



2026 FFA

FFA Week | Feb. 21-28, 2026

A supplement of the
Journal Review

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South FFA teams shine on national stage

For the Journal Review

Two of Southmont's FFA teams represented our community with excellence this year as they competed at the national level in livestock skillathon and agricultural communications — earning top honors and showcasing the strength of our agricultural education program.

The Livestock Skillathon team competed at the national contest in Denver, Colorado, at the National Western Stock Show, demonstrating advanced knowledge in animal science, evaluation, and industry application. The Skillathon contest tests students far beyond memorization — requiring them to apply real-world skills in areas such as: feed ration analysis, meat evaluation, animal breeding practicums, and real world industry scenario problem solving.

Team members demonstrated exceptional technical knowledge and



LEFT: Members of the Livestock Skillathon team from Southmont are, from left, Daniel Simpson, Sophia Shannon, Abigail Smith and Advisor Erin Gilley. **RIGHT:** The Southmont Ag Communion Team are pictured, from left, Advisor Erin Gilley, Sophia Shannon, Amarah Shannon, Kylee Reeves and Kelsey Thompson.

professionalism throughout the event. Competing against top programs from across the United States, the team finished as the second high team overall. Team members included Sophia Shannon, Daniel Simpson, and Abby Smith.

Individually Sophia placed fourth, Abby sixth, and Daniel seventh.

Preparing for this contest required months of dedication. Students practiced before and after school, studied industry standards, worked through

mock scenarios, and refined their technical accuracy — all while balancing academic coursework and other activities. Their success reflects not only talent, but discipline and commitment.

Photos Provided



Photos Provided

ABOVE: South FFA members sponsor a free kiddy pedal tractor pull at the Montgomery County 4-H Fair. RIGHT: Members help serve Thanksgiving meals at CrossWay Covenant Church.

SOUTH FFA CHAPTER

South FFA leads through service, community involvement

For the Journal Review

Service is more than a requirement for members of the Southmont FFA Chapter — it is a way of life.

Throughout the past year, chapter members have demonstrated a strong commitment to giving back, strengthening community partnerships, and living out the FFA motto: Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve.

From agricultural outreach to



hands-on service projects, members have logged countless hours supporting local organizations, schools, and families across the community.

Chapter members have assisted with community events such as the Ladoga Fish Fry, the New Ross 150th Year Celebration, the Lord's Clothes Closet sponsored by the New Market Baptist Church, and the community Thanksgiving event hosted by the CrossWay Covenant Church. Members could be found helping through various activities such as assisting with setting and cleaning up before and after the events, assisting community

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Abby Smith assists at the annual Fourth Grade Field Days at Cain's Farm. Members participate in Ag Day at the county fairgrounds. FFA members wash trays at the Ladoga Fish Fry and help with donations at the Lord's Clothes Closet.

SERVICE

FROM PAGE 3

members with their meals, and helping to organize materials.

Members have engaged with some of the youngest residents in the county, spending time at the annual Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation Fourth Grade Field Days

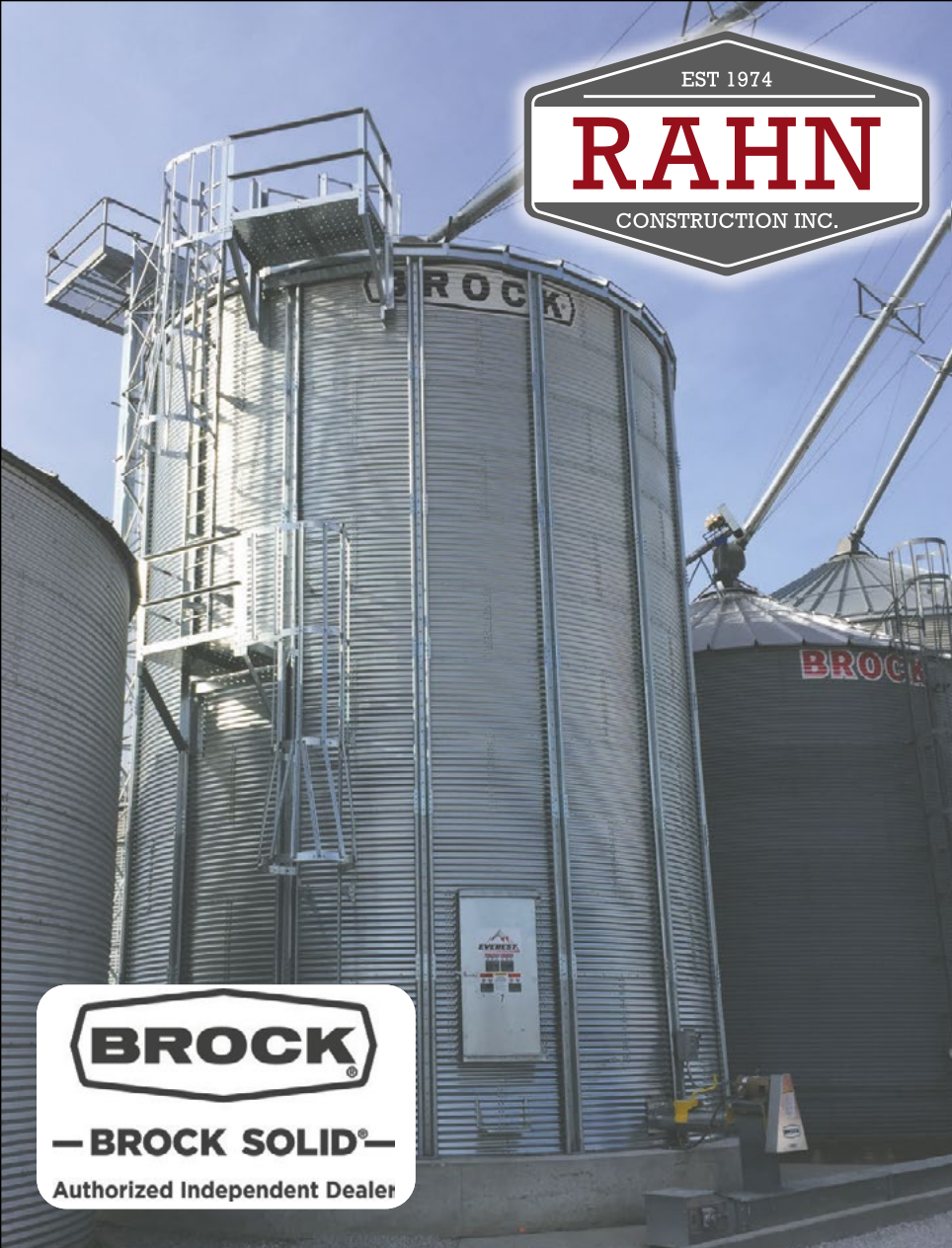
and the Montgomery County 4-H Ag Days. Members spend their day volunteering to teach local elementary students the importance of agriculture and how it effects them daily. At field days, FFA members teach fourth grade students how the water cycle works and allow the elementary students to play a game that show them how a

