



Summer 2010

Serving students in Ag Education



Old Yeller

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Coming Up

- OVATA Summer Conference—Klamath Fall, June 16-18
- Washington Leadership Conference—Washington, D.C.
- Oregon State Fair—Salem, August 27-30
- OVATA Fall Conference—October 9-10
- State Soils—Bonanza, October 12

Hannah Brause wins Teachers Turn the Key Award

They don't come with much more energy than Hannah Brause.

The AST Instructor from Astoria High School is quickly proving herself as a top notch educator and was selected as the 2010 OVATA Teachers Turn the Key award winner. When the announcement was made at the Oregon State FFA Convention, Ms. Brause brimmed with excitement. "You can't believe how much this means to me. To have my peers select me for this is really an honor."

Ms. Brause, who took the reins at Astoria High School three years ago, has seen multiple changes in her tenure there. She has taken the program from non-existent to one that has produced several state degrees as well as a great deal of support from both students and community. By incorporating science into the program, she has broadened the scope of the opportunities offered students. That is something that is not taken lightly by her students.

According to former student Alicia Keller, Brause has truly made a difference. "Without FFA, I don't think

I'd even be graduating. Ms. Brause has truly changed my outlook. Without her, I wouldn't be the person I am today."

With the Teacher Turn the Key

for young educators.

Brause is truly thankful to be a part of agricultural education. "Agricultural educators are among the most dedicated individuals you will



Hannah Brause poses with her FFA members just after the Astoria FFA Banquet.

Award comes a scholarship to attend the National Association for Agricultural Educators Conference in Las Vegas. The experience is a professional development dream come true

ever meet, and I am proud to be associated with such amazing professionals."

Delta Conference Workshop Offered at Summer Conference

Sam Herringshaw thought he had done all right as a teacher. "I could put two sentences together and give a speech. But when I went to Delta, I realized how good a teacher I really could be."

The AST instructor from Hermiston High School attended the Delta Conference, held at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, two summers ago. Along with several fellow teach-

ers from Oregon, he learned lessons about teaching that completely changed the way he delivered lessons. Lessons became more engaging, and according to Herringshaw, "My students haven't taken notes on lined paper since," noting the non-traditional methods Delta Conference incorporates.

With drastic budget cuts facing the entire nation, Delta Conference was

not immune and lost its funding for this year's conference. Fortunately, however, Dr. Kyle McGregor, the facilitator of the popular teaching conference, has agreed to put on a mini-version of Delta during the OVATA Summer Conference in Klamath Falls, June 16-18.

With a full day of Delta
See Page 4

“Nothing will work if you don’t.”—John Wooden, coached UCLA to 10 NCAA titles

The Battle of Misconception by Marty Campbell

I’ve fought the battle at least five times in the past year, and it ain’t been pretty.

The email comes: “I need to talk to you after school in my office.” I know exactly what my principal wants. It seems that parents are calling in a panic to know why their student has to buy a pig for a welding class. I respond with the same question.

Then the conversation goes round and round, me arguing the merits and the importance of the three circle approach to agricultural education, and my principal vehemently disagreeing. The last time around, he had the memo from Dr. Case, himself sitting on his desk, federal laws integrating FFA and SAE into the curriculum, and he still argued that I cannot make FFA part of “the class.” “Some parents can’t have animals” is inevitably uttered at some point during the conversation.

So the question is: Is my principal anti-FFA, or does he just misunderstand agricultural education? I think the latter. As a matter of fact, he misunderstands it less than he did a year ago, but the battle continues. And it isn’t just him. Parents, community members, and even fellow teachers truly misunderstand not only agriculture, but agricultural education, especially.

I am countering that in several ways. I have re-instated a strong advisory committee who is very interested in what we are doing through our AST program. The group includes not only traditional members, such as farmers and ranchers, but also college instructors, local agribusiness professionals, and government employees. I’ve strategically sought out those with a little political pull in the community and with the school board, as well. They are truly the stakeholders in our educational program, and I

have found that it is really important to have them on the side of our students and agricultural education.

In addition, I have put together an Alumni chapter that is small but powerful. They have accomplished some things that have offered our students opportunities not found in other academic areas. For instance, one student will attend WLC because of the Alumni chapter and some of their successes. They helped put on our banquet, which turned out to be a first rate affair, and the success has drawn several more members, as well.

