The 2017-18 State FFA Officers say #ICanWeWillSCFFA!

Philip Rhodes, President
Parents: Tim and Lois Rhodes
Home Chapter: Callaham Falls FFA
Current School: Clemson University
SAE: Outdoor Recreation, working with a non-profit group named Faith Hunters for Youth that takes youth in the community into the outdoors to provide them with an opportunity they may not have had.
Hobbies: Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting.
Future plans: After he graduates from Clemson University, he plans to teach Agriculture at the high school level in South Carolina. Then he hopes to start a family farm.
Lasting Contribution to SC FFA: He wants every student to realize that the FFA has a place for them and that they can do whatever they set their minds to.

Allison Harman, Secretary
Parents: Al and Tammy Harman
Home Chapter: Gilbert FFA
Current School: Sophomore at Clemson University
SAE: Beef Cattle Production
Hobbies: Showing beef cattle; officer of the Clemson Collegiate Farm Bureau; singing in the Clemson University Choir; advocating for the agriculture industry
Future Plans: She wants to earn a Master's degree in Cattle Genetics and Reproduction
Lasting Contribution: She hopes that during her year of service, she can inspire members to be active and take advantage of the many opportunities available in FFA!

Lauren Kirkley, Vice President
Parents: Tim and Barbara Kirkley
Home Chapter: McBee FFA
School: McBee High School
SAE: Community Service
Hobbies: Volleyball
Future Plans: She plans to attend Clemson University to major in Sports Communications. Her eventual goal is to become a Sports Broadcaster.
Lasting Contribution to SC FFA: She wants her lasting contribution to the FFA to be to make an impact, not just an impression.

Matthew Bonnette, Vice President
Parents: Tim and Patti Bonnette
Home Chapter: Lexington-Richland 5 FFA
Current School: Clemson University
SAE: Small farm management
Hobbies: Hunting and being outdoors
Future plans: He wants to teach agriculture at the high school level.
Lasting Contribution: His desire is for all students to feel at home in the FFA.

Samantha Parker, Vice President
Parents: Dama and Matthew Parker
Home Chapter: Pendleton FFA
Current School: Pendleton High School
SAE: Equine Management
Hobbies: Horseback Riding
Future Plans: She wishes to pursue a career in agriculture
Lasting Contribution to SC FFA: She wants to help members be successful as they pursue their passions

Christle Tindall, Vice President
Parents: Olin & Jane Tindall
Home Chapter: Edisto FFA
Current School: Freshman at Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College
SAE: Floriculture / Working in a Florist
Hobbies: Clogging, volunteering and camping
Future Plans: She would like to become an Agriculture Teacher.
Lasting Contribution to SC FFA: She wants to encourage members to find their passion and grow, while staying true to themselves. “Be that somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody.”

Follow your State Officers
Facebook: SC FFA Officers
Snapchat: scffaofficers
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#ICanWeWillSCFFA
90th State FFA Convention
Contributed by Keith Cox

SC FFA was "Transformed" at Clemson University with over 900 members, advisors and guest attending the 90th South Carolina FFA Convention. The convention was held in the Brooks Center for Performing Arts on June 7 - 9, 2017.

After the State FFA Officers opened the First General Session, the Mauldin JROTC posted the colors. Emily McDaniels from McBee FFA sang the National Anthem, and Katie Martin, 2015-16 State FFA President gave the invocation. The convention was formally welcomed to Clemson University by Dr. George Askew, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences and Vice President for Public Service and Agriculture.

Also during this session, tribute was paid to a man that truly transformed the SC FFA, Mr. Frank Stover Sr., Executive Director of the SC FFA Foundation, who recently passed away. Nine outstanding chapters were recognized during the National Chapter and Governor’s Citation presentations. Individual FFA members were recognized for receiving thousands of dollars’ worth of scholarships for their hard work in school and with their Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE). Appreciation was expressed to the SC Young Farmers and Agribusiness Association, National FFA and the SC Fertilizer and Agrichemicals Association for their continued support of the SC FFA. Hoan Do addressed the crowd as the keynote speaker for the evening. Hoan’s engaging style and ability to share important life lessons in a way that resonates with people has earned him the Verizon Wireless Motivator Award.

Thursday morning began with members competing in State CDE events that were conducted on the Clemson University campus. Those not competing in CDE’s had the opportunity to attend a workshop presented by National FFA Vice President, DeShawn Blanding.

The Second General Session was held on Thursday afternoon, where the convention attendees were introduced to eighteen state officer candidates, which is a record number. The SCAAE recognized the “Teach Ag” students and presented them with a gift. These students have shown a serious interest in teaching agriculture in the future. State FFA Degrees were awarded to 213 members. The keynote speaker for the session was Dr. Steve Brown, the National Advisor and Chairman of the National FFA Board of Directors.

