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continued on page 2

**2003-2004**  
**Supporting the Tradition**  
**Illinois FFA Alumni Association**

Volume 5 Issue 4

# PRESIDENT'S CALL TO CONVENTION

Greeting from Ron Byers, Illinois FFA Alumni President. As we are about to finish a prosperous year in the FFA Alumni and prepare for the next, I would like to highlight some of our successes for the year and make challenges for next year.

Our first accomplishment was our most successful scholarship auction ever, generating more than \$14,000.00 As a result, we were able to award extra scholarships for E.D.G.E. conference, Made for Excellence, FFA Leadership Camp, Washington Leaders Conference, and help two FFA officers with the cost of their Work Experience Abroad.

We helped F.C.A.E. with a campaign to encourage legislators support of Ag education in the state budget.

Our fund-raiser to generate capital campaign funds was not the success that we had hoped for, but not a total failure. We are beginning raffle ticket sales for a restored "H" Farm All to be kicked off prior to and promoted at our annual meeting on January 30th and 31st to help with the capitol campaign.

Our new council structure with 15 members has worked well with expanded representation, and efforts taken this year has given our organization voting representation on the administrative council, making more complete the total family of partners working together for Ag education and FFA.

In July I represented Illinois at the National FFA Alumni State Leaders' Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas. Many workshops were presented on how alumni can partner with corporations and FFA to support Ag education.

I promoted our organization at the beginning teachers' workshop in October and discussed what the alumni can do for them.

We are the second largest state alumni in the nation, but work needs to be done to continue building our membership by chartering new affiliates and helping to rebuild struggling affiliates.

Ag education programs throughout the state are being threatened by schools' financial crisis and budget cuts. With these threats our role becomes even more important, as a strong, active, local FFA Alumni can send a signal to school administrators to think twice before they cut ad education.

I would encourage each of you to attend your annual meeting at the Springfield Hilton on January 30th and 31st, 2004. Along with some excellent entertainment and awards presentation on Friday evening, on Saturday we will have informative workshops and a presentation by Jay Runner, F.C.A.E. coordinator on how we can help them work with our state legislator to encourage Ag education in the state budget line item. Again this year we have an exciting silent and live auction lined up with a John Deere lawn tractor, seed, tractor rentals, and as last year many items big and small for everyone. If you have items to donate or know of potential donors either bring them to the annual meeting or call me at 309-426-2738. Please plan to attend and bring friends to make this the best convention and scholarship auction ever.

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Executive Council  
Cont.

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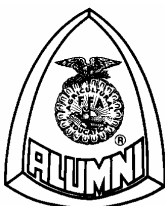
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# MEET THE CANDIDATES

The Illinois FFA Alumni Annual Meeting will be held January 30-31, 2004 at the Hilton Hotel in Springfield, IL. The following individuals submitted an Intent to run for Illinois FFA Alumni Council and will comprise the ballot at this year's annual meeting. The biography portion of the Intent form is the only portion reprinted in this newsletter. In the interest of space, I have eliminated paragraph breaks for each candidate. The FFA Alumni activities, reason for wanting to be on the Illinois FFA Alumni Council, and the additional information portions will be available for review at the annual meeting.

Ron Byers – Ron is from the Roseville FFA Alumni affiliate and is running for President. “I own and operate with our son a beef cow, grain operation, and custom silage harvesting business in west-central Illinois near Roseville. Have been very active with FFA and FFA Alumni since 1993, as I was leading our local alumni when FFA and Ag education was cut in Roseville. Our alumni leadership saved and pressured the school administration to reinstate the program. Our local membership more than doubled from 75 members to 160. My wife and I won and she manages Western Illinois Home Care, Inc. serving ten counties in western Illinois. Our oldest daughter helps manage the home care business with Barb, and our youngest daughter is a senior at University of Notre Dame.”

