



# SALUTING OUR FUTURE FARMERS

## FEBRUARY 17-24

# NATIONAL FFA WEEK



**WARRENTON FFA OFFICER TEAM** — First row, Leah Guss, first vice president; Bailey Schneider, president; Hailey Cary, chaplain; Madison Dent, treasurer; Kris Phillips, assistant treasurer; Doralynn Lee, secretary; second row, Dalton Williams, assistant secretary; Isabella Miller, parliamentarian; Taylor Frye, reporter; Wyatt Karrenbrock, sentinel.

Submitted photo



**WRIGHT CITY FFA** — Front row, Charleigh Ferrell, Alyssa Schulte, Miley Sosa, Bailey Love; middle row: Madilyne Knopf, Danielle Freund, Kaylee Mikus, Alyiva Mikus, Reghan Vehige, Kaitlyn Mikus, McKinley Kunkel, Shelby Brakensiek, Kaylene Sosa; back row, Joseph Wasser, Cody Cushing, Grant Stockmann, Kye Schnarre, Tate Mikus.

Submitted photo

### *I'm with the band*

**By Doralynn Lee**  
WARRENTON SENIOR

This past November, I had the great honor to represent the Warrenton FFA Chapter at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana by playing my tenor saxophone in the National FFA Band for the second year.

Playing in this ensemble combined two of my passions, agriculture and music. The National FFA Band was composed of 80 FFA members representing 30 states from all across the nation, all of whom shared the same two passions as me, such as a fellow saxophone player from Idaho, Haven

Harley, who has become one of my best friends.

Being part of this elite ensemble was the best experience of my life. Being on stage in front of over 70,000 FFA members is a feeling that fills you with so much pride in your accomplishments.

I got to share the stage with many celebrities in the agricultural industry, like the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mr. Tom Vilsack, and have a front row seat to watch Missouri's Grant Norfleet be selected to serve as National FFA Secretary this year.

It was such a huge honor to help provide the music that set the stage for FFA's biggest event.

### *Wright City FFA attends the national convention*

The Wright City FFA Chapter attended the National FFA Convention from Nov. 1-3 in Indianapolis. During the event, the members participated in various activities such as the Lainey Wilson Concert, Game Show, and Fair Oaks Farm. Miley Sosa, a sophomore who attended the National Convention, said: "This year's convention was a memorable

experience for me because I got to go with my sister. I also made new friendships and explored new places. It was amazing!"

Our Members gained new knowledge and created unforgettable memories. Additionally, they had the opportunity to talk with several college recruiters and meet FFA members from different parts of America.



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### The history of FFA and what it means to me

By Bailey Schneider  
WARRENTON SENIOR

Back in 1925, a Virginia high school decided to create a club for teenage farming boys to teach them more about the industry they worked in. They called this organization the Future Farmers of America, designed to educate those "future generations" of agriculturalists. They worked to teach these boys about industries such as meat processing, agronomy, and dairy. Three short years later, the club soon became a national organization, with chapters being chartered all over the nation. Little did these founders know, this organization would grow into something bigger than they ever could have imagined.

Throughout the years, FFA has evolved from a strict all-boys, agriculture based club to an all-inclusive and diverse organization. While FFA still focuses on teaching students about the agricultural industry, it also focuses on providing students with real life skills to prepare them for their futures in any industry. For example, kids learn how to effectively present themselves for a job interview, learn crucial communication skills, and how to overcome public speaking fears. To showcase this shift in focus, in 1998, FFA's name was changed from the Future Farmers of America to the National FFA Organization. Now, this organization serves over 850,000 members across all 50 states along with the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

The experiences that FFA can provide to a high



school student are second to none.

Personally, through my experiences in FFA, such as the Missouri Agribusiness Academy, National FFA Convention, and being an FFA Officer, I have evolved into someone I never thought I would be. I never saw myself as a public speaker, let alone having a dream of being a lobbyist, but FFA changed that path for me. I have developed skills that have helped me become a leader on the podium along with learning to lead members from behind. I have developed a love for agricultural advocacy, connections, and watching other members succeed. I know that without FFA, I would not be the girl I am today. And these opportunities will stay with me for the rest of my life.

So, I encourage anyone reading this article to give FFA a chance. If you are a parent, encourage your kid to join. Or if you are a highschool student, please join! You may not be a farmer or country kid, but FFA is so much more than that. FFA provides you with skills that will help you thrive in your life. From speaking skills, career preparation, to new friendships, FFA is for all!



