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Indiana FFA celebrates National FFA Week, Feb. 19-26

The Indiana FFA State Officer team will connect with members around Indiana promoting agriculture education and FFA in celebration of National FFA Week.

INDIANAPOLIS (Feb. 16, 2022) — The Indiana FFA Association and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture will celebrate all things blue and gold for National FFA Week from February 19 - 26, 2022. National FFA Week remembers more than 94 years of FFA tradition and history while also highlighting and celebrating the success stories of the 735,000 members of the national organization.

“I am incredibly proud of the work FFA members do year-round to support and promote Indiana agriculture,” said Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, Secretary of Agriculture. “National FFA Week is a great opportunity for our FFA members to show their community, schools and neighbors what FFA and serving others is all about. I am excited to see the work completed by these young leaders during this weeklong celebration.”

Starting in 1948, the National FFA Board of Directors designated a weeklong celebration to recognize George Washington’s example and legacy as a leader and farmer. For the past 74 years, FFA members across the country have taken part in agricultural, leadership and service-based activities during National FFA Week.

“FFA has a strong history in agriculture and in community service,” said Bruce Kettler, Indiana State Department of Agriculture director. “This week is a great opportunity for FFA members to give back to their community and their school and to recruit new members to join this outstanding organization.”

Tamara Ketchen, Director of the Indiana FFA Association, is looking forward to seeing all the work done this week in FFA chapters across the state.

“National FFA Week is a time for local chapters to highlight their programs showcasing their success and passion for agriculture,” Ketchen said. “We also use this as an opportunity to recognize community supporters and broadcast the mission of the organization.”

During the week, chapters host a variety of events to educate, advocate and celebrate the agricultural industry. From a school petting zoo to a farmer’s breakfast, these activities pay homage to the dedication and commitment of today’s agriculturalists. During National FFA Week, the Indiana FFA State Officers travel the state to participate in activities with local FFA chapters and their communities.

FFA encourages the next generation of leaders who will change the world. FFA members are our future leaders, our future food suppliers, our future innovators and more! Whether it is through service projects or community gatherings, National FFA Week is a time for FFA members to raise awareness about agricultural education and the role the National FFA Organization plays in the development of agriculture’s future leaders.

New leadership for the Indiana FFA organization

INDIANAPOLIS The Indiana FFA Association and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture announce the hiring of Tamara (Tami) Ketchen as the new Indiana FFA Association Director. Ketchen currently serves as the assistant FFA director for the Association and previously held the role as director from 2015 to 2018.

“We are extremely excited to have Tami back as director of the FFA Association,” said Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, Indiana’s secretary of agriculture. “During her previous time with the department, she was a crucial part of the FFA team and helped develop youth education initiatives that live on today. I look forward to working alongside Tami once again to promote and elevate FFA to our legislative leadership and businesses.”

Indiana FFA is a dynamic youth organization that provides students opportunities for leadership development, personal growth and career success.

“Tami is a great addition to our leadership staff at the department and I am eager to work with her in this role,” said Bruce Kettler, ISDA director. “Our department works hand in hand with the Indiana FFA Association and that organization is very close to my heart. I have full confidence that Tami will ensure our youth development, education and FFA chapters are taken to the next level.”

As director of the Association, Ketchen will oversee programs, collaborate with ISDA staff to progress agricultural education, enhance communications between FFA advisors and members, as well as act as a liaison between Indiana FFA and National FFA. She will also be responsible for continuing the implementation of the Association’s strategic plan.

“I am incredibly thankful to be back as director of an organization that I love so much,” said Ketchen. “FFA is incredibly important for our students and for our state and I look forward to building relationships with advisors, businesses and legislators to promote youth agriculture education for years to come.”

The Indiana FFA Association has 216 chapters serving over 11,600 Indiana FFA members. In this role Ketchen will oversee the Indiana FFA Pavilion at the Indiana State Fair, coordinate the completion of strategic plan initiatives, lead the Indiana FFA Association Board of Trustees and help with leadership training for the Indiana State FFA Officers. She will also manage the team of FFA and ag education employees within ISDA.

