



# BRIEFS TO AG EDUCATORS

October 2001, Volume X, Issue 2

## NEW/BEGINNING TEACHER COLUMN

by: Tracy Hoover, PSU Assoc. Professor



On behalf of the Center for Professional Personnel Development (CPPD) and the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at The Pennsylvania State University, I would like to

extend greetings and well wishes for a successful year of teaching. All new and beginning agricultural science teachers will receive a letter inviting them to be a participant in a new and beginning teacher program sponsored by the CPPD. Our department receives funds from the state department of education to provide professional development activities, programs and events for teachers of agricultural education, one of which is a program for new and beginning teachers. We have defined new and beginning teachers as individuals who are in their first to third year of teaching.

As coordinator for the new and beginning teacher program, I'd like to share with you some of the activities, services and programs, we have planned for this year. Based upon a 2001 needs assessment we have identified several topics for seminars and workshops specifically requested by new

*(continued on page 3)*

## IN THIS ISSUE...

**PAGE 2... SITES OF INTEREST**

**PAGE 3... 2 PA FFA MEMBERS MAKE FINAL FOUR**

**PAGE 4... BROOKHART TO COMPETE FOR H.O. SARGENT AWARD**

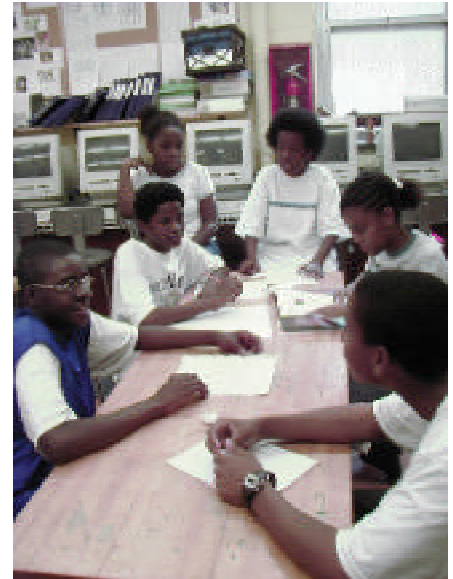
**PAGE 5 .. INTRO.... JESSICA KELLIGHER, HOOVER RETURNS TO AEE**

**PAGE 6... CALENDAR, AIM HIGH**

## Its Own Community

*Walter Biddle Saul HS, Philadelphia, PA*

A sprawling 100 acre tract and 650 agriculture students in the Roxboro section of the state's largest city are just a few of the things that make the W. B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences unique. The school's size coupled with a friendly, supportive atmosphere makes it seem like its own community.



According to Rachel Vecchio, an enthusiastic senior, many families influence their children to apply to Saul. Rachel is an animal science major who shows hogs and also has hopes of becoming an Agricultural Science teacher. Rachel boasts a remarkable family history, since only 10% of those who apply to Saul are accepted. She has a twin who also attends the school, her two older siblings gradu-

ated in 1998 and 1999, and at least two of her cousins graduated from Saul. Rachel feels that this gives the school its community atmosphere since many others also have siblings at the school and are children of alumni. Rachel spent her summer volunteering at the school, assisting with almost 350 summer students who represent about 10% of the school's applicants. The

*(continued on page 4)*



# Sites of Interest

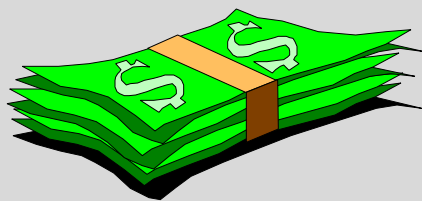
## New AAAE online location

The AAAE web site has moved. It is now being maintained at the University of Florida. Jim Dyer continues to be the webmaster.