At the Third General Session held on Thursday evening, ten members were recognized as candidates for the American FFA Degree. This is the highest degree the National FFA offers. The Honorary State FFA Degree was bestowed to fifteen adults that have supported the South Carolina FFA Association. In addition, FFA members were recognized for their Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) projects during the “FFA Stars over South Carolina presentation”. The session ended with a keynote presentation by National FFA Vice President, DeShawn Blanding. After the session, everyone was invited to Pickens County Career and Technology Center for a night of ice cream, games, music and friends.

The convention concluded on Friday morning with the Fourth General Session, where thirty-seven chapters received awards for having 75%-100% membership. On behalf of Hugh Weathers, South Carolina’s Commissioner of Agriculture, his staff made a special presentation as one chapter, that registered ten or more members, was randomly selected to have dinner with the Commissioner. The session also included the honoring of sixteen members as State Proficiency Award winners and concluded with the announcement of six FFA members who will serve as the 2017-18 State Officer Team.

The 2016-17 State FFA Officer team is to be commended for their commitment, optimism and excellence. It was a great year and a very successful state convention.
CDE Winners, Scholarships, and National Chapters

**Creed Speaking**
- Ralph Chandler Middle
- Maggie Ballew – Advisor
- Daniel Reaux

**Upper Creed Speaking**
- Dixie Chapter
- Billy Mann

**Extemp. Speaking**
- ATEC Kershaw Chapter
- Katie Gilson – Advisor
- Johnathan Marthers

**Job Interview**
- Nation Ford Chapter
- Lee Pettigout – Advisor
- Cooper Plyer

**Greenhand Knowledge Bowl**
- Calhoun Falls Chapter
- Nancy McCann – Advisor, Kaleb Gambrell, Ann Marie Brooks, Branson McClain, Seth Southnerland, Brodie Evans

**Parliamentary Procedure**
- Manning Chapter
- Alonzo McDonald and Michael Haynes – Advisor, Paisley Lesaine, Hannah Ridgeway, Madison Sexton, Shanya Gamble, Marie Joyner, and Anna Bench

**Meats Evaluation**
- Dixie Chapter
- Calvert Sherard – Advisor, Kaleb Gambrell, Ann Marie Brooks, Branson McClain, Seth Southnerland, Brodie Evans

**Prepared Public Speaking**
- McBee Chapter
- Pat Earle – Advisor
- Emily McDaniel

**Farm Business Management**
- Aynor Chapter
- James Roberts – Advisor, Joshua Johnson, Cameron Shelley, Luke Altman, Christian Johnson

**Miss SC FFA Scholarship**
The Batesburg-Leesville FFA Chapter has hosted a statewide FFA pageant for young ladies who are members of the organization. The contestants are judged not only on their beauty, poise and attire, but also on their knowledge of FFA, SAE and how FFA contributes to agriculture. For their efforts, the winner of the pageant has been awarded a $500 scholarship. Ag South Farm Credit sponsored this year’s scholarship. The 2017 Miss FFA is Carolyn Barrett of the Strom Thurmond Chapter.

**Mr. FFA Scholarship**
For many years, the Pendleton FFA Chapter has hosted the Mr. FFA Scholarship Competition; open to all male South Carolina FFA members. The competition is based on an FFA member’s involvement in their chapter and community, their SAE, and their overall leadership abilities. The Pendleton Farmers Society provided the $500 scholarship. Your Mr. FFA for 2017 is Philip Rhodes of the Calhoun Falls FFA Chapter.
National Chapter Gold Chapters and Governors Citation Winners

The National Chapter Award program recognizes FFA chapters that successfully complete an annual Program of Activities that includes a series of activities designed to encourage its members to grow as individuals, to work as part of a team, and to serve others.

Nine chapters were honored for receiving a Gold rating. Three chapters were awarded the Governor’s Citation for exceptional activities in the areas of Growing Leaders, Building Communities and Strengthening Agriculture.

The Citations were awarded to the Nation Ford Chapter in the area of Growing Leaders, the Center for Advanced Technical Studies (Lexington – Richland 5), Chapter in the area of Building Communities and the Seneca Chapter in the area of Strengthening Agriculture.

Mr. Wesley Harris, Secretary/Treasurer of the South Carolina Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, Mr. Larry Rogers, Farm Loan Specialist - USDA Farm Service Agency and William C. Stanley, President of the South Carolina Rural Rehabilitation Corporation presented the chapters with a check for $1000 on behalf of SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation.