Ketchen graduated from Purdue University in 2007 with a bachelor’s degree in Agricultural Education. Prior to her position as assistant director of the Indiana FFA Association, Ketchen held the role of Field Atlas Program Manager with AgriNovus Indiana.
North takes on National FFA convention

The National FFA Convention has been one of the most important events I’ve been a part of within FFA. There’s about 70,000 FFA members that attend the national convention in October. The national convention is held annually in October currently in Indianapolis, Indiana. FFA chapters from around the country come and spend several days here exploring and learning about new things from the convention and the surrounding events.

The North Montgomery chapter spends three days in Indianapolis enjoying the convention. We sit in on things like the Blue Room and learn things to bring back to help our chapter. There are about 400 exhibits in the convention center that the FFA members get to visit. While we visit the national convention we try to attend the concert and rodeo provided by the national FFA. This year we were able to get tickets to them both and students really enjoyed themselves. The students enjoyed dancing to cotton eyed joe and watching the bull riders. The experience was a really great bonding moment.

While we spend time getting to know each other better and spending time together it’s always one of the best events to be a part of, because you know no matter what happens these memories will last you a lifetime. At the end of the day I think I speak for everyone when I say that our day of service is the best part though. We get to help people, which in my opinion is the best thing possible. One of our graduated members Drew Runyan has said “FFA has helped me develop numerous communication skills that I now use on a day to day basis in the work environment.” If you ever get the chance to go on a trip to the National FFA convention it’ll be worth it. The memories you make, the friendly rivalries with other chapters, meeting new people, and the connections you make along the way.

Respectfully Submitted by, Gracen Schwabe, North Montgomery FFA President

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Kids against hunger

The North Montgomery FFA has worked together with, Kids Against Hunger program to make packages of food for families and children in need. This is an annual event that is normally held in April. This year we are lucky enough to have 11 sponsors. They are Ceres Solutions, Land o Lakes, AHW, Fountain Trust, Farm Credit, Perry Equipment, Nutrien, Tymeless Farms, Still well farms, Cargill, and Co-Alliance. We will be packaging 77 boxes this year.

The North Montgomery FFA, sponsors, and the KAH program will meet at North Montgomery High School to package the food. There will be groups that consist of people who package the food, place food inside of the packages, and load it into the truck. Our goal is to make enough packages to help families and children in need around the world and in the United States. This is a great event that demonstrates North Montgomery FFA’s ability and willingness to help people in need.

I talked to a few of the FFA members and other students or adults who have helped with the Kids Against Hunger program. I asked North Montgomery High School student and FFA member Haylee Gemino her thoughts on the program and she responded, “I believe the program is great because it’s helping families in need and we have fun while doing it.” I then spoke to Russ Keller who is a member of the Ag Board. I asked him what he likes most about the Kids Against Hunger program and he responded, “I like that it shows our younger students the importance of helping those in need.”

Respectfully submitted Cascie Keller, North Montgomery FFA Co-Reporter
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National FFA Week activities

National FFA Week is February 19th-26th, however. Due to final exams our Ag advisory board has pushed our celebratory activities to February 28th-March 4th. North Montgomery is not easily limited with their celebrations. We have been able to celebrate at both the middle school and high school. We always enjoy dressing up for our dress up days and showing our FFA pride!

Drive your truck or tractor to school is always a big hit at our school. Whether the students are involved in FFA or not, many people show off their trucks or tractors. We are always trying to get more involvement throughout the school and within our community. The FFA Breakfast is something that our community looks forward to. The support we receive every year from the community and previous FFA members is phenomenal. The experience and growth our members get from this interaction with people as well as bonding with chapter members is something that can’t be replicated. Julia Shea says “I’m looking forward to experiencing my first National FFA Week Ever!”