water molecule would travel through the water cycle. At Ag Days, FFA members bring in a variety of livestock to teach elementary school students how those animals are raised and cared for and what some of the products are that we get from those animals. Southmont FFA also sponsors a free kiddy pedal tractor pull at the Mont-

gomery County Fair and the Ladoga Fish Fry every summer. Children from 3-10 are encouraged to participate and have the opportunity to win a prize! Every child who participates walks away with a free book and ice cream coupon!

The Southmont FFA Chapter continues to demonstrate that agricultural education is about

more than livestock and crops. It is about developing servant leaders who invest in their communities and uphold the values that sustain rural America. As the chapter looks ahead to another year of programming and outreach, members remain committed to strengthening their community — one project at a time.



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FROM CLASSROOM TO CAREER

How FFA prepares students for the workforce

For the Journal Review

Agricultural education is more than textbooks and tests — it is a direct pipeline from classroom learning to real-world careers. Through Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs), proficiency awards, and Career Development Events (CDEs), members of the Southmont FFA Chapter are gaining the skills, experience, and confidence needed to succeed in today's workforce.

While many view FFA as an extracurricular activity, it is in fact a structured leadership and career training program built around hands-on learning and industry application. At the core of agricultural education is the Supervised Agricultural Experience, or SAE. Every FFA member develops and manages an individualized project that connects classroom instruction to career exploration. Through SAEs, students learn financial recordkeeping, goal setting, time management, and business planning. Many members generate real income while gaining industry-relevant experience — a powerful advantage before graduation.

Members of the Southmont FFA have developed numerous SAEs that target their passion for agriculture. From raising livestock to working in greenhouse operations to radio broadcasting, FFA members have found their passion for agriculture.



Photos Provided

Members of the South FFA Soils Judging Team attend the Farm Progress Show in Illinois.

As students grow their SAEs, they have the opportunity to apply for FFA Proficiency Awards, which recognize excellence in specific agricultural career areas. Proficiency applications require students to document financial records and growth, skills learned, career goals, and hours worked.

The application process mirrors professional grant writing and job applications, helping

students refine written communication, organization, and analytical skills. Members from Southmont have earned recognition at the district, state, and even national levels for their work. Last year, ten Southmont FFA members submitted a proficiency application to the state level. Out of those ten five were named State Champions, two received third place honors, and three were ranked as



Members of the South Ag Communications Team are interviewed at Nationals by Hoosier Ag Today.

silver recipients (top 10). Proficiency applicants included:

- Sophia Shannon in Agricultural Services - State Champion
- Lennon Woods in Diversified Crop Production Entrepreneurship - State Champion
- Cole Rhoads in Diversified Crop Production Placement - State Champion
- Jenna Busong in Equine Production - State Champion
- Kylee Reeves in Landscape Installation - State Champion
- Claire Kessler in Beef Production Placement - 3rd Place at State
- Amarah Shannon in Diversified Horticulture - 3rd Place at State
- Ethan Smith in Beef Production Entrepreneurship - Silver Ranking
- Daniel Simpson in Diversified Agriculture Production - Silver Ranking

• Madelyn Roberts in Sheep Production - Silver Ranking
These awards demonstrate not only technical skill but long-term commitment to career development.

Career Development Events take workforce preparation even further by simulating real industry scenarios. Students compete in events that mirror professional roles in agriculture and agribusiness. Depending on the event, students may: evaluate livestock, analyze soil and crop management ideas, diagnose animal health issues, troubleshoot agricultural equipment, or deliver professional presentations.

These competitions demand critical thinking, teamwork, public speaking, and technical accuracy — all skills employers consistently rank as essential.

SEE CAREER/9

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Josh & Brittany McCloud

CAREER

FROM PAGE 7

Members dedicate months to preparation, often practicing before or after school. Through this process, they learn discipline, resilience, and how to perform under pressure.

The Southmont FFA chapter participates in numerous CDEs including Soils Evaluation, Livestock Skillathon, Crops Evaluation, Livestock Evaluation, Floriculture Evaluation, and Agricultural Communications. In the past year Southmont was able to bring home two state championships in the areas of Agricultural Communications and Crops Evaluation, as well as two state runner up titles in Livestock Skillathon and Floriculture Evaluation. In 2026, Southmont hopes to add new Career Development Events for students to participate in, including Meat Evaluation, Agricultural Marketing, Food Science, and Veterinary Medicine.

The combination of classroom instruction, SAE projects, proficiency applications, and CDE competition creates a comprehensive career preparation model. Students leave the program with documented work experience, professional references, interview skills, technical industry knowledge, and leadership skills.

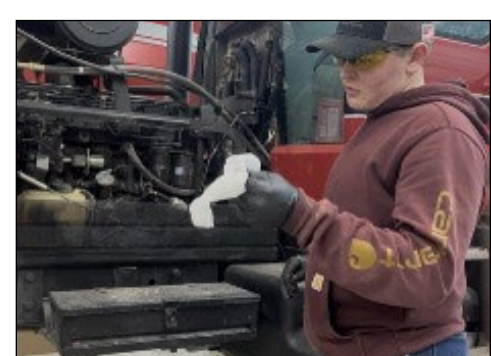
Many alumni of the Southmont FFA Chapter pursue careers in agricultural production, agribusiness, veterinary medicine, engineering, education, communications, and beyond. Others apply the leadership and business skills learned through FFA in entirely different industries.