If you have the old site bookmarked, it will still provide you the link to the new web site, but you can eliminate one step in the process by saving the site as a bookmark at the following URL: <http://aaaeonline.org/>

## Dollars for SAE Projects

SAE Grants available now! Let your students know they can apply to obtain a \$500-1,000 grant for their SAE's! Have them fill out the application and return to the National FFA Center postmarked by November 5, 2001, and test their business plans with other FFA members across the country. Winners will be notified in early December. These grants are sponsored by Merial. Visit <http://www2.ffa.org/programs/sae/html/saegrants.html>



## Biotechnology

Penn State Cooperative Extension has unveiled its new Biotechnology web site at <http://biotech.cas.psu.edu/>. This site attempts to keep the public updated on the issues surrounding biotechnology and genetically modified organisms. The link "Useful sources" connects to information from universities, industry and government agencies relating to bioethics, consumer information, environmental issues and specific crops.



- Other links will enable the site's visitors to submit questions or comments.

## Grants On line

Grant information is available at eSchool News Online for up-to-the-minute grant programs, funding sources, and technology funding information. The site is dedicated to advancing technology integration in education. Teachers can find the latest news about grant programs, some of which are ongoing programs, and sign up for a free e-mail newsletter. Visit <http://www.eschoolnews.org/funding/>

## Global Issues

The Center for Global Food Issues of Churchville, VA has several interesting articles available on present environmental issues and policies such as water quality and sustainable agriculture. The "Articles" are in html and only require your regular browser, but the "Key Publications" are in PDF format, which require Adobe Acrobat reader. The website is <http://www.cgfi.org/articles.htm>



## Ag Ed Resources

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators is part of the Discovery Channel's website and offers an extensive listing of Ag Ed resources under her Agricultural Education link at the top of her subject access list: <http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/>

## Briefs Are On-Line



Get your *Briefs* newsletter at <http://agexted.cas.psu.edu/center.html> under newsletters.

## 2 West Snyder FFA Members Make Final Four

The Agricultural Proficiency Awards recognize students for their accomplishments at the local, state and national levels and are sponsored as special projects of the National FFA Foundation. The top four applicants in each proficiency area are selected as national finalists, and will compete for honors at the National FFA Convention in October. All finalists also are eligible to compete for a week long International Experience Tour to Costa Rica provided by the national sponsors as part of the special projects they support.

The judges followed strict

criteria and determined which applicants have achieved the most, reached the highest levels of skills and made the greatest



progress toward an agricultural career or enterprise as a result of the agricultural education program, their supervised agricultural experience program and their involvement in the FFA. Of the over 1,300 applications, two West Snyder FFA

members qualified to be in the final four. Melissa McWilliams will compete to be recognized at the top Dairy Production individual in the placement category, while James Wright will work to achieve top honors in the Poultry Production area. Congratulations on a job well done.

For more information about other categories and proficiency awards check out the following website:  
[www.ffa.org/programs/proficiency/html/cutomindex.html](http://www.ffa.org/programs/proficiency/html/cutomindex.html).

*( New/Beginning Teacher Column...con't from p. 1)*

and beginning teachers. In a workshop this summer at the Governor's Institute for Agricultural Science Careers, beginning teachers identified the most convenient times to hold these seminars and workshops. Therefore, we will attempt to deliver professional development programs during the following times: concurrently with the Fall Conference for Leadership and Professional Development, the morning of the Mid-Winter FFA Convention, at the State Record Book Contest and the Summer PAAE Teachers' Conference. Participation in these programs could translate into Act 48 or aca-

demic credit hours. The CPPD is also working closely with PAAE to collaborate on activities and programs that support new and beginning teachers.

Beyond the workshops and seminars, we are willing to visit you and your program. In addition to our faculty, we have several veteran agricultural education teachers working with the CPPD to provide assistance and guidance to new and beginning teachers. These individuals are willing to visit your program, discuss ideas and/or provide assistance to help enhance your agricultural education program and FFA

chapter. Additionally, as a participant you will receive periodic information from me relative to teaching and learning, new and interesting curricula and instructional materials, workshop/seminar information and other information that can help you with your program.

We look forward to working with you and hope you will consider being a participant in the program. Please contact me if you have any questions.



*(It's Own Community...con't from p. 1)*

summer session is mandatory for the incoming students who must pass preliminary courses before entering in the fall.

