

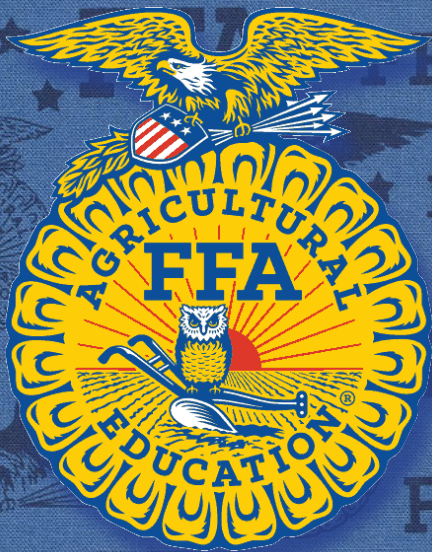
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1930's-1940's

BY: JENA SCHWARTZE

The beginning of the Vienna FFA Chapter all started in the fall of 1934. The very first agriculture teacher at Vienna was J.C. Webb from 1934-1936. In November of 1934, the "Vo-Ag boys competed at the Belle Fair and did very well considering that this was the first year for Vo-Ag." This article was the first to mention the ag program at VHS. Later on in December, the first act of being in the National FFA Organization was recorded. "Several of the boys are going to order FFA Jackets and emblems to go with them." Ordering the official FFA Jacket was the beginning of the Vienna FFA Chapter.

To start off the new year in 1935, the Vo-Ag department decided on their projects for the year which included sow and litter production, sheep management, lamb production, beef production, beef calves, dairy management, egg production, turkey management, baby chicks, farmstead planning, truck gardening, flock management, and colt management. At the end of the 1934-35 school year, the Vo-Ag program brought in a total of \$2,054.71 for the 35 projects. According to the local newspaper, "This total income represents a sum several times larger than the amount spent by the local district on this department. In fact, the amount is larger than the total sum of the special federal, state, and local money used for the local vo-ag department." This amazing income was great for the first year of the Vienna FFA Chapter.

In 1935 the local hog judging teams received third place in state competition. Then in the following year, nine Vo-Ag boys competed at the State Judging contest again in dairy, livestock, and poultry judging held in Columbia during State Convention. The Vienna Ag department also did soil testings for the community when they added a new lab to the laboratory, in 1936. In April of 37, the Vienna FFA Chapter had a very solid Poultry Judging Team, Livestock Judging Team, Dairy Judging Team, and Horticulture. Members of these teams included Paul Hutchinson, Paul Juergens, Joe Finn, Joe Ragan, Arch Feeler, Lenard Fannon, Tommie Hutchinson, John Leslie Palmer, Elijah Overlease, and Doyle



THE VIENNA FFA 1945-1946 Chapter photo.

Feeler. In June 1937 two of Vienna's ag boys, Paul Jergens and Ray Renfrow, traveled to St. Louis for a Lamb Show with advisor Tennis V. Davis. It is unsure of how the boys did at the contest. Marvin Helms took over as advisor after Davis in 37 and would stay until 41.

In February of 1938, Mr. Helms and his 18 Vo-Ag boys helped around the community by helping cull chickens and drench sheep. The following goals were set for the Vienna FFA Chapter: 1.) Supervised Practice: every boy should have a project, 2.) Community Service: donate the boys' time to local farms and have the boys teach farming practices, 3.) Improvements to be made in the classroom: add a radio to the classroom to keep track of stock markets, 4.) Cooperative Activities, pay FFA dues so boys can participate in activities: 5.) Recreation: have an FFA basketball team and compete against other teams, 6.) Leadership Activities, boys need to attend and participate in the National Corn Husking Contest, judging teams and even compete at the state level, go to the State Fair and enter projects at the State Fair, and also attend the lamb show in St. Louis, 7.) Give consideration to scholastic standing in selecting officers and other leaders. At the end of 38, Professor Marvin Helms was nominated

as the South Central District President.

1941's - 1945's

From 1941-1945, J.F. Boehner was the Ag teacher and advisor for Vienna. In 1943, the first recorded President of the chapter was Andrew Volmert, Vice-President- Harold Hayes, Secretary-Berthel Bray, and Treasurer-John Bauer. During 1943-44, many remarkable moments were created.

The chapter was a part of the State FFA Honor Roll of FFA Chapters, the Chapter budget has also increased to \$3,750.42 with a total of 55 projects, and the Chapter President was nominated as the District Sentinel. From 1945-49, A. Mel Akars was the advisor at Vienna. In 1945, The Vienna FFA Chapter had its first basketball team picture. The members of the team included Raymond Sneed, Ronald Geisler, Norman Ricker, the captain, Jesse Carroll, Julius Feeler, and Neil Snodgrass. During the 1945-46 school year, the ag department increased in membership to a total of 44 boys. There were also 38 boys in the ag program during the 1949 school year. The officer team for that year were President-Lloyd Murphy, Vice-President-Jimmy James, Secretary-Donald Snodgrass, Treasurer-Billy Rowden, Reporter-Gene Wilson, and Sentinel-

Dallas Rollins.

1950's - 1969's

BY: HANNAH SHANKS

Starting in 1950 there were 38 boys at Maries R-1 who were members of the Vienna FFA Chapter. In that year, 15 of the young men were working on receiving their chapter degree while the remaining 23 gentlemen were to be initiated as Greenhands before the end of the year. Those overseeing the program at the time were chapter president Harold Backeus and instructor Mr. Carl Hogg.

In 1951 Mr. Marvin Helms rejoined the Vo-Ag program and remained the FFA advisor there until 1976. There were still 38 boys in the program and Harold Backeus was still serving as chapter president.

In 1952 the Vienna FFA Chapter got to experience an exciting first. Donley Brown was the first Vienna FFA member to receive the State FFA Degree.

In 1953 the chapter grew in numbers, now hosting 44 young men. Eugene Johnson became the second person to obtain the State FFA Degree. That year at Barnwarming, Betty Irvin was named Queen. Francis Kloppel served as chapter president this year, as well as in 1954. Jimmy Bray and Clyde Henderson Jr. received their State FFA Degree in the year succeeding.

Jumping to 1956, Bob Bassett was serving as president. Jim Kleffner, Robert Wilson, and Meryl G. Woody received the State FFA Degree.

