

Convention Proceedings

**94th Annual
State FFA Convention
Montana FFA Association**



**Metra Park
Billings, Montana**

State Officers

Jake Chulyak, President

Big Timber

Summit Browning, 1st Vice

President - Gardiner

Shaun Billingsley, 2nd Vice

President - Missoula

Emily Coles, Secretary

Roundup

Lance Rutledge, Treasurer

Big Sandy

Haley Rigler, Reporter

Park

Gunnar LaHaug, Sentinel

Mission Valley

Ayla Yoder, Parliamentarian

Plentywood

Special Guests

Grant Norfleet – National FFA Secretary

Greg Gianforte – Governor of Montana



State Staff

Jim Rose, State Advisor

FFA Foundation

Curt Robbins - Foundation President

Columbus

Mark Sinnard – Vice-President

Wilsall

Belinda Darlinton - Secretary

Great Falls

Kody Farkell – Director

Conrad

Jay Meyer - Director

Stevensville

Mike Tuszynski - Alumni President

Broadview

Lance Rutledge - State Treasurer, Big Sandy

Alumni Association

Mike Tuszynski, President
Broadview

Ken Johnson, President Elect, Conrad

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

Summit Browning, State Officer Rep.
Gardiner



Convention Facts

Approximately 2050 members and guests attended this year's convention.

Career Development Events (CDE) Results

Agriscience Fair Winners:

- Riley Jones – Miles City, Animal Systems
- Corbin Kirkland and Gia Bumgarner – Corvallis, Plant Systems
- Lauren Weidow and Mckenzie Weis – Corvallis, Social Systems
- Addisyn Jensen and Aubree Gerber – Kalispell, Environmental/Natural Resource Systems
- Colter Anderson – Simms, Power, Structure and Technical Systems
- Miley Weston and Alaina Willhite – Missoula, Food Science Systems

Agriculture Communications

1. Shepherd
2. Corvallis
3. Park City

Agriculture Issues

1. Baker
2. Roundup
3. Shepherd
4. Corvallis

Agricultural Sales CDE

1. Kalispell
2. Shepherd
3. Stevensville
4. Winifred
5. Plentywood

Ag Sales Individuals

1. Sophie Banzet – Kalispell
2. Kamryn Jones - Stevensville
3. Josie Ward - Beaverhead
4. Katelyn Frost - Park
5. Kiley Buchnowski - Plentywood
6. Ryleigh Plovanic - Beaverhead
7. Claire Murnin - Shepherd
8. AJ Sharkey - Missoula
9. Aaron Brandon – Ruby Valley
10. Ryan Fox – Huntley Project

Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems CDE

1. Kalispell
2. Stevensville
3. Havre
4. Park City
5. Big Sandy

ATMS Individuals

1. Zane Downey - Whitehall
2. Joel Warneke - Winifred
3. Cole Waldusky - Conrad
4. Selwyn Hackett - Stevensville
5. Tanner Stott – Huntley Project
6. Severin Heimbigner – Big Sandy
7. Reinhard Bold – Big Sandy
8. Jayden McIntyre - Kalispell
9. Gavin Mailman - Kalispell
10. Jayden Thomas – Big Timber

Agronomy CDE

1. Shields Valley
2. Belgrade
3. Stevensville
4. Kalispell
5. Winifred

Agronomy Individuals

1. Amanda Willis – Shields Valley
2. Quinn Rahl – Stevensville
3. Joel Warneke - Winifred
4. Sidney Mccasland - Stevensville
5. Asha Jerke – Shields Valley
6. Alex Tatarka - Belgrade
7. Alexa Smieja - Belgrade
8. Reagan Long – Shields Valley
9. Kyra Desjarlais - Stevensville
10. Rylee Glimm - Kalispell

Creed Speaking CDE

1. Dani Wester - Kalispell
2. Kiley Buchnowski - Plentywood
3. Teigan Hackett - Stevensville
4. Karissa Fraker - Forsyth

Jr. Creed Speaking CDE

1. Chelsie Stone - Geraldine
2. Monte Pedrazzi - Roundup
3. Taylee Reed-Hahne – Park City
4. Ava Grove - Hobson

Conduct of Meetings LDE

1. Miles City
2. Shepherd
3. Missoula
4. Stevensville

ENR

1. Missoula
2. Corvallis
3. Fairfield
4. Miles City
5. Forsyth

ENR Individuals

1. Joel Warneke - Winifred
2. Autumn Benson - Corvallis
3. Kamber Bender - Fairfield
4. Amy McGrath - Missoula
5. Joel Standley - Missoula
6. Hasalyn Schairer - Corvallis
7. Reinhard Bold - Havre
8. Mae Grosenbaugh – St. Regis
9. Robert Lesofski - Choteau
10. Alex Mazurie Chid - Belgrade

Employment Skills

1. Kathryn O'Donnell – Shepherd
2. Grace Mosher - Shepherd
3. Brylinn Olstad - Shepherd
4. Morgan Bisel - Corvallis
5. Alysa Lloyd - Frenchtown
6. Kyona Yeager - Fairfield

7. Russel Lang – Roundup
8. Keagan Sandlin – Stillwater Valley
9. Leah Nelson – Missoula
10. Mary Arthurn – Stillwater Valley

Extemporaneous Speaking LDE

1. Trey Kinamon - Conrad
2. Reagan Long – Shields Valley
3. Romulus Hiner - Wheatland
4. Emma Lou Slivka - Winifred

Farm Business Management CDE

1. Kalispell
2. Big Timber
3. Stevensville
4. Huntley Project
5. Corvallis

FBM Individuals

1. Bradley Fields - Kalispell
2. Paige Werthheimer – Big Timber
3. Alex Tatarka - Belgrade
4. Rylee Glimm - Kalispell
5. Nathan Laubach – Big Timber
6. Zoey Aller – Big Timber
7. Welcome Chapman - Kalispell
8. Gretchen Donally – Huntley Project
9. Emelia Schairer - Corvallis
10. Lane Hess – Park City

Floriculture

1. Missoula
2. Joliet
3. Froid
4. Havre
5. Corvallis

Floriculture Individuals

1. Hasalyn Schairer - Corvallis
2. Emma Horn - Joliet
3. Alexa Woods - Gardiner
4. Joel Standley - Missoula
5. Keagan Merrit - Missoula
6. Collin Yoshimura - Missoula

7. Chloe McNamee – Park City
8. Sylvan West - Missoula
9. Kaylee Olson - Froid
10. Kara Lloyd - Frenchtown

3. Frenchtown
4. Beaverhead
5. Mission Valley

Food Science CDE

1. Missoula
2. Belgrade
3. Big Timber
4. Gardiner
5. Shields Valley

Food Science Individuals

1. Keagan Merrit - Missoula
2. Kelly Reaglan – Park City
3. Eli Huckeby - Missoula
4. Morgan Bisel - Corvallis
5. Weston Sondeno – Big Timber
6. Kaylee Reid - Belgrade
7. Alex Tatarka - Belgrade
8. Joel Standley - Missoula
9. Eliza Tureck - Stanford
10. Zoey Aller – Big Timber

Forestry CDE

1. Kalispell
2. Three Forks
3. Belgrade
4. Mission Valley
5. Missoula

Forestry Individuals

1. AJ Sharkey - Missoula
2. Calla Donnelly – Three Forks
3. Nick Fletcher - Kalispell
4. Severin Heimbigner – Big Sandy
5. Cazz Rankosky - Kalispell
6. Corban Lewellel – Three Forks
7. Tanner Wilke - Kalispell
8. Will James Courville – Mission Valley
9. Emma Berhardt - Belgrade
10. Robert Lesofski - Choteau

Horse Evaluation CDE

1. Lima
2. Kalispell

Horse Evaluation Individuals

1. Madelena Preston - Fairfield
2. Sophie Banzet - Kalispell
3. Teagan Washburn - Belt
4. Molli Miner - Beaverhead
5. Kalen Martinell - Lima
6. Addison Sant - Frenchtown
7. Hannah Fussell – Mission Valley
8. Paige Shaw – Miles City
9. Sidney Mccasland - Stevensville
10. Makenna Tobel - Joliet

Livestock Evaluation CDE

1. Big Timber
2. Fergus
3. Mission Valley
4. Kalispell
5. Roundup

Livestock Evaluation Individuals

1. Nathan Long - Fergus
2. Trevor Halverson – Big Timber
3. Raeanna King – Big Timber
4. Colton Sherman – Mission Valley
5. Ella Lund - Kalispell
6. Charlee Shaw - Roundup
7. Wylee Simonson - Chinook
8. Spencer Braaten - Broadwater
9. Stockton Stroh - Fergus
10. Maddi Butori - Baker

