

Briefs for Ag Educators

The Center for Professional Personnel Development



Send Get Well Wishes to Javier at:

Javier Moreno
National FFA Center
PO Box 68960
Indianapolis, IN 46268
or by email at
<http://www.ffa.org/chapter/s/html/nationalofficers.htm>

Highlights:

Sites of Interest	2
AEE Graduate Courses	3
National FFA Week Celebration in PA	3
Act 48 Credits from Penn State	4
Leadership Resource	4
Announcements	5
Calendar	6

Getting Ready! – PSSA Handbook

Each year the Department of Education releases an Assessment Handbook to help teachers prepare their students for the PSSA. They are currently revising the format of the Assessment Handbooks. In the interim, the Assessment Handbook Supplement called **Getting Ready!** covers the essential information you need to know about the 2004 PSSA in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11. **Getting Ready!** is available in both math and reading and may make references to

information that is still relevant but contained in previous Assessment Handbooks and other PDE documents.

There are three important parts to **Getting Ready!**:

- * **Test Highlights.**
- * **Test Blueprint, Standards and Eligible Content.**
- * **Released Items and Rubrics.**

The release of this information on the PDE website is the first step to "taking the mystery out of the

(Continued on page 5)

New & Beginning Teacher Column

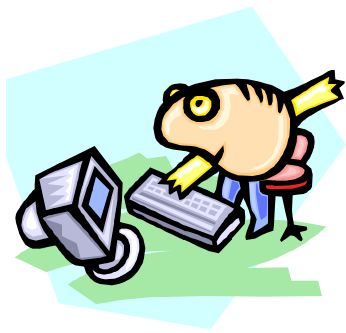
By David Bittner, PSU AEE Undergraduate Student

Joanna Wilson, who is surpassing the midway point of her second year as the agriculture instructor at Wilmington Area HS, is no stranger to the difficulties of being new to a program. "It really does get better," Wilson advises first-year teachers, "things will start to come more easily. I did not think that day would ever come, and things are still rough, but they are easier than they were last year." All agriculture instructors - young, old, and alike - are aware of the woes that first-year teachers face.

Wilson assumed leadership of the Wilmington Area program immediately following the 36-year tenure of her agriculture instructor, David Ward. Facing the challenges of new faces, old programs and, not to mention, her first job, Wilson has practically doubled the membership of the Wilmington Area FFA Chapter in only two years! When asked about the most frustrating thing that she had to put up with over the duration of the past year, she mentioned, "Trying to get one-on-

(Continued on page 5)

Sites of Interest



If you have a great website that you would like to share with other agricultural educators, please forward the information to Tiffany Hoy at tmr175@psu.edu

Fast Plants

Join thousands of teachers worldwide who use Fast Plants to make science come alive in their classrooms!

To Know a Plant, Grow a Plant
Plant a seed
In the mind and with the hand
Use the five senses
To engage and understand

To investigate: observe,
Measure, analyze, and
describe...
Harvest a Fast Plant seed
And make science come alive

The petite, hardy, fast-growing plants whiz through an entire life cycle in about 40 days, making them ideal for inquiry-based science investigations and for learning about plant biology.

The Fast Plants website has been reorganized to help teachers at all grade levels:

- Discover and download FREE grade-appropriate activities
- Download growing instructions and troubleshooting tips
- Learn about Fast Plants and plant biology
- Get ordering information for Fast Plants seeds and materials

For more information go to http://fastplants.org/home_flash.html.

Bottle Biology

Hands-on, eyes-on, noses-on, mouths-on, minds-on: If you combine science with a soda bottle, what do you get? Two liter soda pop bottles orbiting Earth with NASA might be one result. But did you know you can use bottles to create an ecosystem, explore the concept of niche, and model a lakeshore? You may have made a tornado in a bottle but have you used bottles to pickle your own cabbage? Have you made a bottle microscope, a bottle timer or bottle tweezers?

The Bottle Biology website, <http://bottlebiology.org/>, is full of ways you can use recyclable containers to learn and teach about science and the environment. The projects on the website promote science as a tool everyone can use to explore the world. These explorations can be integrated with history, art, music and other creative endeavors.

Out of the trash, into the classroom: You'll find the inexpensive materials you need for Bottle Biology in your trash can, backyard, supermarket, neighborhood park and recycling center.

AEE Summer Graduate Courses

The Department of Agricultural and Extension Education will be offering the following graduate level courses Summer 2004 (from June 14th to July 2nd). A series of different graduate level courses will be offered during Summer 2005 in an effort to help interested individuals secure coursework needed to complete a graduate degree. Interested individuals can obtain registration and enrollment information through Continuing Education at <http://www.outreach.psu.edu/CE/> or 814-865-3443. Information relative to graduate degrees offered in Agricultural and Extension Education can be accessed at <http://agexted.cas.psu.edu/> or contact Dr. Joan Thomson, AEE Graduate Coordinator - jthomson@psu.edu or 814-863-3825.

