

Ag students mark FFA Week amid pandemic

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — FFA students in Wallowa County are celebrating National FFA Week this week by sharing the successes of their chapters and modifying their activities to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a press release.

A majority of the events during the Feb. 20-27 week have been forced to change during the past school year because of the pandemic. Those changes included how meetings are held, community service and career development events. Despite the changes, students in FFA — formerly known as Future Farmers of America — have found ways to live and thrive in school and in the FFA events, the release stated.

“We work to keep our students in their assigned cohorts, all students wear masks and we keep our distance,” the release stated.

In the fall, FFA chapters held their soils competition, largely with the help of Stangel Bison Ranch providing a pit and Dave Yost for officiating. Also held were competitions in crops and weeds via Google Forms, rituals via Zoom and members participated in virtual workshops with the state FFA officers.

As winter approached, the students participated virtually in an agricultural sales competition and the FFA district hosted the annual career development events, with the Enterprise and Joseph chapters excelling.

Aside from competitions, another honor in FFA is to earn the highest award the state can bestow upon its members, the State FFA Degree. To receive this honor members must have earned or invested \$1,500 or worked a minimum of 500 hours. They must prove involvement in the FFA, serve on a chapter committee, complete 25 hours of community service and more. Joseph



Jeremy McCulloch/Contributed Photo

Wallowa Junior High agriculture and FFA students work on projects in their banner-adorned classroom recently. The school's participation in National FFA Week was limited by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

had seven members earn this honor and Enterprise had 21 members.

Joseph members who earned this honor are Anabelle Russell, Hayden Hite, Jonah Staigle, Trace Collier, Ian Goodrich, Destiny Moore and Maggie Zacharias.

Enterprise members who earned the State FFA Degree were Andy Huwe, Elizabeth Rowley, Bailey Vernam, Dylan Jennings, Gideon Gray, Jada Gray, Hunter Harvey, Destiny Weeks, Landon Greenshields, Lannie Stonebrink, Alona Yost, Gaven Winn, Kasey Duncan, Rilyn Kirkland, Caylynn Beck, Alex Albanez, Carrin Yaw, Grace Collins, Flynn Nave, Gracie Ellis and Addie Royes.

In the CDE team competitions:

Soils Judging and Crops and Weeds: Joseph placed first.

Rituals: Joseph's Beginning Greenhand Team placed second and Enterprise's Beginning Team was fourth.

Agriculture Sales and Service:

Joseph's Advanced Team placed second and its Begin-

ning Team placed first, Enterprise's Advanced Team placed fourth and its Beginning Team placed fourth.

Advanced Parliamentary Procedure:

Enterprise's Team of Flynn Nave, Alona Yost, Bailey Vernam, Cody Fent, Trace Evans, Aubrina Melville and Maclane Melville placed first in Districts and first in Sectionals. Joseph's Team of Mary Thiel, Hayden Hite, Trace Collier, Juston Rogers, Layla Snyder and McKenzie Keffer.

Beginning Parliamentary Procedure:

Enterprise's team of Jessica Jourigan, Talia Aase, Brandon Charlton, Zach Farr-Roberts, Alex Rowley, Quincee Zacharias and Codi Cunningham placed fourth. Joseph's team of Owen Gorham, Kane Johnson, Aimee Myers, Cooper Nave, William Clark, Andrew Beachy and Payton Hess placed second in Districts and first in Sectionals.

Creed Speakers:

Enterprise's team was Codi Cunningham, Quincee Zacharias and Jessica Journigan. Joseph's team was Kane Johnson and Rhyson Collier.

Beginning Public Speaking:

Enterprise's team was Zander Flores, Sydney Hopkins and Lily Royes. Joseph's team was Cooper Nave (third) and Jaxon Grover.

Sophomore Public Speaking:

Enterprise's team was Tanner Kesecker, Emily Love and Harlie Stein. Joseph's team was Mary Thiel (first at Districts, fourth at Sectionals) and McKenzie Keffer.

Advanced Public Speaking:

Enterprise's team was Tegan Evans and Destiny Weeks. Joseph's team was Anabelle Russell (second at Districts and first at Sectionals) and Jonah Staigle (third.)

Extemporaneous Speaking:

Bailey Vernam of Enterprise.

Job Interview:

Enterprise's team was Alona Yost and Casidee Harrod. Joseph's team was Josey Wearin and Grace Hickman.

The FFA mission is to provide the next generation of leaders who will change the world by focusing on premier leadership, personal growth and career

success through agricultural education, according to the press release. This mission has been proven through the hard work of all of our students during these challenging times.

In a statement from Wallowa's FFA adviser, Jeremy McCulloch, he said most of that chapter's activities for FFA Week were curtailed by the pandemic restrictions.

“Everybody's picking and choosing with all this going on,” he said.

“This year in Wallowa, we were forced due to COVID-19 restrictions to stay pretty much in-house during FFA Week. Many years we are able to do outside events in the community and engage with our alumni and supporters in more ways,” McCullo-

ch said in an email. “The focus this year, being forced by regulations to be internal, have shifted toward making sure our next generation of FFA members, our Discovery members in seventh and eighth grade are prepared for FFA membership and excited for what the future holds. Chapter officers helped with some team-building projects and we have some community service projects we are working on in the shops. McCulloch said his chapter is working toward spring.

“Our Introduction to Agriculture class also spent FFA Week gearing up for spring activities like the annual plant sale and our chapter officers have begun discussions about our (we hope) annual chapter banquet,” he said.

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Trace Evans tops the list of Elks scholarship winners

Duncan, Salim, Farwell also honored

Chieftain staff



ENTERPRISE — The Enterprise Elks Lodge No. 1829 recently held its 2020/21 Most Valuable Student Competition, and selected Trace Evans and Kasey Duncan, of Enterprise High School, as their 2021 Most Valuable Student Scholars, according to a press release.

Each student receives a \$1,200 scholarship from the lodge to use next fall for college.

Placing second, and receiving \$800 each are David Salim and Claire Farwell, also of Enterprise High School.

All four students advanced to the Elks Northeast District Judging on Jan. 4, where first place receives \$1,800, second place receives \$1,600 and third place receives \$1,400. Evans placed second in the boys competition for our district, receiving an additional \$1,600. His application was to advance to the state competition Feb. 13, in Newport, because while the 14 first-place district winners automatically advance to the Grand Lodge Scholarship contest, Oregon also is allowed to send an additional three applications to the Grand Lodge competition, so all second-place district winners are advanced to the state level for further judging as well. If they advance to the Grand Lodge level, they will join 486 other scholarship winners across

the country for a chance to earn a \$50,000 scholarship for four years.

Evans is the son of Teah Jones and Todd Evans, and plans to attend St. Mary's College, in Leavenworth, Kansas, to major in history education or prelaw. He plans to wrestle collegiately for St. Mary's.

Duncan is the daughter of Rob and Tamarah Duncan, and plans to attend the University of Idaho, and major in architecture and interior design.

Farwell is the daughter of Troy and Lisa Farwell and plans to attend either Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, or

Washington State University in Pullman, and major in mathematics education.

Salim is the son of Sarah Jackman, and plans to attend the University of Idaho and major in electrical engineering and music.

Last year, the Elks National Foundation provided more than \$3.65 million in college scholarships to graduating seniors. This year's amount will be similar, but as yet, is not known. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is second only to the federal government in scholarships awarded to seniors in high school.

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