Dean Olson – Dean is from the Geneseo AG Alumni affiliate and is running for Vice President. “Agriculture has always been part of my life. I now own and operate the farm near Geneseo where I was raised. I graduated from Geneseo High School where FFA was my major activity. I graduated from Western Illinois University with a B.S. in Animal Science and Ag Management. Along with my sons I farm 1700 acres of corn, soybeans, rye and hay. Feeding cattle is the basis of our operation, but we also feed hogs and do custom work. My family includes my wife, Diane (a middle school English teacher), our daughter Dee Ann Kuster (a veterinarian), sons Deric and Dustin who both operate farms of their own, and son Devin, a sophomore in high school. All four of our children have been very active in FFA. I have served on the Henry County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, as president of the Henry County Beef Association, Illinois Beef Association Board, as 4-H County Fair Superintendent, and am currently president of the Geneseo FFA Alumni and vice president of the Illinois FFA Alumni. We are members of First Lutheran Church in Geneseo.”

Sally Kittinger – Sally is from the Eldorado FFA Alumni affiliate and is running for Reporter. “I grew up in Bloomington, Illinois and attended University High School in Normal. My high school did not offer agriculture or the FFA. I had heard of the organization but did not really know what the FFA was until I began working for the Illinois FFA Center in 1995. In 1995, I was hired on as a secretary. I finished earning my associates degree during the time I worked in the FFA Center. I continued to work there until August of 2000 when the FFA Center moved to Springfield. Instead of following the FFA Center's move, I chose to move to Eldorado, Illinois. In November of 2000, I married Bill Kittinger, the FFA Advisor here in Eldorado. I have been on maternity leave from my part-time job as a secretary for Shults Septic Service and from substituting at the Child Study Center and Eldorado Unit 4 School District and may return to work in January of 2004. The most recent addition to our family, Chase Austin, was born in August 2003. In addition to Chase, I have a 6-year-old daughter, Riley, a 16-year-old stepson, Alex, and 21-year-old stepson, Logan. Riley is in the first grade and involved in Brownies and Basketball. Alex is a junior in high school, active on the golf team and serves as the FFA Chapter Sentinel. Logan is a junior at the University of Evansville in Indiana studying computer engineering. I volunteer as my daughter's Brownie troop leader, am a member of the PTO, serve on the community Town and Country Days committee, and I am an active member of our local FFA Alumni affiliate.

# MEET THE CANDIDATES cont.

Bill Brown – Bill is from the Eldorado FFA Alumni affiliate and is running for Treasurer. I was raised in Saline County where my father owned and operated a small cattle operation and a game bird farm and my mother owned a Bible Book Store. I graduated from Eldorado High School in 1981 and was active in all FFA and vocational programs. After graduation I went into law enforcement security and then into sales. I was Vice President of Sales for a communications company in Tampa Florida until a change in Board of Directors. I am currently doing construction while seeking a career in Non Profit or Management. I am married to a wonderful wife Valerie and have 2 children. Our oldest, Adam 15 years of age, is currently JR President of the Eldorado FFA and is very active within the FFA Chapter. His freshman year he won the Star Greenhand Award and after graduating from high school he wants to major in Constructional Engineering. Our youngest, Audrey 12 years of age, is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade cheerleader in the Eldorado Middle School. She loves all kinds of animals and wants to become a Marine Biologist. I am very active volunteering for the State of Illinois Special Olympics serving on the State Committee Board for the winter and summer Olympics and well as serving on the Special Olympics area 14-committee board. I am a key volunteer for Coleman Tri County (adult disabilities). My wife and I are members of the Eldorado FFA Alumni and I am currently serving as the Alumni Section 25 Chairman.