The thing that both of these groups have in common is that they believe in what Agricultural Education, including FFA and SAE, can offer our students. They’ve either been members, or they have seen or employed former members, and they are believers. The more of those believers we cultivate, the more successful our programs will be.

My principal truly means well, and when I told him to name one bad thing FFA does for kids, he responded with the good it does. Our chapter has shown him that with the multitude of newsworthy activities in which they have participated. One example is our Farm Day, in which we invite all of Pendleton’s first through third graders to our land lab, and students man educational stations that teach students everything from swine production, to soils, to crops, and even rodeo. Students develop flyers to hand out at each station, and the rave reviews from teachers trickle their way to our building administration. Those are the types of landmarks that make believers.

I believe if we can truly integrate FFA and SAE into our classrooms, and use whatever tools we can, be it Alumni, Advisory Committees, or Professional Development, to help develop those students into the best they can be, we’re doing all right. And I know next time I get that ominous email, the battle will go even better than it did last time. Slowly, but surely, I’m getting him trained.



Summer Conference Schedule

Oregon Agricultural Education



Professional Development Partners

Wednesday, June 16

- 3:00-5:00 p.m. Registration
- 5:00-6:00 p.m. Dinner
- 6:00-7:30 p.m. OVATA Bus. Session I

Thursday, June 17

- 8:00-9:30 a.m. Business Session II
- 9:30-9:45 a.m. Break
- 9:45-10:45 a.m. Prof. Dev. Workshop I
- 10:50-11:50 a.m. Prof. Dev. Workshop II
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00-2:00 p.m. Prof. Dev. Workshop III
- 2:00-3:00 p.m. Communities of Practice Ideas Unlimited
- 3:00-6:30 p.m. Skills & Team Building Activities
- 6:30-8:00 p.m. Dinner
- 8:00-10:00 p.m. Yellow Dogs

Friday, June 18

- 8:00-9:45 a.m. Delta Conf. Workshop
- 9:45-10:00 a.m. Break
- 10:00-11:50 a.m. Delta Conf. Workshop
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00-2:45 p.m. Delta Conf. Workshop
- 2:45-3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:00-5:00 p.m. Delta Conf. Workshop
- 6:30-8:00 p.m. OVATA Banquet
- 8:00-10:00 p.m. Entertainment

Saturday, June 19

- 8:30-9:30 a.m. Team AgEd Meeting
- 9:00-11:30 a.m. Optional Delta Conference Workshop

Bring your great Ideas
unlimited!

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.”—Aristotle

One of the Most Important Needs People Have...

Greg Thompson, Oregon State University

In a few weeks, another school year will come to a close. As you say goodbye and anticipate a relaxing summer, be sure to set aside some time to reflect and take pride in what you have accomplished. Now is the time to acknowledge your efforts in planning and delivering great lessons, and providing learning opportunities for all students. The list of your successes goes on and on. You deserve the accolades, but we need to give them as well.

An essential aspect of showing appreciation is first to be grateful — and we have a lot of people to thank. Certainly, we need to thank our students for trusting us, for following our leadership in the classroom, and of course for providing us with some laughs and many reasons to be proud. Most of our students have done everything we asked and have performed to the best of their ability. Students deserve a big thank you and a promise of our continued support.

Search out faculty, staff, and administrators who work hard and have gone the extra mile to help you and your students. Our colleagues deserve our thanks for their vital part in our professional career. Many of them laughed with us, felt our frustrations, and acted as our sounding board. Some of them have become important resources as well as valued friends. Do not forget others who have served us, including the cooks, custodians, secretaries, counselors, aides, advisory committee members, FFA Alumni, and other vital members of the school, community and program. Finally, give a heartfelt thank you to your school administrators. They deserve your gratitude and acknowledgement of their hard work and support.

When you show gratitude, you will quickly realize just how many things people do to make your life easier, more productive, and more enjoyable. In addition, you will find that your rela-

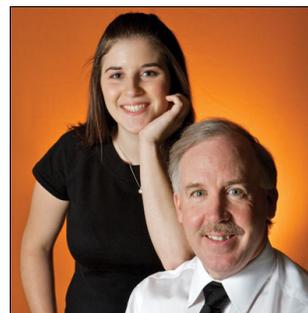
tionships will grow stronger, people will enjoy you more, they will not forget you, and they will know their contributions have been honored and valued. A sincere “thank you is a powerful tool that will return to you many times.