### The barnwarming dance

This year the Wright City FFA Chapter had an FFA Barnwarming Dance on Dec. 1 and the theme was Wild West. Many students danced the night away! This year's Barnwarming King was junior, Kye Schnarre, and queen was senior, Charleigh Ferrell. The Barnwarming prince was freshmen, Tate Mikus, and the princess was sophomore, Miley Sosa.

### Why I joined FFA

By Aiden Hockensmith  
WARRENTON FRESHMAN

I joined FFA because I wanted to learn more about the agricultural industry.

I wanted to be more involved in the ag industry and in the ag community.

I wanted to increase my knowledge on agricultural topics.

I wanted to feel like I was part of a community that supported me and wanted to help me go far in life.

When I joined I did not know what I wanted to do with my life.

Now that I have been in FFA for a few months I have decided that I want to go into ag business.

I also feel that FFA will teach me so many important skills in order to be successful in my life.

There are so many opportunities in FFA.

So far FFA has made my public speaking better and has taught me how to build relations that will last a lifetime.

I will cherish my time in FFA and do as many things as I possibly can.

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Caitlyn Johnston, a junior at Warrenton High School, is constructing a bud vase in floriculture class. Submitted photo



WRIGHT CITY AT FFA CAMP – The FFA camp was an incredible experience where we had the opportunity to learn new things and meet people from all over the state of Missouri. We were able to interact with some of the state officers and participate in various leadership sessions that covered a different topic each time that was based around their theme “Cultivating Communities.” Attending a certain amount of these leadership sessions would earn you a state leadership pin as recognition for your dedication and commitment to developing your leadership skills. It was a wonderful opportunity to encourage members to participate and engage in the various leadership opportunities available. In addition to learning, we also had a lot of fun playing games like volleyball, badminton, corn hole, and horseshoes. It was a great opportunity to develop our leadership and better our communication skills and make long lasting memories with our fellow FFA members. “I enjoyed my time at FFA camp because I had the opportunity to meet new people and learn valuable leadership skills,” Danielle Freund said. In the photo are: front row, Skylla Barfield, Jahniya Palmer, Miley Sosa, Anahi Hernandez, Bailey Love; middle row, Kaylee Mikus, Kaylene Sosa, Alyvia Mikus, Madilyne Knopfel; back row, Joseph Wasser, Danielle Freund, Kaitlyn Mikus, Alyssa Schulte and Cody Cushing. Submitted photo

### Agriculture education classes lead to success

By Caitlyn Johnston  
WARRENTON JUNIOR

Floriculture class is the class that I look forward to everyday. It is in the middle of my school day so it balances out with my school work load well.

In Floriculture the classwork is interesting to learn about so that makes the learning process much easier and engaging.

Within 3 months of being in this class I have developed an understanding that focuses more around the study of flower and plant identification, greenhouse diseases and pests, flower arrangement types, and flower design techniques. All of the things that I

have learned are good to know since they are skills I can use for the rest of my life.

Plus, I love hands-on activities! Floriculture is an opportunity to get a look at a variety of pathways leading to agriculture related careers.

Throughout the whole school year you can make all of these unique types of flower arrangements for holidays and other special occasions. Whether you are a beginner learning new skills or advanced, all projects engage students.

I enjoy this class not only because of the students in the class but also because of the Floriculture teacher here at WHS, Mrs. Niederhoff.

### How FFA affected me and my future

By Makenzie Bethmann  
WARRENTON JUNIOR

FFA has impacted my life greatly.

I have learned so many valuable lessons throughout my three years in the program. I learned how to advocate for the agriculture industry and also strong leadership skills. I have been lucky enough to attend events and programs through FFA that have helped enhance my skills.

My SAE (supervised, agriculture, experience) has developed so much throughout the years. I started out with a couple

of pigs to show at the local fair and now I have two breeding sows. I have built up my operation and hope to grow it even more.

Last year I had my first litter of piglets. I showed at jackpot shows around the state and also took them to the county fair. I won fourth overall with my home grown gilt.

This is one of my most memorable and favorite memories. FFA has helped me to believe in myself and try harder in everything I do. I have felt more confident with myself knowing that I am always supported by my peers.