The Gold chapters honored were Buford High School, Calhoun Falls High School, Crestwood High School, Dixie High, Manning High School and Pickens County Career and Technology Center. The SC FFA Foundation presented each of the Gold Chapters with funds to attend the National FFA Convention.

Nation Ford
Wesley Harris, SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, William C. Stanley President of the SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, Lee Petitgout, Agriculture Teacher, Cooper Plyler, Chapter President and Larry Rogers, USDA-FSA

Lex – Rich, 5
Wesley Harris, SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, William C. Stanley President of the SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, Kevin Sox, Jessica Jones, Agriculture Teachers, Bridget Wilson, Chapter President, Sim Asbill, Agriculture Teacher and Larry Rogers, USDA-FSA

Seneca
Wesley Harris, SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, William C. Stanley President of the SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, Christina Addis, Agriculture Teacher, Garrett Powell Chapter President and Larry Rogers, USDA-FSA

Seven Members Receive A National FFA Scholarship

Matthew Bonnette
Lexington Richland 5 FFA
MetLife Foundation – $2,000.00

Emily Cleveland
Thurmond FFA
CSX – $4,000.00

Avery Hatcher
Lake View FFA
America’s Farmers Grow Ag Leaders/Monsanto Fund – $1,500.00

Misty Henderson
Thurmond FFA
Chevy Trucks/Pendarvis Chevrolet – $1,000.00

Caroline Johnson
Lexington Technology Center FFA
Georgia M. Hellberg Memorial – $5,000.00

Brandon Pugh
Thurmond FFA
Chevy Trucks/Pendarvis Chevrolet – $1,000.00

Mariah Swygert
Batesburg-Leesville FFA
Rabo AgriFinance – $2,000.00

Individual FFA award

The Individual FFA award is used as an incentive to encourage Agricultural Education students to maintain high academic standings in school and recognize those who are well rounded in the FFA, their Supervised Agriculture Experience, Leadership, and, most importantly, Community Service. The state winner is awarded a $500 scholarship. The winner is Mariah Swygert from the Batesburg-Leesville Chapter and her advisor is Libby Templeton.

Hilton V. Rogers Scholarship

The SC Fertilizer and Agri-chemicals Association annually presents a scholarship in honor of Hilton V. Rogers, Marley Long of the Newberry FFA Chapter received the scholarship this year. Her Advisors are Holly Havrid and Kip Beam.
State Star Farmer – Josh Bobo

Contributed by Tim Keown

The State Star Farmer was awarded to Josh Bobo from the Belton-Honea Path FFA Chapter.

Bobo is the part owner of Ashley Farms in Belton, SC. Ashley Farms is a 400-acre diversified livestock farm that raises beef cattle, goats, chickens, horses, and hay. Bobo is well trained to run all of the farm equipment, including the tractors, hay equipment, and sprayers. In his enterprise, Bobo’s main passion is building the beef herd. He is currently using a registered Angus bull to cross with Charolais brood cows. His many duties on the farm include fence building and repair; working in the farm’s hay and forage production area; and the day to day operation of the farm. Through his earnings on the farm, Bobo has been able to purchase 35 meat goats. He made this decision so that he could diversify his operation and maximize his profits.

Bobo serves as the President of the BHP FFA Chapter and has participated in Soil Judging, Livestock Evaluation, Tool ID, Tractor Driving, and Wildlife CDEs. He is a rising senior at BHP High School and has plans to attend Clemson and major in Agricultural Education and become an agricultural education instructor. Bobo’s FFA Advisors are Glenn Stevens and Ben Woody.

State Star in Placement – Hunter Dove

Contributed by Tim Keown

The State Star in Agricultural Placement was awarded to Hunter Dove. Dove is employed by Clemson University’s Simpson Research Station located in Pendleton, SC. The Simpson Research Station is the state’s beef cattle research station. His duties there range from feeding calves, baling hay, feeding minerals, maintaining cattle health, moving cattle to new pastures, fence repair, and general farm labor. Dove has used his wages to invest in his own entrepreneurship beef cattle enterprise, where he has purchased three heifers of his own.

Dove is an active FFA member at Pendleton. He has competed in Tractor Driving, Livestock Evaluation, and Wildlife CDEs. He has also participated in Leadership FFA Camp and Potential Officer workshops. In addition to FFA and his job, he participates in the Town of Pendleton beautification project and West Anderson Church of God litter pickup. Dove is also a member of the National Cattlemen’s Association, the Polled Hereford Association, and Anderson County Farm Bureau. Dove’s FFA Chapter advisors are Blake Berry and Ashley Priest.