Marketing Plan

1. Corvallis
2. Shields Valley
3. Havre
4. Stillwater Valley
5. Bainville

Meats Evaluation CDE

1. Big Timber
2. Missoula

3. Frenchtown
4. Stevensville
5. Shepherd

Meats Evaluation Individuals

1. Weston Sondeno – Big Timber
2. Trevor Halverson – Big Timber
3. Sierra Mauland – Big Timber
4. Paige Wertheimer – Big Timber
5. Miley Weston - Missoula
6. Joel Standley - Missoula
7. Eli Huckeby - Missoula
8. Aspen Courtney - Frenchtown
9. Alysa Lloyd - Frenchtown
10. Larry Eslinger - Frenchtown

Parliamentary Procedure LDE

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

Poultry Evaluation Teams

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

Poultry Evaluation Individuals

1. Kody Barnes - Hobson
2. Jenna Hodik - Hobson
3. Jady Frank - Hobson
4. Trace Gilbert - Hobson
5. Hannah Fussell – Mission Valley
6. Collin Yoshimura - Missoula
7. Bailey Seaholm – Grass Range
8. Keagan Merritt - Missoula
9. Alivia Snyder - Victor
10. Zane Downey – Whitehall

Prepared Speaking LDE

1. Kennedy Lyson - Baker
2. Claire Murnin - Shepherd
3. Weston Sondeno – Big Timber
4. Trey Kinamon - Conrad

Vet Science CDE

1. Missoula
2. Beaverhead
3. Kalispell
4. Frenchtown
5. Fergus

Vet Science Individuals

1. Kinzey Clark - Missoula
2. Mary Cate Nagel - Missoula
3. Weston Sondeno – Big Timber
4. Ivory West - Missoula
5. Collin Yoshimura - Missoula
6. Katie Johnson - Beaverhead
7. Taylor Yecny - Beaverhead
8. Addison Sant - Frenchtown
9. Harli Hansen - Kalispell
10. Sierra Mauland – Big Timber

Team Sweepstakes Winner

1. Kalispell
2. Stevensville
3. Winifred

Individual Sweepstakes Winners

1. Joel Warneke - Winifred
2. Joel Standley - Missoula
3. Reinhard Bold - Havre
4. Lane Hess – Park City
5. Morgan Bisel - Corvallis

State Talent Contest

1. Goddy Bandola – Judith Gap
2. Grace McPherson - Fairview
3. Nick Macallister – Hot Springs

Star Chapter – GOLD AWARDS

1. Beaverhead - **STAR**
2. Wibaux
3. Conrad
4. Gardiner
5. Baker

Star Greenhand

Big Muddy District: Brynlie Borsen - Hinsdale

Eastern District: Joseph Billing – Miles City

S.E. District: Charles Shaw - Roundup

S.W. District: Makinzey Milesnick - Belgrade

***Western District: Adelaide Meyer -
Stevensville**

Glacier District: Alyson Leach - Conrad

Southern District: Brody Pelton – Stillwater
Valley

Judith Basin District: Nathan Long - Fergus

Star in Agricultural Placement

STAR Echo Saunders – Gardiner

Star in Agribusiness

STAR Reagan Long – Shields Valley

Star Farmer

STAR Jordan Leach – Conrad

Hall of Chapters

1. Huntley Project
2. Park
3. Cascade

American Indian Presentation

1. St. Labre

Reporter Event

1. Katelyn Noyes - Broadwater
2. Kaylee Reid - Belgrade
3. Brylenn Olstad - Shepherd

Secretary's Book

1. Faye Holland - Beaverhead
2. Morgan Bisel - Corvallis
3. Grace Fritz - Missoula

Scrapbook

1. Sidney
2. Gardiner
3. Kalispell

Treasurer's Book

1. Lina Smith - Richey
2. Teonna Funk - Hinsdale
3. Eric Garofalo – Ruby Vally

BOMC Awards

1. Shields Valley
2. Gardiner
3. Bainville

Scholarships Awarded

College, Leadership and \$750 SAE Grants

Scholarship Name	Scholarship Amount	Application: First Name	Application: Last Name
AMTOPP	\$1,000.00	Josie	Shaw
Big Muddy Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Ayla	Yoder
Blue Shows Through Scholarship	\$500.00	Piper	Ward
Dr. Max L. Amberson Ag Education Scholarship	\$500.00	Evan	Heupel
Dr. Max L. Amberson Ag Education Scholarship	\$500.00	Calla	Donnelly
George & the late Nancy Luther FFA Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Madison	Butori
John J. Kozlowski Memorial Scholarship	\$2,000.00	Jake	Chulyak
John J. Kozlowski Memorial Scholarship	\$2,000.00	Lance	Rutledge
MABA/MGEA Scholarship	\$500.00	Maya	Niles
MABA/MGEA Scholarship	\$500.00	Jessica	Stark
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Shayla	Russell
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Keagan	Sandlin
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Katelyn	Frost
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Trey	Kinamon
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Abby	Begger
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Weston	Sondeno
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Bryce	Dorsett
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Dillon	Ferster
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Rylee	Glimm
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Katelyn	Anderson

Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Tabitha	Vermulm
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Ethan	Bay
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Madelynn	Beals
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Madelena	Preston
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$500.00	Hattie	Baver
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Zora	Holt
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Grace	Mosher
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Kaycee	Corbin
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Emelia	Schairer
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Tylee	Rieger
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Emma	Slivka
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Andrea	Hopf
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Aiden	Fouhy
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Jordan	Leach
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Mikayla	Kraft
Montana FFA Foundation Leave a Legacy Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Sydney	Hawks
Murdoch's Scholarship	\$500.00	Romulus	Hiner
Servant Leader Scholarship	\$500.00	Echo	Saunders
Stockman Bank Next Gen Scholarship	\$500.00	Breauna	Erickson
Stockman Bank Next Gen Scholarship	\$500.00	Katie	Jackson
TrailWest Bank Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Savannah	Kostecki
TrailWest Bank Scholarship	\$1,000.00	Ian	Zook
Vernon Dahlstrom Memorial Agriculture Scholarship	\$500.00	Hannah	Fussell

Brad King Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Ava	Landa
Brad King Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Laney	Williams
Doris Robinson Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$250.00	Hailea	Dalton
Doris Robinson Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$250.00	Grace	Fritz
Holt Family National Convention Scholarship	\$200.00	Kaylee Reid	Reid
Irene Andres Memorial National Convention Scholarship	\$200.00	Keagan	Merritt
John Bliss National Convention Scholarship	\$200.00	Molly	Alexander
Montana FFA Alumni and Supporters Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Elizabeth	Kautz
Montana FFA Alumni and Supporters Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Callie	Cano
Montana FFA Alumni and Supporters Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Justin	Aye
Montana FFA Foundation Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Teah	Vennes
Montana FFA Foundation Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Teegan	Hahne
Montana FFA Foundation Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Hasalyn	Schairer
Montana FFA Foundation Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Lake	Jones
Pat Cavey Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Collin	Yoshimura
Pat Cavey Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Kassie	Hagedorn
Pat Cavey Alumni Leadership Camp Scholarship	\$100.00	Makinzey	Milesnick
Sam Cornthwaite Memorial Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Autumn	Benson
Sam Cornthwaite Memorial Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Travis	Schallenberger
Sam Cornthwaite Memorial Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Finn	Graveley
Sam Cornthwaite Memorial Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship	\$500.00	Leah	Nelson

Connley	Hoagland	Dawson FFA
Collin	Yoshimura	Missoula
Autumn	Benson	Corvallis FFA
Morgan	Bisel	Corvallis FFA
Ava	Wilcox	Corvallis
Hasalyn	Schairer	Corvallis
Ivory	West	Missoula FFA
Adelaide	Meyer	Stevensville FFA
Brett	Gruba	Miles City
Asher	Burch	Beaverhead
Michael	Brophy	Dawson
Keagan	Merritt	Missoula FFA Chapter
Eli	Huckeby	Missoula
Joel	Standley	Missoula
Ariane	Hoff	Dawson FFA
Kyona	Yeager	Fairfield FFA

Liz	Moke	Hysham FFA
Hannah	Braaten	Ruby Valley FFA
Grace	Fritz	Missoula FFA
Leah	Nelson	Missoula
Casie	Stornetta	Corvallis FFA
Reagan	Fink	Hysham FFA
Tangia	Bumgarner	Corvallis FFA
Amelia	Watson	Corvallis FFA
McKenzie	Weis	Corvallis
Katie	Jackson	Corvallis
Sydnee	Wilson	Hot Springs FFA
Lily	Vickers	Roundup
Baylee	Williamson	Corvallis
Alexa	Smieja	Belgrade FFA
Nathan	Laubach	Big Timber
Danica	Tucker	Red Lodge FFA

State Officer Nominating Committee

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

Austin Mapston - Billings, Tyler Wiltgen - Billings, Kendra Heiken - Billings, Lauren Chase - Billings, Cindy Luoma - Luther, Klayton Lohr – Shelby.