Agricultural education is not simply about farming — it is about developing adaptable, skilled professionals ready to contribute to the workforce on day one. As the agricultural industry continues to evolve, programs like FFA ensure that the next generation is prepared not only to fill jobs — but to lead.



Photos Provided

The Southmont FFA chapter participates in numerous CDEs including Soils Evaluation, Livestock Skillathon, Crops Evaluation, Livestock Evaluation, Floriculture Evaluation, and Agricultural Communications. Pictured are Floriculture Team members and the Livestock Evaluation Team. Southmont also has developed numerous SAEs. From raising livestock to working in greenhouse operations to radio broadcasting, FFA members have found their passion for agriculture. Pictured from top are Amarah Shannon, Daniel Simpson, Claire Kessler and Sophia Shannon.





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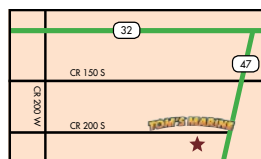


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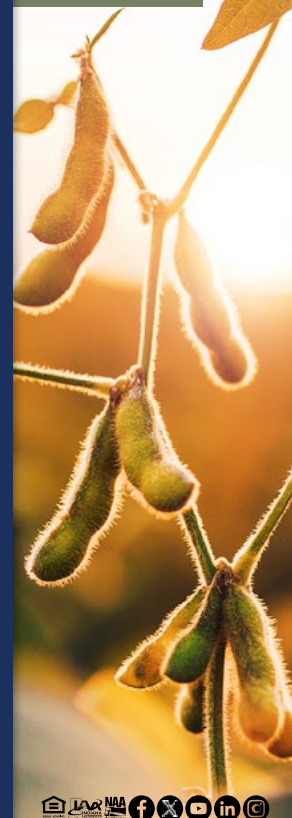
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North FFA Chapter keeps busy all year long



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North FFA members attend the National Convention.

National FFA Convention

What is the National FFA Convention? The National FFA Convention is the one time each year when FFA members from across the country gather to celebrate their accomplishments together. This four-day event brings thousands of blue jackets to one place for learning, competition, and connection.

Chapter vice president, Kade Parks, describes the convention as “an awesome way to meet new people from all over the country.” These four days provide an opportunity to learn more about the agricultural industry and develop skills that will last a lifetime.

So, what all goes on during those four days?

Throughout the convention, members compete at the national level in Career Development Events (CDEs) and Leadership Development Events (LDEs). There are also general sessions where members hear from powerful public speakers who share inspiring messages. During these sessions, retiring National FFA Officers give their farewell addresses, reflecting on how the organization has shaped them as leaders and individuals.

For many members, the favorite part of the convention is the expo. The expo includes the FFA Mall, filled with official FFA merchandise and apparel. In addition, many boutiques and well-known brands, such as Ariat, set up booths to sell merchandise. Colleges, agricultural businesses, and organizations are also present, offering information and opportunities for students.

My personal favorite part of the expo was the back section, where colleges and brands hosted interactive booths and gave away promotional items. While there, I watched a dog demonstration, met a famous



North FFA members participate in Farm Safety Day.

bull rider, and connected with colleges I plan to attend in the future.

The only downside?

Chapter reporter Hope Delp said, “You walk a lot of miles.”

Despite the long days and sore feet, the experience is truly unforgettable.

The National FFA Convention benefits every member who attends. It opens your eyes to new opportunities and shows you a side of the agricultural industry you may not have seen before.

Ella McManomy
President 2025-26

FFA Farm Safety Day

“Farm Safety Day is a great day to spend teaching kids different safety tips,” said North Montgomery FFA member Taelyn Stephens.

Farm Safety Day is an event hosted every other year by the North Montgomery FFA Chapter. It alternates with the chapter’s annual petting zoo. On this special day, fourth-grade classes from across the county travel to North Montgomery High School to learn how to stay safe — not only on the farm, but in everyday life.

Throughout the day, students rotate through eight different safety stations.

Station 1, students learn about food safety and proper hand washing. They discover what germs are and how washing their hands helps keep them healthy.

Station 2 focuses on grain safety. Students learn what grain is, how it can be dangerous, and why it is important to stay away from grain bins and equipment.



Station 3, lawn mower and bike safety are discussed. Students are taught how to properly handle equipment and protect themselves while riding bikes.

Station 4 covers power take-off (PTO) safety and proper clothing. Students learn what types of clothing are safe to wear when working and why loose clothing can be dangerous.

Station 5, animal safety is the focus. Students learn how to stay safe around animals and how to properly interact with them.

Station 6 teaches chemical safety. Students learn about common household cleaners and why they must be handled carefully and kept out of reach.

Station 7, health safety is discussed. Students learn how to recognize when they are feeling sick, when to tell an adult, and how to identify when someone may need medical help. At this station the St. Vincent Healthcare Providers will help with teaching the kids.

Finally, at Station 8, students learn about fire safety and what to do in case of a fire emergency. Here we will actually bring in the Coal Creek Fire and Rescue to help give the demonstration to the kids.

Overall, Farm Safety Day is filled with both learning and laughter. Chapter Vice President Kade Parks describes the event as “a way to educate the youth about how to be safe around everyday things they encounter.”

This event is not only a valuable learning opportunity for the students but also a rewarding experience for FFA members.

Chapter Reporter Hope Delp said, “seeing the kids have fun while learning is a wonderful reward that makes you feel good about what you are doing.”

SEE DAY/13



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For me, Farm Safety Day is one of my favorite events. At the end of the day, you know you have shared important lessons that could help keep these students safe for the rest of their lives.

Ella McManomy
President 2025-26

Indiana State FFA Convention

Each year, our FFA chapter has a blast at the Indiana state FFA convention. We are very lucky to have it be held in our own backyards. We travel the 45 minutes to Purdue University, where convention is held. Purdue is very kind and allows hundreds of blue jackets to walk around its campus. At State Convention, we see friends whom we already know, and we get to meet new ones. As the North Montgomery chapter, we had many photo ops with monuments at Purdue University. We had our picture taken with the Purdue train and under the famous Purdue University archway. There were many more opportunities as we were walking down the sidewalk. We saw a sign that said "IN FFA" and a milk truck with the FFA emblem. No matter how hot and tired we were, Mrs. Bell never let us pass up a picture opportunity.