“W. B. Saul is Philadelphia’s best kept secret. We work with students in an environment of trust,” said Scott Geller, the summer session coordinator. Today Saul’s rigorous curriculum offers 16 specialty areas, an increase from the four original areas (turf, animal lab, crop production, and large animal production) the school offered when it first opened in 1943. During the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades, students must rotate through all 16 curricular areas, spending 6 weeks in each area. As juniors and seniors, they are able to specialize. The faculty also are very specialized and teach only one area, such as dairy and swine while another teacher teaches small animal science.

Many students graduate from Saul with a skill level that enables them to enter well-paying jobs in their own city.

This is especially true of the students who major in animal



W.B. Saul’s Students Compete at the PA Farm Show

sciences, since there is a demand for those skills in research labs. Other areas of excellence are Career Development Events and the Philadelphia Flower Show. All grounds maintenance is done by students, including the one-hole golf course. Saul FFA is the largest chapter in the world, and the students are very active in the Philadelphia County Fair in May, which serves as a culmination for several activities.

Saul has many unique facilities, such as the barns that house horses, sheep, hogs, and a llama (to protect the sheep), a tree

nursery, an apiary, a small farm where produce is grown, extensive greenhouses, and an aquaculture facility with Talapia and Japanese Coyfish. Computer aided design is taught in the agricultural engineering class. According to principal Tom Scott, “one of the school’s strengths is the relationship with the community, which is in part due to the active alumni, parents, and friends.” These relationships bring unique opportunities, such as an internship at Longwood Gardens for 5-6 students each year. Scott explained that there are students who have participated in the trade missions to Puerto Rico to sell heifers with PA Agriculture Secretary Sam Hayes. In addition, students have traveled to Japan a few years ago and are planning to travel to Mexico in December. “We can offer these programs due to the excellent teachers,” noted Scott.

## Brookhart to Compete for H.O Sargent Award

The H.O. Sargent Award was established to honor Dr. H.O. Sargent. This award is given to recognize FFA members and non-members who are active in supporting and recognizing cultural diversity.

Kendra Brookhart, Greenwood FFA Chapter will be traveling to the National FFA Conven-

tion to compete against three other individuals. Her competition will include an interview process where she will explain how she promoted cultural diversity within her school and community. We wish Kendra the best of luck!

Dr. Sargent, Federal Agent for Agricultural Education for

African Americans, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., is responsible for the inception of the New Farmers of America who believed that the time was ripe for an organization of African American agricultural students similar to the Future Farmers of Virginia.

## Introducing...

### Jessica Kelligher



Jessica Kelligher realized her drive to become a teacher was

sparked when she spent the summer working at a national wildlife refuge. "Through the experience, I realized that I wanted to educate people about agriculture and its impact on our society." Following her summer internship, Jessica obtained Agricultural and Extension Education and Wildlife and Fisheries Science Degrees in May 2001 from Penn State.

When Jessica reflects on her time of student teaching she realizes that the experience taught her that "teachers are more than educators, but they are social workers, counselors, guiders, 'police' and parents." During the recent terroristic

attacks on the US, Jessica has used her experience in helping students and friends to cope with such an imaginable event.

Jessica is employed at the Central PA Institute of Science and Technology in Centre County. The diverse environmental program encourages and challenges students to apply skills in the following areas: forestry, fisheries, wildlife, shop safety, aquaculture, hydroponics, landscape design and plant science. Even though Jessica has just begun her teaching career, she has set high goals for herself and the program. "I plan to increase enrollment to a full-time program which will include the community's interests and needs. Through these interests students will develop their SAE programs."

Please help us in welcoming Jessica Kelligher to our Agricultural Education Family!

## Hoover Returns to AEE

Tracy Hoover returned to the Agricultural and Extension Education Department on June 1<sup>st</sup>. She is now an associate professor with primary responsibility for teacher education and leadership development, teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses. Tracy will be a part of the Center for Professional Personnel Development and work with agricultural educators and the New and Beginning Teachers Program.