In 1957 there were 64 boys were registered in the agriculture program. The Vo-Ag department received recognition for winning first place at the Illinois-Missouri Show and Sale for having the best exhibit of hogs. Bob Bassett remained chapter president and Norman M. Ragan became the next recipient of the State FFA Degree. The FFA Basketball team made their debut with six players: Tommy Kleffner, Don Burd, Ralph Kloepfel, Shawn Malone, Charley Honse, and Lewis Wilson.

In 1958 and 1959, Edward Redel served as

See **History** on Page 4B

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Vienna FFA members see rewards, surprises during process of gathering chapter's history – Memories made in the Blue Jacket

BY LAURA SCHIERMEIER
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER
lschiermeier@wardpub.com

VIENNA — Officers and members of the Vienna High School Chapter of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) have compiled an extensive history of the 85-year-old Vienna chapter.

Jena Schwartz played a large role in pulling together

people to help with the research. Schwartz said they found information about past presidents, state degree recipients, and chapter awards on plaques in the agriculture room. They looked through the chapter scrapbooks for information. They made trips to the Historical Society of Maries County's research room located in the basement of the courthouse. At the research room they looked through old newspapers and high school yearbooks and found all kinds of interesting photos and articles. They also got information on state and

national awards from DESE. They interviewed past members and Schwartz said, "Thank you to all those we interviewed. You all provided great stories."

There were interesting surprises and highlights that came with their search through all that information. Lily Wagner said she was pleased to find out her mom was the creed speaker in high school. "I am now the creed speaker as well," she said.

See **Memories** on Page 2B

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Memories • from page 1B

Paige Breeding said they saw a calf with two heads, which was surprising.

Jade Kleffner said she was surprised to find out the FFA Chapter had a basketball team and that one of the grassland teams went to the national competition.

Schwartz said in a 1934 newspaper, there was an article stating “Seven Ag Boys purchased jackets with FFA emblems.”

Hannah Shanks said she thinks it was really interesting to find her family members and see what they did in FFA. “Its crazy how much the chapter has grown in eighty years.”

It was a learning experience as well and the FFA members had their favorite part of the process. Wagner said she liked interviewing people and seeing how much FFA has changed over the years. Breeding said she liked learning the history. Kleffner said her favorite part of the project was learning about her family when they were in FFA.

Tappel said while looking through old newspapers she found the engagement announcement of her grandparents. “I thought that was really cool,” she said. Shanks said she liked talking to past members and seeing them reminisce on the memories they made in the blue jacket.

Schwartz said she enjoyed getting to know how the Vienna FFA Chapter has evolved. “We used to be a seven membership of males only in 1934, and 85 years later we have about 100 members with a good majority being female.”

As the FFA'ers waded through the information and rich history of their chapter, they realized how much has been done over the past 85 years to continue the FFA Chapter and traditions in their hometown.

“Being a part of this organization has been amazing. It has broadened my horizons after the past four years and I cannot wait to see what other history the chapter makes in the future,” Schwartz said.

Tappel said gathering the information for the FFA history was an amazing experience.

Shanks said she is “so proud and honored to be in such a history rich organization. I’m glad to be a part of the chapter’s story.”

Kleffner said she loves being part of the Vienna FFA.

Breeding said it feels “amazing” to be part of such a great organization.

Wagner said it feels amazing to know how great of an organization she is part of. “We are truly blessed to have an amazing organization to be part of.”

Vienna State Degree Members

- 1952 - Donley Brown
- 1953 - Eugene Johnson
- 1954 - Jimmy Bray
- 1954 - Clyde Henderson Jr.
- 1956 - Jim Kleffner
- 1956 - Robert L. Wilson
- 1956 - Meryl G. Woody
- 1957 - Norman M. Ragan
- 1961 - Neil Joseph Kellison
- 1980 - Kenneth W. Davis
- 1980 - Paul Kleffner
- 1982 - Donald Schwartz
- 1983 - Ronnie Woody
- 1985 - Melinda Ripka
- 1986 - Larry M. Kleffner
- 2001 - Jeremy James Smith
- 2002 - Jacob O Cahill
- 2003 - Heather Smith
- 2003 - Brandon Shanks
- 2004 - Christopher W Shanks
- 2004 - Kyle J. Miller
- 2005 - Arthur Thompson III
- 2005 - Mathew Clark
- 2005 - Nicholas Davis
- 2007 - Laura Shanks
- 2007 - Ethan Shanks
- 2016 - Eli Deckard
- 2016 - Tanner Wansing
- 2016 - Megan Wieberg
- 2017 - Hunter Wyss
- 2017 - Emily Shanks
- 2018 - Kara Harker
- 2018 - Malerie Meier
- 2018 - Gina Wieberg
- 2019 - Megan Thompson
- 2019 - Corlis Kloeppel
- 2019 - Tyler Roberds



IN 1955 the Vienna FFA sold 123 hogs for \$5,637.08.

History • from page 2B

chapter president. The basketball team had a successful year. They played two games against Dixon and won a game against Iberia 47 to 37.

In 1960, 50 boys were enrolled in the program and Joyce Honse was chosen as Barnwarming Queen. Neil Joesph Kellison received his State FFA Degree in 1961.

In 1963 the enrollment decreased slightly with only 40 boys participating in the program. Kenneth Hollis served as president. Linda Chambers was named Chapter Queen.

In 1964 Roy Ramsey served as president and there were 47 gentlemen in FFA. Linda Burd was named chapter queen. Forty-three boys were in FFA in 1965 and Betty Buschmann was selected as chapter queen. Larry Hollis served as chapter president in 1966.

No records were obtained for the years 1967-1968.

Up until this point, women were not allowed to be in FFA because the National FFA Constitution specified that only men could join. However, at the 1969 National FFA Convention, a motion was made to strike the word male from the constitution. By a two-vote margin, the motion carried. Women were now allowed to become members of FFA.

1970's – 1979's

BY PAIGE BREEDING

In 1969 women were officially allowed membership into the National FFA Organization. In the 50 years since the formal acceptance of female membership, women have become an integral part of the organization. The first record of a female FFA member in the Vienna FFA history was in 1977. In 1978, the Vienna FFA Chapter recognized Teresa Smith as one of the first woman members of the Vienna FFA Chapter. Later on in 1979, she became the first female officer, the P.R. Chairman.

There were not many activities recorded of the 1970's decade. There were, however, a couple significant ones. The February 1977 newspaper highlighted that the National FFA was organized in Kansas City, and adopted Missouri into the organization in 1929. Also during this time in 1977, the Vienna FFA Chapter celebrated National FFA Week February 20-26. The membership only consisted of about 50 active members at this time.

