montana FFA State Convention, what direction are your next steps in your shoes going to look like? Will you be taking steps to give grace to those around you?

I challenge each and every one of you here today to practice walking in grace. When you put on your shoes to go out into the world, think of the steps you are going to take. Will you keep walking when the journey gets difficult, or will you take a few steps backward? Will you follow in Manina's path and thank the people that give grace freely to you? Are you going to step into Brinkley's shoes and look for opportunities to use grace to bring joy to the lives of others? Grace is a choice. When you leave these seats today, you have a choice. When you wake up tomorrow, you have a choice. Every day, you have a choice. Montana FFA, will you choose to walk in grace.



Colton Young – Stillwater Valley *State 1st Vice President*

Take Your Shot

Picture this, 11 year-old Colton, who was a basketball fanatic, wearing his Tim Duncan jersey from the San Antonio Spurs and let me just add, that jersey was looking good! I'm outside at our basketball court standing at the top of the three- point line. It's tied, game 7, the Spurs have the ball with 5 seconds remaining. Young vs LeBron. I'm thinking in my head, I have hit this shot a million times before. I got this. It was very simple, a couple between the leg dribbles, fake right, go left, step back and shoot the ball. This is your shot Colton... take it. 5, 4, 3, 2,1, Young for three... It's good! The San Antonio Spurs win the NBA Championship! Of course, I came back to the realization that I was just an 11 year-old boy in Nye, Montana

and definitely not in the NBA finals! But that's beside the point.

Now fast forward to my senior year of basketball. Our team was playing in the district tournament against Reed point/ Rapelje. This game went back and forth. It was the final minute and our team was down 4 points. We needed a stop. I'm guarding a kid on the wing and I get a steal. I take the ball all the way down the lane but instead of going in for the layup, I tried to dunk the ball. I had never dunked in a game before and it was one of my dreams as a kid. I swing to the left wing, pick up the ball and go in for the dunk, but instead of dunking it, I flipped the ball off my fingertips in the last second and the ball hits the rim and bounces out. I missed the shot. We ended up losing the game and my basketball career was over. Afterwards in that locker room I felt like I failed myself and my team. Now I knew that just because I missed that shot, that wasn't the only reason we lost that game. I have been playing basketball my entire life and I had always dreamed of dunking the ball in a game. Obviously, you can see that I am not the tallest person out here so I knew it was going to be hard to do. When I was in that moment, dribbling the ball down the court, I had a choice to make. I could have gone in for the layup, or knowing that this could be my last game I could try to make my dream of dunking come true. I took the shot. I took that monumental chance to achieve what was considered greatness in my mind. One quote that my football coach told us one time goes like this. "Someone once told me not to bite off more than I can chew, I told them I would rather choke on greatness than nibble on mediocrity." I would rather choke on greatness than nibble on mediocrity.

Every morning that we wake, we have a choice to make. We can sit in bed, maybe get up to grab a snack or just stay in bed all day, or we can get up and seize the opportunities ahead of us. We can aspire to be great, chase our dreams and take our shot. But it all starts with a choice. I'm reminded of this quote, "you miss 100% of the shots you don't take." Are you willing to take the shot?

I don't know about all of you but I like a good comeback story. A story about someone who handled adversity, overcame obstacles, and is now considered one of the greats. One that comes to my mind is the great Tom Brady. Now being a die-hard Denver Broncos fan, it hurts me a little bit to talk about Brady, and I know my mom will be upset at me too. But Tom Brady is considered the greatest quarterback of all time. He has won 7 super bowls, and been elected to 14 pro bowls. But it wasn't always this way for Brady. Brady played football at University of Michigan and he was a backup quarterback for his first couple years. But then his senior year, he finally started. Brady wasn't an outstanding quarterback entering the draft. He was selected in the sixth round as

the 199th pick. 199... There were 198 other players drafted before Brady. Now for those of you who do not understand football well, most players picked at 199 don't see much playing time. They usually just play on practice squads and will never get a chance to walk out of the tunnel into the stadium. Not Brady. Brady made a monumental choice. He could have quit and gone into every practice, every game with the mindset of defeat. But Brady walked into Foxborough stadium and told the owner of the New England Patriots that he was the best decision this franchise has made. Brady took his shot of being great, never giving up, handling that adversity, and beating all odds, and look what happened to his professional career.