For the majority of the time at convention, we walked around the expo. This was held in one of Purdue's buildings, occupying a few classrooms. There were more than 30 companies, small businesses, and colleges that set up booths and got the chance to talk to many FFA members. Our chapter walked around in groups and received information about each vendor while picking up some goodies. We came home with a lot of candy, flyers, squishies, and sunglasses. While we were walking around, we got the chance to mingle with other FFA members from our state. It was nice to meet people who were from other chapters close to North Montgomery and some from far away. We got the chance to talk with chapters that are outside our district



Photos Provided

North FFA members attend the Indiana State Convention at Purdue University.

and ask them how far they live from Indianapolis. It was shocking the number of chapters that had to drive a few hours.

Apart from the expo, we attended several sessions that kept us occupied. At these sessions, hundreds of FFA members sat in the Elliot Hall of Music and listened to the state officers deliver speeches about the honor that comes with wearing the blue jacket. Throughout these sessions, awards were presented, speeches were given, and the current officers gave their inaugural speech. They also announced the candidates for the upcoming 2025-26 state officers, and eventually, they announced the winners. Our chapter was presented with multiple awards at State Convention. Our Dairy Cattle judging team was presented with a plaque for winning first place at competitions. Kade Parks, Claire Grimes, and Logan Ireland all received their Hoosier

Degrees. For this, they walked on stage with many more FFA members and shook the hand of a state officer. Dawson Bell won fourth place in Plant and Soil demonstrations, and he received an award. As a chapter, the North Montgomery FFA won second place in the Living to Serve Safety Initiative. All of these awards are huge accomplishments for the members individually and as a chapter.

Ella McManomy, who is our president, said, "Texas Roadhouse's food never gets old."

As a chapter, we got to enjoy a nice meal at this restaurant after all the sessions. I can verify that we went through a lot of baskets of rolls, which probably cleaned them out. The best part of this dinner experience was getting the whole restaurant to sing happy birthday to Mrs. Bell while she was on the horse saddle.

Hope Delp
Co-Reporter 2025-26



North FFA members unload fruit for their annual fundraiser.

NM FFA Fundraisers

As an FFA chapter, we have multiple fundraisers that we do throughout the year to help support our FFA. Our members put a lot of time and dedication into selling and preparing all of the items that we sell. In December, we sell fruit and poinsettias to our community. The fruit and poinsettia sales are great for businesses that give their employees gifts each year because they can easily do so. Our FFA chapter has a greenhouse located in the parking lot of North Montgomery. Every year, the greenhouse gets filled with hundreds of plants and flowers that we sell as a fundraiser. Each FFA member is responsible for selling multiple items to not only gain FFA points but also to support our chapter.

When the semi truck that hauls all of the fruit arrives at North Montgomery, it is all hands on deck. Every FFA member is in the Ag room unloading boxes. Trip after trip. Then once they are all unloaded, they all get sorted into piles. This is an extensive process because we have a lot of orders to fill, and the ground becomes full of boxes. Mrs. Bell's Ag classes help check the orders to make sure they are correct, or sometimes they help us sort if we are running behind. During the pickup hours, members load boxes of fruit and poinsettias into customers' cars. This sure can be entertaining as the boys like to get into snowball fights while working! The poinsettias that we grow are stored in the greenhouse throughout

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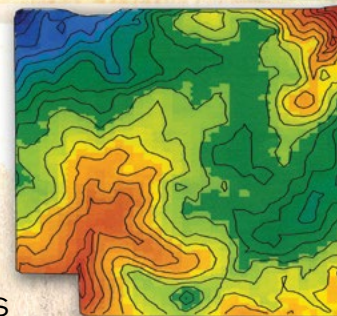


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2026



FUNDRAISERS

FROM PAGE 11

the winter. These flowers are vibrant, beautiful and make good Christmas decorations. I personally love giving poinsettias as gifts around the holidays. My grandmas love them!

Our second major fundraiser is held in the spring, and this is where we sell flowers and vegetables. During this fundraiser, we have multiple types of plants that can be bought. This can be anything from peppers to purple petunias to spider plants. We have it all. The students who take Mrs. Bell's Ag classes throughout the day help maintain the greenhouse along with FFA members. These students will help plant, organize, and prepare all the flats of flowers and pots of poinsettias that will be sold. Members take turns over the weekends or school breaks to help our advisors out and water the plants for them. This sale is always popular because people who want to plant a garden buy our vegetables because they are reliable. The flowers that we sell in the spring are very beautiful and make great porch decorations!

Emily Seaman, who is an active member and helps with our fundraisers states, "There are good lessons and opportunities to be learned while watching the plants grow throughout the year!" Our annual fundraisers are a really big part of what makes our chapter thrive. The support that our families, friends, and community give to our FFA is greatly appreciated. The selling of our items is the reason that our chapter can participate in multiple activities throughout the year. Our greenhouse is always occupied with growing hundreds of beautiful plants.

Hope Delp
Co-Reporter 2025-26

FFA Chapter Retreat

The North Montgomery FFA retreat takes place every year at the Indiana FFA Center in Trafalgar. This retreat is an opportunity for members to step away from the classroom and focus on leadership, teamwork, and personal



Photos Provided

North FFA members conduct a spring fundraiser, selling many types of plants and flowers.

growth. Throughout the retreat, we participate in activities that push us out of our comfort zones and help us build stronger relationships within our chapter. It is a time where we can focus on what it truly means to be an FFA member and how we can better serve our chapter and community. The retreat allows us to grow not only as individuals, but also as a team that supports one another throughout the year.

"It's a very fun, educational, and bonding time with other FFA members," Taelyn shared. During the retreat, we take part in leadership workshops, group challenges, and discussions that help us improve communication and trust. These activities show us the importance of working together and relying on each other's strengths. We also learn how to set goals for the upcoming year and how to represent our chapter in a positive way. The bonding that takes place at retreat helps create friendships and memories that last far beyond just those few days.

Members also get the opportunity to meet and learn from Indiana State FFA Officers, which is a highlight for many of us.

Corbin said, "My favorite part about

retreat is how we get to talk to state officers and along with meeting them."

Being able to hear their experiences, ask questions, and receive advice from leaders at the state level is inspiring. It motivates us to become more involved and to continue growing as leaders within FFA. Overall, the North Montgomery FFA retreat is more than just a trip, it is a meaningful experience that strengthens our chapter and prepares us for the year ahead.