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History • from page 4B

In August 1977, the Chapter was put in charge of the livestock exhibits for this year's fair. The chapter was granted money to fix the barn and install electrical outlets throughout the facility.

In 1977 the Chapter attended the American Royal in Kansas City. They had been traveling that day and took a wrong turn and ended up landing in the state of Kansas! They turned back and made it to the Royal. They attended a rodeo and had the chance to see the Nashville personality Dolly Parton!

In 1978 the Chapter attended a machinery show in Kansas City at the American Royal. The Chapter also adopted a constitution, proposing one that mainly followed the National one, but with a couple additions. The constitution was ratified by a unanimous vote of the members present.

On the weekend of October 8, the Vienna FFA sold candles to raise money so that the chapter could attend the National FFA Convention in Kansas City. The chapter raised \$771 and were able to attend.

Recorded in the December 1978 newspaper was that the Vienna FFA Chapter built a new trophy case to be placed in the east lobby of the Allen Gymnasium. It was built to keep individual awards and trophies.

The Vienna FFA Chapter organized a "Gilt Chain Program" during the early months of 1977 until the late months of 1978. This al-

lowed members to interview and be screened to receive a gilt. When a gilt would wean eight or more pigs, the chapter would pick one gilt from the litter and give it to one of the seven individuals picked. During 1977, those individuals included: Kenneth Davis, Mike Fanning, Larry Honse, Rick Hoy, Carl Neubert, Todd Schoene and Roger Schulte. The chain turned out to be very successful, and that was when the chapter decided to do it in 1978 mainly for incoming freshman of the chapter. For the 1978 year, the recipients were Donnie Schulte, Paul and Wanda Steinman, Irb Williams, Theresa Smith, Greg Leisman and Randy Quick.

In 1978 the Dairy Judging Team placed third in the competition, which advanced them to state. They were to travel to Columbia to compete. The members consisted of Marvin Wieberg, Dwayne Shanks, Carl Neubert, and Mary Smith. No other Vienna team placed high enough to go to state that year. After competing at state, the Dairy Judging team placed 29th out of 60 teams.

During the Christmas months of 1977 through 1978, the Vienna FFA Chapter began to cut down Christmas trees and place them in the teachers rooms of the elementary school for the kids to enjoy and get into the Christmas spirit. They had distributed 14 trees in 1977.

There were three recorded Star Greenhands during this decade, they were: Mike Fanning 1977, Paul Kleffner 1978, and Michell Eicholz 1979.



VIENNA FFA officers from 1979, (front row) K. Davis, Treasurer; G. Hollis, V. Pres.; C. Neubert, sec.; G. Thompson, reporter, (back row) M. Kleffner, sentinel; P. Kleffner, COM chairman; R. Qucik, rec. Chairman; T. Smith, P.R. Chairman; M. Eicholz, CSNA Chairman.

Doug Cahill was the President of the Vienna FFA Chapter from 1978-79. When Doug was the President, the Vienna FFA Chapter was only about 30 members, with the vast majority of males and only a few female members. Today the Vienna FFA Chapter has about 100 members and an equal number of males and females in the organization. When Doug was asked about his experience in the chapter and time as President he stated that he learned a lot, he grew as a public speaker, and it was an eye-opening experience. At the time, Kevin Sullivan was his Ag teacher. Doug's most memorable moment would have had to be when he was elected as President. Doug was one of five candidates for the position and the chapter chose him to be the president the next school year, and he was very

honored in that moment. Doug's advice for the current and future FFA members would have to be "Get out everything you can, do everything you can, be involved."

Mike Kleffner was the President of the chapter from 1979-1980 while under the advisement of Mr. Kevin Sullivan. His most memorable moments were when the chapter traveled to conventions, doing judging teams, and winning in the Proficiency award area of Beef Production. His advice for members is to "put in what you want to get out during your time in the chapter and to be involved."


Paul Kleffner was another busy member of the Vienna FFA Chapter that made history.

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~ Thomas Jefferson (1767)

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Mr. Kleffner was the first Vienna FFA Chapter member to be an Area Officer. He served as the Area Treasurer from 1979-1980. When asked about his experience as an Area Officer, Mr. Kleffner stated that he learned a lot about collaboration and teamwork. Along with being an Area officer, Mr. Kleffner also served as the Chapter Treasurer and President. In 1980, Mr. Kleffner also received his State Degree. When he received his State Degree, Mr. Kleffner felt honored and very privileged. His inspiration to receive his State Degree was Kleffner's father, Jim Kleffner, who also received his State Degree in 1956. Mr. Kleffner's advisor was Mr. Kevin Sullivan for a couple years and Mr. Dale Hodges. Mr. Kleffner's Supervised Agricultural Experience included Hog Production. Some teams he participated on the Parliamentary Procedure team, Agronomy Team, and Public Speaking events. Some advice Mr. Kleffner would like to give to members is "Broaden your horizons, be involved in the chapter, push yourself outside of your comfort zone, and join the CDE/LDE teams."

There were also two recorded

amazing FFA Advisors during this time and they were Marvin Helms and Kevin Sullivan. These two pushed FFA members to become all they could be. These two have made a huge impact on the Vienna FFA Chapter. Kevin was the advisor to the first Area Officer recorded in the Vienna FFA. Marvin was there when the first females began to appear. These two have truly made history.

1980's - 1984's

BY: LILY WAGNER

In 1980 the Vienna FFA's officer team was Mike Kleffner-President, Paul Kleffner-Vice-President, Carl Neubert-Secretary, Ken Davis-Treasurer, Theresa Smith-Reporter, and Bryan Rollins-Sentinel. Kevin Sullivan was their advisor for part of the year and Dale Hodges for the rest of the year. In 1980, they had four teams that made it to state: Farm Management team, Ag Mechanics team, Meats team, and the Dairy Cattle team. Kenneth Davis and Paul Kleffner both received their State Degrees and Darryl Schwartz was the Star Greenhand recipient in 1980.

Other individual awards that were

given were the Beef Proficiency award to Mike Kleffner and the State Farmers Degree for Paul Kleffner and Ken Davis. In addition to the individual awards, the Vienna FFA received the Superior Chapter Award. At the 1980 Vienna FFA Barnwarming, Connie Duncan was elected to be the Queen.

In 1980 the FFA participated in a four-school basketball tournament in Belle. St. James, Belle, Fatima, and Vienna all played in the tournament which was hosted by the Belle FFA Chapter.