Student members: Aubry Kirschten – Baker, Miley Dixon – Plentywood, Hailey Snyder - Victor

Officers Selected: **Jordan Leach - Conrad** - President; **Reagan Long – Shields Valley** 1st Vice President; **Romulus Hiner - Harlowton** - 2nd Vice President; **Emma Lou Slivka- Winifred** - Secretary; **Grace Mosher – Shepherd – Reporter**; **Sierra Mauland - Big Timber** - Treasurer; **Ryan Bal – Park City** - Sentinel; and **Grace McPherson - Fairview** - Parliamentarian.

Proficiency Award Winners

Claire Murnin – Shepherd – Agriculture Education
 Joel Warneke – Winifred – Ag Mechanics Repair and Maintenance
 Mackenzie Hogenson – Shields Valley – Agriculture Service
 Lane Botts – Huntley Project – Beef Production Entrepreneurship
 Leah Nelson - Missoula – Diversified Livestock Production
 Echo Saunders – Gardiner – Environmental Science and Natural Resource Mgmt.
 Addison Sant - Frenchtown – Equine Science
 Grace Fritz – Missoula - Goat Production
 James Malchow – Shepherd - Poultry
 Savannah Kostecki - Stevensville - Sheep Production
 Tel Holland - Beaverhead - Swine Production
 Reagan Long – Shields Valley – Turf Grass Management

State FFA Degree (184)

Loren	Lane	Augusta
Hallie	Iverson	Bainville
Logan	Josephson	Bainville
Madison	Butori	Baker
Jessica	Stark	Baker
Samantha	Anderson	Beaverhead
Andrew	Egan	Beaverhead
William	Ellis	Beaverhead
Clinton	Ford	Beaverhead
Faye	Holland	Beaverhead
Katie	Johnson	Beaverhead
Bridger	Kemph	Beaverhead
Kaydyn	Nelson	Beaverhead
Clancy	Setzer	Beaverhead
Alexander	Tatarka	Belgrade
Ella	Young	Belgrade
Samuel	Cox	Big Sandy
Eli	Dixon	Big Sandy

Kaden	Pursley	Big Sandy
Conner	Sibra	Big Sandy
Cooper	Taylor	Big Sandy
Christian	Winderl	Big Sandy
Mason	Gallagher	Big Timber
Sierra	Mauland	Big Timber
Mollie	Ruth	Big Timber
Weston	Sondeno	Big Timber
Maria	Mader	Broadus
Mikayla	Kraft	Broadwater
Aislinn	Handy	Chinook
Wylee	Simenson	Chinook
Tate	Spidahl	Clarksfork
Lydia	Hulsey	Columbus
Breauna	Erickson	Conrad
Trey	Kinamon	Conrad
Jordan	Leach	Conrad
Tabitha	Vermulm	Conrad

Justiz	Daricek-Johnson	Corvallis
Katie	Jackson	Corvallis
Corbin	Kirkland	Corvallis
Lino	Ponce-Juarez	Corvallis
Emelia	Schairer	Corvallis
Lawren	Weidow	Corvallis
Kylie	Bergum	Culbertson
Carson	Solem	Culbertson
Addisyn	Chapa	Custer
Trent	Kuntz	Custer
Jake	Snively	Custer
Jenna	Brown	Dawson
Shelby	Gobbs	Dawson
Connley	Hoagland	Dawson
Tayler	Wolf	Dawson
Kaycee	Corbin	Deer Lodge
Emmett	Banner	Fairfield
Kaylie	Bender	Fairfield
Shane	Donnelly	Fairfield
Wyatt	Murphy	Fairfield
Madelena	Preston	Fairfield
Kyona	Yeager	Fairfield
Allison	Jensen	Fairview
Grace	McPherson	Fairview
Allie	Uecker	Fergus
Cort	Fraker	Forsyth
Breelynn	McCaffree	Forsyth
Payne	Reilly	Forsyth
Kara	Loyd	Frenchtown
Jaeleigh	Davidson	Froid
Missouri	Kalal	Froid
Cian	Logan	Froid
Kaylee	Olson	Froid
Madison	Birrer	Fromberg
Madison	Reynolds	Fromberg
Echo	Saunders	Gardiner
Alexa	Woods	Gardiner
Payson	Dickinson	Geraldine
Tyler	McOmber	Geraldine
Sienna	Stone	Geraldine

Landon	Burleigh	Grass Range
Reinhard	Bold	Havre
Ida	Hencz	Havre
Clara	Holland	Havre
Landon	Molitor	Havre
Shyla	Solomon	Havre
Walker	Albus	Hinsdale
Andrew	Boucher	Hinsdale
Coy	Bowman	Hinsdale
Zora	Holt	Hinsdale
Lauryn	Aldridge	Hot Springs
Clint	Lien	Hot Springs
Michael	Marrinan	Hot Springs
Sydney	Wilson	Hot Springs
Lane	Botts	Huntley Project
Ryan	Fox	Huntley Project
Bo	Ledesma	Huntley Project
Tanner	Stott	Huntley Project
Willa	Tauer	Huntley Project
Tyrel	Twitchell	Huntley Project
Frank	Weigum	Huntley Project
Andrea	Hopf	Hysham
Samantha	Roberts	Hysham
Tamra	Taber	Hysham
Stefan	Shoemaker	Joliet
Shelby	Sticka	Joliet
Goddy	Bandola	Judith Gap
Zane	Mager	Judith Gap
Brady	Boll	Kalispell
Kinzey	Davis	Kalispell
Bryce	Dorsett	Kalispell
Bradley	Fields	Kalispell
Kate	Ford	Kalispell
Rylee	Glimm	Kalispell
Kyla	Hays	Kalispell
Rachel	Kurth	Kalispell
Gavin	Mailman	Kalispell
Lauryn	Siderius	Kalispell
Beth	Young	Kalispell
Lauren	Prevost	Lambert
Sage	Spinner	Lambert

Alyssa	Robertus	Laurel
Kali	Lindvold	Miles City
Ian	Zook	Miles City
Tanner	Bergh	Mission Valley
Hannah	Fussell	Mission Valley
Coleton	Sherman	Mission Valley
Fortino	Silva	Mission Valley
Dorthy	Webster	Mission Valley
Wilson	Bordner	Missoula
Dane	Geraldson	Missoula
Laynie	Jensen	Missoula
Miley	Weston	Missoula
Alaina	Willhite	Missoula
Katelyn	Frost	Park
Megan	Otis	Park
Hayden	Lane	Plevna
Rylee	Cotrell	Red Lodge
Magdalena	Eaton	Red Lodge
Danica	Tucker	Red Lodge
Josh	Sponheim	Richey
Weston	Austin	Roundup
Russ	Lang	Roundup
Ty	Pierce	Roundup
Lily	Vickers	Roundup
Alizae	Howard	Roy
Meghan	Mosby	Roy
Gunnar	Decker	Ruby Valley
Chase	Lutgen	Ruby Valley
Koy	McDougal	Ruby Valley
Louella	Voegeli	Ruby Valley
Kate	Anderson	Shepherd
Kaydin	Kumpula	Shepherd
Ella	Lane	Shepherd
Skylar	MacGillivray	Shepherd