State Star in Agribusiness – Philip Rhodes

Contributed by Tim Keown

The State Star in Agribusiness was awarded Philip Rhodes from the Calhoun Falls FFA Chapter. Rhodes, along with his father, started a non-profit organization called Faith Hunters for Youth. This is a group of outdoorsmen that take underprivileged children hunting and fishing alongside an adult. In the process, they share Christian values with those students. Rhodes cultivates a portion of his family’s property to plant wildlife food plots to provide these children a safe place to hunt. Faith Hunters for Youth hosts a wildlife dinner each year as a fundraiser for the organization. Rhodes helps to clean and cook the game for this event. He teaches younger students the importance of wildlife management and also how to identify common wildlife found in South Carolina.

In addition to FFA, he is a member of the Calhoun Falls Sporting Clays shooting team. In this role, he teaches others proper safety of skeet shooting and gun handling.

Rhodes credits much of his wildlife management skills to his Natural Resources class at Calhoun Falls Charter School. He competed in Parliamentary Procedure, Tool ID, Greenhand Knowledge Bowl, attended Washington Leadership Conference, and currently serves as the State FFA President. Rhode’s FFA advisor is Nancy McCannon.
The Tradition Continues
Contributed by Steve Sanderson

Many FFA chapters from across the state have the tradition of attending summer camp. This summer, over 600 FFA members from across the state attended the SC FFA camp in North Myrtle Beach. The camp offered three weeks of “traditional” camp and one full week of Leadership Camp.

Campers participated in a variety of camp activities including a beach trip, kayaking, low ropes, high ropes, paintball, pool, athletics, cardboard project, and color war. This year’s “Night Life Activities” included the Myrtle Beach Grand Prix, Legends in Concert, and Myrtle Waves Waterpark.

Campers were able to show their FFA spirit as the blue and gold teams competed in a variety of contests during the “color war.” The “color war” began with Blue and Gold teams competing in beach games in the morning, while afternoons were spent competing in kayak races, water sports, paintball and the legendary lip-sync competition among many other activities.

This year’s cardboard project challenged campers to build a “Treasure Chest” from nothing but cardboard, duct tape, and a dowel rod. The chests were then tested by seeing how many “bars of gold” they would hold.

The SC FFA Camp at Cherry Grove has been a South Carolina tradition since 1957, and this tradition still lives strong in lives of FFA members from across the state.

ArborOne Farm Credit Sponsors Aim-At-Ag
Contributed by Keith Cox

Each year, the Aim-At-Ag Sporting Clay Tournament generates funding for the South Carolina FFA Association and the South Carolina 4-H. Last year’s tournament was held at the Black River Sporting Clays in Kingsstree and was very successful, generating over $40,000 which led to contributions of $20,000 to both the SC FFA Association and the SC 4H.

ArborOne presented the check for $20,000 to the South Carolina FFA Association during the SC FFA State Convention. The funds are utilized to support the functions of the SC FFA Association throughout the year.

The 2017 event was held at Back Woods Quail Club in Georgetown, SC in September. Once again, the event was a huge success.

ArborOne’s continued support of the SC FFA Association has provided numerous leadership opportunities for young people throughout the state as well as some local chapters.

Visit their website at www.ArborOne.com
South Carolina FFA Loses a Legend
Contributed by Billy Keels

The South Carolina FFA lost a legend. Mr. Frank R. Stover, Executive Director of the South Carolina FFA Foundation, passed away on May 20, 2017.

"Transformed" was a common theme for the FFA in 2017 and "Transformed" is the best word to use to describe what Mr. Stover did for the FFA in South Carolina.

His career began in 1953 where he served as the Agriculture Teacher and FFA Advisor at Pelion High School. Under his leadership, the Pelion FFA chapter was very active and received many awards for outstanding achievements. A highlight of his accomplishments was having a student being selected as a National FFA Officer. At the time, this was only the third person from South Carolina ever to hold such an honor.

In addition to his work with his students, Mr. Stover also believed that learning is a lifelong process. Therefore, he established a strong community adult program through the Pelion Young Farmer Chapter, which was very active with members receiving many awards and rendering valuable service in the community. The chapter remains active today.

Mr. Stover’s success in the classroom, as well as his leadership ability, did not go unnoticed. In 1965, he was hired by the Office of Vocational Education, S.C. Department of Education to serve as Executive Secretary for the S.C. Association of Future Farmers of America and the S.C. Association of Young Farmers of America. In this position, Mr. Stover was responsible for conducting the activities and awards programs and planning and conducting events at the state level for both organizations.

