

The FFA Update

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Tomales FFA

March 2017

North Coast Region Spring Meeting—Haylee Furlong

Four Tomales FFA members made the long trip to Fortuna to attend the North Coast Region Spring Meeting and speaking contests. Bella Sandoval and Preston Costanzo competed in Creed on March 21st. Preston placed 6th place and will be an alternate at state if one of the top 4 candidates are unable to attend the speaking contest in Fresno. Jeanette Furlong also competed at region and placed third in Extemporaneous Speaking. She will compete at state in April. On March 22nd,

Haylee Furlong and Bella Sandoval were delegates at the North Coast Spring meeting where they voted on the 2017-2018 NCR officer team, as well as, new amendments to the state constitution. Jeanette Furlong, Sophie O'Conner and Lauren Nunes received their state degrees later in the day. Jeanette and Sophie received regional proficiencies for their S.A.E. projects. Jeanette will move onto state for her proficiency. Jeanette Furlong was elected NC Region President. A big congrats to Jeanette and

all her accomplishments over the weekend; we are excited to see her work to come in this new year!

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Ag Industry—Abby Spaletta

As of March 6 2017, Sonoma County's Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District has announced its largest planning agenda for the next 15 years. Last Tuesday, the district officially began its "Vital Lands Initiative", which means that the the dis-

trict will hold five meetings in the next month gather contribution from the public on the best ways to conduct preservation of the county's farmland.

The Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District was established back in 1990, and

has spent a little over \$300 million (in tax dollars) to care for over 100,000 acres of Sonoma County land. This acreage makes up around 10% of the county. The purpose of the new initiative is to show the district how to direct their money in keeping the

land safe for the next decade and a half, and determine priorities for how it will be spent. The district hopes that this new plan will assist in land-conservation efforts made by the county.

Alumnus of the Month—Nadia Soto

Our alumnus for this month is Joe Moreda Jr. Joe attended THS from 2002-06. Many of his older friends encouraged Joe by speaking of great leadership opportunities and amazing activities/ experiences. Another factor that encouraged him to join was he grew up around his family's dairy and wanted to follow the footsteps of past generations of agriculture, something he was proud to do. Joe attended Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he majored in Dairy Science with an emphasis in Dairy Products Technology, minored in Agricultural Business and received a Bachelor's of Science degree in December 2010.

How do you see FFA benefitting the lives of young students?

FFA is a great program for young people to help develop skills and assets that can make lifelong impacts. It offers so many different programs that students can cater to their strengths while pushing their comfort zones at the same time. Teamwork, public speaking, leadership, community service and public education are just some of the aspects/benefits which can be attributed to FFA. It helps to both prepare students for college and the real world at the same time, and can open up opportunities to some kids who may not even know they are interested in agriculture or any related field of industry. Connecting with peers who have similar interest can also lead to lifelong friendships and working partners. Whether an FFA member is showing animals at the local fairs, competing in leadership competitions, attending conferences and meet-

ings, or helping with community service activities, he or she is helping to make the world a better place, broadening their skillset, and helping prepare themselves for life after high school.

How will or how has AG impacted your life?

Being a member of FFA helped to reassure my passion for the agriculture industry and affirm that that was the direction I wanted to go with my life. While at the time I did not specifically know that I would go into the Dairy Products Manufacturing industry, FFA did assist in narrowing the desired career scope to agriculture in general. Also, competing in leadership contests and project competitions forces members to put themselves in situations that might be nerve-racking and uncomfortable at the time, but down the road they will realize that it was all in the best interest of growing and making them a better person. A funny thing about FFA is that sometimes it takes a person perhaps years to fully grasp the appreciation for the intention of the program as a whole. Finally, FFA can help build an impressive resume for any member looking to get into college or trade school or enter the work force.

What was your favorite memory or experience in FFA?