The 1980 Creed Speaker was Patricia Robbins. To end the year, at the Chapter Banquet, the guest speaker was the National FFA President, Douglas Rinker of Virginia. What a great way to end the year!

In 1981, the FFA Officer team consisted of Ronnie Woody-President, Donald Schwartz-Vice-President, Darryl Schwartz-Secretary, Mike Smith-Treasurer, Jeff Tellman-Reporter, Kenny Neubert-Sentinel, and Tammy Messersmith-Historian. The FFA Advisor was Mr. Dale Hodges.

Some more interesting facts found in the newspaper was that Vocational Agriculture first became a subject



IN 1974 Vienna FFA Presidet Darla Rehagen was featured in the Three Rivers Electric Cooperative.

in 1917 and the FFA was founded nationally in 1928. Another fact is in 1950, FFA operated under a federal charter granted by an Act of Congress.

In 1980, there were four teams that went to State: The Farm Management team of Paul Kleffner, Phillip Wieberg, and Kevin Kloepfel, the Agriculture Mechanics team, which of Kenny Neubert, Kim Elrod, and Ronnie Woody, which Kim Elrod and Kenny Neubert each won gold medals

for placing high individually in the Ag Mechanics contest. The other two teams that went to state were the Meats team of William Stephen (gold metal), Leanna Miller, and Nancy Schwartz, and lastly, the Dairy Cattle team of Darryl Schwartz, Gerald Schwartz, and Jeff Tellman. In November the National FFA Convention was held in Kansas City. Those attending were

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History • from page 6B

Donald Schwartze, Ronnie Woody, Bill Meier, Mike Smith, Tammy Messersmith, Patricia Rollins, and advisor Dale Hodges. You could say they had a very successful year.

In 1982 the advisor was Dale Hodges. They had four teams that made it to districts: the Farm Management team of Rueben Wieberg, Ronnie Woody, Kenny Neubert, and Donald Schwartze, the Ag Mechanics team of Mike Smith, Kevin Kloepfel, and Leroy Wieberg, the Meats Team of Brad Robertson, Greg Rehagen, Bill Meier, and David Ripka, and the Field Crops Team of Darryl Schwartze, Jeff Tellman, and Gerald Schwartze. Don Schwartze received the State Farmer Degree and Darla Rehagen received the Star Greenhand Award. Rehagen was the very first female to receive this award. In November the National FFA Convention was held in Kansas City. Those attending were Jeff Tellman, Gerald Schwartze, Dale Logan, Kris Lord, and the advisor, Mr. Hodges. They had a very fun trip full of many activities and lots of excitement.

In 1983 Dale Hodges was the advisor. The Officer team members were Jeff Tellman-Sentinel, Gerald Schwartze-Secretary, Brad Robertson-Treasurer, Darryl Schwartze-President, Tammy Messersmith, and Darla Rehagen-Historians. In 1983 only one team made it to State, which was the Field Crop Judging team. They got 5th out of 21 teams. The team members were Darla Rehagen, Melinda Ripka, Jimmie Robbins, and Jeff Schulte. In 1983 Ronnie Woody was the only Vienna FFA member who received the State Degree. Lastly, Richard Messersmith received the Star Greenhand Award.

In 1984 Mr. Hodges continued as the advisor. Andrew Schwartze received the Star Greenhand in 1984. The FFA officers were Larry Kleffner-Reporter, Ginger Stephen-Secretary, Terry Shanks-Treasurer, Melinda Ripka-Vice President, Dale Logan-Sentinel, and Darla Rehagen-President. Ms. Rehagen was the first female to become President of the Vienna FFA Chapter. She was also one of eight girls out of total of 45 Vienna FFA members. This is when girls finally started making their presence felt at all levels. Now the number of girls and boys in equal with a majority of the officers being women. The Vienna FFA Chapter has definitely changed over the past 36 years since 1984.

1985's – 1989's

BY: LILY WAGNER

In 1985 the Vienna FFA Officer Team members were Tim Burd-Sentinel, Mark Buechter-Secretary, Larry Kleffner- President, Doug Rowden-Vice President, Gary Reinkemeyer-Treasurer, and Andy Schwartze. Their great advisor was Mr. Norman Hollis. Melinda Ripka received the State Farmer Degree, the first chapter female to achieve this. She was an involved FFA member. Her SAE, which was called occupational experience project back then, was a herd of 33 head of cattle. Ms. Ripka received the Chapter Greenhand and Chapter Farmer Degree awards prior to her state degree. She was an active and helpful FFA member. William Robertson received the Star Greenhand award in 1985. At the Maries County Fair in September of 1985, there were many successful SAE projects. Project awards included: Grand Champion Steer-Larry Kleffner, Grand Champion Lamb-Jerold Shirk, Grand Champion Barrow-Robert Schwartze, Reserve Champion Steer-Brian Schoene, Reserve Champion Barrow-Larry Kleffner, and Reserve Champion Lamb-Terry Shirk.

In 1986, the Officer Team was Mark Buechter-President, Chris Bray-Vice President, Kevin Tellman-Secretary, Andy Schwartze-Treasurer, Shannon Thompson-Reporter, and Chris Feeler-Sentinel. The advisor was Mr. Norman Hollis. In 1986, Larry Kleffner received the State Farmer Degree. He received this award at State FFA Convention in Columbia. He was the 14th Vienna FFA student to receive this honor. During the summer of 1986, Andrew Schwartze attended the State FFA Camp. Also, the Vienna FFA Barnwarming Queen was Julie Wansing. Shannon Thompson and Andrew Schwartze attended the National FFA Convention which was held in Kansas City. At the end of the year, Vienna FFA had its annual Banquet. At the Banquet, Shannon Thompson received the Star Greenhand award and William Roberson received the Star Chapter Award.

In 1987, the Officer Team was Scott Bock-President, William Roberson-Vice President, Chris Wright-Secretary, David Cahill-Treasurer, Bruce Kleffner-Sentinel, and Shannon Thomp-



THE 1980-1981 Vienna FFA Chapter.

son-Reporter. Advisor was Norman Hollis. Mike Meyer received the Star Greenhand award. This award is given to the freshman who is most involved in their chapter. The Star Chapter Farmer Award was given to the sophomore who is most involved. It was awarded to Shannon Thompson.