In 1969, Mr. Stover was promoted to the position of state supervisor of agricultural education and advisor for S.C. Association of Future Farmers of America and the S.C. Young Farmers of America. He served in this capacity until retiring in 1984.

Perhaps Mr. Stover’s most noted accomplishment occurred near the end of his distinguished professional career. It was at that time that Mr. Stover realized the need to establish the S.C. FFA Foundation, which would serve to seek and manage funds to support the South Carolina FFA Association. As a result of his leadership and foresight, in 1975 Mr. Stover began the process of forming and chartering the South Carolina FFA Foundation. Bylaws for the South Carolina FFA Foundation were adopted in 1985, and Mr. Stover was named as the Executive Director / Treasurer of the newly created SC FFA Foundation, where he continued to perform this role in a highly efficient and productive manner until his passing. Under his leadership, he managed the assets and investments of the foundation to produce hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, which are utilized to conduct FFA activities throughout the state, as well as provide needed support to Agricultural Education and reduce the burden of taxpayer dollars.

In 2012, in recognition of his dedication to the South Carolina FFA and the thousands of young people in Agricultural Education, Mr. Stover was presented the Order of the Palmetto, the highest honor given to a civilian in the State of South Carolina. Ms. Frances Price, as Chair of the South Carolina Agricultural Commission, presented the award at the first General Session of the 85th Annual South Carolina FFA Association State Convention at Clemson University. Ms. Price presented the award on behalf of Governor Nikki Haley.

Mr. Stover resided in Pelion, SC, where he and Betty raised their family, which consists of two daughters; Joyce and Ann and a son, Frank, Jr. Frank, Jr. has followed in his father’s footsteps to serve as an outstanding agriculture teacher at Pelion High School.

Frank R. Stover was an excellent example and role model for the youth and citizens of South Carolina. The South Carolina FFA Association greatly will miss the man who truly transformed the FFA. His life will leave a long and lasting legacy of achievements for our state and the hundreds of thousands of FFA members whom he affected.
Formation Of South Carolina High School Programs Of Agricultural Education

2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Hughes act, which provided for high school agricultural education. In honor of this historical moment, Dr. Phil Favel, Agricultural Education Professor at Clemson University is providing a series of historical accounts of the “birth” of Agricultural Education in South Carolina. This article is the second in this series.

The evolution of the high school system in South Carolina nearly coincided with the progress and development of Agricultural Education within the State. Not until 1907 did the State legislature authorize the formation of accredited high schools, and then only in districts with a minimum population.

In 1914 an experienced Clemson Cooperative Extension agent, J.M. Napier of Darlington County, possibly became the first full-time public school teacher of agriculture in South Carolina. Napier, a former instructor of Agronomy at Clemson College was assigned to the Darlington County Experiment and the task of teaching agriculture in the upper elementary grade levels within the five consolidated schools of Darlington County. Napier visited each school on a rotational or circuit basis among the five participating schools involved during the 1914-15 school year experiment. Those schools were located in the communities of Antioch, Auburn, Dovesville, High Hill, and Mechanicsville with a total of 115 boys enrolled. The second school year of the Darlington County Experiment, 1915-16, added two additional teachers, H.L. Reaves and E.H. Pressley, to work under the supervision of Napier. Their official title was listed as Assistant Demonstrator in Agricultural Education. The number of schools being served increased from five to 14 the second year.

Building upon the legislation provided in the South Carolina Toole-LaGrone Act of 1916, W.W. Smoak of Walterboro, and V.E. Rector of Darlington, introduced the Smoak-Rector Act of 1917 to “Provide for the Teaching of Agriculture in the Public Schools of the State” as a further attempt to encourage the teaching of agriculture in the public schools. Funding for twelve teachers of agriculture prior to the Smith-Hughes Act were hired by the provisions of this act. The federal money provided by the upcoming Smith-Hughes legislation further set the tone for the future of Agricultural Education programs in the public schools and would quickly overshadow the South Carolina Smoak-Rector Act.

Between the fall of 1917 and January 1918, thirteen programs in 13 different counties began operation in South Carolina under the Smith-Hughes program of agriculture. A list of those first 13 Smith-Hughes programs and teachers is shown at the conclusion of this article.

In actuality, these initial programs were 13 groups of schools, as South Carolina used the itinerant-teacher or circuit plan where the agricultural teacher traveled between several schools on a rotational basis. For example, C.S. Folk’s headquarters at Wagener provided a hub for his weekly work. Within a 10-mile radius of Wagener, Folk also taught classes in Salley, New Holland, Bethca, and Kitchens Mill. Work in the Black schools was first performed in five community schools in Marlboro County by G.W. Pegues and in five schools of York County by R.J. Crockett.