We always have a Kickball game between the South and North Montgomery FFA chapters. Our friendly competition has grown bonds and friendships between people you would never expect to be friends with. We won the year previously, so everyone is hoping to win this year as well. We have a trophy that we sign and move between schools and the different schools win for the years. Of course once we have we finish it off with some pizza.

One thing the high school does throughout the week is kiss the goat. Students vote for teachers to kiss the goat by putting money in a jar with their name on it. At the end of the week three teachers will kiss the goat, one during each lunch shift. This is something that not only the FFA members can get behind but the whole school, not only students but teachers as well. Don’t like a teacher? It can’t hurt to have them kiss a goat.

Respectfully submitted by, Gracen Schwabe, North Montgomery FFA President

Needy family shopping

The North Montgomery FFA chapter does an annual needy family shopping. We go and buy food for needy families during the holidays. We went shopping for food that they need in general and a holiday meal. Before We went shopping we gathered at the high school and split into groups, one group per family. Each person in the group will be responsible for coming up with an item that they need. This is a fun and good way to help someone who needs it. This is a good holiday gift for the people that we help because it gives their family a holiday meal that they otherwise could not afford.

Behn McClamroch is one of our high school members. He is currently a sophomore. He attended this meeting with ideas and he helped us come up with items that were essential for these families. I asked him what he thought of the meeting and he said “The family shopping meeting was a great way for your chapter to reach out and give back to the community”. It indeed is a good way to give back to the community. Our FFA chapter does a lot of community service. Things like packing food or buying food for needy families is a valuable community service. That helps people in need of it in a simple but effective way. All and all, we North Montgomery FFA take pride in helping others, and this is one way that we do it!

Respectfully submitted, Patrick Daron, North Montgomery FFA Sentinel
Nourish

Nourish is one of North Montgomery FFA’s most important events. Within the Nourish program we pack food from the food pantries into bags to be distributed to local schools in our area for students and/or families in need of a weekend meal.

"Nourish is very important because it helps kids in need" Masen Bush

Nourish meets twice a month at the Old Mills elementary school in Crawfordsville. FFA members feel very rewarded with this opportunity. In Montgomery County, 10% or more than 80,710 individuals are food insecure; 13.2% are children. An estimated 166,000 in Montgomery County were expected to experience hunger last year due to the pandemic.

With the world being the way it has become in the last couple of years, any event that helps to bring people together to make a difference is just what we all need. We strongly encourage all of our community members to lend a helping hand whenever possible. You can reach out to Cathy at Nourish and she can get you or your group started in helping with the bagging of the backpacks that are sent home weekly with our students. All the backpacks that are packed up each week stay in Montgomery county.

Respectfully submitted Mady Bush, North Montgomery FFA Co-Reporter

Retreat

The North Montgomery FFA chapter will be attending their annual FFA chapter retreat on March 18th-20th. The chapter retreat is at Trafalgar, Indiana at the Indiana FFA leadership center. At the Leadership center our chapter stays in a cabin for the whole weekend. This weekend helps develop many life skills to take on and use later on in our life. Last year due to Covid-19 we held our FFA retreat in the Ag room at the HS.

On our weekend away, we will be doing various activities at the Indiana FFA Center. During the first night we will arrive and unpack, then have a limited amount of time to go outside or relax inside. The next day, we will wake up early and eat a healthy breakfast before the state FFA officers arrive. Although only a select few State FFA officers arrive, we still learn a lot. The FFA members will then be put through mini classes based on what strengths and weaknesses that the chapter possesses that year. The retreat will hone in on those and work with the members to better themselves and the chapter as a whole.

These activities help us develop leadership and community service skills. During the lunch break, we will have many opportunities to meet the state officers and chat with them. Once we finish our leadership training, we will have the rest of the day to ourselves to enjoy the outdoors, spend time together, and build new friendships with people we may not have knew a lot about in our chapter.

Overall, our Chapter retreat is an amazing way to connect with the members and all of our State Officers. Even though it is 3 days, it is a great learning experience and I highly recommend going!