In 1988, the FFA Officer Team members were Robert Schwartze-Reporter, Scott Breeding-Treasurer, Joe Shockley-Sentinel, Chuck Woody-Secretary, Mike Meyer-Vice President, and David Cahill-President. Mr. Hollis was the Advisor. In October the FFA Chapter held an annual Greenhand and Chapter Farmer ceremony. There were 13 Greenhands and 14 Chapter Farmers who received pins. Mike Meyer received the Star Chapter Award and Robert Schwartze who received the Star Greenhand Award.

In 1989, the FFA President was Mike Meyer. Robert Schwartze was the recipient of the Star Chapter Award and Samantha Stroupe received the Star Greenhand Award. In April the Vienna FFA Chapter and the Vienna FHA hosted a Spring Dance with about 50 people attending. Senior candidate Scott Breeding was crowned FFA King.

1990's – 1994

BY: ASHTON STRATMAN

In 1990 the Officer Team was Justin Darr-

Sentinel, Samantha Strobe-Secretary, John Meyer-President, Ben Steinman-Vice President, Mark Bure-Treasurer, and Tom Roberds-Reporter. Awards included Mark Bure-Star Chapter Farmer, Rusty Robertson-Star Greenhand, Mike Meyer-Outstanding Senior, Robert Schwartze-Diversified Livestock Production, Pat Ragan-Placement in Ag Production, Lori Rea-Ag Sales and Service, Calvin Hollis-Ag Electrification, Tom J. Roberds-Ag Mechanics, Chuck Woody-Beef Production, Brian Lipari-Horse Proficiency, Willis Genter-Speciality Animal Production, and Justin Darr-Turf and Landscape Management.

In 1991, Ag Instructor Norman Hollis inducted Samantha Strobe as the new Vienna FFA President. Both Star Greenhand and Star Chapter went to David Bauer.

In 1992, James Doyel was inducted as the new Vienna FFA President by Ag Instructor, Norman Hollis. Star Greenhand went to Joe Bremer and Star Chapter to Mark Kloepfel.

In 1993, Norman Hollis resigned from Maries R-1 and coordinated his last Vienna FFA Banquet after being the Vocational Ag Instructor for a decade. He was replaced by Michael Melson in the upcoming school year. The new

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History • from page 7B

Vienna FFA President was Mark Kloepfel and the Star Chapter award went to Travis Otto. In November the Annual FFA/FHA Barnwarming Dance was reinstated after a brief absence for several years. The dance was well attended and the Barnwarming King and Queen were Mark Kloepfel and Susie Rowden.

In 1994 FFA students participated in various district level agricultural competitions in Rolla. Students participated in Livestock Judging, Dairy Cattle Judging, Soils, and FFA Knowledge. The Livestock Judging team was Bryan Gillispie, Woody Hollis, Glen Rowden, and Daniel Conner. The Dairy Cattle Judging team was Andy Schwartz, Scott Bastion, Sean Hollis, and Matt Stratman. The Soils team included Todd Bock, Jim Hale, and Doug Deekin. The FFA Knowledge team was Chrissy Haller and Matt Stratman. In April 14 members traveled to the 66th Annual State FFA Convention in Columbia with Advisors Mike and Debbie Melson. All members going were officers and/or on state qualified contest teams. Woody Hollis and Todd Bock were voting delegates and represented the Vienna FFA Chapter during the convention. In May 70 members and guests attended the annual Vienna FFA Banquet. At the banquet, past State Vice President Rebecca Rademan was a guest speaker. Proficiency Awards went to Todd Bock-Forest Management, Matt Stratman-Diversified Livestock and Swine Production, Glen Rowden-Beef Production, Crystal Shanks-Crop Production, Woody Hollis-Agricultural Mechanics, and Joe Honse-Agricultural Sales. Separate Awards went to Woody Hollis-Home & Farm Improvement and the Soil & Water Management, Crystal Shanks-Forage Production, Bryan Gillispie-Specialty Animal Production, and Glen Rowden-Outdoor Recreation. Greenhand Degrees went to all first year FFA members and all second year members received the Chapter Degree. Crystal Shanks received the Star Greenhand degree and Bryan Gillispie received the Star Chapter Degree. Deann Rehagen got Special recognition and a T-shirt for selling \$1,800 of fruit earlier that year for the Vienna FFA fundraiser. Laura Rowden and Regina Wieberg also received T-shirts for their beautiful work on the scrapbook that was on display at the banquet that year. New officers for the upcoming

year were Crystal Shanks-President, Regina Wieberg-Vice President, Joe Honse-second Vice President, Tony Wieberg-Secretary, Glen Rowden-Treasurer, Kevin Sinden-Reporter, Bryan Gillispie-Sentinel, and Laura Rowden-Historian. In July Bryan Gillispie and Joe Honse took a trip to Washington D.C. for a National FFA Meeting. They were with a small group of other FFA students from Missouri and took a picture with Congressman Ike Skelton. Other events that year include a summer picnic, a blood drive, adopting a highway, and students got sold in a slave auction at the state fair for four hours of work. The Vienna FFA Chapter also picked up trash in the morning of the local fair and went to Kansas City for the National Convention.

1995's - 1999's

BY: ASHTON STRATMAN

In 1995 the new Vienna FFA officers were Bryan Gillispie-Sentinel, Tony Wieberg-Secretary, Crystal Shanks-President, Regina Wieberg-Vice President, Joe Honse-Second Vice President, Glen Rowden-Treasurer, Laura Rowden-Historian, and Kevin Sinden-Reporter. The FFA celebrated National FFA Week by dressing up and hosting activities for the students. On Monday students brought tractors to school. Tuesday was teacher appreciation day and students wore official dress to school. Wednesday was Farmer day and students wore work clothes to school. First-year FFA members (Greenhands) dipped their hands in green dye before school. Thursday was food day. FFA students visited the elementary and explained to the younger kids where food comes from. Finally, on Friday the FFA held a fish fry. Crystal Shanks also participated at the district level in Creed Speaking, and was the first-ever female Vienna FFA member to be elected as an area officer. At the yearly Banquet, new officers were inducted in by FFA Advisor Mr. Melson. Proficiency awards went to Todd Bock-Home & Farm Improvement and Soil & Water Management, Crystal Shanks-Forage Production, Bryan Gillispie-Specialty Animal Production, and Glen Rowden-Outdoor Recreation. The FFA also held a bake sale over the summer and decorated a truck for the fair parade. The



VIENNA FFA at the 2001 Nation FFA Convention

Barnwarming King was Travis Otto and Queen was Regina Wieberg.

