



FFA Week

Manson Future Farmers of America (FFA) barrels into celebratory events for National FFA week

By ERIN ROSSELL, STAFF WRITER

MANSON – With Future Farmers of America (FFA) week taking place this week, the high school students and FFA Advisor Kevin Amsden have a week full of events taking place.

“Green Hand Day” kicked off the week’s activities, Tuesday, Feb. 20, which is a special event for all first-year FFA students. Throughout the day, the newest FFA students were able to walk into Amsden’s classroom and have their hand painted green for the day. Events will continue throughout the week with events including competitive tire toss and wheelbarrow races for “Olympics Days” later on in the week.

Something new to the FFA program at Manson this year is the transition to an affiliate chapter, explained Amsden. Being an affiliate chapter “allows any kid that takes a class from me to be in FFA,” he explained, stating that previously it had been an individual membership, if a student wanted to join FFA, they had to sign up. This method alleviates a lot of problems, he said, such as a student’s inability to pay FFA dues for example. The change had been made at the recommendation of

the school district advisory board, which will help these students participate through the use of the vocational

budget to cover any dues that may not be able to be covered otherwise.

The students are getting

ready for their spring contests, said Amsden, which will include leadership activities such as speech and job

interview competitions. This year’s class size is about the same as last year, he added, however next year will be

down a little bit with several of the FFA students set for graduation this year.



Kevin Amsden, FFA Advisor



Manson School District 2018 Future Farmers of America (FFA) participants.

Photo courtesy of Manson School District

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. FFA membership today is comprised of student members in grades seven through 12 who belong to FFA chapters throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

FFA operates on local, state, and national levels. Student members belong to chapters organized at the local school level. Agriculture educators serve as chapter advisors. Chapters are organized under state associations headed by an advisor and executive secretary, often employees of the state department of education. States conduct programs and host annual conventions.

The National FFA Organization is governed by a board

of directors, charters state associations and provides direction, program materials and support for local chapters and state FFA associations.

FFA was organized nationally in 1928 in Kansas City, Mo. In 1950, Congress granted FFA a federal charter, making it an integral part of public agricultural instruction under the National Vocational Education Act. FFA receives no federal funding.

The U.S. Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for FFA as a service to state and local agricultural education programs.

Science, Business, Technology

The National FFA Organization has evolved in response to expanded opportunities available in the industry of agriculture. Today’s FFA helps members prepare for careers in agribusiness,

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agrimarketing, science, communications, education, horticulture, production, natural resources, forestry and many other diverse fields.

Career Preparation

The agricultural education program provides a well-rounded, practical approach to learning through three components: Classroom education, hands-on supervised agricultural experiences, and FFA, which provides leadership opportunities and tests students’ agricultural skills.

Student Leadership

FFA members elect their own officers and plan and conduct activities with supervision from their chapter advisors. A team of six

national officers, typically college students taking a year away from their studies, plays a key role in planning the annual National FFA Convention & Expo and other events. The National FFA Officer Team travels more than 100,000 miles during its year in office.

Programs and Activities

Local, state and national FFA programs and activities help members develop public speaking skills, conduct and participate in meetings, manage financial matters, strengthen problem-solving abilities and assume civic responsibilities.

National FFA Convention & Expo

The National FFA Convention & Expo is the organization’s premier gathering during which all FFA competitive events and programs are recognized nationally. The event brings FFA members together to learn, be inspired and celebrate their accomplishments in the organization.

National FFA Foundation

The National FFA Foundation is headquartered at the National FFA Center, and works with business and industry, organizations and individuals to raise funds that support FFA activities at the national, state and local levels. For more, visit FFA.

org/Give.

National FFA Alumni Association

Agriculture teachers rely on more than 225,891 FFA Alumni members and countless volunteers to help ease the outside commitments of teaching. FFA relies on alumni members for student recruiting, scholarship funding, advocacy for agricultural education, and support to help stage camps, conferences, conventions and other personal development programs.

The National FFA Organization is headquartered at the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C., as a part of agricultural, food and natural resources education in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Its business center is the National FFA Center in Indianapolis.

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Chelan Future Farmers of America (FFA) express impact of program



Richard Heimark



Ashley Oswald



Matt Fitzpatrick



Carlos Vargas

Events planned for National FFA Week

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
ERIN ROSSELL, STAFF WRITER

CHELAN – Future Farmers of America (FFA) began their celebration of National FFA week this week with “Green Hand Day,” Tuesday, Feb. 20. In addition to the newest members of the Chelan Chapter having their hand dyed, the painted handprints were also used to sign the FFA member’s 2018 poster. Events will proceed throughout the week, according to Advisor Randy Gleasman, with a barbecue lunch, Thursday, Feb. 22 and “Wear Your Shirt Day,” Friday, Feb. 23.