June 14 – July 2, 2004

301A Ag Admin. Bldg.

8:00 – 10:30 AM...AEE 501 – Foundations of Agricultural and Extension Education (3 credits) - Drs. Tracy Hoover - tsh102@psu.edu & Ed Yoder - epy@psu.edu, Required course

10:30 AM – 1:00 PM...YFE 597(550) – Program Development and Evaluation (3 credits) – Dr. Rama Radhakrishna – brr100@psu.edu, Program Development and Evaluation core

2:00 – 4:30 PM...AEE 465– Leadership Practices: Power, Influences and Impact (3 credits)- Dr. Phyllis Adams – padams@psu.edu, Leadership and Communications core



Courses will be offered from June 14 – July 2.

National FFA Week Celebration in Pennsylvania

A nationwide event, National FFA Week, February 21-28, acknowledges the organization's commitment to education, leadership and career success, while also recognizing its business, educational and civic partners from local, state and national communities. The 2004 National FFA Week theme is "FFA...Living the Legacy."

The Center for Professional Personnel Development would

like to share your chapter's unique celebration ideas. Activities might include formal banquets, proclamations, school activities, fundraisers, bulletin boards, billboards, visits with the State FFA Officers, etc.

Please send photos, narratives or stories to Tiffany Hoy at 323 Ag Administration Building, University Park, PA 16686 or by email to tmr175@psu.edu.



ACT 48 Credits from Penn State



Information found on the web at <http://www.psu.edu/registrar/act48/actframe.html>.

If you have taken a course for credit from Penn State and would like to use it towards Act 48 Credits/Hours you must go to <http://www.psu.edu/registrar/act48/actframe.html>. From there you will have two categories to select - credit or non-credit. Click on whichever one fits your needs. It will then give you two choices - current student or former student - read the descriptions to see which fits your criteria. Once you make your selection it will ask you for your Penn State account information - this is your Penn State email address without @psu.edu on the end and your password. (If you never received this information when you took the course, you can hit create an account and complete the information.)

Once you enter your Penn State account information, and hit return - your courses that can be forwarded to PDE should appear. Select which courses you would like to report by clicking on the left column. Then hit submit or send to PDE. You will then receive a note that states, "courses have been reported on (date sent)."

NOTE: Penn State does not automatically send your courses taken for credit to PDE. You must complete the above task each time you complete a course.

Remember, you need to have paid for your course and have received a grade before attempting to report credits to PDE. If you are unsure - you can go to elion and check your transcript.

Leadership Resource

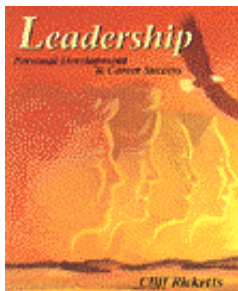
By: Jessica Landis, AEE M.Ed Candidate

Leadership, Personal Development, and Career

Success. Written by Cliff Ricketts, PhD. Published by Delmar Learning, Copyright 1996.

<http://www.delmarlearning.com>

Textbook cost is \$65.95



Description of Textbook:

The first comprehensive text to cover the skills and qualities necessary for leadership, personal development and career success! Defying the tired cliché that leaders are born and not made, this energetic text explains and demonstrates the leadership skills and abilities that are most

valued in agriculture industries, helping reader to identify and enhance their strongest traits. Readers will learn the fundamentals of public speaking, FFA Parliamentary Procedure, group dynamics, interpersonal skills and workplace readiness. A generous number of activities, along with objectives and questions, motivate readers to put these into action. Plus, a financial management chapter details how to successfully manage, budget and invest money with innovative ideas on accumulating personal wealth through agricultural enterprises.

New & Beginning Teacher Column continued from page 1

one time with a student to work on his/her project book. It seems like when I try to do it, another student is right there waiting for me too. I feel bad that I do not get the time to help one student for more than a minute or two."

Wilson's advice comes from the heart and, with it, she exhibits her genuine concern for serving students through the field of

agriculture. Wilson's advice for a first-year teacher who is sick of it all, getting ready to throw in the towel and start over from scratch is to "learn to deal with things one day and one task at a time. You will always have something go wrong, but you learn to expect it and deal with it as it comes while realizing that, when it is over, you will be a stronger person and a better teacher because of it."



*Joanna Wilson,
Wilmington Area HS
agricultural instructor.*

Getting Ready! cont'd. from page 1

PSSA." They will also provide regional workshops in partnership with the Intermediate Units to help as many teachers as possible prepare for the 2004 PSSA using this material and others. In the spring after the test, the Department will be releasing additional information about the 2005 PSSA and some of the

enhancements they are making to create a stronger and more instructionally-sensitive test. Stay tuned!