In 1996 the new officers were James Crider-Secretary, Tony Wieberg-Vice President, Glen Rowden-Second Vice President, Crystal Shanks-President, John Schulte-Treasurer, Kevin Schwartz-Reporter, Andy Schwartz-Sentinel, and Mr. Marshall-Advisor. Kevin Schwartz, Tony Wieberg, Shannon Dillon, and Matt Helton won third place at the Grassland Evaluation Contest in Rolla.

In 1997 the Horse Judging Team won first in an area contest in Owensville. The team members were Howard Snodgrass, Brian Auten, James Crider, Crystal Shanks, and Shannon Dillon. The team also won third in districts and proceeded to state. Derrick Otto, Howard Snodgrass, Amy Haller, and Brian Auten also placed third in district Grassland Evaluation. Greenhands attended a motivational seminar and the FFA held a strawberry sale. The new officers were Brian Auten-President, Leah Mertens-Vice President, Shawn Wagner-Secretary, Amy Haller-Treasurer, and Tommy Pickering-Historian.

In 1998 Willy Rowden, Amy Haller, Leon Weed and Derrick Otto won first place in Area Horse Judging Contests. The Barnwarming King was Derrick Otto and the Queen was Renee Wagner. Grassland Evaluation team members Derrick Otto, Howard Snodgrass, Amy Haller, Debra Snodgrass, Brian Auten, and Willy Rowden, received third at state competition. The new officers for the upcoming year were Brian Auten-President, Amy Haller-Vice President, Derrick Otto-Second Vice President,

Leah Mertens-Secretary, Howard Snodgrass-Treasurer, Renee Wagner-Reporter, and William Rowden-Sentinel.

In 1999 the Grassland Evaluation Team, Brian Auten, Willy Rowden, Howard Snodgrass, and Amy Haller won third place in District Competition. Diane Weider won Barnwarming Queen.

The Vienna FFA Chapter today

BY JENA SCHWARTZE

The Vienna FFA History Committee, unfortunately, did not complete their research from 2005 to the present. So here is a brief summary of all the awards and highlights from the Vienna FFA Chapter in that time period.

In 2005, The Vienna FFA Chapter Advisor was Mr. Alan Freeman. In 2007, Mr. Randy Stockstill took over until 2014. Mrs. Hannah Heintz was the advisor for two years. In 2016, Mrs. Sara Schwartz was hired and is currently still the Ag Teacher in Vienna.

From 2005-now, the Vienna FFA Chapter has had 16 State Degree recipients and 12 American Degree recipients. The Chapter has also had two Area Officers, including Sarah Jo Thompson serving as the Secretary of Area XIV in 2006-2007, and Kaitlyn Neubert serving as the 2nd Vice President in 2019-2020. The chapter has had 10 State Chorus Performers. The chapter has also had five FFA members qualify to compete at the state level in their own Proficiency Award

See **History** on Page 9B

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History • from page 8B

Area. The chapter has also had a lot of Career Development Event (CDE) teams compete at the State Level including Entomology, Horse Evaluation, Dairy Cattle Evaluation, Livestock Judging, Floriculture, Dairy Foods, and Meats. The chapter had some Leadership Development Events (LDE) compete as well in FFA Knowledge and Prepared Public Speaking. Some of these CDE and LDE participants have also won first place in Area XIV with their team or individually. In 2016, Bailey Wilkinson was the first Vienna FFA member to perform during the Missouri FFA State Convention talent competition. She later competed in 2017 and 2018. Owen Kloepfel has competed in the talent competition during State Convention in 2018. In 2017, Bailey Wilkinson was the first Vienna FFA member to compete in the National FFA Talent Competition. Later in 2019, Owen Kloepfel competed in the National FFA Talent Competition. In 2019, Jena Schwartze was the first Vienna FFA member to be accepted into the National FFA Band.

Some of the Chapter activities that occur throughout the year include an Ice Cream Social, State Fair, Maries County Fair, FFA Olympics, Barnwarming, participated in community service projects, National FFA Convention, Greenhand Conferences, ag field trips to various farms, CDE and LDE competitions, State FFA



THE VIENNA FFA Chapter photo from 2007-2008.

Convention, Chapter BBQ, Barnyard Zoo, Fruit and Mum Fundraisers, Trap Shooting, Public Speaking Contests, Compete in Proficiency Awards, Labor Auction and Scholarship Dinner, National FFA Week, Tractor Day, Farm Truck Day, FFA Assembly, Chapter Recruitment assemblies, Supporters Lunch Fish Fry, Area Banquet, and Chapter Banquet.

The Vienna FFA has grown substantially within the past 85 years. From the very beginning in 1934, the chapter membership consisted of seven males. Today, the Vienna FFA Chapter consists of 110 members, both male and female.

The Vienna FFA Chapter would like to thank all those who made this article possible. Thank you to all those who helped research, to the His-

torical Society of Maries County for letting us use their facilities, to those who sponsored this article, to those who we interviewed, and to the Maries County Advocate staff who helped put this article together. To all the past and present members, thank you for making history in the chapter. Here's to future of the Vienna FFA Chapter and the history that is yet come!

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In 1926, BHS's first AG advisor was J. A. Miller. In 1929, Harold McQueen won 1st at the 1929 American Royal Live Stock Show in the Livestock Judging Contest.

This year National FFA is also celebrating a huge milestone, 50 years of women in FFA. Before this girls were only in Future Homemakers of America. Now, women run the FFA.

Soon Belle FFA entered the new century, the chapter began utilizing the technology and internet that came with it. Gaining chromebooks in the class-



Mareta James (Sherman)

room and has added a Plasma Table to the shop in the fall of 2017. Which has allowed the students to utilize creative design, engineering, and technology allowing the chapter to create many projects to the community. Since the start of our chapter 90 years ago we have had 101 members receive the highest degree that a state can bestow upon its members, the FFA State Degree.

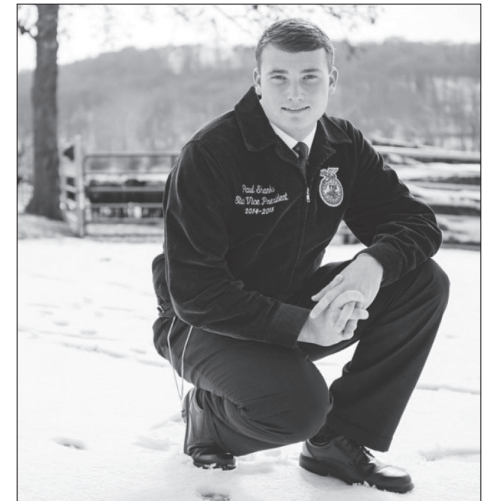
The chapter has also had 6 students go on to be FFA advisers themselves



Collin Miller

including our very own advisor, Mareta James who came back in 2016 to begin teaching. Belle FFA also currently has 6 students that are working to become FFA advisors.