Rich Sanders – Rich is from the Prairie Central FFA Alumni affiliate and is running for Secretary. I was born and raised in the Forrest area. I was the state electrification award winner in 1968. I received my associates degree from Joliet Jr. College in 1970. I was in the army for 2 years at Ft. George G. Meade in Maryland between Baltimore and Washington DC. In 1975 I started my own electrical business and by 1988 I had 6 employees, doing mostly agricultural wiring. In 1999 I co-purchased a plumbing and heating business. In 1978 I became interested in the village operations so I decided to run for the board. I was elected village council member for 6 years. I have served as village president from 1984 until the present. I am a volunteer fireman and was fire chief for 18 years. I am vice president of the South East Livingston County Ambulance Board. Wanting some changes in the Livingston County economical development, I was elected to the board and am currently president

## WE HAVE A WINNER!

Phillip Frank from Athens, IL won the 2003 Alumni tractor raffle. The drawing was held on October 15, 2003. There were not enough tickets sold to give away the new MTX200 McCormick tractor and the raffle turned into a 50/50 drawing. 270 raffle tickets were in the drawing. The Alumni Council would like to thank each of the chapters that helped to sell raffle tickets. A \$500 check will be presented to the Athens FFA Chapter for having their chapter name on the winning raffle ticket. A \$1,000 check will be presented to the Cissna Park FFA Chapter for selling the most tickets. The Alumni will make a \$2,000 contribution to the capital campaign. All other funds were used for raffle expenses.

With this raffle behind us, the Alumni Council will once again sponsor a raffle beginning January 1st for a restored International H. The tickets will be on sale through the State FFA Center from January 1, 2004 through May 1, 2004 and the winning ticket will be drawn at the FFA Convention on June 8, 2004. Tickets will be \$20 each or 3 for \$50. The Alumni Council reserves the right to turn the raffle into a 50/50 drawing if less than 500 tickets are sold. Watch and be ready for your chance to purchase a winning ticket!

## E.D.G.E. CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

The following individuals were selected to receive a scholarship for them to attend the E.D.G.E. Conference in Springfield, IL on November 8, 2003. Kirk Buetke of the Woodland FFA Chapter, Bethany Corbin of the Roseville FFA Chapter, Danielle Delap of the Eldorado FFA Chapter, Mark Hornbostel of the Trico FFA Chapter, Callie West of the Geneseo FFA Chapter, and Carolyn Wicklein of the Waterloo FFA Chapter. Congratulations to these scholarship recipients!

# TENTATIVE ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

## Friday, January 30, 2004

1:00 p.m. Pre-Convention Meeting  
4:00 p.m. Registration Opens / Check in Auction Items  
6:30 p.m. Evening Banquet  
    Introduction of Officers  
    Presentation of Colors  
    National Anthem  
    Call to Order  
    Welcome  
    Introduction of Guests  
    Invocation  
    Awards Banquet  
    Alumni Affiliate Award Presentation  

- Charter Plaques
- Outstanding Affiliates
- Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award
- Largest % of Growth
- One for One Chapters
- Most New Life Members
- Most New Members
- Largest Affiliate

  
    Recognition of Candidates  
    Silent Auction Rules  
    Recess Business Session  
    Entertainment  
    Silent Auction Ends

## Saturday, January 31, 2004

7:30 a.m. Registration Opens / Check in Auction Items / Silent Auction Begins  
8:00 a.m. Breakfast  
    National Anthem  
    Pledge of Allegiance  
    Invocation  
    Greetings  
    FCAE Workshop  
9:30 a.m. District Caucuses  
10:00 a.m. Morning Break  
10:30 a.m. Business Meeting  
    Reconvene Business Session  
    Introductions  
    Review Voting Procedures  
    2003 Minutes  
    2003 Financial Report  
    Old Business  
    New Business  
    Remarks on Raffle  
    Election of 2004 Officers  
    Workshops

# **TENTATIVE ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA cont.**

11:30 a.m.      Announcements  
                    General Session  
                            Call to Order  
                            Welcome from FFA  
                            President's Remarks  
                            2003 Alumni Council  
                            Invocation  
                            Luncheon  
                            2004 Officer Introductions  
                                    Section  
                                    District  
                                    State  
                            Cornerstone Award  
                            Announcements  
                            Silent Auction  
                            Officer Meeting Following Live Auction  
                            Adjourn / Close Silent Auction