Respectfully submitted, Grace Shrader, North Montgomery FFA Treasurer
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Riley blankets

Making blankets for Riley Hospital is something the FFA does every year. It is a great way to give to those in need while also having fun and getting to know the people around you. The best part is that other clubs join the FFA, such as the North Montgomery Key Club, NHS, YAR, and the student council. The meeting this year was done in a record time of under 60 minutes. Even with Covid-19 the event had a great turn out with social distancing and wearing of masks for the event. Our Ag classroom and workshop were full of helping hands. The blankets are made by cutting equal sheets of fleece and cutting finger-long and two-finger-wide pieces along the edges. The pieces are double knotted to other pieces of fabric all the way around the edge, making a blanket, but with different patterns. They had patterns that were girlie and they had patterns that were boyish. This activity is really for everyone because you don’t have to sew anything, it’s just tying fabric together.

When asked about what she liked most about making the Riley Blankets, freshman FFA member Julia Shea, said, “the thing I enjoy about making Riley Blankets has to be the community service aspect of it. Working with our community for a good cause is my favorite thing about making the Riley Blankets.” An amazing part of this activity is that North Montgomery also sent some blankets to Kentucky for the tornado victims and the Ronald McDonald Hospital this year.

Respectfully submitted, Jessica Clark, North Montgomery FFA Student Advisor

Spring and fall fundraisers

The North Montgomery FFA chapter is currently working on our Spring fundraisers. In our greenhouses we raise a variety of flowers, fruits and vegetables. Some of our new products include Victoria Blue Salvia, Red Star Petunias, Cucumbers, and many more. We are also offering our older favorites like Boston Ferns, Lantanas, and a variety of tomatoes and peppers. Be sure to check out our offerings as all funds raised help support our chapter leadership activities that we all participate in. FFA member Behn Mcclamrock said “The spring fundraiser is a great way for our chapter to raise money for our activities.”

In the Fall, the FFA members also participate in another fundraiser. Not only do we sell Poinsettias, but we also work with Florida Fruit to sell fresh fruit. We also offer summer sausages and cheese. These are always a great way to give gifts during the Christmas season. FFA member Nolan Yarger said “I like calling around to different family members and friends, catching up with them and seeing what they would like to buy.” If you miss your opportunity to order fruit, we always make sure to order extra just in case more is needed.

Did you know that both the Spring and Fall fundraisers help educate FFA members and Ag students alike as they help participate in the growing of the plants? Recently The horticulture class learned how to propagate Spider Plants and Wandering Jews. These plants will also be offered during our Spring plant sales. The FFA members also help in the greenhouse by placing orders and transporting the plants. The poinsettias are also grown by the FFA members.

Support of our fundraisers is greatly appreciated. Please be sure to contact an FFA member or visit our sales website for more information.

Respectfully submitted, Brent Runyan, North Montgomery FFA Secretary
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State FFA convention

State convention is held in June and allows chapters to meet other chapters in their state. The state convention was held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds this past year. It was held at the Indiana state fair grounds to allow for more people to attend and more booths for more students to meet more job or college opportunities. During state convention we have multiple days to attend and each day has something different going on. On the first day is competitions for those that made it passed district. The 2nd and 3rd day are awards with the 3rd day having hoosier degrees last. An award we get at state is the living to serve food security initiative. We also highlight the winners in the SAE proficiency with winners in each category. The Hoosier Degree is the highest award the state FFA can give out, and it recognizes your progression in FFA and recognizes your work in your supervised agricultural experience. That day is one of the most important days as an FFA member receiving that award.

Respectfully submitted, Sean Kilgour, North Montgomery FFA Vice President
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2021 brings success to the Southmont FFA

The Southmont FFA Chapter had an exceptionally successful year highlighted by being named a National 3 Star Chapter by the National FFA Organization. This award is given to the top 1.5% of chapters in the Nation! Hard work, responsible members, and community support has always allowed Southmont FFA to be a successful part of the school and offer outstanding leadership opportunities for Chapter members.