In 2005, Chris Mertz joined BHS as Belle FFA's Advisor, Ag Advisor and Shop teacher. In 2006, Nick Mertz, Wesley Moore, and Zach Robertson brought home the State title for Livestock Judging and went on to compete in Nationals. Since then the chapter



Paul Shanks

has had 12 members receive a Full Ride Judging Scholarship and go on to judge collegiately.

Each year, many contest teams are extremely successful and go to compete at the state level. The chapter has also had students place in the top ten at the State level.

See **Awards** on Page 14B

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Belle FFA Chapter Mo0013 celebrates 90 years during commemoration week

BY ROXIE MURPHY
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER
rmurphy@wardpub.com

BELLE — In honor of Future Farmers of America (FFA) Week, Belle FFA Chapter Mo0013 is celebrating its 90 year history with 101 student state degrees since Oct. 19, 1929, and 161 current active members.

Advisors Chris Mertz, who teaches shop and agriculture classes, and Merita James, public speaking and greenhouse horticulture, share the chapter's historical records.

"We were among one of the first schools in the state to organize a chapter," James told The Advocate. "The first group to start the organization was smaller — we were part of the second group."

The first chapter members included Sammie Licklider, vice president, Roman S. Tellman, secretary, Clarence Klaas, Harold McQueen, Narorin Graff, and Raymond H. Garirer. Since the first president did not mark his station next to his name, that information has been lost. James said it would be a "he" because women were not allowed to join the chapter back then.

Mertz is the longest running Belle agriculture teacher

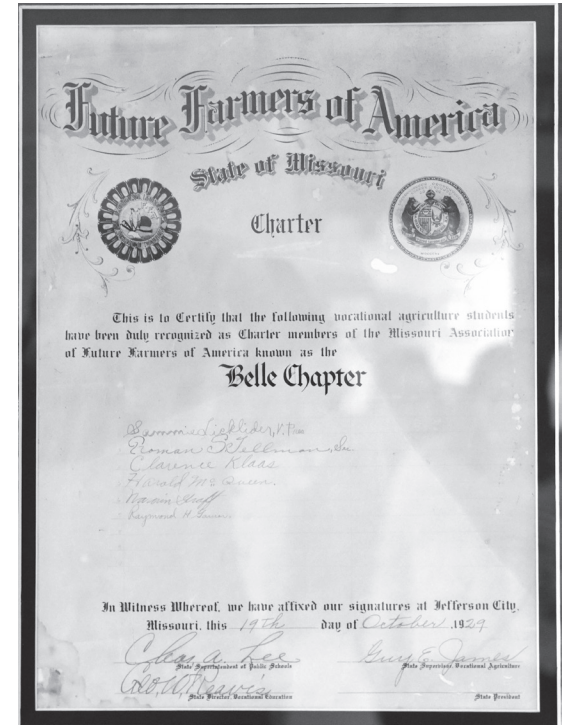
since the chapter began. He had worked at three previous school districts and started at Belle High School (BHS) in 2005-06. He has 28 years of experience total this year.

"When the Belle agriculture position came open, this is where my children went to school. I wanted to be here the longest," Mertz said. "I always heard stories of agriculture teachers going quick — staying two years minimum. But I wanted the program to have more stability than that."

When Mertz took the position in 2005, only 43 students had been awarded a state agriculture degree over the course of the program's 75 year history. Since he started teaching, 58 students have received their FFA state degrees. Mertz teaches students by the chapter's motto, "Learning to do, doing to learn, earning to live, living to serve."

"I saw a lot of potential here that I knew wasn't being reached," Mertz said about the beginning of his BHS teaching career. "I enjoy the contest side of things and encourage students to do more. That first year, my oldest son was a junior in high school and he and a friend were judging livestock in 4-H. I knew I had a really good group of kids that year."

See **90 Years** on Page 14B



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Natalie Koch



Emily Koch

Awards • from page 12B

In 2010 Belle FFA had their very first Missouri State Officer, Mareta James (Sherman) who served as the State Secretary. In 2014, Belle had their second State Officer, Paul Shanks who served as the State Vice President. The Belle FFA has many different successful pathways for its students from welding to the greenhouse.

In 2017, Belle FFA senior Collin Miller won 1st place at the MWI Welding Competition where he won a \$14,000 scholarship along with many other prizes. The chapter has had 11 other students place in the top ten at the MWI Welding Competition. Students who take the greenhouse pathway learn how to grow produce from seeds and sell plants to the community.

In 2017, Emily Koch placed 1st at State in the Young Farmers Young

Farm Wives Speech. Each year many students compete in Fall Public Speaking and Leadership Development Events.

The chapter is extremely successful with public speaking and contest teams. In spring of 2016, Amberely Sydner came to speak at Belle High School about how she over came a severe car accident and becoming paralyzed. Today, she has learned how to ride again and barrel races again.

In 2019, Natalie Koch became the third state officer for the Belle FFA, and is serving as State Vice President.

Belle FFA is proud to be one of the oldest FFA Chapters and is excited to be celebrating 90 awesome years! We're excited and ready to begin FFA week from February 23-28.



90 Years • from page 13B

All three of Mertz's students from that first year went on to judge at the collegiate level, received their masters in agriculture and are working in the professional field. Mertz said he encourages his students to visit the Belle school and show other students what they could do.

"I had an idea because we had lived in the community for years and for years I was amazed at the quality of the agriculture program," he said. "They started

the agriculture program here before FFA even began and it is my job to say 'hey, you can do this.'"

His first year's success only made him eager to see other Belle FFA members get to the top. Now out of 14 contest teams, 12 have made it to state.

"Now we are setting a bar," Mertz said. Then around 2007, Marieta Sherman

See **90 Years** on Page 15B

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FFA ADVERTISER Chris Mertz teaches in class at the Belle high school.

90 Years • from page 14B

(James) became Belle Chapter's first State FFA Officer.

"We just kept grinding away at contests and kicking out state degrees," Mertz said. "I had a vision to make Belle the top FFA and agriculture program in the area, and the first time we won state was when Merita and was here. She and the others that year were competitive."