Kaden Parks
Co-Vice President 2025-26

Field Day at Cain's Farm

The Conservation Field Days at Cain's Farm is an opportunity for FFA members to teach the youth around us about agriculture, conservation, and how the land is more than just farmland. As FFA members we realize there is more to agriculture than just growing food. There is also sustainability, aquaculture, and how the water cycle affects it all. We take time to educate all the fourth graders from Montgomery County. Field Days are two days, North Montgomery (NM) FFA shares with the students one day and South Montgomery FFA on

the other. The Cain Family graciously opens their farm, located outside Darlington, to many volunteers, students, and teachers.

As a little boy, I have grown up with a front seat to agriculture and have seen firsthand the impacts it can have on our community. I have been fortunate to grow up raising and competitively showing sheep. This gave me the opportunity to mentor younger 4-H members about caring for their animal and be the best showman they can be. My mom worked at the Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) previously, where she helped plan and organize education events but also helped farmers and landowners with conservation and sustainability practices. They helped them preserve their land or create habitat for native wildlife. Many practices involve slowing erosion and keeping soil and nutrients from entering water bodies and impairing its health. At Field Days, Montgomery County SWCD organizes stations to share with students about a variety of topics including water quality, forestry, pollinators, the water cycle, and others.

As the North Montgomery FFA, we teach the kids about how the water cycle works. We take a few minutes to share a general overview with the students and then they get a chance to "act" as a water droplet moving through various stages of the water cycle. It is fun and enjoyable outside versus inside the high school, but it is more fun to see the kids running around with huge smiles on their faces while learning.

Hope Delp, NM FFA Secretary, said, "The day at Cain's is a great opportunity to teach kids about agriculture and get them interested by engaging with them."

As a student goes from stage to stage, they receive a bead representing that stage of the water cycle. After they learn more about that specific stage, they get to spin the wheel on the board to see where their 'water droplet' is going next. This mimics a more realistic life cycle of a water droplet. The students use the beads to make a bracelet for

SEE FARM/17

Indiana FFA to receive Lilly grant

For the Journal Review

TRAFALGAR — The Indiana FFA Foundation has been selected to receive a \$750,000 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Capital Project Initiative for Residential Youth Camps. This is one of 69 implementation grants being awarded through phase 2 of the initiative, which aims to help Indiana residential youth camps improve the overall camp experience and outcomes for youth through new, enhanced and expanded facilities integral to quality youth camp programming.

Thanks to this generous grant, Indiana FFA will make significant improvements to the Indiana FFA Leadership Center in Trafalgar. Since 1968, the Leadership Center has been a cornerstone for developing youth and adults

through leadership workshops, retreats, camps, and career development events.

With these funds, Indiana FFA plans to:

- Upgrade and modernize electrical system
- Remodel the south-side restrooms for improved accessibility and comfort
- Replace doors, doorframes, and hardware to enhance security and functionality

Install new gutter downspouts and improve the drainage system to protect the facility

These enhancements will ensure the Leadership Center continues to provide a safe, welcoming, and inspiring environment for generations to come.

"Receiving this \$750,000 Phase 2 grant is a transformational moment for the Indiana FFA Leadership Center. The

Main Lodge has been the heart of our campus for more than 50 years, and this investment allows us to make it safer, more accessible, and better equipped for the thousands of young people we serve each year," said Lisa Chaudion, Executive Director, Indiana FFA Foundation. "These improvements ensure that every camper, advisor, and community member who walks through our doors experiences a facility that reflects the quality, energy, and inclusiveness of Indiana FFA. We are deeply grateful for this support — and excited to move forward with a project that strengthens the future of our programs and the young leaders we develop."

Phase 1 of the initiative focused on creating a comprehensive campus master plan to guide future improvements at the Indiana FFA Leadership

Center. This planning phase included evaluating existing facilities for code compliance, accessibility, and opportunities for expansion; assessing utility and infrastructure capacity to support long-term growth; and addressing structural concerns such as erosion and flooding through detailed site analysis. These efforts lay the foundation for sustainable development and ensure the Center can continue serving Indiana's youth for generations to come.

"We at the Indiana FFA Foundation are truly appreciative for the funding from Phases one and two of the Lilly Endowment grant. These funds will help Indiana FFA to continue to provide the opportunities and experiences through the Indiana FFA Leadership Center for Indiana's FFA members to

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them to remember the day.

"It was fun seeing all the kids and how much they enjoyed learning," said Ella McManomy, NM FFA President.

The Field Days at Cain's was not only a fantastic way to teach kids about the water cycle, but also an opportunity for the North Montgomery FFA Chapter to grow as leaders while inspiring the next generation to learn more about agriculture.

Kaden Parks
Co-Vice President 2025-26

County Ag Days

Each year the fourth graders from the Montgomery County schools spend a day at the Montgomery County 4-H fairgrounds to learn about agriculture from FFA members and local ag leaders. The FFA members enjoy getting to teach the young kids and getting them involved in agriculture.

When asked about his experience speaking at County Ag Day FFA member experience Logan Ireland said, "It was a great experience, I enjoyed getting to teach the children."

When participating in County Ag Day the presenters have to not only use their public speaking skills but also be able to explain agriculture in a different way. As they are talking to ten year olds, they have to explain it in a way that children will understand. It's a great experience for them because not only do they have to simplify how they explain agriculture but they also have to do it in a way that keeps the children interested and engaged.

When asked about his/her experience going to County Ag Day Ella McMannomy said, "It was very fun, because you get to see all the kids be enthusiastic about agriculture."

Members who attend are in charge of not only teaching the fourth graders about agriculture but making it fun as well. They do this by playing games, and doing other engaging activities with the kids. Through these activities students learn new things such as shoe



Photos Provided

North's officer team attend the Leadership Workshop at the Indiana FF Leadership Center.

laces that are made out of a soybean by-product, which further their curiosity and encourage them to get into agriculture.

Lucy Smith
Co-Reporter 2025-26

LDW Camp

Each year the North Montgomery FFA officer team along with freshmen who are good candidates for the next year attend the Leadership Workshop at the Indiana FFA Leadership Center. There members gain skills needed to work together and lead together as an officer team for the coming year. As well as getting to know other chapter officers from all over Indiana, participating in fun activities, It's an unforgettable weekend.