Obviously not all of us are like Brady and going to get our shot in the NFL, but let's take a moment here real quick. Everyone, close your eyes for a second and think about this last year. Going through school, sports, hanging out with friends, FFA events whatever it may be. Think about an opportunity you had that you wish you would have taken. A shot that you could have taken but decided not to. Think about if you would have taken that shot, that chance, where would you be right now and how would you feel? Are you feeling regret because you didn't take that opportunity? Ok open your eyes. Look around the room. All of us have had an opportunity that we didn't take that we wish we did. That's ok though because we have today. Today is a new opportunity, a new shot at life. We can't live in the past. There is a reason why our rearview mirror is much smaller than our windshield, because it matters where we are going, not where we've been.

This next story I'm about to tell you all is one that has changed my life forever. It has left a huge impact on my heart and I want you all to really pay attention.

When I was in 7th grade, there was a group of us that would go play football at lunch time. We would play catch, occasionally play a game, and always have fun. One day we were playing football, and it was a great day, everything went on as normal, and we went home after school. The next day when we came to school, everything was off. The mood in the halls wasn't the same because our administration, school board, and some parents were standing, waiting for us to go to our first hour classes. When we got in the classroom, you could just feel that something bad happened. Something was not right. It was that morning that our administration told us one of our great friends went home last night and took his own life. At first, I didn't understand it. I was confused. Tyler seemed totally fine that day at school. During football he seemed ok. The thought that went through my head next has never left my head. I have always thought about this day and my biggest regret in life is knowing that if I had gone over to Tyler during our usual lunch football game or anytime throughout the day, and asked if he was ok, would he still be here? If I simply just went up to him and asked if he was ok, would that have ever happened? This event and thoughts have left a burden on my heart and I don't want anyone to ever live with a burden like that. We all have our connections, our friends, our family that we see each and every day. All it takes is one conversation to make that person feel like they are loved. Life is such a beautiful and fragile thing. Each of our lives are completely different, so you don't know what your friends may be going through. Take the opportunity to make sure they know they aren't alone. Let them know you are there to help them with whatever it may be because life is hard. We cannot go through it on our own, which is why we are blessed with the people around us. Look to the person on your left, on your right. They need you and you need them. Trust me you do not want to live with the thought that someone could still be on this earth if you would have simply just asked how they were doing.

I want to leave you all with a bible verse. John 8:12 says, "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." Be someone's light. Be someone's reason for greatness. So, the next time your friends want you to go hang out, take it. The next time an opportunity comes up, take it. The next time your beautiful momma wants to call you and just chat, take it because tomorrow is not a given. Don't let life be mediocre, inspire others, love your friends, love your family. Live each and every single second of every single day to the fullest because we don't know when it will end. Continue being you! Montana FFA you have inspired me in so many ways this year. I will cherish all of you in my heart forever. Now it's your turn to go inspire someone else! Thank you all for the best year of my life. Montana FFA, I love you all and always remember to take your shot!



***Riley Prather – Big Timber
State Reporter
Know Yourself to Grow Yourself***

Their eyes follow
Whispering behind hands
Pointing fingers
Leaving me confused
Hurt
Damaged
What was so wrong
With me being me
Would I ever belong
Time ticked away
With me questioning my identity
Wondering
What is wrong
With me
Add another hobby
Play a new sport
Maybe then
They will like me
Whispering and snickers continue
Except I found joy
Joy in new things
Discovering passions

Reaching my dreams
Identifying me
All that's left
Are scars
Slowly fading
From my journey
Despite the scars
I still stand
Loving myself
And living my dreams

When I was in junior high, I struggled a lot with trying to fit in with the "cool kids". I have found one of the best ways to express how I felt is through poetry, so I wrote this poem titled Who Are You to explain my junior high experience a little better. I wrote this poem not as an explanation for others, but for myself. I needed to find ME. I needed to learn how to celebrate ME. This has been a journey I have been on for a while and one that I have not been on alone.