James	Malchow	Shepherd
Grace	Mosher	Shepherd
Maya	Niles	Shepherd
Ian	Danielson	Shields Valley
Myles	Fehlman	Shields Valley
Mackinze	Hogenson	Shields Valley
Kyle	Jerke	Shields Valley
Reagan	Long	Shields Valley
Brooklyn	Kirby	Simms
Reese	VonBergen	Stanford
Tanna	Bailey	Stevensville
Selwyn	Hackett	Stevensville
Kamryn	Jones	Stevensville
Savannah	Kostecki	Stevensville
Sidney	McCasland	Stevensville
Katelyn	Pope	Stevensville
Quinn	Rahl	Stevensville
Noah	Tan	Stevensville
LeAnn	Wandler	Stevensville
Hattie	Baver	Stillwater Valley
Dillon	Ferster	Stillwater Valley
Abigail	Jeffery	Stillwater Valley
Shayla	Russell	Stillwater Valley
Keagan	Sandlin	Stillwater Valley
Layne	Smith	Twin Bridges
Taylor	McKinley	Victor
Desirae	Neider	Victor
Romulus	Hiner	Wheatland
Piper	Ward	Wheatland
Abby	Begger	Wibaux
Ashlynn	Varner	Wibaux
Emma Lou	Slivka	Winifred
Joel	Warneke	Winifred

2023 American FFA Degrees

Olivia Collins	JOLIET	Montana
Carson Crary	CHOTEAU	Montana
Justin Dickhaut	MISSOULA	Montana
Wyatt Dooley	Gardiner	Montana
Jack Gibson	BEAVERHEAD	Montana
Anthony Hernandez	Little Big Horn-Lodge Grass	Montana
Jesse Isaacs	MILES CITY	Montana
Wyatt Iverson	BAINVILLE	Montana
Gabby L Krueger	Corvallis FFA	Montana
Brighton Lane	HUNTLEY PROJECT	Montana
Brealyn LaRue	BIG TIMBER	Montana
Keena Lewis	Gardiner	Montana
Daniel Martin	BEAVERHEAD	Montana
JESICA MASSHARDT	RUBY VALLEY	Montana
Colton Noyes	Broadwater	Montana
Shelby Pitman	SHEPHERD	Montana
Adaline Reilly	FORSYTH	Montana
Darin Schallenberger	Carter County	Montana
Mackenzie Serrano	Roundup	Montana
Kiara Sherman	MISSION VALLEY	Montana
Lenora Shoemaker	FROMBERG	Montana
Claire Standley	MISSOULA	Montana
Ashlie Welker	MISSION VALLEY	Montana
Jordyn Whitmus	FROMBERG	Montana

Honorary State FFA Degree

Mike and Pam Chulyak – Big Timber
Joel and April Browning – Gardiner
Boe and Nikki Billingsley – Missoula
Wendy Coles – Roundup
Kelly and Kristie Rutledge – Big Sandy
Josh and Mindy Rigler – Livingston

Stacy Ingram – Ronan
Gabe and Amy Yoder - Plentywood
Joylynn Petrosky - Billings
Kellan Standley - Bainville
Chase Rose - Bozeman

Distinguished Service Award

Ryan's Trophies - Manhattan

DELEGATE BUSINESS

Delegate business this year was limited to the discussion of the Montana Membership Policy.

Friend of the Foundation Award

Scott Aspenlider – Billings

Lee Boyer Lifetime Achievement Award

Kristen Swenson

Bill Jimmerson Forever Blue Legacy Award

Milford Wearley - Choteau

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Jay Armstrong
Lyle Armstrong
Curt Robbins
Kristen Swenson

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2023-2024 STATE OFFICER RETIRING ADDRESSES



Ayla Yoder – Plentywood *State Parliamentarian*

When we were little, my brother used to hate this song. He thought the idea of anyone stopping him from growing up to be a cowboy was awful. When he turned nine, he realized that a silly little song was not going to stop him, that was the year my older brother started showing 4-H steers, I remember that first year very well. I thought it was one of the coolest things he had ever done, and I couldn't wait for it to be my turn. I was so excited to get my first steer, my mom helped me pick him out and my uncle hauled him home for me. He was a little black Angus steer named Blackie... very original I know. Every day my brother and I would spend hours out in the cold just trying to pet our steers, or goofing off depending on who you talk to. As time went on, we realized that my steer was not one that we could tame. Even with all the help I had, this steer was not going to let me put a halter on him. It was devastating to me, but luckily for me we had a spare steer named Fred. Fred did not

love me, nor I him, but somehow, we made it work.

A few months later, it was time for our county fair, where we would show and sell our steers. All that work I had done was finally going to pay off. Little nine-year old me was so excited, but also so scared. It felt like I was fighting this 1100 lb. steer just to get him to walk. My saving grace was my family. They all came together to help me and Fred get ready for the show. My mom helped me fit him, my brother helped me feed and water him, and my dad provided unending support. How the show went doesn't really matter anymore, I think the biggest thing I learned that year was that, no matter what, my family was there for me. Let's all take a minute to think about the people in our lives that are always there for us. Whether they are here or not I want you all to make a point to thank them, because without the support of those around us, we would not be where we are today.

Now, let's move forward a few years to my senior year of high school. It was a rough year for me. I was suffering from a severe case of senioritis and carried a lot of fear of the future. I felt like I was totally alone at that point in time. Somehow that year I had become immersed into a dark fog, it felt like it dulled the sounds of life, it pushed down the motivation I used to have, and it took a lot for me to look forward to simple everyday life.

Let's pause for a second. If you have ever felt like that, please know you are not alone. I know, at the moment, it feels like you are, but you are not. As a reminder, I want you all to turn to the people around you and remind them that they are not alone.

As I muddled through each of my days, there were a few things that helped me get through them. First was my cat. This cat has been through a lot with me. Then, there were my friends and family. And last, there was FFA. School was boring, but I went almost every day and worked hard so I could go to competitions and events. Even with my unmotivated mindset I managed to make it to every sales, floriculture, and speaking practice.

I was getting ready to compete in prepared speaking alongside my friend Carly and two freshmen preparing for their first ever creed speaking competition. Lindsey and Miley, the two that introduced me, were our creed speakers for the year. Every Friday, all of us would gather in our ag room and get to work. Creed would always go first, so me and Carly would get there early to help them. As Lindsey and Miley tried their best to recite the creed with a straight face Carly and I would make up as many distractions as we could, to... get them to improve their focus. As the weeks went on, I found that these two freshmen had such a strong passion for FFA, a passion that people years older than them never achieve. As time passed, I made the decision that these two were my freshmen, my friends, and people I would always support and help in any way I could. Apparently, they decided to make the same decision, because when I hit a wall and was struggling with the decision to run for a state office, they pushed me. They encouraged me and supported me with everything they had. The time I spent watching Miley and Lindsey grow more confident in their abilities, made me more confident in mine. You see, before I made that connection with Miley and Lindsey I was lost, and granted, I was still lost after meeting them, but they helped me find myself a little more with each interaction.

My advisor has also gone leaps and bounds to help me be the best version of myself, even when I didn't know what that looked like. Looking back, I see myself last December and I was in a rough spot, I was ready to give up on something hugely important to me. The idea of failing at getting a state office terrified me at the time, but I think the idea of succeeding terrified me a little bit more. One day I walked into the AG room, defeated. I was ready to call it quits, I looked at my advisor and told her, "I can't do this anymore." Do you know what she said to me? She said, "That's too bad."

A few weeks later I sent in my application. State convention came and I did all the interviews and a year later here we are. With that, I would like to say that I would not be standing up here without Ms. Osborne pushing me. I would not be here without Lindsey and Miley's endless support and inspiration. I would not be here without my friends and the laughs I have had with them. I would not be here without my family who, without a doubt, have done more for me than I can ever say.

When we look around us sometimes it can be hard to realize we aren't alone. I now want us all to take a minute or two, and think about the people who have brought us to this point in our lives. The people who pushed us to be better, those who inspire us, and even just those who support us with their laughs and love. This can be friends, family, teachers, and even coworkers.

One of the most important things that I have learned in my FFA career is how important it is to surround yourself with a good support system. More than that I have learned that I have a family here. In this jacket I know that I am not alone, Montana FFA thank you for being my family.



Gunnar LaHaug

Mission Valley

State Sentinel

“Look, if you had one shot or one opportunity
To seize everything you ever wanted in one moment
Would you capture it or just let it slip?”

Lyrics Quote by Eminem

These lyrics are pretty darn close to the words I've asked myself many times in my life. Like the time, I took the chance to run the 4X4 in middle school and was able to run at the state meet later that year. Or the time I decided to move schools because I thought it would better my education. Or the time I decided to move two states away to try and grab the chance of joining a traveling soccer team and try to pave my way to the pros.