James went on to college to graduate with an agriculture degree and came back to Belle to help teach the program. As co-advisors, Mertz said they get the students going and let them take initiative.

"Kids build confidence in themselves," Mertz said. "Our program, advisors and teachers say little."

The annual FFA Banquet is student led, along with many of the other chapter initiatives. Before they knew it, another member had broken into the state ranks. Paul Shanks became the second FFA State Officer from Belle, and now Natalie Koch is serving. Koch was recently featured on national TV on FFA Today.

"That's the rewarding part of this job," Mertz said. "To see students be successful in life."

See **90 Years** on Page 17B



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90 Years • from page 15B

The program has grown significantly since the beginning and especially in the last 15 years. Of the 235 students in the high school, 161 are involved in agriculture classes.

“It helped that a few years ago one of the teachers in the department went to the middle school part-time,” Mertz said.

About 12 students a year receive scholarships to judge at the collegiate level and Division One level. Mertz keeps track of the agriculture graduates that are working towards a related field degree, including four already in the field and five in various stages of completing their agriculture degrees.

The local chapter has had some bumps along the way. It was temporarily closed from 1944 to 1948, while previously under the direction of J.W.

Stafford.

“Due to the war,” Mertz said while showing a list of former agriculture teachers back to 1929. “The program picked back up after that (1948-49, under the direction of W. E. Foster).”

About 33 years later, the original shop burned down.

“I came and observed this class in the early 1980s and they were in a building downtown,” Mertz remembers.

The current shop and classroom are the “new facilities,” and where the current weight room is located in the back used to be the shop classroom.

“We have really good kids coming from here,” James said.

“People not from here come here and say ‘yeah, this cool stuff,’” Mertz said.

The Belle FFA Chapter Mo0013 looks forward to another 90 years.



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30 Belle FFA members in attendance were able to expand their comfort zone through networking, participating in workshops, and collaborating with other members within the organization. The experience involved a skit that was about enemies becoming friends through FFA and learning more about the organization and what students can achieve in it. Overall the conference was able to help agriculture students set goals for their education, careers, and FFA ex-

periences.

The FFA is a national youth organization of over 700,000 student members preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture with 348 chapters and more than 25,000 members in Missouri. The FFA strives to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural experience.

Belle FFA: 1930-2020

Vienna FFA: 1935-2020

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Belle State Degree Members


1930 - Sammy Licklider	1988 - Chris Freed	2005 - Stevie Nichole	2009 - Chris Gerloff	2013 - Taylor Honse
1930 - Clarence Klass	1989 - David Mayberry	Crull	2009 - Tyler Noblett	2013 - Hunter Loughridge
1944 - Edwin Lehnhoff	1989 - Mark Eric Thurston	2006 - Nicholas Mertz	2010 - Seth Klein	2014 - Allison Gieck
1944 - Randolph Roehl	1989 - Chris Cook	2006 - Wesley Moore	2010 - Samantha	2014 - Wyatt Loughridge
1952 - Albert Bray	1989 - James Allen	2006 - Zach Robertson	Maddison	2014 - Paul Shanks
1955 - Elmer Cordsmeyer	Hampton	2007 - Chelsea Crull	2010 - Jake Mikel	2015 - Wyatt Maddison
1960 - Louis Bremer	1990 - Chris Leonard	2008 - Andrew Brown	2010 - Haley Vandegriff	2015 - Madeline Guffey
1960 - James Gray	1991 - Keith Thompson	2008 - Brandon Baxter	2010 - Hilary Bush	2017 - Emily Koch
1961 - J Edward	1993 - Samantha	2008 - Colt A Thomas	2010 - Kelsi Withouse	2017 - Lindsey Kluesner
McKinney	Slinkman	2008 - Jeff Heintz II	2010 - Mareta Sherman	2017 - Zachary T Hill
1962 - August Rieke	1995 - David Flowers	2008 - Kaleb Heintz II	2011 - Callan Tackett	2018 - Logan Nicole
1962 - Ronald Terrill	1995 - Chris Smith	2008 - Nathan Mertz	2011 - Matthew Murphy	Honse
1964 - Sam Jones	1997 - Traci Marie	2008 - Cody Nichols	2011 - Will Moore	2018 - Trent C Stockton
1964 - Steve Swanson	Temmen	2008 - Taylor Shanks	2011 - Zech Moore	2018 - Payden Leean
1965 - Donald Rieke	1999 - Casey Jones	2008 - Ginny DeVine	2011 - Kollin Bush	Woodruff
1965 - Larry Rhoads	1999 - Paul Speichinger	2009 - Jess Kottwitz	2011 - Jordan Heintz	2018 - Crista Woolley
1976 - Edward Haring	1999 - Patrick Mistler	2009 - Heather Terrill	2012 - Joe Sherman	2019 - Natalie Danae
1976 - Ira Thompson	1999 - Bill Leonard	2009 - Cory Seba	2012 - Harley	Koch
1987 - Glenn Koch	2003 - Ashley Marquart	2009 - Eli Robertson	Baumgartner	2019 - Grace Morgan
1988 - David Martin	2004 - Kim Branson	2009 - Rachel Ringeisen	2012 - Wyatt Duncan	Busch
1988 - Doug Butler	2004 - Lindsay	2009 - Miranda Reynolds	2012 - Garit Kinsey	2019 - Erin Michelle
1988 - Patricia Heflin	Speichinger	2009 - Allie Nielson	2013 - Sara Klein	Helmig
1988 - Todd Robertson	2004 - Erin A. Moore	2009 - Holly Hiatt	2013 - Macie Kinsey	

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Belle FFA: 1930-2020
Vienna FFA: 1935-2020
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and RC2060 Rotary Cutter



\$314
per month³

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PROUD SUPPORTER OF OUR LOCAL FFA CHAPTERS

(1) Offer ends 10/30/2020. Subject to approved installment credit with John Deere Financial. Based on a 20% down payment and financing of 0% APR for 84 months. Taxes, freight, set up and delivery charges could increase the monthly payment. Price and model availability may vary. Heritage Tractor reserves right to change or cancel at any time. (2) Offer ends 4/30/2020. Subject to approved installment credit with John Deere Financial. Price and model availability may vary. Restrictions may apply, see dealer for details. (3) Offer ends 4/30/2020. Subject to approved installment credit with John Deere Financial. Based on a 0% down payment and financing of 0% APR for 72 months. Taxes, freight, set up and delivery charges could increase the monthly payment.