Thomas M. Cathcart, a 1915 Clemson College graduate from Winnsboro, who began work in Anderson County on October 1, 1917, appears to be the first Smith-Hughes teacher of agriculture in South Carolina. The first year, Cathcart taught in Pendleton High School, Zion, Lebanon, Walker-McElmoyle, and Clemson-Calhoun schools.

To fulfill a federal requirement of the Smith-Hughes legislation, Clemson College began a search for a State Supervisor of Agricultural Education in early 1917. That search concluded and Mr. Verd Peterson was hired in July 1917 and held that position for the next 29 years. Peterson devoted much of his first six months of employment visiting various counties and school districts throughout the State for the purpose of promoting the formation of agricultural programs within the schools. Peterson reported visiting the counties of Aiken, Anderson, Chesterfield, Colleton, Darlington, Greenville, Hampton, Lancaster, Laurens, Marlboro, Orangeburg, Richland, Spartanburg, Sumter, Union, and Williamsburg. One must understand that during the 1917-18 year, there were additional schools offering Agricultural Education courses simultaneously under state support that did not meet the requirements set forth by the federal Smith-Hughes legislation. One year later during the 1918-19 school year, the Agricultural Education programs expanded to 20 white high schools and five Black schools under Smith-Hughes support along with 32 schools in 13 counties receiving state funds to support programs not yet meeting the federal guidelines by the Smith-Hughes legislation.

The positive results of the Darlington County Experiment, the Smoak-Rector Act, and the financial support of the subsequent Smith-Hughes Act expanded the view and future of Agricultural Education in the South Carolina public schools.

In the upcoming issue of AgriBiz, we will examine the Clemson College Agricultural Education program.
Clemson University Host the 2017 SC Agricultural Teachers Conference

Contribution by Billy Keels

The 2017 South Carolina Agricultural Education Teachers Conference was held in July at Clemson University.

Participants of the conference were housed at the newly renovated Best Western / University Inn. The hotel also served as the location for the opening session.

The first general session focused on three major initiatives for 2017-18. The group was introduced to nine areas of certifications that are now available for Agricultural Education students. The certifications are offered through CEV multimedia. Glenn Perryman, regional representative on CEV was on hand to answer any questions.

Teachers were also informed that they will receive free access to online recordkeeping through AET for one year. After which, they will have the opportunity to purchase access for a minimum fee. SCFFA Executive Secretary Keith Cox, discussed the use of AET with South Carolina FFA Students SAE’s and how it can be tied in to FFA applications. Mary Wilson, a representative with AET was on hand as well, to answer questions.

A third focus area for the upcoming year is teacher supply and demand. Dr. Cathy DiBenedetto, Agricultural Education professor at Clemson University, reviewed the current and future demand for agriculture teachers in South Carolina. She also informed the group that South Carolina was selected by National FFA to be a STAR State and received an $8,000 grant to develop strategies for teacher recruitment and retention.

The remainder of the conference was focused on providing educational programs for the teachers in attendance to prepare them for the coming school year. Teachers had an opportunity to choose from a variety of workshops, which covered such topics as, Growing Microgreens, Biofuels, Electrical Control Systems, Rainfall Simulators, Digital Imaging, Turf Equipment Operation and School Gardens.

Always a highlight of the conference is the the SCAAEE Banquet. This year’s banquet was held at the beautiful Chattooga Belle Farms in the mountains of the upstate. The facility provided a backdrop of breathtaking views as the SCAAEE presented awards and recognition to deserving teachers from across the state for their success in the classroom as well as recognition of those who provided support to Agricultural Education in South Carolina.

The South Carolina Agricultural Educators Conference is held annually to provide in-service to Agricultural Educators to ensure that they are kept up-to-date with developments in both education and the agricultural industry.
Tommy Harmon Named Distinguished Teacher

Contributed by: Tim Keown

Tommy Harmon, recently retired agricultural educator at Pelion High School, was named the 2017 Clark Woods Distinguished Teacher. The South Carolina Association of Agricultural Educators (SCAAE) gives this award during their statewide conference, which was held in Clemson, SC.

His peers, who are from all corners of South Carolina, selected Harmon for this prestigious award, which proves how far his leadership and influence ranges. Harmon is the perfect candidate for the award due to his excellence in the classroom as well as his student’s success outside of the classroom.

According to his colleague and longtime friend, Frank Stover, Jr., “When Mr. Harmon came to teach alongside me at Pelion, it was only then I understood just how good of an agriculture teacher he was. He is a wealth of knowledge about agriculture and he was able to effectively pass that knowledge to his students. Tommy loved to work on our chapter farm. He was able to pass that passion for farming to his students. He loved his students and they loved him in return.”