When asked about his experience at LDW, member Corbin Meadows said, "I had a great time, I was able to meet people from all over Indiana and learn what it takes to become a leader in our chapter."

When attending, LDW members have the ability to grow their networking skills by sharing their ideas, and love for agriculture with fellow Indiana FFA members. Many of the members who attend make friendships that last their FFA experiences and beyond.

At the work shop members do a variety of activities to get them engaged and inspired to become the best leaders

for their chapter.

"It was an eye opening experience. I learned multiple new skills and really began to understand what it takes to be a leader within FFA," Braxton Cook said.

Workshops such as these are such a great experience for members to participate in as they allow them to grow their skill sets, meet new people, and give them the confidence to try new things. Most of the members who attend go on to run for chapter office and become more involved within the chapter.

Lucy Smith
Co-Reporter 2025-26

Kids Against Hunger

Members of the FFA chapter recently partnered with Kids Against Hunger to help fight food insecurity and serve families in need around the world. This hands-on service event allowed members to step outside of the classroom and make a direct impact on children and families facing hunger. By volunteering their time and effort, students demonstrated the true meaning of the FFA motto, "Living to Serve."

During the event, members worked together in organized assembly lines to carefully scoop, weigh, and seal meal packages. Each student played an important role in the process to ensure the meals were properly prepared and boxed. Through teamwork, focus, and efficiency, the chapter successfully packed 56 boxes of meals. Every box completed represented support and hope for families who may not have reliable access to food.

The room was filled with energy as members encouraged one another and



North FFA members partner with Kids Against Hunger to help families food insecurity. FFA members also enjoy FFA Week activities.

worked toward a common goal. The experience allowed students to see how much can be accomplished when everyone contributes. It was not only about packing meals, but also about understanding the importance of service and compassion on a global scale.

"Kids Against Hunger was a day we got to help the kids and families in need out of the country, and I'm glad we could help as a community for them," Taelyn Stephens said.

Fellow member Paige Yarger added, "Kids Against Hunger was really fun. Not only were we helping kids and families in need, we were also growing friendships and making memories."

The Kids Against Hunger service project strengthened relationships within the chapter while reinforcing the importance of leadership and giving back. Packing 56 boxes was a meaningful accomplishment, and the chapter is proud to have made a difference through service.

Adam Riehle
Secretary 2025-26

National FFA Week Activities

National FFA Week was a spirited and engaging time for our chapter as members celebrated agriculture, leadership, and involvement in the National FFA Organization. The week served as a reminder of the opportunities FFA provides students through leadership development, personal growth, and career success. Throughout the week, members participated in themed dress-up days and activities that promoted

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school spirit and agricultural awareness.

Each day brought new excitement as students showed their pride by participating in the daily themes. The activities encouraged involvement from not only FFA members but also other students throughout the school. National FFA Week is designed to highlight the impact agriculture has on everyday life, and our chapter embraced that mission through active participation and enthusiasm.

The highlight of the week took place on Friday during the Ag Olympics and the Kiss-a-Pig Contest, which quickly became the most talked-about events. The Ag Olympics featured competitive, agriculture-related challenges that required teamwork, problem-solving, and plenty of school spirit. Students competed in friendly competitions that brought laughter and energy to the end of the week. The Kiss-a-Pig contest added an extra level of excitement, as participants eagerly waited to see the final results.

FFA member Cayden Cassidy shared, "FFA Week is a great way for everyone to get involved and show pride in agriculture."

Claire Grimes also commented that the week brought members closer together and strengthened the chapter through participation and teamwork.

National FFA Week successfully showcased the pride, leadership, and unity within our chapter. The events created lasting memories while promoting agricultural education and involvement. It was a week filled with enthusiasm and

celebration that truly reflected the values of the National FFA Organization.

Adam Riehle
Secretary 2025-26

Nourish Program

The Nourish program is an outreach program for our community that our chapter participates in. We go to the Youth Service Bureau to pack food bags for less fortunate families that are in need of help. Our North Montgomery FFA chapter tries to do this 2-3 times a year. We were able to do one in November, we had eight members packing and we packed 78 bags in 30 minutes.

I feel that this is a rewarding experience to be able to serve our community, and we all have fun getting together packing these up. These are all nonperishable items — evaporated milk, canned green beans or corn, pancake mix, cereal, two packs of ramen noodles, canned ravioli, spaghetti, canned beans and a few other items that have a good shelf life that could help a family have a few meals together.

The Youth Service Bureau has a sheet of paper with the school name on it and a number of how many bags to pack for each school. We set ourselves up like an assembly line with one or two people at each station to help speed the process up to be more efficient. The first station starts out with putting one to two items in a bag and then passes it down the line until all the food has been added. We place around eight to 10 items in a bag, then we make sure to double bag it at the end, and it's put on a shelf. Then someone from the Youth Service Bureau will deliver the bags to the elementary schools later that week.

"I love packing thing for people and helping people that need the food," Ryan Hess said.

Corbin Meadows added, "I believe that the Nourish program is good because it help family's that are need, and it is fun because we can talk to the people next to you when were packing the bags and it only takes around 30 minutes."

Brody Wright
Sentinel 2025-26

District 4 FFA Contests

District 4 FFA Contest is a district competition for students to compete against each other to demonstrate their skills in agriculture, leadership and technical areas. These contests serve as a primary elimination round for members seeking to advance to state level. They generally fall into two main categories. One is leadership development events, LDE and the career development events, CDE.

The LDEs focus on communication and soft skills. Common LDEs include public speaking, parliamentary procedures and job interviews. CDEs are geared towards technical knowledge and hands on skills. Some examples are livestock and or dairy judging, agronomy and floriculture and AG technology and mechanical systems.

Students must place in the top individual/team, to qualify for state. To be eligible to compete, students must be an active FFA member and must be enrolled in an Agriculture education class. The format of the contest could include written exams, live demonstrations, speech deliveries, and or hands on demonstrations.

"It is a good way to learn skills that you didn't know you



Photo Provided

North's Dairy Judging Team of Dawson Bell, Caden Ireland, Logan Ireland and Kellen Ireland will travel to Scotland and Ireland.

needed but also makes them enjoyable," Kade Parks said.