Taking a deeper look into the importance of this agricultural program on the growth of its participants, Lake Chelan Mirror staff interviewed four of the Chapter’s members on the importance of the program as individuals heading into the future.

Richard Heimark – Junior
Richard Heimark is in his

third year of participation with the Chelan Chapter of FFA. Of the upcoming events, he is most looking forward to the prepared public speaking, he said. “I’ve been doing prepared public speaking for a while,” he explained, “the reason I like it is because I like to put on a show for people. Even though it’s kind of limited for what I can do, I do a lot better speaking to people about things that I find interesting.” This year, Heimark will be speaking on the future of agriculture after the cultivation of other planets, he said, “I’m a sci-fi dude, I love science and I love astronomy.” The activity that FFA students are encouraged to do and be involved in is important for the student and community, he explained, “it’s really creating a better tomorrow by making citizens and people that can actually go and be productive members of society.” Heimark expressed how these skills have greatly benefited his life, “FFA has helped me get two jobs, I’m working two jobs right now and I have hobbies ... I’ve learned how to speak to people and how to express my ideas, how to communicate ... FFA (programs) have really allowed people to grow.”

Ashley Oswald – Senior
Ashley Oswald is in her third year with FFA. Oswald has shown goats for the past six years, beginning in 4H. She is most looking forward to the competitions, she explained, “it’s a lot of hard work, but I like doing the hard work ... FFA is all about hard work, so I feel like that shows what hard

work is and your accomplishments of getting to state is your reward.” FFA has so many benefits individually and for the community, she stated. “For me, I’ve learned a lot of lessons that I don’t think I could’ve learned doing anything else, a lot of it has to do with the hard work and taking responsibility ... with FFA you’re always learning and growing,” she added, “there’s not really any wrong thing you can do because it’s always going to come out helpful in the end ... FFA has been a huge part of the community, we do a lot of auctions and benefit dinners and it definitely gets the community involved ... they are a big part in everything they do” After graduation, Oswald plans on becoming an elementary school teacher. “I know that I’ll take some of the stuff that I’ve learned into the classroom,” she explained, “I know I don’t want my students to just sit in the classroom all day, I want them to get outside and do science experiments and hands on learning.”

Matt Fitzpatrick – Chapter President
Matt Fitzpatrick expressed that he is most looking forward to the Agricultural Mechanic (AgMech) competition, which is new to the program here this year, “I’m excited for that,” he expressed, “and we’re going to go compete at state this year for it.” The AgMech competition will focus on welding skills in an agricultural setting and making items out of the metals. “It’s a big contest where every school has a team, and there’s five of us,” he explained, “and you have to identify engine parts, show you arch weld and oxy weld ... it’s pretty exciting.” In his fourth year with FFA, Fitzpatrick served as secretary last year, and is the current chapter president. Being a part of the FFA has really helped Fitzpatrick be more outgoing, he explained, “I wasn’t very outgoing at all as a freshman, I didn’t really talk to anybody and just kept to myself,” he said, “FFA has helped me be more confident

in myself and a lot of my friends I have gotten to know through FFA ... I think it’s definitely helped me grow as a leader too, because I never saw myself as a leader before ... It’s really just helped me grow up ... FFA will help with everything in life, it all relates to working hard.” After high school, Fitzpatrick said that he plans on attending school in Eastern Oregon and will be continuing his education in agriculture through Oregon State University.

Carlos Vargas
Carlos Vargas is in his fourth year of FFA and received Grand Champion with his goats at the Waterville Fair last year. This year, “I think most of us are excited for the cattle judging competition in Okanogan that’s

coming up,” he explained, “I know a lot of people are excited for that. We’re also coming up on our speaking competitions that will prepare us for state.” Being involved with FFA has helped Vargas be more responsible in and outside of school, he said. After graduation, “the main focus will probably be to go to college,” he explained. While uncertain as to what direction he will take after high school, Vargas is certain that he’d like to stay in the field of agriculture. “FFA looks good on your transcript,” he laughed, “but it really gives people a feel for the real world, to see what things are really like. With anything you do in FFA, there’s a lot of things you have to take care of and a lot of preparedness.”



- PROCLAMATION -

Whereas, FFA and agricultural education provide a strong foundation for the youth of America and the future of the food, fiber and natural resources systems; and

Whereas, FFA promotes premier leadership, personal growth and career success among its members; and

Whereas, agricultural education and FFA ensure a steady supply of young professional to meet the growing needs in the science, business and technology of agriculture; and

Whereas, the FFA motto “learning to do, doing to learn, earning to live, living to serve” gives direction of purpose to these students who take an active role in succeeding in agricultural education; and

Whereas, FFA promotes citizenship, volunteerism, patriotism and cooperation.

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