This award honors Clark Woods, who was a longtime agricultural educator at Hillcrest High School in Simpsonville, SC. The recipient of this award must exhibit a passion of teaching young people about agriculture. Harmon embodied all of those philosophies that made Clark Woods a legendary teacher.

Harmon taught high school agricultural education courses for thirty-eight years in Abbeville and Lexington Counties before retiring in 2017.

Speaker of the House of Representatives
Jay Lucas Receives Parris Agricultural Leadership Award

Representative and Speaker of the House Jay Lucas, Hartsville, SC, who represents State House District 65 including Chesterfield, Darlington, Kershaw, and Lancaster Counties, was presented the John W. Parris Agricultural Leadership Award by the SC Association of Agricultural Educators at their recent conference held in Clemson, SC. The award was presented to Speaker Lucas by W. Pat Earle, Agricultural Education Instructor at McBee High School, on behalf of the agricultural educators group.

“Speaker Lucas demonstrates superb leadership on behalf of the Agriculture community in South Carolina as a member of The House of Representatives since being elected in 1999,” Mr. Earle said. “The Speaker is a great friend and supporter of Agricultural Education and the FFA,” he emphasized. He has championed legislation that has had a lasting impact on the Agriculture programs throughout South Carolina his entire time in the House and was instrumental in moving Agriculture Education administration to Clemson University.

Speaker Lucas was instrumental in securing state appropriations for significant improvements to the State FFA Leadership Center near North Myrtle Beach. He has also played a major role in the passage of legislation in support of Clemson University, the SC Department of Agriculture, the State Forestry Commission and the SC Department of Natural Resources. After serving as Speaker Pro Tempore, 2010-2014, he was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives in 2014 where he continues to serve today.

After graduating for the University of South Carolina in 1979, Speaker Lucas received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of South Carolina in 1988. He has served as the attorney for Darlington County and city Judge for Hartsville. He is a practicing attorney and Partner with the firm of Lucas, Warr, & White.

“A recipient of the Honorary FFA Chapter Degree from the McBee FFA Chapter and the Honorary State FFA Degree from the SC FFA Association, Speaker Lucas was awarded the Honorary American FFA Degree by the 600,000-member National FFA Organization in 2015,” Mr. Earle said.

Speaker Lucas and his wife, Tracy Ann, have one son, Will.

The John W. Parris Agricultural Leadership Award is the most esteemed recognition presented by the South Carolina Association of Agricultural Educators. This award was established several years ago by the association and named in honor of Mr. Parris of Columbia, SC, a nationally recognized leader in Agriculture and Natural Resource Conservation with more than 50 years of professional service.
Al Gray
Contributed by Steve Sanderson

Al Gray graduated from Clemson University with a BS in Agriculture Education in 1982 and completed his Masters in 1983. He began his teaching career in Lancaster County at Buford High School. He then moved to Anderson County where he served the students of Pendleton High School for many years. His teaching endeavors continued to Lakewood High School in Sumter, Chester County Career Center, and Darlington County where he taught at Hartsville High School and ended his career at the Darlington County Institute of Technology. Al completed a total of 34 years of teaching the students of South Carolina, where he and his students received numerous awards.

Mr. Gray also served the SCAAE for many years as the Executive Treasurer of the organization. In addition, he served as the Young Farmer Advisor in each county in which he taught. Mr. Gray was one of the first teachers to introduce Aquaculture into his program, and he was one of the first to implement bio-fuels production into his curriculum. Mr. Gray always kept the educational experiences of his students first and foremost.

Barry Burdette
Contributed by Tim Keown

Barry Burdette began his teaching career at Crescent High School in 1983. He then taught at Blue Ridge High School for three years. He was recruited to be the lead horticulture teacher at the Roper Mountain Science Center where he grew the Agricultural Education program and was forced to move to the Golden Strip Career Center for the increased laboratory space. He finished his career at Woodmont High School for a total of thirty-three years of service to the profession.

During his long career, he had over fifty State Degree recipients, one American Degree recipient, and was highly competitive in FFA CDEs, especially Forestry and Land Judging. Burdette was named Teacher of the Year multiple times for the different schools he taught in, and was 2nd Runner-Up for Greenville County Teacher of the Year.

Burdette has a B.S. and Master’s in Agricultural Education plus thirty hours of coursework in Horticulture and Turfgrass, all through Clemson University. One of his career highlights was teaching for eight years alongside one of his former students, Matt Rollins, at Woodmont High School.