Tracy received her Ph.D. in Agricultural and Extension Education and M. Agr. in Animal Science from Penn State, and her B.S. in Animal Science from Delaware Valley College. After leaving Penn State, Tracy was a tenured faculty member in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication at the University of Florida. Prior to assuming her faculty position at Florida, she was on staff at Penn State Agricultural and Extension Education. Earlier in her career, Tracy taught agricultural science at Big Spring HS for three years.

She moved to State College with her husband, Ron, and their two daughters. Ron has assumed a staff position in the Department of Agronomy where he will provide major leadership for the College's efforts in sustainable agriculture.

### I AM THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I am the flag of the United States of America. My name is *Old Glory*.

I fly atop the world's tallest buildings.

I stand watch in America's halls of justice.

I fly majestically over institutions of learning.

I stand guard with power in the world.

Look up and see me.

I stand for peace, honor, truth and justice.

I stand for freedom.

I am confident.

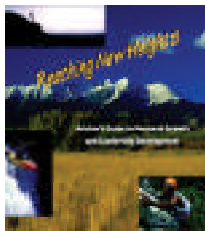
I am proud.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS.....**

- October 9 ..... PAAE Western Region Mtg,  
 October 10 ..... PAAE Southcentral Region Mtg., Forbes Road JSBS, 6:00 PM  
 October 11 ..... PA FFA Foundation Mtg., Penn Stater, 10:00 AM  
 October 11 ..... Fall Conference for Leadership & Professional Development, Penn Stater  
 October 20 ..... Floriculture Workshop for teachers at Kutztown HS  
 October 24-27 ..... National FFA Convention, Louisville, KY  
 November 1 ..... PAAE Eastern Region Mtg., Twin Valley HS, 6:00 PM  
 November 9 ..... State Keystone Degree Evaluation, PSU  
 November 15 ..... PYFA Award Applications due to Denise Sanner, Kutztown Award Chairperson  
 Nov. 28 - Dec. 1.. National YFEA Institute, Falls Church, VA  
 November 30 ..... FFA Association Board Meeting, PSU, 6:30 PM  
 December 4..... Schools will be notified of Farm Show Exhibits by C. Weller  
 December 4..... Farm Show Pre-registration - Voc. Horticulture Exhibits, due to CTSO Office

**TEACHER DEADLINES.....**

- October 16 ..... Farm Show Landscape Display Entries & Sketches due to CTSO Office  
 October 30 ..... Farm Show Market Swine Ear Tag Number must be on, Rate of Gain Entries  
 Due to Farm Show Office  
 November 1 ..... Farm Show Window Exhibit, Ag Education Display & School Demonstration  
 Entries due at CTSO Office  
 November 2 ..... Keystone FFA Degree Applications due to regional coordinators (Project books  
 required)  
 November 5 ..... Farm Show Entries due to Farm Show Office (dairy, poultry, breeding animals)  
 November 20 ..... Keystone Star Applications due at CTSO Office (Regional Coordinators only)  
 December 1..... Program of Work & Budget for National Chapter Award Program due to CTSO  
 Office  
 December 15..... Reconfirm Entries for Farm Show market swine, market steers, market lambs -  
 Farm Show Office

**Aim High**

“Reaching New Heights: An Advisors Guide to Personal Growth and Leadership Development” is now available for \$15 through the National FFA Organization. This resource fully integrates

all of the components of the FFA leadership continuum, presents the same philosophies taught at FFA conferences like MFE and ALD, and contains more than 250 pages of lesson plans, activities and student worksheets. Developed and pilot-tested by master teachers

from across the country, this collection of materials is sure to become a cornerstone resource. Whether you’re looking for a tool with which to teach a leadership course or just information to help train your officer team, this CD is a good place to start.

**Briefs to Ag Educators** is a publication of the Center for Professional Personnel Development, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, The Pennsylvania State University, 323 Agricultural Administration Bldg., University Park, PA 16802. Editors: Tiffany Roberson, Carol Hodes and Thomas Bruening. Phone: 814-863-7876; Fax: 814-863-4753; email Tiffany at tmr175@psu.edu

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