



Montana FFA Alumni & Supporters

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Agenda

Montana FFA Alumni Meeting (KMON)

The January 22nd, 2022 meeting of the Montana FFA Alumni Association was called to order at 12:16 PM in Great Falls, MT at KMON.

Approve Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Secretary McKenna Quirk posted the minutes from the November 2021 meeting.

Scott Lackman moved to approve the minutes, Gracie Tooke seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Officer Reports

Treasurer's Report

Mike Tuszynski presented the Treasurer's report. Our current balance is \$19,361.90. We are still looking to fill the role of Treasurer.

The Montana FFA Alumni was asked by the Montana FFA Foundation to sponsor snack trays at the 2022 FUSION Conference for \$250.00. The group agreed unanimously that the executive decision made by Mike Tuszynski to sponsor the snack trays could be upheld.

It was discussed that the previously agreed-upon spending limit on the account needs to be verified for future reference.

Executive Report

Mike Tuszynski would like the Montana FFA Alumni to focus primarily on providing a service to local alumni chapters to organize and facilitate local affiliation with state and national groups. We attended a training with Ben Meyer after this meeting to develop our goals, as well as identity and review what aspects of the Montana FFA Alumni Association work well.

We would like to make a pointed effort to serve local alumni chapters and make our goals and aspirations more realistic.

Montana FFA Foundation

Kat Taylor presented the Montana FFA Foundation report. The Foundation held the FUSION Conference in Helena this January that incorporated two tracks for students to participate in. The GOLD track helped students begin their preparation to run for a state FFA office, and the BLUE track focused on career readiness. The Montana FFA Foundation partnered with Reach Higher Montana as the title sponsor for the FUSION Conference this year, which was a great connection for students to make.

In regards to State Convention preparation, Kat Taylor will be helping plan the trade show, so if anyone knows a business or group that may be interested in having a booth, let her know.

The Foundation will also be putting together the donor luncheon and a past state officer social on campus that will both occur during State Convention.

It was announced that Gwynn Simneuik will be leaving the Foundation, and working part-time until State Convention.

Montana FFA Association

Jim Rose presented the report on the Montana FFA Association. The Montana FFA State Convention will be held from March 30th to April 2nd in Bozeman. Sessions will be held in the Fieldhouse this year, with parking available in the Fieldhouse parking lot. Most of the other activities at the State Convention will remain in the same locations they have been in the past when Convention was hosted in Bozeman. The Alumni Store will be hosted in the Fireplace Room in the Strand Union Building during State Convention.

The National FFA Western Region Vice President, Josiah Cruikshank, will be in Montana during National FFA Week from February 23rd through 25th. He will be presenting workshops in Missoula, Belgrade, and Park City that chapters from across the state will be encouraged to attend.

CDE Days will be held in Miles City on March 21st and 22nd, with awards being presented at State Convention.

Alumni members are encouraged to volunteer as CDE/LDE judges at both State Convention and CDE Days.

District Representative Reports

Western District Report

Corvallis FFA/Alumni is going to be holding a huge fundraiser on January 28th, they are calling it Corvallis FFA Cuts Footloose. There will be dinner, a dessert dash, live and silent auctions and live music to dance to. Tickets are \$40 per person and the earnings will help to fund the chapters travel expenses and other costs. There was a great newspaper article about this event, and the Corvallis FFA chapter advisor Neela Andres shared that the alumni are knocking it out of the park!

Mission Valley alumni is experiencing some growth right now. The alumni is currently doing some renovations to the stockyards in Ronan which are owned and operated by the alumni as a fundraiser. The chapter recently received a grant to get a small farm/livestock facility beside the stockyard the alumni are helping to put that together. Mr. Lunceford said he will pass my information on to his alumni so I can be looped in.

Kalispell FFA alumni have had more attendees at meetings so far this school year than in past years. We are providing snack bags to the members and advisors when they travel to events like KMON, Mechanics in Lewistown, etc. We provided soda and water for the members Christmas dance. We are trying to get another drive through chili feed fundraiser set up the same weekend that the Sportsmans Show takes place at our fairgrounds the end of February, and we've had great support from the school district kitchen with cooking for us in the past. We are helping to judge the chapter speaking contest January 26th, and the district leadership contests on February 11th. On February 4th we are hosting Monte Carlo night for the members, with students paying \$5 admission which gets the food and drinks for the evening and a bundle of FFA bucks to place all the different games we set up. The alumni have been gathering prizes which they will then be able to purchase at the end of the evening.