Calvert Sherard
Author: Tim Keown

Calvert Sherard began his professional career as a Clemson Extension Agent. He remained in Extension for twelve years before moving to his home county where he became the Agricultural Education Teacher at Calhoun Falls High School for eleven years, two years at Abbeville County Career Center, and seven years at Dixie High School.

During his teaching career, Sherard had over a dozen American FFA Degree recipients, over one hundred SC state degree recipients, seven state FFA Officers, earned a Gold FFA Chapter multiple times, a Three Star National Gold Chapter once, and eighteen State Championship FFA CDE Teams.

Before retiring, Sherard created the “America’s Corn” FFA Project where he collected a soil sample from all fifty states. He then planted popcorn seeds in a mixture of all soil samples. He harvested the corn, packed the seeds in a small packet, and gave away the packets to FFA Chapters at the National FFA Convention. The goal was for each chapter to return home and plant the corn, just like the secretary’s line, “where ever corn is grown,” in the FFA opening ceremony.

Sherard holds a B.S. in Animal Science and a Masters in Agricultural Education, both from Clemson University.

Gilbert “Chip” Lewis
Contributed by Steve Sanderson

Gilbert Lewis graduated from North Carolina State University with a BS in Agriculture Education in 1975 and completed his masters in 1988. Lewis taught in North Carolina for 34 1/2 years and then came to South Carolina to be the agriculture teacher at North Myrtle Beach High School in Horry County.

Lewis then had the opportunity to move to Dillon County where he taught at Dillon Technology Center and at Lakeview High School. Lewis had the opportunity of serving students in both North and South Carolina for over 41 years. He took pride in training his students in the area of agriculture mechanics and soil science. Lewis always understood that he was training the next generation and he always saw the potential in every student that he came in contact with.

Lewis served as the advisor for the Dillon County Young Farmers and was a member of the SCAAE.

Tommy Harmon
Contributed by Tim Keown

Tommy Harmon, of Lexington, SC, recently retired after thirty-eight years of service to South Carolina Agricultural Education. Harmon began his teaching career at Calhoun Falls High School and then moved to his home county and served thirty-one years at Lexington Applied Technology Center before teaching for three years at Pelion High School.

Highlights from his teaching career include: twelve American Degree recipients, over fifty state degree recipients, twelve state FFA officers, over twenty state winning CDE teams, four state star award winners, and eight regional star award winners.

Harmon served the Ag. Ed. profession in a multitude of ways beyond the classroom. He was a SCAAE Officer for five years and he also sat on the FFA Board of Directors. Harmon has been the recipient of numerous teaching awards during his career.

Harmon holds a B.S. and a Master’s Degree in Agricultural Education plus thirty more hours of degree work, all from Clemson University.
South Carolina Young Farmers
Tour Historic Lexington County
Contributed by Tim Keown

A crowd of 258 SCYFAA members, advisors, sponsors, and their families, swarmed to Lexington County for the annual SCYFAA Summer Tour. All of the Lexington County Chapters collaborated to plan the tour. Members of the Spring Hill Chapter led the efforts for the registration of all of the guests and meal planning.

The Friday tour included stops at Riverbanks Botanical Gardens and a tour of the State Farmers Market. The day ended with a delicious meal at the Phillips Market Center and greetings brought to the attendees from Spring Hill Advisor, Kevin Sox and SCYFAA President, Tim Kelley.

The Saturday tour stops included a tour of the Delano Kneecie farm in Pelion, Mercer Winery in Lexington, WP Rawl Farms in Pelion, and ended with a delicious lunch at the Mid Carolina Electric Co-Op. A ticket was drawn at the luncheon for a $1,000 cash prize.

The Lexington County Summer Tour was educational, well planned, family friendly, and will be remembered by all who attended. Sumter County Young Farmers will be hosting the Summer Tour in July of 2018. Make plans to attend this event!

SCYFAA Awards Scholarships
Contributed by Tim Keown

The South Carolina Young Farmer and Agribusiness Association offers assistance, through scholarships, to students who have chosen to attend a college or technical school in order to prepare for a career in Agriculture.

Each year, a designated number of scholarships will be reserved for those students who are currently attending or are accepted to Clemson University. Scholarships will also be available to those students who are currently attending or are accepted to a technical college or other college or university that offers a study in an agriculturally related field.

Mariah Swygert – Batesburg-Leesville FFA - $1,000.00
Marley Long – Newberry FFA - $1,000.00
Hunter Dove – Pendleton FFA - $500.00
Amarillo Nivens – Clover FFA - $500.00

Make plans to join us for the SCYFAA State Convention!

Dates: January 19-20, 2018
Location: Isle of Palms, SC
Site: Wild Dunes Resort

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