One person that has helped me find ME and celebrate ME has been my FFA Advisor, Mr. Standley. FFA Advisors have an ability to see parts of us that we may have never seen in ourselves. Let's raise our hand if we have ever had our advisor randomly throw us in a contest. I know I definitely have. Time was flying by during my second semester of senior year, just as district and invitational contests started to pile up. Mr. Standley was always on top of making sure he got as many members as possible to the contests. One of the contests coming up was the Missoula Meats Invitational. I had always wanted to see the Missoula Meats Program. I had never tried the meats contest before, so I thought this is PERFECT. I can see their facility and try a new contest. A classic two birds, one stone situation. The contest was a blast and taught me a lot about meat processing. Surprisingly, I wasn't absolutely horrible at it, which backfired. A couple weeks pass by and KMON is getting close, I was all set to compete in the sales contest. We finally got to KMON, and I was ready for sales. The sales contest went great on Friday night. Then Saturday morning rolled around, when we got to the fairgrounds Mr. Standley told me that I would be competing in the State Meats contest. I was not ready for it. I did not think I could do it. I was afraid of failing the team and my advisor. I took a minute to gather myself and walked to my group. I went from identification, to judging classes, to reasons, to the written test. I wasn't sure how I did. I still didn't have the confidence in myself, but when the results came out my team had actually done pretty well. I realized that maybe I wasn't so bad at this after all. I was able to see what Mr. Standley saw in me. I had the skills and knowledge to help our team. Mr. Standley helped me realize that everyone has something special about them that is worth investing in, worth sharing with others, and something that is worth celebrating. Once I read a quote that said, "We are each gifted in a unique and important way. It is our privilege and our adventure to discover our own special light." How many opportunities have you let slide by because you didn't think you were capable? What skills or talents do you have that you aren't sharing with others? Who in your life encourages and guides you in finding that something special about yourself? You are special. There is something in you worth sharing. Don't miss the opportunity.

How many of you have had an influential person in your life? Show by raising your hand. Same here. All my life I have had my big sister, Sydney, supporting me from playing volleyball, recovering from tearing my ACL surgery, all the way to something as simple as letting me practice doing nails. She was always there, by my side to hold me accountable and keep me going. She was my rock. She was always there for me. One morning, I was getting ready for my first day of senior year after volleyball practice. I was so excited. I walked out of the locker room and saw my sister standing there with tears welled in her eyes. That's when I remembered today was the day she was moving away. I was not ready for this. Sydney pulled me in for a long deep hug where we cried and told

each other we would both be okay. We let go and I walked her to her car. I stood there in the dust as she drove away, not knowing what I was going to do without her. The person that was always there to keep me going and discuss life decisions with was moving to a different state. I was scared for myself, because I relied on her so heavily that I realized I didn't know who I was without her. What was I going to do? For several days I thought about this and knew I needed to figure out who I was. I started to reflect on my passions, desires, dreams, and goals. I was able to find myself. If I didn't take this time through individual reflection to find myself, I would still be lost and just doing what others told me to.

It's incredible having someone like Sydney in our life who can encourage and support us, but the truth is we can't completely depend on that person. We need to discover who we are and realize we are worth celebrating on our own. Someone can't always be there to walk us through it. Sydney leaving forced me to determine who I was, and because of that I got to spend time learning about the things that were important to me and the kind of person I wanted to be. I had to know myself to grow myself. PROPRES: Slide (know yourself to grow yourself) Let that sink in, know yourself to grow yourself. If we do this, we will have the confidence in ourselves to chase after our dreams.

Leo Buscaglia said, "celebrate your humanness, celebrate your craziness.... celebrate you." How are you celebrating? What are the skills or talents that you have that are worth celebrating? Where can you derive confidence in yourself from? How can you learn to be that supportive person for yourself when others are not able to be? You could run for a chapter office, enter that CDE you've been dying to try for years, cheer yourself on, learn a new dance move, or anything in between. As we are going through our everyday lives, let's find the courage to try something new. Let's fall in love with who you are as your own unique and amazing self.



Joe Lackman – Forsyth

State President

In Color

We've always been told that reality is black and white. That in life there is right and wrong, good and bad, and a simple answer to all our questions if we look hard enough, but is that perception of our reality really working? You see, we live in a world filled with joy and sorrow, needs and aspirations, but sometimes these can become too complex. We must simplify. We must first, find and believe in ourselves so we can tackle the next challenge in front of us. Perhaps then, will we be able to live in color.