If you have any questions or concerns please call an assessment staff person at 717-787-4234 or email at 00testing@psupen.psu.edu.



Announcements

Isaac Bucher, a junior in agricultural education at Penn State, recently was recognized at the National Young Farmer Spokesperson for Agriculture at the Young Farmers National Convention in Indianapolis, IN this past December.

Isaac is a graduate from Gettysburg Area HS, where he began his public speaking career. As a member of the Battlefield FFA chapter, Isaac improved his speaking skills through the local and state CDE's. He continues to use his skills in the Penn State Collegiate FFA as chapter Parliamentarian.

Isaac wants to be a career that lets him use his leadership skills and communication abilities. "I would really love to pursue a career in teaching." As a teacher, one of his goals would be to reverse our society's sometimes negative image of agriculture.

On January 23, Brandon Hill (Warfordsburg FFA Chapter President), Christy Hill (Warfordsburg FFA member) and Erin Anderson (Chambersburg FFA member) were in an automobile accident. Brandon and Erin were uninjured but Kristi was life-flighted to Hershey Medical Center. Christy is progressing well, but still has a long road ahead of her. She has suffered extensive facial and skeletal injuries and will require a substantial time to recover. Brent Dahlhaus, Warfordsburg FFA Advisor, and the Hill Family would like to extend their thanks to everyone for their support and prayers.

Cards can be sent to:
Christy Hill
c/o Warfordsburg FFA
Southern Fulton High School
13083 Buck Valley Road
Warfordsburg, PA 17267

We're on the Web!
See us at:
<http://agexted.cas.psu.edu>

PENNSTATE



**The Center for
Professional
Personnel
Development**

323 Agricultural
Administration Building
University Park, PA
16802

PHONE:
814-863-7876

FAX:
814-863-4753

E-MAIL:
tmr175@psu.edu

Editors: Thomas
Bruening & Tiffany Hoy

**2004 Governor's
Institute –
Integrating
Math into the CTE
Areas
July 19-23
Holiday Inn,
Grantville**

Calendar – [\(items underlined are due dates\)](#)

[February 2...Recordbooks due \(regional coordinators\)](#)

- February 3-5...PYFA Convention, Willow Valley, Lancaster, PA
- February 5-7...PA FFA Recordbook Judging Event, Super 8 Inn, State College
- February 9-14...CTE Week, State Capital Rotunda
- February 10...GET UP Workshop – Biotechnology, PSU Meats Lab, University Park
- February 12...GET UP Workshop – Biotechnology, PSU Dubois
- February 14-15...ACES Leadership Conference, Marriott, Harrisburg (*M. Brammer*)

[February 15...National FFA Scholarship Applications due](#)

- February 17...GET UP Workshop – Biotechnology, Berks Co. Extension Office
- February 19...GET UP Workshop – Biotechnology, PSU Harrisburg
- February 21-28...National FFA Week
- February 24...Meet Your State Officers Night, Hoss's (*M. Brammer*)

February 27...PA FFA Board Mtg., PSU, 301A, 6:30 PM

March 2...CCC Area CDE's, Clearfield HS, 9:30 AM

March 2...AFY Area CDE's, Northern York HS, 4:00 PM

March 8-12...PSU Spring Break

March 14-16...SLLC, Holiday Inn, Grantville (*M. Brammer*)

[March 15...American FFA Degree Applications due to CTSO Office \(C. Day\)](#)

- March 18...CCC Area CDE's, Central Mountain HS, 9:30 AM
- March 18...AFY County CDE's, Northern York HS, 4:00 PM
- March 18...Wild about Water Fowl Workshop, Middle Creek Manag. Area, 4:30 PM
- March 19...AG ED Advisory Committee Mtg., Ramada Inn, State College, 10:00 AM
- March 19...PAAE Board Mtg., PSU - 301A, 7:00 PM
- March 25...PAAE Eastern Region Mtg. & SOCS, Brownstown CTC, 5:45 PM
- March 25...Environmental Education Workshop, PSU – 301A, 5:00 PM
- March 27...PSU College of Agricultural Sciences Open House, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- March 29...Berlin Public Speaking & Parli. Pro. CDE's, Berlin, 9:00 AM

[April 1...Proficiency & Entrepreneurship Applications due \(regional coordinators\)](#)

- April 1...PAAE North Central Region Mtg., Aungst's Rest. – Mill Hall, 5:00 PM
- April 2... PA FFA Board Mtg., PSU, 301A, 6:30 PM

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901, Tel 814-865-4700/V, 814-863-1150/TTY.