### Why I am forever Blue and Gold

By Launa Jeffers  
WARRENTON SOPHOMORE

Joining FFA was a no-brainer for me. I've always had a deep appreciation for country living and nature. FFA gave me the perfect opportunity to embrace the passion that I have for what I love. Through FFA I've been able to learn valuable skills in agriculture, leadership, and teamwork. It's not just about farming, it's about cultivating a love for the land and fostering a sense of community. FFA has provided me with incredible experiences, lifelong friendships, and a platform to make a positive impact in my community. It's been an amazing journey, and I'm grateful to be a part of this incredible organization.

Another reason why I joined FFA was because of my love for agriculture and the opportunities it presents. FFA allowed me to explore different aspects of the agriculture industry, from animal science to horticulture to agribusiness. It's not just about learning technical skills, but also about developing a strong work ethic, responsibility, and a sense of pride in what we do. FFA has provided me with hands-on experiences, competition and networking opportunities that have shaped me into a well rounded individual. It's a community of like minded individuals who share a passion for agriculture and are committed to making a difference in the world.

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### Take a shot in life

By Cole Meyer  
WARRENTON JUNIOR

Trap shooting is one of my favorite hobbies. From shooting at my house with friends to shooting on the range with my team. It has always been a part of my life since I was little watching grandpa shoot at his club every Sunday. Trap shooting is not only fun and a hobby, it has taught me a lot about life.

Trap shooting has taught me to keep a level head and to wait for the right time and be patient when doing things. While on the line, it is very easy to get frustrated when missing a bird. It is important to let it go and just move onto the next shot. It has also taught me to be patient and do things at the right time.



Cole Meyer, center, gets ready to shoot at a FFA Trap Shoot meet alongside team members Jacob Lange, left, and Jake Kinney. Submitted photo

If you shoot too early, you miss under; if you shoot too late, you shoot over it. You have to do it at the right time to get a good

hit. Overall trap shooting has made me a better person and I will carry these lessons with me the rest of my life.

### Why did I enroll in an ag education class?

By Nicole Benne  
WARRENTON SENIOR

Growing up I looked forward to taking ag classes in high school so that I could be a member of the Warrenton FFA Chapter. Agriculture has always been one of my biggest passions, especially anything with animals.

I took Advanced Animal Science my junior year and loved getting to learn about animal systems and reproduction.

This class increased my interest in animal science. I started shadowing at a local veterinary clinic and now have over 200 volunteer hours.

I have learned how to

give nail trims, handle animals, take vitals, fill prescriptions and pull up shots at the vet clinic.

This experience confirmed my plans for my future. future.

I will be attending Mizzou in the fall to major in animal science pre-vet.

My senior year I branched out and decided to take two classes on the plant science side of agriculture: Greenhouse and Floriculture.

After some hesitation, I was surprised to find out that I really enjoy learning about plants.

In Greenhouse class I have been able to learn how to propagate and take care of plants.

This is a skill that will be great for me at my own house someday.

I will know how to properly care for landscape plants and plants in my garden.

Floriculture class is more focused on arrangements and fresh flowers.

I have learned how to make anything from a flower bouquet to a miniature Christmas tree.

I have enjoyed branching out and learning more aspects of agriculture.

To me agriculture class is so much more than "just another high school credit." To me it is the backbone of what has, and will continue to shape my future.

### How FFA can help my future

By Rylee Priest  
WARRENTON FRESHMAN

Taking Ag classes as well as being in FFA can have an impact on my future in many ways. I am very lucky to be in an Ag class as well as being a member in FFA.

This can prepare me for my future career and continue to improve many of my skills.

I am trying to accomplish becoming a Veterinarian, I believe taking these classes and being involved can help me tremendously in the future. I believe that if I continue to learn I can grow and learn in many ways.

It has improved my speaking skills already, teaching me how to be a leader.

I can learn many things about the agriculture industry that I may not have known yet. I believe learning these things will help me to improve and teach others about the industry.

I can be a leader in my future jobs and relationships. Taking an Ag class as well as being involved in FFA can impact and has been impactful on me.



### Wright City FFA student's SAE advances to state

Reagan Vehige's supervised agricultural experience project consists of raising and selling sheep. Over the years, Reagan has gained knowledge and experience with sheep and used that knowledge to grow her SAE. This year Reagan had the opportunity to use her SAE, her financial record book, and her involvement in FFA to apply for a proficiency award. Reagan spent hours completing the

application and on Feb. 7, judges selected Reagan's SAE as the first place proficiency award in the Sheep Production Entrepreneurship area. Being selected as first place within Area 5 FFA, her application has now advanced to the state level. This upcoming April, Reagan will accept her Area 5 Proficiency Award on stage at the Missouri State FFA Convention at the University of Missouri.



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