Special titles and achievements include:
- Indiana Gold Chapter and Big Ten Chapter Recipient
- 1st Place State Proficiency - James Nichols
- 1st Place State Soils Team
- 1st Place State Crops Team
- 6th Place Livestock Skillathon Team at the Southeastern Regional Contest
- Top 4 Proficiencies at State – Gabriel Little, Lauren Tricker, Levi Brush, & Caden Sixberry
- Hoosier Degree Recipient – Levi Brush
- Indiana FFA Convention Delegates - Jenna Bushong & Caden Sixberry
- American Degree Recipients - Holly Shaver
- District IV Sentinel - Levi Brush
- 4th Place Discovery Degree Demonstration at State - Kylee Reeves & Mallory Leach
- 4th Place Agribusiness Management Demonstration at State - James Nichols & Alex Doyle

The spring of 2021 kept the Southmont FFA busy competing in Horse Evaluation and the Floriculture contest. Jenna Bushong, Bell Regan, and Elyse Thompson participated in the horse judging contest and placed 3rd in the Senior FFA Division. As a team they also placed 5th in the reason divisions. Individually Bella was 9th overall and Jenna was 10th in reasons. The chapter also had one junior individual compete, Helen Butter. She placed 15th overall and 8th in the reasons division. In the Floriculture contest Southmont was well represented with two senior teams and a junior team. At the state contest the first team of Lauren Tricker, Levi Brush, Cole Rhoads, and Gabriel Little were able to place first. The team of Caden Sixberry, Jacob Pike, Alex Doyle, and Kelsey Thompson placed second at state. Individually.

Later on in the year, Southmont participated in Leadership Development Events. Southmont was well represented in numerous contests. First Place finishers who qualified for the state contest included Madison Livesay in Persuasive Essay, Kylee Reeves, & Mallory Leach in the Discovery Degree Demonstration, Jenna Bushong in Freshman Prepared Public Speaking, Multimedia Scrapbook, James Nichols & Alex Doyle in the Ag Business Management Demonstration, Lilli Mussche & Brady Largent in the Horticulture Demonstration, Elyse Thompson in the Food Science Demonstration, and Cole Rhoads, Clair Simpson, Hunter McArthur, and Sophia Shannon in the Discovery Quiz Bowl Contest. Kylee Reeves & Mallory Leach, as well as James Nichols & Alex Doyle went on to place fourth in the state in their respective contests. Second place finishers include Elyse Thompson & Jenna Bushong in the Animal Science Demonstration, James Nichols in Ag Sales, Levi Brush in Prepared Public Speaking, Lilli Mussche in Leadership Ambassador, and Kelsey Thompson in the Discovery Creed Contest. Southmont was also well represented in the following contests: Lauren Tricker in Extemporaneous Speaking, Alex Doyle in Job Interview, and Jenna Bushong in Freshman Creed.

The fall brought about a busy time for the Southmont FFA. Members found themselves busy practicing for various judging contests and other events. One of those contests included Soils Judging. The soils judging team this year had close to twenty members participate in the contest. The team traveled all across the state competing in contests.

The first contest of the year was the Farm Progress show in Decatur, IL where the team started off the season on the right foot. The team of Cole Rhoads, Kelsey Thompson, Clair Simpson, and Levi Brush were able to place first. The Team of Hunter McArthur, Gabriel Little, Caden Sixberry, and Spencer Cass placed fourth. The next contest was on September 11th when the team traveled to Tippecanoe Valley.
In 2022 restrictions, only 40 members were selected to be a part of the choir from all across the country. Clair thoroughly enjoyed her time and plans to be a part of the national choir again.