Ella McManomy added that she believes LDE and CDE are a great opportunities not only to learn and grow as a person but to make new friends.

Brody Wright
Sentinel 2025-26

World Dairy Expo and Traveling to Ireland in June

Our Dairy Judging CDE program is the most successful program our FFA has given to the dairy industry. Our Dairy Judging consists of four members Dawson Bell, Caden Ireland, Logan Ireland, and Kellen Ireland who have worked together to win the state championship for dairy judging. After winning this competition they received the opportunity to travel to Madison, Wisconsin to compete in the World Dairy Expo.

On this trip they were able to experience agriculture in the state that leads America in the number of dairy farms. They

were able to visit many historic dairy farms including Hoard's Dairymen, Jones's Dairy Farm, and Hendrickson's Jeffrey-Way Holsteins. They were able to see the different variations of dairy from other parts of America. At Hoard's Dairymen they were able to tour the farm and see some of the newest milking technologies. At Jones's Dairy Farm they saw how an agricultural facility worked and operated and stayed as a family business. At Hendrickson's Jeffrey-Way Holsteins they were able to see descendant animals from a champion Holstein from the World Dairy Expo and even had the chance to judge these animals in a non competitive setting. After visiting these sites they were able to arrive at the Expo. At the Expo they were able to watch multiple classes of championship cows.

They were able to explore the whole expo, all the advertising, and barns.

"I loved having the opportunity to walk the barns and see

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all of the cattle,” Caden Ireland said.

After exploring the Expo they got to judge in a competitive setting with 116 teams. They did extremely well and placed third as a team lead by Dawson Bell who placed 14th out of the hundreds of participants.

Caden Ireland added, “I loved having the opportunity to go on tours and see new things and have new cool experiences with the dairy judging.”

The dairy judging team because of their success in Madison, Wisconsin has been given the opportunity to travel to Ireland and Scotland this coming June to judge at two different competitions. They didn’t expect this opportunity to arise although with eagerness the team accepted the trip. In Europe they will be able to experience agriculture in a different way.

Dawson Bell said what he is most excited about, “I am excited to see production agriculture in different countries at a different scale.”

The team will travel to many different dairy farms, facilities, as well as the different parts of the Scottish and Irish territory. The dairy judging team is very excited about this opportunity and all that they will get to see.

Kellen Ireland
Treasurer 2025-26

Parli Pro Novice & Senior Teams

Parliamentary Procedure is a structured system of rules used to conduct meetings in an organized manner. That is what the Senior and Novice teams both learned this year. At our district contest this year the North Montgomery Senior Team placed fourth out of seven, while the Novice team earned second place. The Novice team got to compete at Section contest which is the next level in the contest and tried their hardest but did not make it any farther. They continue to practice for next year to make it much farther and work much harder.

Joe Zuk
Student Advisor 2025-26

Soils Team

The North Montgomery Soils team is made up of seven team members that represented the school at the area contest this past season. They did not end up making the cut for the state contest but are working hard over the school year. Kelby Coon is a Soils member and he said that soils didn’t seem fun at first but after the contest it showed him the importance

of patience and attention to detail. Practicing once every other week to stay vigilant and continue learning for any other invitationals or contests of next season.

Joe Zuk
Student Advisor 2025-26

Samaritans Purse

The North Montgomery Senior and Novice Parliamentary Procedure teams had volunteered their time after the contest to Operation Christmas Child. Shifting their focus from competition to community service. The members carefully picked out School supplies, hygienic items, and toys for the children. The teams sponsored five boys and five girls. After they had bought the items, the team went back to the school and carefully packaged them.

Joe Zuk
Student Advisor 2025-26

Riley Blankets

Our North Montgomery FFA chapter has many events throughout the year to help serve our community. One of our members favorite ones is the Riley tie blanket event. This is a meeting our FFA chapter hosts in cooperation with many other school clubs. The FFA chapter works alongside groups like the Nation-

al Honors Society, Student Council, and Key Club. All of these groups work together to achieve the goal of creating blankets for the Riley Children’s Hospital.

“This is an enjoyable event as we get to help others while working with one another,” Caden Cassady said.

During this event students from our school come to our ag workshop to assist in the blanket making. The students will work in a group with their friends as they begin trimming and tying the blankets. After students complete their blanket we add it to the ever growing stack.

This year we created more than 60 blankets for the hospital. This was thanks to the help and support from the community and the many volunteers. These blankets make a huge impact for the children at Riley. When these kids are having a rough day during treatment they are given comfort and hope to them during their stay at the hospital.

Logan Ireland
Co-Vice President 2025-26

Needy Family Shopping

Every year around Thanksgiving our FFA chapter helps out needy families in our community by shopping for them.

This is a small event where our members volunteer their time to assist others.

Our members meet at the ag room where we divide into two groups. These groups work amongst themselves to form a menu plan for two families in our community. After the groups plan out the meals we board a bus and head to Crawfordsville to shop for the families.

At the store the groups walk around and pick out the best items for their meal plan. The items chosen can be anything from a honey roast ham to sparkling grape juice. Typically we pick out a main dish, two sides, a desert and one other special item to be used for dessert.

“You can’t forget the desert,” is what Caden Cassady believes.

In addition to this meal the students always believe it is important to have enough for leftovers. It is always a goal for the students to see who can get the most without breaking the budget. This year the boys group was able to maximize their cost effectiveness and get the most.

“I always love winning the friendly competition,” Dawson Bell said.

Logan Ireland
Co-Vice President 2025-26

GRANT

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grow and develop in the future leaders,” said John Nagle, Board Chair, Indiana FFA Foundation.

Annually, 13 leadership conferences are offered to Indiana FFA members at the Indiana FFA Leadership Center. These conferences, which are facili-

tated largely by State Officers that reside at the Leadership Center, allow for a creative and fun way to help youth develop positive character traits and habits. Altogether there are more than 200 activities to engage FFA members statewide.

“We are thrilled for the opportunity created through Lilly Endowment’s investment in the Leadership Center. This

funding empowers us to tackle critical projects, enhance safety and accessibility, and position the facility for long-term success,” said Adam Sweet, Indiana FFA Leadership Center Director. “It marks a major step forward in ensuring the Center remains a premier space for leadership development in Indiana.”