This is the time to reflect upon what you did right and well. It is a time for celebrating your hard work, efforts, and successes. It is a time to be thankful and to give thanks.

Teaching is the profession where dreams

are born. Keep the dreams alive for you and your students, and finish strong.

Dr. Greg Thompson and one of his protégés, Bibiana Gomes



Tough Times Call for Tough Teachers by Marty Campbell

By now, it should be fairly obvious that tough economic times are upon those living in the United States, maybe especially in the state of Oregon. With Governor Kulon-goski's mandated 9% across the board cuts to state agencies, many school districts have been faced with drastic budget cuts, and with those cuts, the precarious positioning of some Agriscience and Technology programs.

For many AST instructors, primarily those in rural areas with an agricultural economy, the fear of losing a program is minimal. However, with forecasts of state revenue reaching even greater shortfalls, that confidence can be a bit presumptuous, even in places with strong support for agricultural education. Therefore, it is necessary for agricultural educators to fortify their programs in order to protect and preserve perhaps the most valuable educational program there is.

With every academic program scrambling for every educational dollar, programs that are traditionally considered elective face a very real danger. Much talk of restructuring education in order to make the most of every dollar spent is a very real indicator that if

agricultural education intends to survive, it must truly demonstrate and market what it truly has to offer students, both as an elective program and a program with core academic ties.

According to Educational Resource Strategies, educational dollars must get the most bang for their buck, and that requires an entirely new vision for funding education. “Reaching new visions will require fundamental restructuring of resources and difficult trade-offs,” ERS claimed in a recent educational restructuring presentation.

Fortunately, agricultural education and agricultural educators are able to meet that restructuring and participate, nearly unscathed, in those trade-offs. For instance, in a push to restructure the actual occupation of teaching into a more high capacity job that integrates subjects across the curriculum, it is easy for agricultural educators to step up to the plate. How many AST instructors are certified in both Agriculture and Science? How many others can teach math, as well? How often

“It is important for AST instructors to inventory the diversity and quality of education they bring to the table and market that to their districts.”

do we integrate the Language Arts and Social Sciences into our classrooms?

Teachers whose job may otherwise be in jeopardy right now, are kept because they can teach an Applied Plant and Animal Science class for science credit or an Agricultural Mathematics class for math credit. Perhaps they are teaching an Ag Communications course for English credit, as well.

Agricultural educators truly have a great deal to offer in restructuring education. Schools may get more bang for their buck by hiring one teacher who can truly teach across the curriculum. As a strategic use of school resources, hiring or keeping an AST instructor is perhaps one of the most financially sound investments a school district can make.

It is important for AST instructors to inventory the diversity and quality of education they bring to the table and market that to their districts. It is important all of the time, but it is particularly important in economically trying times.

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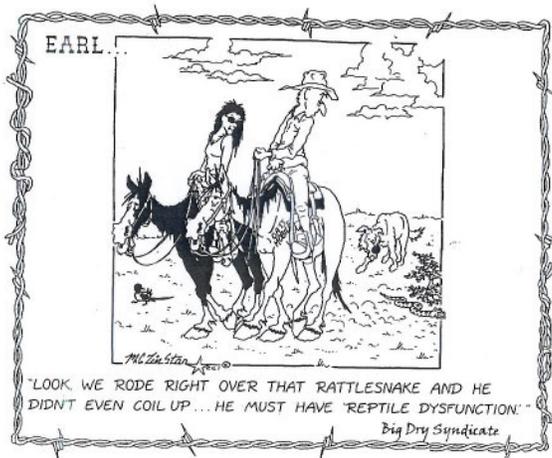
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We're on the web!

www.ovata.org



Delta, Continued

being offered on Friday and an optional half day offered on Saturday, OVATA members will be treated to some of the most talked-about professional development offered to instructors of agriscience and technology. But don't come hoping to develop championship CDE teams, although that could happen as a byproduct of becoming a great teacher.