My favorite memory from FFA has to do with one of the most important benefits that the program offers, connections. When I was a junior, I went to the State FFA Conference and our hotel rooms were adjacent to St. Helena FFA's

rooms. A couple friends and I went over and introduced ourselves to them and we found out that we had a lot more in common than just being members of FFA. Throughout the entire trip, we did everything with them, from riding to the conference, to eating meals, to hanging out at night at the hotel. At some point, the topic of "where are you planning on going to college" came up, and it turns out that two of the guys (who happened to be twins) were also planning on attending Cal Poly. At the end of the trip we exchanged contact info and promised to keep in touch. Little did we know at the time, these two brothers would become some of my best friends. The memories we have made together from the time at that conference to today are countless. The three of us did end up going to Cal Poly, joined Alpha Gamma Rho (the National Fraternity for Men in Agriculture) where we were freshmen and became roommates our sophomore through senior years, went on trips, joined clubs and played intramural sports. Although we live an hour and a half apart, and it's been six years since we graduated from Cal Poly and 12 years since we first met at FFA State Convention, we still get together a couple times a year and talk on the phone all the time. They are lifelong friends and together we shared many accomplishments, memories, and also made many new and mutual friends and contacts. If it wasn't for us becoming members of FFA, it's possible that none of this would have ever happened.

Recipe of the Month-Shamrock Shake—Kiara Bush

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups vanilla ice cream
- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 10 drops green food coloring
- 1 teaspoon peppermint extract
- Whipped cream (optional)
- 1 maraschino cherry

PREPARATION:

In a blender, combine the vanilla ice cream, milk, green food coloring, and peppermint extract, and process until smooth, about 30 seconds. Pour the shake into a glass and top with the whipped cream and maraschino cherry.



Gardening Tips—Bebe Spaletta

Lime trees are easy and fun to grow and use in cooking. The first step is picking out the tree. If you only have a small space, consider a dwarf tree. They do not take up as much space and produce the same fruit as a normal sized tree. Try to choose one with most to all green leaves and no fruit. If there is insect damage already on the tree, chances are it will not thrive in the garden. Step 2 is planting the tree. Select a sunny site that is protected from winds. Dig the hole twice as deep as the pot. Do not expose the roots to the air for a long period of time, other-

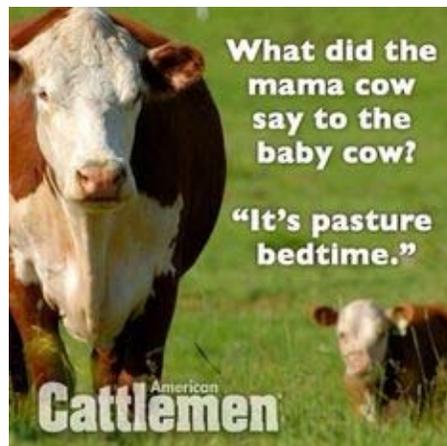
wise they may die. Step 3 is caring for your tree. Make sure not to overwater the tree but do not let it get dry. Keep it damp. Fertilize it once every month from late February to late September. April is the perfect time to begin this process



and begin to get in the monthly habit. Don't worry if leaves drop because this is normal in citrus trees.



Ag Facts & Funnies—Natalya Feliciano



- Over a single cow's lifetime, the cow can produce 200,000 glasses of milk.
- One acre is about the size of a football field.

Tomales FFA March Activities—Lauren Nunes

As spring is rapidly approaching, the amount of chapter activities has increased steadily. At our monthly chapter meeting on Tuesday, March 7, we discussed our current financial standings, as well as, previous events. The meeting ended with a quick game of musical chairs and a raffle. Later on in the month, on Thursday, March 16, five of our chapter members: Haylee Furlong, Jeanette Furlong, Preston Costanzo, Parker Costanzo and Audrey Bush traveled with Mr. Costanzo to the Marin County fairgrounds in San Rafael to participate in the annual Marin Ag

Day. While there, our chapter members help educate young kids about agriculture, and more specifically, the benefits of FFA involvement. On March 25, ten of our members will volunteer as servers at the Dairymen's Benefit Dinner at the Veteran's Hall in Petaluma. Finally, to round out the month, the Annual Farm Day is scheduled to be held on Friday, March 31. On this day, chapter members will bring in various farm animals and create a "petting zoo" at both Tomales Elementary School and West Marin School in order to get our district's youth excited about

agriculture in the area.

