

# FFA UPDATE

Volume 11 Issue 6

## FFA EVENTS — AUDREY BUSH

On December 7th, four of our chapter officers participated in Section Service Night, held at the Redwood Empire Food Bank. There, they spent time interacting with members from all over the Sonoma FFA Section while packaging apples to give out to people affected by the Sonoma County fires in October. Audrey Bush, Preston Costanzo, Isabela Sandoval and Jeanette Furlong spent their evening giving back to their community. “It was a very enlightening experience and it felt good to give back. What may seem like a small gesture of kindness to you, makes a world of difference to someone else,” said Tomales FFA Historian Isabela Sandoval.

On December 12th, the officer team had their mid-year retreat at the Costanzo residence. That night consisted of reviewing the event calendar, one on one officer meetings with Ag Advisor Bill Costanzo and a gift exchange between officers. “We ate good food and enjoyed good laughs. Definitely a highlight from my year,” said FFA Reporter Audrey Bush.



Students packing apples at the Redwood Empire Food Bank.

### Special Points of Interest:

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## Braves Welding Website — Preston Costanzo

In December of 2017 the Tomales High School welding shop opened its first online website and shop store. The Braves Welding company has been open since 2008, but it has never had an online presence until now. The Agriculture Teacher, Mr. Costanzo hopes that the new website will bring in business to the shop so that students can gain real world experience and customer relations in a high school agriculture welding course. The shop has been building projects for the community once or twice a year, but Mr. Costanzo hopes that the website will bring in revenue that he can use to purchase more equipment for the welding shop. Check out the new website and shop store at [www.braveswelding.com](http://www.braveswelding.com), you can even use PayPal to order your signs or projects!

## Microwave Mug Brownie — Lauren Nunes

### Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/8 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Cook in microwave until cake is done in the middle, about 1 minute 45 seconds.

### Instructions:

- Mix flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt in a microwave-safe mug; stir in milk, canola oil, water, and vanilla extract.



## Gardening Tips - Abby Bianchi

1. To remove the salt deposits that form on clay pots, combine equal parts white vinegar, rubbing alcohol and water in a spray bottle. Apply the mixture to the pot and scrub with a plastic brush. Let the pot dry before you plant anything in it.



2. To prevent accumulating dirt under your fingernails while you work in the garden, draw your fingernails across a bar of soap, and you'll effectively seal the undersides of your nails so dirt can't collect beneath them. Then, after you've finished in the garden, use a nailbrush to remove the soap, and your nails will be sparkling clean.

3. To prevent the line on your string trimmer from jamming or breaking, treat with a spray vegetable oil before installing it in the trimmer.

4. Turn a long-handled tool into a measuring stick! Lay a

long-handled garden tool on the ground, and next to it place a tape measure. Using a permanent marker, write inch and foot marks on the handle. When you need to space plants a certain distance apart (from just an inch to several feet) you'll already have a measuring device in your hand.



### AG FACTS:

- 350,000 Acres of land in the United States are in production for growing Christmas Trees.



- Poinsettias sold in local stores are all grown in California, mainly in the Watsonville area!

A: A turkey because it is always stuffed.

Q: Why are Christmas trees so fond of the past?

### AG FUNNIES:

Q: Who doesn't eat on Christmas?

A: Because there are presents under them!

## FFA MEMBER INTERVIEW — JENNY MARTIN

For the month of December, we had the opportunity to interview 2 FFA chapter members; Megan Marx, a past Chapter Officer and Abrielle (Abby) Spaletta, current Tomales FFA Chapter Vice President.

Q: What have you gained from being involved in FFA?

A: Megan - "FFA has given me the confidence to speak in front of others and come out of my shell. Before I joined FFA, I was very shy and hated public speaking. However, after participating in speaking competitions and attending conferences, I have grown out of my shell and feel more comfortable talking to new people and giving presentations."

A: Abrielle - "FFA has served me so well these past three years, because it has taught me a plethora of skills outside of the classroom. I have learned the traits and characteristics of a leader, the skill of public speaking, and how to immerse myself in situations outside of my comfort zone."

However, for the second question, their answers were quite distinct.

Q: Did you come from an agricultural background? If not, how were you introduced to it?

A: Megan - "I do not come from an agricultural background. I was introduced to Ag and FFA from some of my friends at school who were part of FFA and enjoyed it. They were constantly trying to get me to join, so one day I said yes. After that, I've been able to learn so much more about the Ag industry, which has led me to open my horizons and try new things."

A: Abrielle - "I do come from an agricultural background. My sister and I are the grandchildren of a 2nd generation beef rancher and we have lived on a beef cattle ranch our whole lives. Though I am not directly involved in how my grandfather runs the process, I still experience the day-to-day joys and discomforts that come with having animals; I get to see the newborn calves in August, but have to watch them leave later in the year for a commercial farm in Sacramento."