According to McGregor, "Delta is not a conference where one learns the best strategies to train FFA teams for competition, to learn how to complete award applications, or to focus on specific FFA activities. Delta is a conference that focuses on the craft of becoming a better teacher and leader for your students, on articulating the value of your program to your key stakeholders, and building a complete agricultural education program that will be innovative and sustainable."

Buckskin Mice and Illiterate Cows by Marty Campbell

Tough or Dumb?

That is the Question

A fine line is drug through the dirt between tough and dumb. Jesse toed that line. He moved north about twenty years ago in order to work and send money back to his family down in Bolivia. To find a harder worker, a guy would be awful hard-pressed. The guy wasn't afraid to sweat, and he went about his chores with the determination of an irrigator killing snakes. He moved through obstacles like a bull through a porta-potty, and he could work longer than all of the rest of us combined. He really impressed me.

The only problem with Jesse's haphazard style of work ethic was that many of us were a little bit scared to be on the same chore as he was. If you were moving pipe, he was usually cranky about dragging you behind. If you were setting siphon tubes, he would look at you with disgust as he had finished three quarters of the stretch while you were still trying to get water flowing through one chunk of pipe. If a combine needed serviced, you'd better look out. A zerk wasn't safe if that guy was around, and if you happened to be in the way, he'd simply shove you out of the road and squirt you on the way by. Jesse could make the hardest workers look slow and lazy.

He wasn't just a farmer, though. Jesse could top off colts as good as anyone, and he had a gentle hand with a horse that would impress Buck Branaman. His gear was a little different, but the horses ended up being darned good mounts. That is the first place I saw Jesse's really tough streak.

The round pen was set up next to a barn. Most of the circle was made up of sucker rod panels, but its D-shape came from the one side that was simply made up of the barn wall. The roof of the barn came down to an eave that hung about 9 feet off of the ground. Jesse had gotten a colt saddled and was putting his first ride on him when that little booger come uncorked! He stayed right in the middle of that bawling beast all the way around the round part of that corral. However, when he got to the barn, the wreck began.

The first rafter simply hit him square in the forehead, knocking his baseball cap off and making the same sound a watermelon does falling off the back of a truck. The second rafter knocked three teeth out, and the third one dismounted him. As he lay there in the sand, he groaned, said something in Spanish, and climbed up wiping blood from his mouth. A few of us bystanders rushed over to help him. He pushed us aside, caught the colt, and climbed back on. Tough.

The next instance of tough came when he and I were moving a set of discs. Them boogers are heavy, but if two guys are wallering 'em around, you can get them where they need to be. The discs we were wrestling lay on top of a couple of railroad ties, and we both lifted at the same time. I am a bit puny, and I seemed to lose control of my end of the disc, dropping it and effectively leaving the entire weight of the implement in Jesse's hands.

That was more than he could bear. His end of the discs dropped, landing one sharp, round chunk of steel right in the middle of his pinky. I had never seen an appendage amputated so cleanly, so I think maybe I was in more shock than Jesse. He just jerked his hand back, said, "Ahh-ye," and winced. He shook it off, and it finally began to bleed. Jesse gently walked over to the pickup toolbox, dug around for a roll of black electrical tape, and taped over the nub left on the end of his hand.

"I got to make eet tight," he said painfully. I passed out.

The finger lay in the dirt until a dog found it, and Jesse still only has one pinky. I'm not sure which side of the line that episode sits on, but I know Jesse don't like me no more.

Ideas Unlimited—A Handbook to Assist Ag Teachers

Aaron Geiman uses an activity that allows his students to conduct a precision agriculture simulation on their school's football field. Before beginning this experiment, students are trained on how to use the needed equipment properly. Following their training, students are split into groups. Each group collects geospatial data of the non-turf grass plants growing on the field using Garmin GPS receivers. Once students have collected the data for their assigned one square-foot plot, the data is combined into a class set. Using the data, the students use colored markers to show the areas that have problems with weed density. Using this information, the students collaborate on how much herbicide is needed and where. They learn how a sprayer is programmed to spread the proper amount on each area, and conduct a survey on the costs of various herbicides. The activity is a way for students to learn about new techniques that are better for the environment while having fun. "This activity is applicable to numerous agricultural courses and topics," said Geiman. "It supports mathematics, science, technology, and communication curriculum standards, proving that agricultural education supports national and state academic assessment programs spawned from No Child Left Behind."