You see, I've had to ask myself that question a lot. If I had one shot, one opportunity to seize everything I ever wanted, would I capture it? Now,

the scenarios aren't all the same as mentioned earlier. I've had to think on this question at many different points of my life, and it was usually in moments that would change my life in a dramatic way. But I never asked myself this question in the little moments I would think twice about and that is where I really found out the answer to this question.

Now when I did finally find my answer I wasn't really doing much with my life. Most kids were playing multiple sports or burying their heads in books or hanging out with friends. I on the other hand was trying to figure out what the heck I was going to do with my new life because I had just moved to a new town, a little place called Ronan Montana.

It was here with my mom in our trailer having a conversation about trying to find something to fill my time. I would have the greatest, most brilliant idea of my life. I'M GONNA GET A JOB. Now it was really my mom's idea but now I had the idea that I was going to get hired by the company I wanted to work for. I was going to make so much money I was going to buy a new car and everything I ever wanted, but that's not what happened at all.

Instead, I struggled to find a job I really wanted to do because all I wanted to do at the time was play soccer but I had also just given up on the idea of going pro so then I finally realized that maybe I should settle for what I can get. But as I sat around thinking about places that would hire a high schooler with no experience, I remembered a conversation I had with my advisor Mr. Luncford about the Lake County Fairgrounds and how they were looking for employees. And knowing they had been struggling to find employees I thought that I could help out by offering my time.

So, after an interview and some paperwork at the county court house It was settled and just a few shorts days after school had got out for summer I was working for the Lake County Fair ground as a groundskeeper. just as glamorous as I thought it would be. Now when I got the job, I really didn't know what I was in for and to be honest I don't think they really knew what they were in for either. Because when I had signed, I had zero experience and was assigned with the task of getting the entire fairgrounds ready and up to spec for the fair that was in 3 months and we had a big issue: the hog barns water lines had burst as a result of poor maintenance.

All of a sudden, I had gone from grounds keeper to plumber and still had no idea what I was doing. So, I did what any smart person would do. I sent it. I spent so much time in and outside of that hog barn trying to get it ready for fair and just as I was starting to fade and was really starting to doubt my own ability from a bright light, I could see my savior start to approach. But then I realized it was just the sun glare of a car window and it was

actually just one of our local ranchers, Jack Lake. Jack had just come around to check on the problem himself and see what he could do as he would offer his services to the fairgrounds whenever he could. And as I was wrenching away Jack out of nowhere started dropping some knowledge on me. And one piece of knowledge that blew my mind, something I had never thought about... using a pipe wrench to remove all the broken pipe instead of a crescent wrench (mind blown) genius I know.

Now after I had taken in all this very common knowledge I had gotten back to work and after about 2 weeks it was done and the barn was ready for show week. But the fair-grounds itself need much more attention. So, with a few weeks still between us and fair week we got back to it and for every project someone Jack, my advisor Luncford, or another local would be there to help whenever they could and would bring their knowledge of each field into the picture and as they came to help, I would make sure to take note and learn from each individual.

Finally, it was a fair week and I got to see all my hard work pay off. But we were not done yet. I had to put many more hours into working around the fairgrounds during my time on the clock that week but also giving up some very valued sleep and time to help others when I was just there to be there as a helping hand. And as I drove home one late night after a hard day at the fair, I had finally realized that I had my shot, my opportunity, and it wasn't at all what I thought it would be.

Instead of winning the lottery, or becoming a pro athlete, or meeting Elon Musk I had an even better chance to meet those who decided to help me even when they didn't need those like Jack. And, after thinking about how I felt once they helped and encouraged me, I realized that I myself need to do exactly what they did lose myself in others. Because by losing myself in others I would not only have the opportunity to learn from others but grow and become a better and more disciplined version of myself and would now be able to build connections from anywhere just by offering my time and services. And it's` by doing exactly that is why I believe I have made it to where I am today.

Now I encourage you all to go out and lose yourselves in every conversation, every day, every moment because you never know which one could change your life forever.



Haley Rigler – Park

State Reporter

In 5th grade, I had a dream.

My dream was for that to go viral. I was in 5th grade in 2016, way before TikTok's time, but Music.ly was the "It" app. My dream was to get thousands of views and go "viral."

Well, my 5th-grade dream just came true; thousands of you have now seen that "Musical masterpiece." A year ago, if you'd asked me to show it to anyone, I would've been too embarrassed. It takes a lot of self-confidence and belief to be vulnerable about the things that we are insecure about.

We have all faced the challenges of feeling insecure and unable to believe in ourselves. This inability stops us from accomplishing our goals and even reaching our dreams. In the 5th grade, it stopped me from reaching my dream. But how do we overcome that fear? Let's lighten the mood. Picture this: 5th grade. You are at the top of your

game. You are the coolest kid in school. You have an unwavering confidence. You start to believe in your dreams. There was no chance that they couldn't come true. Right?

Take a second, turn to someone next to you, and ask them, "What did your 5th-grade self, want?" Mine was, well... going viral. Now that we have all shared our 5th-grade hopes & dreams..... by show of hands, how many of us lost hope in that very dream? Let's talk about that.

My cross-country coach once shared this quote with me. "Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

I have been run over a lot. Growing up, I was never overly involved in the agriculture community. I wasn't raised on a family ranch or showed livestock outside of the county fair. In a group where "how country" you are can be a contest, the pressure of fitting into the crowd overwhelmed me.

When I was a freshman, the upperclassmen were the most intimidating people I had ever been around. Like Regina George, scary. From my point of view, they were loud, very opinionated, and not exactly open to a freshman's "new ideas". During our FFA meetings, I held myself back.

Even when I had something I desperately wanted to share. This fear paralyzed me from doing the things I wanted to: like running for chapter office. Imagine this: It was right after COVID hit, back when everything we did was online -- including our chapter officer applications.

After going back and forth on starting my officer application for what seemed like forever, I finally opened up the document and got to work.

I spent hours on that application. Every detail of my leadership experience, my time in 4-H, and all of my community service hours were entered.

I sat back, cursor hovering over the submit button, admiring my work.

Every line of that Word document held something that I was proud of.

Something fear held me back from saying out loud. Freshman Haley put herself out there. Later that evening, My phone buzzes. It's a text from my friend. The text told me that I had typed on the master copy of the application. That opportunity I took to be extremely vulnerable was now shared with the people I feared most. I was so upset over embarrassing myself in front of the upperclassmen. I was genuinely humiliated; this was my worst nightmare come true. I never actually finished the process and did not get the chance to be an officer that year. I had been run over.

The fear of being myself stopped me in my tracks. Looking back, there was nothing to be afraid of. Everything that I had feared had already happened. There was nothing that I could've lost. But that fear it stopped me from believing in my dream. How many of you gave up on your 5th-grade dream just because you were afraid? Don't allow yourself to be run over by fear; instead, use that fear to motivate yourself to keep moving.

Instead of giving up like I did, continue to believe in yourself and take a chance because we all have a voice in this organization that deserves to be heard. There is one member who I will always admire, a member whose fear never stopped her. When I first met Kai Welton, she kind of scared me.

She had this vibe like she didn't want anyone bothering her. Looking back, I get it now. She was just trying to find her place as the new kid in our school. As time went on, Kai decided to join the mechanics team, but it wasn't as easy as just signing up. She was the only girl in our whole chapter who wanted to do mechanics. And even though we didn't seem to have much in common, we both felt the pressure of not fitting in with the typical ag crowd. Instead of letting that pressure hold her back, though, Kai went all in. She knew she had to step out of her comfort zone to grow. So, she started soaking up everything she could about mechanics.

Lunchtimes were spent in the classroom, bombarding our teacher with questions about welding, engines, you name it. And she'd spend her free time working on stuff people said she couldn't do. All that effort paid off big time when Kai got to compete at the state convention in mechanics. It was like a dream come true for her. I remember seeing her face light up when she found out she made it. And the excitement never left her as she prepared for the competition, practicing techniques and fine-tuning her skills.

Watching her dedication and passion shine through despite all the doubts and obstacles she faced was inspiring. Her success teaches us a valuable lesson: stepping out of our comfort zone can lead us to amazing things. We can make our dreams come true. I believe we could all benefit from embracing this lesson and actively seeking

opportunities that push us beyond our usual boundaries. We all can take a chance, just like Kai, and work to push out of our comfort zones and accomplish our dreams.