Let's hear if this has been a state convention to remember?

Oh ya! Did you know that 90% of the information transmitted to our brains is visual? Some moments go by too fast for us to see them, so let's slow down for a moment to take this time in. If you would,

everyone take a deep breath in, then out and take a quick look around. Take account of who's around you, your friends, your advisors. Then, broaden your eyesight and take into account the fieldhouse, the lights, and

anything else that adds to this snapshot of today. It is moments like these that drive our perception of this world and more importantly, ourselves. It has been moments like these in this blue corduroy that have seemed to shape me into who I am.

It was not too long ago that I was able to wear this FFA Jacket for the first time in Bozeman. It was my 7th grade year and I can't tell you how excited I was to participate in the John Deere Ag Expo. Long hours were put into rigorous FFA practices that for some reason always seemed to end up with someone duct-taped to a chair. Those long hours had led up to this...

One shot

Or one opportunity

To seize everything I ever wanted

one moment

Would I capture it

Or just let it slip

It's November 12, 2015, right after the keynote dinner and my mind is blown as I'm surrounded by thousands of FFA Jackets leaving the SUB. Mrs. Banks, my ag advisor, is giving my chapter the rundown of what was going to happen for the rest of the night. Naturally, I'm more focused on the surroundings than instructions but I faintly remember her saying to stick together. Easy, right? My chapter begins to shuffle out the doors and guess what happens next? Little Jo Jo gets lost.

That's right, I managed to do the one thing I was not supposed to do, and got separated. What makes it worse is that our chaperone, Mr. Mork is 6 foot-plus and just towers above us FFA members. Like, c'mon Joe. How do you just lose a giant of a man in a bright green shirt. Stupid, nevertheless, after 20 minutes or so of running up and down the walkways of campus, freaking out the whole way, I called up my dad who was there helping with the events. Eventually he pulls up in his pickup, and takes me back to the hotel.

When we get to the hotel, Mrs. Banks walks up to me so I proudly tell her my excuse, because nothing is ever my fault, and I say this "I just followed the blue jackets." To this day, I've never forgotten that quote, and the fact that not one person noticed I wasn't on the bus until halfway down 19th Street.

That day, I learned an important lesson: Following just to follow isn't going to lead you where you want to go. Thinking more broadly, following just to follow isn't going to give you direction in your own life. It is you that must take that first step in finding your yourself.

The cool thing is, as we live through new experiences and meet new people, we change. Your identity might not be a single answer but a combination of all the shots, all the opportunities, all the moments that have led you to this point. Take pride in becoming more than this moment. Find what drives you to be better and take that first step, but a bit of advice. Look at what you're following, because I obviously know that you can easily get lost.

Fast forward a few months in my FFA journey and it's the 86th Montana FFA State Convention. Guess what? Little Jo Jo didn't get lost this time. In fact, he got a little direction in his life.

It's the fourth session, April 2nd, 2016, and it's finally time for awards. I look around as everyone is anxiously awaiting results and you know me just chillin in my seat not expecting what would happen next. Cody Boyce, the State secretary starts off the award ceremony with the high individuals of the Agricultural Sales and Service CDE. In no particular order, please come to the stage. Jessica Horan, Kyla Andres, Ashley Koenig. More names are listed off as I see these individuals run up to the stage. I'm thinking to myself, "that's pretty cool, one day I'm going to be up on that stage".

All of a sudden, Cody calls out my name. Hold up, what? I'm just a seventh grader, there's no way my name just got called. April Fools was supposed to be yesterday. I look over and my chapter shoves me out into the aisle, and I run up to the stage gracefully, with my hair flowing in the wind, Chariots of Fire playing in the background. Don't believe me, you're right but it's my story and I'm going to stick to it. In reality, little Jo Jo feels like his heart is going to explode.

I get up on stage and of course I notice I'm the shortest, even shorter than Kyla Andres. I'm definitely the youngest, and definitely the most nervous one too. I'm sure to be last. Cody starts listing off the placings starting at tenth. My name is not called. 9th. No mention. 8th. 7th. 6th. 5th. 4th. 3rd. At this point I'm freaking out, trying not to look awkward in front of thousands because I had the shakes so bad. I think to myself am I really in the top 2 of the state? Shake it off Joe, act cool. Cody looks back at the award script. In second, from the Forsyth FFA Chapter, Joe Lackman.