The Southmont FFA crops teams continued their winning traditions this year. The teams competed at the area contest on November 23rd which was held at the Beck Center at Purdue University. The first placed team consisted of Levi Brush, Cole Rhoads, Gabriel Little, and Caden Sixberry. The second place team members were Kelsey Thompson, Kylee Reeves, Jenna Bushong, and Caden Allen. Southmont also had 6 out of the top 10 in individual placings. Levi placed 1st, Cole placed 2nd, Kelsey 4th, Kylee placed 5th, Gabriel placed 6th, and Caden S. placed 7th.

The junior teams also did well placing first, second, and sixth. The first place team consisted of Natalie Rhoads, Trent Reeves, Helen Butcher, and Hunter Thompson. The second place team consisted of Lennon Woods, Ethan Smith, Daniel Simpson, and Harmony Norton. Madelyn Roberts, Harrison Cass, and Grant Reeves made up the 6th place team. Individually Natalie placed 1st, Trent placed 2nd, Helen placed 3rd, Lennon placed 4th, Ethan placed 8th, Daniel placed 10th, and Harmony placed 11th. The top 6 teams in the area qualify for the state contest and also the top 5 individuals.

The final contest of the year was the state contest held at Purdue University on December 11th. Southmont’s senior team of Cole Rhoads, Levi Brush, Gabriel Little, and Kelsey Thompson won the contest and were named the 2021 state champions. Individually Cole placed 1st, Levi placed 3rd, Gabriel placed 8th, and Kelsey placed 13th. Southmont’s second senior team consisting of Kylee Reeves, Caden Sixberry, Jenna Bushong, and Caden Allen placed 3rd, with Kylee placing 4th and Caden S. placing 15th. Each member of the 1st place team will receive a $500 scholarship given by the Southmont FFA chapter. The members worked very hard this year and the senior teams continued Southmont’s winning tradition by placing 1st in every contest. During the last 39 years, Southmont has won the state contest 32 times.

The Southmont FFA Junior High Crops team also won the state championship. There were a total of 21 junior teams and 56 individuals. The champion team members were: Natalie Rhoads, Helen Butcher, Trent Reeves, and Lennon Woods. Each member will receive a $100 scholarship given by the Southmont FFA chapter for winning. Southmont also had the 3rd place junior team made up of Hunter Thompson, Ethan Smith, Daniel Simpson, and Harmony Norton. Individually Natalie placed 1st, Helen placed 2nd, Trent placed 6th, Lennon placed 7th, and Hunter placed 11th.

2022 has brought about a busy schedule for the FFA members as they complete the requirements to receive their various degrees in the organization. They are also spending countless hours preparing for District Leadership Contests, filling out proficiencies, as well as, practicing for Livestock Evaluation, Horse Evaluation, and the Floriculture judging competitions. They will soon begin preparing for the election of the 2022/23 Chapter Officer team. The officers are also planning an exciting schedule to celebrate National FFA week including a teacher appreciation breakfast, a kickball game against North Montgomery FFA, and the first ever Ag Olympics.
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The Southmont FFA chapter has always been active in the community; philanthropic activities teach its members to give back and live to serve! A few of the community activities the chapter participates in includes hosting the chapter’s Ag Exploration Program for New Market Elementary third graders, Conservation Field Days, hosting 3 area pedal pulls, the Adopt-A-Highway program, planting flowers at the Alamo Fire Station, setting up chairs at New Ross & Ladoga community events, and facilitating 3 area Blood Drives.

FFA members enjoy making their community a more attractive place to live by volunteering their time to landscape and plant flowers at local businesses and clean a two mile stretch of Highway 47. FFA members donate leftover plants to the Alamo Fire Station. FFA members clean out the flower beds and add new bright colorful flowers to the landscape. Members will also spend time mulching to make the area look great. FFA members also gear up each April and October to clean a two mile stretch of Highway 47. This activity encourages members to take care of their community and their environment.