The Indiana FFA Leadership

Center spans a 170-acre facility with a roughly 5.5-acre lake. The campus includes trails, woods, a creek, a large parade field, and a 33-element low ropes challenge course.

The Indiana FFA Foundation builds partnerships with industry, education, government and individuals to secure financial resources that support the efforts of the

Indiana FFA Association and the Indiana FFA Leadership Center, recognize FFA member achievements, develop student leaders and support the future of agriculture education for over 14,125 student members who belong to one of 233 local FFA chapters across Indiana.

For more information, visit the Indiana FFA Foundation at www.inffa.org/foundation.

WeBo chapter grateful for growth, learning

District Kickoff

District kick off was a fun event we attended in September and supported our two district officers, Chris Hall and Emma Hosfield. Members divided into groups with the other chapters and competed in fun leadership events led by district officers. Our chapter won the spirit award.

Career Development

Soils: Soils judging teaches the use, quality and potential use of land. This year's team of Maddy Sharp, Lucas Garland and Chase Buchanan were coached by Ellie Garst. Practice sites were hosted at Sharp Farms. The team took part in the Purdue Invitational and Area 6 contest. Everyone had fun while learning soil and land differences.

Livestock Evaluation: Western Boone County Livestock Team, comprised of Western Boone FFA and Boone County 4-H members, had the opportunity to represent Indiana 4-H at American Royal in Kansas City. The experience and opportunity were a wonderful way to start the fall break. Our farm trips were educational and informative to help prepare students for the contest later that weekend. The relationships within the team strengthened as the week went on and they bonded more over the love for livestock evaluation and all things animals. They left the contest satisfied with their score and full of thankful hearts for all the people and sponsors who helped make this trip possible.

National Convention

Western Boone FFA members traveled to Indianapolis for the 98th National FFA convention. Many members participated in the service projects, sessions, and leadership workshops. Also, Kasey Dulin was awarded the American Degree which less than 1% of

FFA members are awarded throughout the whole nation.

SOAR

Western Boone FFA members had the opportunity to attend Seeking Opportunities and Achieving Results (SOAR). Four members attended as campers four served as counselors. The members got to learn lots about setting goals and creating connections.

Leadership Conference

In November our members attended FIRE, a leadership conference at the Indiana FFA Leadership Center in Trafalgar. Our chapter had one member go along with three counselors.

Livestock Skillathon

The success and comradery of the chapter's livestock skillathon team is one of the highlights of the fall season. This year the skillathon team was extremely competitive and energetic. Our senior members who competed were: Lilly Beck-King, Jacee Gaines, Ashtyn Wagner, Dottie Wilson, and Eli Weakley. Our junior members were: Zoey Trent, Chase Buchannan, Owen Henry, Lane Merrill, Bristol Demaree, Lexi Wilt, and Cora Kistler. Many thanks to Jody Garst and Todd Smith serving as coaches. Senior team earned 4th place at state contest out of 154 total teams while Juniors earned 6th place finish from 81 teams.

Welding

Levi Hayden, Garrett Parks, Jaiden Shelton, Isaak Carson, Aiden Culley and Riley Parks represented our chapter in the district welding contest. The team of Aiden Culley and Riley Parks earned 5th place team in the beginner division, and the team of Levi Hayden and Jaiden Shelton finished 5th place team in the advanced division.

Fruit Sales Fundraiser

Fruit sales is a fundraiser for FFA students. Members gain sales experience by going around to friends, family, or others in the community and ask if they would like to buy fruit and other treats from you. Money raised from this fundraiser pays chapter activities throughout the year. An awards trip will occur as it was an incentive encouraging members to reach sales goals.

Crop Plot

This year's 35 acre crop plot we have here at Western Boone was planted by Kent Miller. Because last season's crop was corn, we decided to alternate and raise beans this year. Keystone Cooperative provided seed, and the donation was arranged by Ben Wiat. Soloman Farms harvested our crop. Proceeds will go towards contest/conference fees, chapter expenses, and other activities like National FFA Convention. The Western Boone FFA Chapter greatly appreciates everyone who volunteered and donated to the crop plot to make our harvest possible.

Alumni Chapter Renewal

Having an organized alumni association provides a formalized adult group to support Western Boone's FFA Chapter and agriculture education program. Like an athletic booster organization, the FFA alumni association can not only provide financial assistance and fundraising support, but they can also serve as a resource to identify experts who can provide classroom guest speaker expertise as well as support stronger student supervised agricultural experiences, making a stronger and more vibrant high school agriculture education program. It is intended to renew the Western Boone FFA Alumni Chapter in the coming months that was

vibrant many years ago. Please email Makayla Smith, Agriculture Instructor, makayla.smith@webo.k12.in.us, or Tony Carrell, Instructional Assistant, anthony.carrell@webo.k12.in.us, if interested in joining.

Parliamentary Procedure

The parliamentary procedure team of Dottie Wilson, Ashtyn Wagner, Maddy Sharp, Maddy Rawlings, Eli Weakley, Mae Wilson and Jacee Gaines competed in the district contest. Thanks to Sarah Correll for coaching. Congratulations on their 7th place finish.

2025 Officer Team

Many thanks to the 2025 Western Boone FFA officer team.

President - Dottie Wilson
Vice President - Emma Hosfield
Secretary - Ashtyn Wagner
Treasurer - Rylee Pelley
Reporter - Maddy Rawlings
Sentinel - Kyndal Dickerson
Chaplain - Maddy Sharp
Jr President - Eli Weakley
Jr Vice President - Corbyn Wilt
Jr Secretary - Caleb Keyes

2026 Officer Team

Western Boone FFA's future is looking bright as the 2026 officer team is excited to continue building on the chapter's success.

President - Maddy Rawlings
Vice President - Rylee Pelley
Vice President - Eli Weakley
Secretary - Caleb Keyes
Treasurer - Corbyn Wilt
Reporter - Kyndal Dickerson
Sentinel - Parker Miller
Historian - Lucas Garland
Jr President - Zoey Trent
Jr Vice President - Chase Buchanan
Jr Secretary - Kynadi Dickerson
Jr Reporter - Max Rawlings
Jr Sentinel - Lila Hall