12:30 p.m.      Live Auction

## **LOCAL PARTNERSHIP GRANTS AVAILABLE**

Grants are available to assist Illinois FFA Alumni Affiliates send delegates to the annual meeting of the Illinois FFA Alumni, January 30 & 31, 2004. A grant in the amount of \$100 (maximum) is available for alumni affiliates that have a representative in attendance who participates at both days of the meeting. Grants are limited to one per affiliate with funding available for 100 affiliates. Should more than 100 affiliates apply for the grant by the pre-registration deadline, the grant amount will be pro-rated among the eligible affiliates. (Eg. If 110 affiliates request the grant by the deadline, all will be funded, but the grant per affiliate will be reduced to \$90.90)

How your affiliate can qualify:

- 1) Complete the advance registration form.
- 2) Have the affiliate president sign the advance registration form and mail it with the registration fee before the deadline.
- 3) The affiliate representative must sign in at each session of the annual meeting.
- 4) Grant checks will be mailed to the local affiliate following the annual meeting.

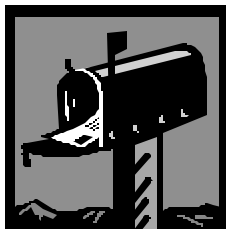
Partnering in the local community is a powerful force. The grants have been made available to compensate individuals and affiliates for the costs to attend the annual meeting. The meeting will provide some valuable information and tools that can be implemented in your local community to increase and improve the opportunities for local Agriculture Education students and will also focus on how the local community can have a positive impact on the future of Agriculture Education in their schools.

## **NATIONAL ALUMNI CONVENTION**

Three FFA Chapters received a Chapter Grant from the National FFA Alumni at this year's National FFA Alumni Convention. Bushnell-Prairie City receive a \$999.97 grant, Eldorado received a \$1,000 grant, and Mt. Vernon received a \$1,000.00 grant. Bushnell-Prairie City FFA Alumni also received a Gold in the Outstanding Affiliate Award. Other Outstanding Affiliate Award winners were: Waterloo FFA Alumni – silver, LeRoy FFA Alumni – bronze, Mt. Vernon FFA Alumni – Bronze, and Tri-Point FFA Alumni – Bronze. Bill and Sally Kittinger of the Eldorado FFA Alumni each received a Legion of Merit. Illinois also had a state basket put together by Sarah Myer. Congratulations to all!

# IMPORTANT DEADLINES!

**Illinois FFA Center**  
3221 Northfield Dr  
Springfield, IL 62702



**National FFA Alumni**  
6060 FFA Dr  
PO Box 68960  
Indianapolis, IN  
46268-0960

## **SOME DEADLINE DATES HAVE CHANGED SINCE LAST YEAR!**

Remember, your membership rosters must have been postmarked and returned with dues to the State FFA Center by March 1, 2003 to qualify for alumni scholarships. Rosters must show 10 or more active members and include a list of officers. Dates listed are the postmarked dates due.

Nov. 1, 2003 M.F.E. Scholarship application due to State FFA Center  
Nov. 1, 2003 Outstanding Affiliate Award application due to State FFA Center  
Nov. 1, 2003 Outstanding Achievement Award application due to State FFA Center  
Jan. 1, 2004 Work Experience Abroad Scholarship application due to State FFA Center  
**Jan. 30-31, 2004 Illinois FFA Alumni Annual Meeting at Hilton Hotel, Springfield**  
March 1, 2004 Membership Rosters due to State FFA Center to qualify for scholarships  
March 1, 2004 IL Leadership Camp Scholarship Applications due to State FFA Center  
March 1, 2004 Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship Applications due to State FFA Center

**There will be a sale bill for the annual alumni auction printed in the Illinois Agri-News in early January!**

**Supporting the Tradition**  
**ILLINOIS FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**  
3221 Northfield Dr  
Springfield, IL 62702

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**WATCH FOR A SALE BILL FOR THE ALUMNI AUCTION IN THE ILLINIOS AGRI-NEWS**