The Southmont FFA also enjoys educating the community about agriculture! Each August the Southmont FFA attends the Soil & Water Conservation Days at Cain’s Farms and educates area fourth graders about the water cycle. FFA members always love going to this event and often will remember when they got to attend the event. Fourth graders get to learn about the water cycle from FFA members while playing a game where they get to travel through the water cycle as water molecules. The event is sponsored by the Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District each year. The Southmont FFA also lends a hand at the Montgomery County Ag days sponsored by the Montgomery County 4-H Extension Services. FFA members have taught stations on swine production, goat production, and aquaculture. FFA members bring in their own animals and teach students who attended the event what it takes to care for each animal as well as a little bit about common products we get from each species.

This past spring the Southmont FFA volunteered and sold food at the Waveland Strong community event. FFA members could be found rolling up their sleeves to help cook and serve dinner, assist patrons with carrying their meals, and mingling with community members at the event that featured the Peterson Farm Brothers. The chapter thoroughly enjoyed the event that supported and highlighted the importance of rural agricultural towns like Waveland!

The Southmont FFA Chapter hopes to continue its impact throughout the county by continuing its current service projects while adding new events each year. The Southmont FFA is led by FFA Advisors Erin Gilley and Gary Mosbaugh as well as Chapter FFA Officers: Brady Largent -President, Caden Sixbery - Vice President, Levi Brush - Secretary, Gabriel Little - Treasurer, Jenna Bushong - Reporter, Bella Regan - Sentinel, and Jacob Pike - Historian. The Southmont FFA Chapter would like to extend its appreciation to the South Montgomery School Corporation, as well as Southmont High School faculty and staff, and community supporters for their continued support and generosity to the Southmont FFA Chapter.
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Southmont livestock skillathon goes to nationals

The Southmont FFA chapter has had a long line of successful judging teams since its founding in 1972 including 32 state titles in Crops Judging and 25 state titles in Floriculture Evaluation. Southmont has also been very fortunate to have hardworking and dedicated FFA members over the last fifty years and this year was no different. This year the livestock skillathon team was able to continue that tradition of working hard and reaping the benefits.

This year senior team members included Brady Largent, Jenna Bushong, Naomi Plunkett, Clair Simpson, and Rachel Rhoads. Junior Team members included Sophia Shannon, Avery Staddler, and Claire Kessler. The teams traveled to several contests and placed in the top ten at every contest they competed in this year. The first contest of the year was the Benton Central Invitational. Both the senior and junior teams were able to place 1st overall. Individually Jenna was 1st, Clair S. 2nd, Brady 3rd and Rachel 9th. Individually in the junior division Claire K. was 1st, Sophia 2nd, and Avery 7th. The next contest of the year was the Hamilton Heights Invitational where the senior team placed second and the junior team placed third. Individually in the senior division Jenna was 3rd, Clair S. was 8th, and Brady 14th. In the junior division Sophia was 1st and Claire K. was 3rd.

Up next was the area contest where the senior team of Jenna Bushong, Brady Largent, Clair Simpson, and Rachel Rhoads placed 1st. Individually Jenna placed 3rd, Clair S. placed 5th, and Brady placed 12th. Naomi Plunkett also competed as an individual at the area contest. In the junior division the team placed 1st, with Sophia placing 1st individually, Clair K. placing 4th, and Avery placing 12th. Placing first qualified both teams to the state contest.

The state contest which was held at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds was the last contest of the year, or so the senior team thought. The senior team of Clair Simpson, Brady Largent, Jenna Bushong, and Naomi Plunkett placed 3rd in the senior division qualifying them for a National Contest in North Carolina. Individually Clair Simpson placed 7th in Evaluation, Jenna Bushong was 8th in Evaluation, and Brady Largent was 9th in Quality Assurance. Individually overall we had two individuals in the top twenty: Clair placing 17th and Jenna placing 19th. With three of the four senior members returning next year, the team is excited to get started.

The senior team would like to extend a huge thank you to the sponsors that helped them attend the national contest: Tom’s Marine, Montgomery County Farm Bureau, Ceres Solution, Ahead of Hair, Nucor Steel, Meg & Tim Shelley, Greg & Laura Nichols & Family, and David & Myrona Gilley.
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