It took bravery, courage, and determination to overcome the criticism that she faced from others. It was not easy, but by allowing ourselves to focus on what is important to us, we, too, can believe in ourselves and overcome anything that might be standing in our way. Kai did it, and the reward was accomplishing a dream that she had. In the past year, I've reflected on what gave Kai the fearlessness & grit to overcome even when she had no one in her corner. Kai was able to silence her rat brain. Now, you guys must think I'm crazy. Rat Brain? What even is that? Well, let me give you some background. This is my cross-country coach, Kirk Lentz.

Coach Lentz is a goofy guy, an alpaca farmer, an amazing pancake maker, and, above all, the best coach. He also has quite a few personal philosophies. One of which...the rat brain. So, what is it? Well, according to Coach Lentz, it's that pesky inner voice that loves to rain on our parade. It's the part of our mind that pipes up with doubts and fears when things get tough.

It's the part that held me back barely two miles into a cross-country race, that little voice whispering, "I'm exhausted," "My legs are killing me," "Why even bother? Why don't I just walk? I give up." Coach Lentz believes that shutting down this rat brain is key to unlocking our full potential. It's the only thing holding us back from giving it our all and accomplishing our dreams. After all, it's hard to soar like an eagle when you've got a nagging rodent dragging you down. So, how do we silence the rat brain? It's simple, really – we've got to believe in ourselves and our dreams. We need to push past our comfort zones, knowing that it's the rat brain that's trying to keep us rooted in negativity. Unlike me, who failed and froze in fear, we can all strive to follow Kai's example by silencing our rat brains and stepping out of our comfort zones. Once we kick that self-doubt to the curb, there's nothing we can't achieve – even those wild dreams we wanted all the way back in fifth grade. I'd like to challenge your rat brain. I'd like you all to pull out your phone, open your notes app, and write down one dream that you have today that your rat brain is keeping you from.

Tonight, after this session, I encourage you all to write your dream on a piece of paper and put it in your jacket as a reminder to always confront your rat brain and step outside your comfort zone. I'm not going to claim perfection or pretend that I never have days where my rat brain fills me with fear, sometimes to the point where I feel run over. But what keeps me going is believing in myself, just like Kai did. Despite facing doubts and challenges, she proved that with determination, we can conquer our rat brains and achieve our dreams. Kai's journey, along with my own experiences, teaches us that even in moments of doubt and fear, we have the strength within us to overcome obstacles and pursue our dreams.

Even if your dream seems as silly as going viral with a selfie mic, it's still worth believing in.

As Strawberry Shortcake once said, "To believe in your dreams, first you must believe in yourself." And that belief, coupled with the courage to step out of our comfort zones, is what propels us forward.

So, let's follow Kai's example. Let's believe in ourselves, push past our fears, and conquer our rat brains. With determination and self-belief, there's no dream too silly or too daunting to achieve. Montana FFA - Believe in yourself, get out of your comfort zone, and conquer your rat brain.



Lance Rutledge – Big Sandy *State Treasurer*

What is there more of, doors or wheels? I don't know about you but at Big Sandy High School this was a hot topic. I know we could sit here and debate all night but to avoid this let's just talk about doors. The doors we come across may not always be to close a room; sometimes they're the door to our next opportunity. It is up to us to walk through the door of opportunity when it is presented. If you all would bear with me for a bit, I would like to relive my glory days of High school and tell you about a time where I walked through my own door to seize my opportunities.

Let's all take a step back with me really quick to August 18th, 2022. That day marked my last first two-a-day practice. And to say I was over two-a-days is a complete understatement. This practice was the first of many of my lasts, but this was more than just my last first

practice; This was the last chance for me and the other 4 seniors to do what no Big Sandy Football team had ever done before. You see since my freshman year our team was always in a spot to succeed. But every year we met the same fate of losing in the semi-finals to the team that would continue on and win the state championship. We knew going into this season that at the end of the year we wanted to be holding the trophy. We had the opportunity; The door was there. Now all we had to do was seize it. Our journey to this point didn't just start on that HOT August day. It started in 6th grade. We invested our time, our work, and our passion into this endeavor for the previous 7 years, attending camps and working out over the summer just to get one step closer to hoisting the state championship trophy. For the next 13 weeks, our life revolved around football. There were points I was ready to call it a season; I feared we would simply be back in the same spot we were for the last 3 years.

When you are presented with an opportunity, it is up to you to seize that chance and walk through the door of opportunity. No one will tell you it will be easy. But it will be worth it. I could have called it a year, I could have quite trying, but I didn't. None of us did. For us all, our work really became worth it right here After years of work. I was able to help bring a first to my community. Never before had Big Sandy been the team holding the state trophy at the end of the season. The rest of my life I have the chance to look back and realize I was a part of that. I was a part of something bigger than just myself. When you have a chance, no one can push you towards that. At the end of the day, it is up to you to make the best out of every situation you find yourself in.

Now, not every opportunity is going to present itself to you. The old saying when opportunity knocks all you have to do is answer the door, isn't quite right. Some days you are going to have to build the door and go find the opportunity. Who has been in a situation where you find yourself in a new place? This is exactly where Havre FFA Member, Reinhard Bold found himself in the fall of 2021. Reinhard had just moved from Big Sandy to Havre at the end of his freshman year. A new school, a new town, a new start. But, for Reinhard it was more than just a new start. It was a new opportunity. In Big Sandy, Reinhard was a three-year FFA member serving as chapter Treasurer as well as competing at the state level in a variety of events including creed and star greenhand. Reinhard had found a home in his blue jacket and he wasn't quite ready to be done with the iconic corduroy. Over the next few months Reinhard began work to bring an FFA chapter to Havre. With the help of school administration and other members on the hi-line Reinhard was able to help show the importance FFA has not only for students but how it can impact a community. Reinhard saw a need and built his own door to get back in the

blue jacket. Last spring, soon after I became a state officer, I had the chance to attend Havre's first ever chapter banquet. Even though this chapter was barely through its first year, the community support behind Havre FFA was astonishing. Reinhard saw a need and created his own opportunity. His work helped to bring a chapter to his community and help others around him find their own home in the blue jacket.

Zig Zigler, a motivational speaker once said, "There is no elevator to success, you have to take the stairs". At first it seems like a common-sense type of statement, but the more I stop and think about it, the more I realize how true this statement is. You could have all the opportunities in the world and they are worthless unless you go work for them. Reinhard could have just sat back and made it through the rest of his high school and not worried about bringing a chapter to Havre. It probably would have been easier for him to just be done with FFA, but where would he be? I know I speak for many former, current, and future FFA members when I say FFA has made me a better person. A better leader. A better me. Be willing to go out and build the door for opportunity. Put in the work and you will reap your rewards.

All of you here today whether this is your first state convention or your last. I want you to realize that you are taking the steps to create and seize your own opportunities. The time you spend in the blue jacket will help, but at the end of the day, it is up to you to make the most out of your opportunities. Whether it's going to ALC this summer or organizing community service projects in your chapter, it is up to you. Build your door; Seize your opportunity. Today, tomorrow and the rest of your future is in your hands. Montana FFA open the door to your tomorrow.

Take action and go after what you want. There are NO LIMITS to your dreams. Montana FFA, "WHAT IF?"



Emily Coles - Roundup

State Secretary

Shannon Alder once said, "One of the greatest regrets in life is being what others would want you to be, rather than being yourself." Let me bring you back to February 1, 2005, which I think is quite arguably the greatest day

of my mom's life.....the day I was born.....well, actually, come to think of it...that might be second to the day my sister was born, but that's not important. (lean into that more) You best bet that as a kid I was your average spoiled little chatterbox with an obsession for care bears, reading, and singing

“In My Car” by Shaniah Twain while dancing around my aunt's living room. At about age three, we moved from Billings to Pray, and from Pray, we moved to Great Falls, but what I didn't know was that this small moment in time would change my life. When I was five, I officially gave up my spot as my favorite child. My little sister Rayelynn was born.