Even though I didn't take first that day - I gained something that is so much more valuable. Confidence! Confidence that while I was only 5'5", I was on top of the world. It was then that little Jo Jo realized what was achievable for himself and developed the confidence to pursue his dreams.

At times, I think we forget to add color to our experiences, because it is during those times where we feel like we are on top of the world that gives us the best view of our true identity. We are confident in ourselves.

A lot of us don't truly realize that the world already views us for who we are. Every word we say, every action we commit adds to the perception of how others see us. How often do we try to change that perception by changing who we are? Is it because we have a need to fit in? Is it because someone else told us to? Is it because we doubt ourselves?

If you have doubt of what you can achieve, quiet that feeling inside you. You are good enough. You deserve good things. You are smart enough. You are worthy of love and respect. You are amazing just the way you are. – Lorri Faye

Be confident in who you are for you know yourself better than anyone else in this world.
You are full of color!

I would say that after the 86th Montana FFA State Convention, little Jo Jo couldn't be stopped in his FFA career until life threw a curveball at him on March 13, 2020. A date that a lot of us might not quite remember but an impactful one of our lives.

At the time, I didn't quite understand what was going on, but March 13 was the start of some pretty challenging days. Every high school in Montana got the order to shut down for two weeks. Eventually those two weeks turned into two more and two more until we finished an entire school year without even being in a classroom. Lots of us had sports canceled, trips postponed, and events go online, and if you are anything like me, when reality went back to "normal" it was like starting all over. Life perhaps was truly black and white.

It's tough knowing that there was a gap between who I am and who I was. For life forgot its purpose for a little bit, and in turn I guess so did I... Man, those were some tough days knowing what I wanted to change. I wanted my confidence and swagger back, but how I could do that was giving me some problems. Until one summer day I took an evening run down to the Yellowstone River, about a mile down the road from my house. I was sitting on this old tree that had fallen over a long time ago, watching the sunset and listening to music when a song started to play.

The first time I remember hearing "In Color" by Jamey Johnson was January 27, 2018 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Miles City. Family and friends are all gathered around, celebrating the life of a very inspirational

character in my life. My grandpa, Tom Zook. Listening to that song brought back a lot of memories. My Grandpa lived a life of service to his country as a mechanic in the Navy, and as a legislator in Montana. More direct to me, my grandpa lived a life of service to his family. Being a role model for all us grandchildren, an amazing father, and a caring husband who was willing to move off the ranch in my grandma's time of need. As the sun set over the Hysham Hills, I didn't realize how much I missed him. I wonder what wise words Grandpa would have about today.

I hesitate to say this, but 2020 hasn't ended for some of us. Our normal isn't the same. Life just keeps adding on hardships until we all are burdened down without the ability to pick ourselves up. Without the ability to pursue the confidence we all once had. I will be the first to admit that life is tough, but instead of thinking in that mindset, I propose this one that I learned from my grandpa - Live life In Color. Why be stuck focusing on everything that is wrong with the world? Why hide in the thousand shades of gray that keeps our identity covered? Rather, why not perceive ourselves and others in color, for we all have the ability to light up this world just as my grandpa lit up mine.

Can y'all do me a favor? Everyone in the 406, grab your phones, turn on your flashlights, and hold them in the air like so. 90% of what we remember is visual. So deep breath in, out and take a look around. You all have the ability to make a positive difference in the lives of others, and for your knowledge, you have made the biggest one in mine. I can't thank you all enough for what you have given me this past year. You all have brought me out of the Darkness of Selfishness and into the glorious sunlight of brotherhood and cooperation. In my time of need, you all reminded me of who I am. From my first state convention in a jacket to my last in this one, I can say it's shown me one thing. FFA Serves. You have all inspired me beyond measure, showing me that there is a reason the big guy upstairs has us where we are and that reason just might be so we can be a light. A light of service to ourselves and others so we can light up this world. Montana FFA, this is our time to live a life IN COLOR!