Regarding the Deer Lodge alumni chapter, Mr. Lombardi did give me contact information for their alumni president, I have reached out to him but haven't heard back yet.

I have tried several times to get a meeting set up with Justin Wright in Hot Springs to help him get an alumni set up, with no luck yet.

Southeastern District

Gracie Tooke presented the report on the Southeastern District. Carter County is disbanding its alumni, and it was discussed as to why this is the case. Wibaux is very interested in building an Alumni chapter, and Gracie Tooke will be working with them on that. Glendive would like to further develop their alumni, and Broadus's new advisor is getting settled in and will be in touch with Gracie Tooke in the future. Forsyth is hosting a cornhole tournament and chili contest as a fundraiser, with support from their Alumni chapter.

Plevna and Fallon have a combined Alumni chapter, and the benefits of this were discussed, as well as the potential implementation of this in other areas of the district.

Glacier District

This report was presented by Ken Johnson, who reached out to Sunburst who shared that they are hoping to revitalize their Alumni chapter. The idea of having a combined Alumni chapter around the Shelby area was discussed, as this could help both the Fairfield and Shelby Alumni chapters get started. Choteau does not have organized alumni, but the support is there to build a strong, organized Alumni chapter. Fairfield has wanted to get reengaged and Ken Johnson hopes to continue to stay in touch with them in the future.

Ag Ed Specialist

Eric Tilleman gave a report regarding agriculture education in the state. There are multiple new agriculture education programs getting started as well as chapters being restarted, including in Florence, Havre, Augusta, Great Falls, Valier, and Helena. We have eight teachers coming out of MSU this year, which is very exciting. There are a few job openings, as well as one or two teachers retiring. OPI is also putting together the economic impact statements for the various SAE projects that students track in AET. In 2019, the reports showed that members had a \$4.6 million impact in the state of Montana. Eric Tilleman will share that report with us once it comes out.

National FFA

Ben Meyer will be attending a conference next week in Indianapolis along with other representatives from Montana. Additionally, a new grant cycle is opening up this March that both school FFA chapters and Alumni FFA chapters can apply for. Stevensville FFA received one of the grants for \$5000 to get supplies for their new greenhouse. There are many \$1000/\$5000 grants available for alumni/chapters to apply to.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

State Convention Planning

Alumni Store

Mike Tuszynski will be in touch with Jim Rose and Gwynn Simenuik about space and rooms, and Gracie Tooke and McKenna Quirk will help where they can by going to meetings in Bozeman.

Mike Tuszynski talked to Laurie Kraft, as she is going to have her students staff the Alumni store as a community service project for her chapter. She is going to need help getting materials out of storage, and Gracie Tooke and McKenna Quirk, as they are in Bozeman, can help her with that. It was mentioned that Laurie Kraft should be made aware that purchasing nylons, hairspray, and other similar items to sell at the store would be a great investment.

Hospitality Room

Kristen Swensen reached out and will be taking care of hospitality needs for the nominating committee and the hot box. Matt McCamey will be able to order food for the nominating committee as well.

Silent Auction

In discussion with chapters and alumni groups, please let them know that their students can donate items to the Silent Auction, and that the funds go towards ALC and scholarships for students.

The idea of having a progressive auction, in which individuals would bid in small increments that would then act as pledges/donations to the Montana FFA Alumni, was also discussed. Mike Tuszynski will be following up with Jim Rose regarding if we could host a live progressive auction at the State Degree Dinner, or at another event during State Convention. We could also pick one of the silent auction items to be the "silent progressive auction" item, that would have a printout next to it on how a progressive auction works. A dessert auction or dessert dash during the State Degree Dinner was also discussed as a potential fundraiser.

Meeting & Social Event

We will begin having a meeting at State Convention. We need to advertise the meeting, along with including it in the State Convention program. The meeting is currently scheduled to be on Friday, April 1st in the Fireplace Room in the Strand Union Building, however, that is subject to change. We are planning on having a Zoom option during this meeting so as to include as many people as possible.

Officer Elections

No nominations were made for the positions of Treasurer, District Representative for the Judith Basin District, or District Representative for the Big Muddy District.

Next meeting

We are having a Zoom meeting on March 9th to check-in before the Montana FFA State Convention.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 PM on January 22nd.