We live in a world where we are often told that our circumstances define us and that we are limited by the situations we find ourselves in. But I think that couldn't be further from the truth. The reality we experience is not predetermined by external factors; it is shaped by our thoughts, beliefs, and actions. I'm sure everyone here knows that life isn't always easy. Shortly after my sister was born, my mom got a divorce and we moved to Melstone. After the move, I felt kinda lost, I had to make all new friends and what happens now when my sister has to go visit her dad? During this time the little head in my voice started to get kind of...mean...and sad. After not much time, I had let the voice inside my head completely overtake my mind. I have a single parent, I act different than the other kids, I'm not as good at sports as them, I'm never going to fit in, and I'm not even getting very good grades right now, then, I had an AHA moment...maybe I should just try to fit in... I'll join all the sports and clubs, get some new clothes, try to act more “normal” and maybe people will like me more...Sure this MAYBE worked for a little bit, but I wasn't the little chatterbox with no worries that I used to be. Slowly, I became almost overtaken with the idea of changing myself, I found myself in conversations that I didn't know anything about, started dressing how I thought everyone else was, started listening to their music, and slowly, who I was started to fade away, the little light inside of me was becoming dim,...but...why? I have some friends, I've gotten a little better at the sports I'm in, and yet I'm still missing something

Something that I have REALLY come to know is that, in times like this, our reality is influenced by the people we surround ourselves with. Surrounding ourselves with those who believe in our potential are the ones who can help us out of some of the toughest moments.

I don't know about you, but it took me a LONG time to learn that it's okay to ask for help. I saw it as a weakness, I mean come on I'm only one person it shouldn't take too much work to understand myself...right? Wrong. As I was trying to wrestle with my thoughts I was once again, losing friends, still wasn't getting the best grades, and was consumed with trying to become whatever skewed version of myself this was. After my freshman year, we moved from Melstone to Roundup. At the start of my sophomore year, I shut myself off from meeting others. I didn't feel like I had a place in this new town I had to call home. As the weeks went on, I slowly started to break out of my shell, in class, I didn't say much, but it was always my teachers who saw the light in me and made sure I was doing okay, things started to look brighter again, I broke out of my shell, got right back into trying different sports, joining all the clubs, and even trying to make new friends. After finding my place in places like FFA, BPA, and volleyball, I became more confident in my ability to just do what I want. I no longer felt the pressure of having the most friends or the trendiest clothes. Instead, I dove into what made me happy.

Obviously, it didn't happen overnight, but it was the strength that I got from advisors like Mrs. Mayfield and friends like Emalee Vickers and Josie Shaw who let me know that I didn't have to be good at every sport, be at the top of my class, or act whatever normal is. Instead, they taught me that hugs and laughter are the best medicine and to pursue the things that I truly love doing. It's because of the compassion shown to me by others, that I finally realize the strength in all of us just being unapologetically us.

Don't get me wrong, it's easy to see ourselves as inferior to others, as if we are always two steps behind the people around us, or wonder if we are actually good at anything. But I promise you that there is purpose in all of us sitting here today, from the best mechanic to the greatest comedian and from the best interviewer to the best DJ. We are all here together to show that the world doesn't need a ton of people to be good at one thing, but we need a community of strengths to lean on each other. Lean into whatever it is that brings you joy, it is when you find joy that you find purpose... it takes time...It requires us to step outside of our comfort zones, challenge ourselves, appreciate change, and embrace learning opportunities.

MONTANA FFA embrace the power you hold within yourself, BELIEVE IN YOUR ABILITIES, FIND YOUR PEOPLE, AND CREATE YOUR OWN REALITY.



Shaun Billingsley

State 2nd Vice President

“Who has ever been in or watched a dance competition maybe at Ag Expo, here at state convention? Now who’s excited for the one in just a few hours? I don’t know about you guys but my favorite part is the way the partners work together to bring out the best qualities in each other. It’s pretty amazing isn’t it. Now, some of us may not be the best dancers, maybe stuck with two left feet or just never got the hang of it, but we all can think of at least one person who has helped us bring out our best qualities. You see in life, much like dancing, you have to find the people who bring you up and help you to be the best you can be.

Let’s all take a trip, close your eyes and think back to your first day of Ag. we all know or at least most of us know this feeling. being anxious, maybe a little nervous. Well, this is exactly how I felt my freshman year. After finally settling into the new school, an older member who I know fairly well **barged** into the middle of my Ag 1 class. I looked up to see Max Andres standing at the door and he told me to meet him by the flag poles after school. After going through the rest of school I **reluctantly** met him at the flagpoles just outside of the front doors. While on the short drive to the Ag center Max told me that he was going to teach me about the meats contest so we could have a winning team. Now as a young naive freshman the thought of winning seemed a little out of reach but eventually we pulled into the ag center and walked in to meet the group of new members ready for practice. When Max threw the box of id cards onto the table, I got pretty worried as the **HEALTHY** stack of what felt like hundreds of cuts made a solid thud against the table. The thought of memorizing each one of those cards really made homework feel like a better option.

As we flipped each card max showed our team how to identify each cut with special devices. Each one is different from the last and none of them are serious. Like this one (Pic of an arm chop) What’s this? It’s an arm chop, see the T-rex the eyes right there and the teeth there? Well, the t-rex goes CHOMPPPPP CHOMPPP get it like Chop so it’s an arm chop.

You see when I joined FFA, our chapter had an extremely great group of upperclassmen. These members organized practices, leadership opportunities, as well as pushing underclassmen to be the best they could. Max taking his time to help our team was showing me the value of this dedication to better those around him.

As Ag Expo got closer and closer practices got more complex and our team looked at other parts of the contest. With each practice Max shared as much knowledge as he possibly could. Before leaving for ag expo the group of members Max had put all his effort into, sat around and started flipping through the ID cards and rather than stumbling through nearly every card the group quickly identified each cut. Max’s silly memorization techniques had stuck in our heads.

Finally, we got to the Ag Expo where there were three days of competitions, running around, and meeting new people. Max’s efforts to help our team paid off and his dedication was not a coincidence. Rather than just giving us the cards and expecting us to figure it out. Max took time to teach us the tricks to the contest and help our team succeed. By finding and surrounding ourselves with good people who are willing to help us, as FFA members we can achieve whatever we set our sights on.

Let’s take just a few short seconds and think of some of these people in your lives. The people who make you laugh when you are having a bad day. Those good dance partners who we just click with. The people who make us better. For those of you who don’t know a lot about me, most of my time in high school was spent studying for contests or dancing.

So, coming off of the high from the CDE days and State convention in 2022 my food science and I were looking forward to sometime relaxing and dancing before starting to study for the national convention. However, our coach Mrs. Standley had another Idea. Not a month after coming back from state convention our team all were met with a google classroom invitation titled “National Food Science Team”. In this google classroom she started posting weekly food science tests. At the first practice she came in with a packet of resources covering all sorts of food science. Soon this packet was put into a binder wrapped to look like a food package with the required parts of the packaging outlined and explained. She put more work into these practices and resources than I had my entire junior year. It was pretty clear that Mrs. Standley believed in our team and she was going to make sure that we had everything we needed to succeed. She cared so much she scheduled field trips for our team to see local processing facilities for our team to get a better understanding of the content we were learning. Much like a joke about HACCP plans, her believing this much in our team did not make a lot of sense to me. Yet every day I would get the daily vocab and just about every week I would receive a gentle reminder to do my test. Mrs. Standley’s belief in us never faltered and if it did, she sure did not let us see it. Eventually this faith in our team paid off as we competed at nationals. Through every step of the process even if my team and I didn’t, Mrs. Standley believed that our team could do great things. Her trust in us pushed us further than any of us could have expected.

Max and Mrs. Standley didn’t just happen to make such a huge impact on my life, both of them consciously wanted to help. Max took the time to teach me about hard work. Mrs. Standley showed me that she believed in my ability. Both pushed me to be the person I am today. For the members, now in high school more than ever the people you surround yourself with influence who you become. Ronald Reagan puts it very well “Surround yourself with the best people you can find”. Make sure they are good dance partners and making you a better person.

Montana FFA find your people!”



Summit Browning - Gardiner *State 1st Vice President*

We are Driving in the Dark, although, we don't know what is ahead of the headlights we know that the road will continue. We have to put faith in the road that is ahead of us. Nothing in life is guaranteed for any of us. We are not guaranteed to wake up tomorrow, be successful or that the road ahead continues. However, when we focus on what is happening within the range of our vision or our light then that will guide us farther into the future.

I, like many of you out there, am not from Montana. Me along with my family moved here when I was 8 years old. We moved here from Utah and my headlights did not shine very far. I had no idea what to expect because we were starting an entirely new life here in Montana. We left Utah, the only place I had ever known But I had faith that the move would be a good one. I had faith that I would be able to set new roots in this new environment. After We made the move, we didn't even have a place to live for the first few months that we were in Montana. We lived in a camp trailer in a campground with no cell service, No water and no shortage of Grizzly Bears. We moved to Montana as a dream. My dad has always wanted to work

in Yellowstone Park and so after the recession when he lost his job, we took a shot in the dark and put absolute Faith in the Lord's plan as we made this transition. In Corinthians 2, 5:7 it reads "For we walk by faith not by sight" We knew as a family that in the coming years there would be no shortage of unknown and obstacles that would no doubt hinder ourselves and our progress. Despite knowing that this move would require sacrifices on all of our behalf we were willing to do it because we had Faith that the rewards would far outweigh the sacrifice. For the first few years, gracious donations of elk and cows from the people that were around us are what kept our Family afloat as we were transitioning to a new life.

During this time my family made a vow to FIND THE LIGHT IN ALL THAT IS DARK. When we would come home and got to eat Ramen for dinner. I was always thankful for the simple things. The fact we had a roof over our heads, water to drink, Dogs that loved us and would protect us and being able to live in God's country. We sought the light in the dark times. We knew that we were blessed and we never knew what was going to come next but we knew that we were blessed and had faith that it would all sort out. A very special person that I hold very close to my heart always told me to "Never wish time away". At this time in my life, it would have been easy to say how I wished that the hard times would pass and would pray to "skip to the good part" However I was told that "If it weren't for the hard-times you would never appreciate the good" and ever since then I have always lived in the moment and enjoyed the simple times in life. Despite all the unknowns my dad chased his dream and got the job in Yellowstone that he had been dreaming of since he was just a little kid. He picked up his dream and walked in faith to chase it. This year my dad has worked in Yellowstone for 11 years and going from living in a camper in the woods to owning a small farm in the very place he dreamed of he has achieved his dream.

Fast forward a few years and I got my first job. Throughout my life I have always had expensive taste. I have never been able to not stay busy. However, it was never the long hours of dealing with cows or cutting hay that I was most thankful for but the time I was able to spend with my family. In your walk-in faith find the light when the road is dark. Have faith that the road is there but strive to turn on your high beams. Although times may seem dark, always be thankful for the simple things no matter how small or large they may be.

All of you along your roads will have a dream. It is up to you however what you do with your dream, will you chase it or will it stay on the pillow? In Luke 8 Jesus tells a parable of a farmer that is planting his crop. As he scatters his seeds some fall along the path and are trampled on, some fall on rocky ground and when the plants grew, they withered because they had no moisture but still others fell among good soil and yielded 100 times what was sown. Your dreams are the seeds and you are in control of the soil they fall in I would like to remind you all of the story I had told earlier. I strive to walk in his footsteps, my dream is to one day own a cattle ranch somewhere in Montana and become a great Father, Husband and steward of the land for my future family and for future generations. I have had this dream since I was 8 years old although it has changed and developed. The overall goal has remained the same. For a long time, I was waiting for the perfect time to start chasing my dream. I kept saying tomorrow and day after day tomorrow never came. This last year I finally decided to start chasing my dreams. After much brainstorming I made a choice to start my own company. I started off roasting my coffee in our school shop one bag at a time. I spend that entire time building a groundwork for the company that hopefully enables me to achieve that dream. I chose day one a little over a year ago and continue to look back and am always thankful for where I have been able to get to. Now S Bar B Cowboy Coffee is in over 29 stores and continues to grow. Although I made a large financial investment spending all the money I had saved since I was 12, I walked in Faith on my journey and continue to do so every day. The Bible Reads in (Jeremiah 17:7-8 Blessed is He whose trust is in the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.)"

Bring your dreams with you off the pillow, walk in faith in all that you do and never forget to look back upon how far you have come since day one. Turn on your high beams when all becomes dark and enrich your soil to grow a dream that yields more than ever imaginable.



Jake Chulyak – Big Timber *State President*

“Well, everyone, it's time I come clean, I have something to get off my chest. It may come as a bit of a shock to some of you but I have to tell you: I am a nerd. I'm one of those people who actually likes math and science. Particularly physics. In physics, you learn a lot about the types of energy. Sit tight because science class is now in session.

There are two main kinds of energy, potential and Kinetic, Stay with me this might be kind of complicated. Potential energy is like a rubber band, like this one (rubber band). It has all kinds of energy waiting to turn into movement. The further I pull it back and build up its potential the further it will go. (launch into crowd) Much like that rubber band, we all have potential inside ourselves. Whether you see it right now or not, I see enormous potential in this room. Each of you has value. And you are capable of things you never thought possible. The key is figuring out how to convince ourselves of our capabilities and gain the confidence to turn that into action.

Let's talk about physics again. Who in here has used a slingshot before?

The further we want something to go the farther we have to pull the rubber band back.

Summit and Lance come up here and help me for a second.

Each of you hold an end of this. This slingshot is like each of us. To make a big impact and go far in life we need to be stretched and pushed to realize our potential. We have far-off goals and to reach them takes a lot of energy. (launch into crowd)

You know what else takes a lot of energy, skiing. Who in here has tried skiing? I remember my first-time skiing. It was a few years ago when my friends drug me to Showdown so they could teach me. I was terrified but my friends were there to encourage me, to push me out of my comfort zone, and show me that I could do it. I stared at the bunny hill. Scared and slightly shaking not because of the cold. I mean honestly who thought it was a good idea to strap a couple of pieces of wood to your feet and fly down a mountain at 40 miles an hour? Nevertheless, I started small, and found myself crashing more often than not, but as the day went on, I felt more comfortable and stayed more upright. Then it was time to take on a harder run. I was once again terrified. When I got off the chair-lift I realized something. There was no easy way out. I had to ski down. Just like Newton's second law of motion, what goes up must come down. Nothing in this life is easy. The way that we grow is by stepping out of our comfort zone, finding our potential energy, and turning it into the positive forward motion we call kinetic energy.

Trying something once is not enough. If you want to succeed you have to be okay with being uncomfortable and pushing on. You cannot just try something once and give up because it was hard. Thomas Edison tried and failed over 1000 times before the lightbulb was finally invented. He kept trying because he knew it would work. Once you realize your potential you owe it to yourself to continue working hard to do what we all know you are capable of. Use your newly created momentum to continue forward toward your goals.

I would like to tell you about a group of ladies from my home chapter of Big Timber who exemplify this practice. They are classmates of mine who found their passion in livestock evaluation and used hard work, commitment, and camaraderie to achieve their goals. Now I told you I'm a self-proclaimed nerd. I found myself taking FBM tests and calculating board feet in mechanics contests, so frankly, I didn't understand what this livestock judging stuff was all about. From the outside looking in I saw them often frustrated at officials or at themselves after contests. I saw tears, hugs, and individual placings all over the board sometimes. I knew they were successful but didn't totally understand why until thinking about it lately. I didn't consider the tens of thousands of miles they traveled. They went to Oregon, Colorado, Texas, Kentucky, Utah, Arizona, Nebraska, and many more. They embraced competition at a high level instead of running from it. They took their failures in stride and used them as motivation to grow and learn. They did not have some superhuman gift, in fact, I knew them to be far more insecure and nervous than you would ever guess in the reasons room. They found their strength in teammates and coaches who continued to push when they doubted themselves. They worked day in and day out to build each other up and hold each other accountable. They started small at weekly practices and local livestock evaluation contests. Despite busy schedules and occasional poor performances, they pushed on worked hard for many years until eventually landing on stage at the National FFA Convention.

Sixty-thousand blue jackets filled the stadium, looking upon the 4 finalist teams. The girls held their breath. Morgan, Rylee, RaeAnna, and Molly stood under those shimmering lights in their well-seasoned blue corduroy jackets. Years of hard work, determination, and belief had led them here. Upon that stage, they were crowned the national reserve champion Livestock Judging team. We should all take notes from these ladies on turning potential into motion through hard work and belief. Believe in yourself and in others. When you believe and push yourself and those around you, there is no telling where you will go. You can travel across nations, and over oceans. It will be uncomfortable but discomfort is how we grow and create momentum in our lives.

Seven thousand blue jackets boast gold lettering with the name of our great state and an emblem representing the one million members nationwide who stand alongside you. Someone helped push you to be here today and maybe this week you have found some of your own potential energy. I challenge each of you to be scientists in your own lives, turning potential energy into kinetic energy. Create momentum and build others up to help us all move forward. FFA members stand up, look to your right, now look to your left. These people are the ones who will push you, challenge you, and join you in finding your potential energy. But it is up to you to turn that into action and to keep pushing forward. Embrace the discomfort, stretch that sling shot back, and turn your potential energy into action!"