

NCATA Summer Newsletter

Matt Harris, Southwest Vice President, Crest High School

As the new school year starts many agriculture teachers throughout the state move back into the classroom role. For some of those teachers, like me, we start another cycle. Others may be wrapping up the last year of their career and for some it may be the very first year of the journey. It is this time of the year I like to reflect on why we do what we do.

I remember the first time I met Chivous Bradley, my former agriculture teacher. I was so excited to be part of the Chase FFA chapter. It was at that part of my life the course was set for what I do today. I remember it being more about Creed speaking than anything else. I was quiet, shy and very unsure about myself and my capabilities. In this ninth grade class I remember that we had to do the FFA Creed as a classroom assignment just as many of us continue to assign today. I did my part to learn each paragraph by the due date and to recite it in class like everybody else. To me, there was nothing special, it was just a grade. Little did I know but this assignment and Mr. Bradley's encouragement became a big part in driving my confidence and my future.

It was not the results of the effort, but the process that I was part of that began shaping my confidence in life. No, there is no huge success story to tell; I was second to a student from Madison at the regional contest. The success of the activity was in the classroom experience and the coaching of my teacher.

As the new school year starts we will meet some new students and a few returning ones. Throughout the year there will be many opportunities in shaping our students' futures. We agriculture teachers may not have a state winning team, proficiency finalist or take home the camp banner this year, but we will have many special moments where we will shape the future success of another individual. It is for that reason we do what we do and who knows how many lives it will change for the better.

May God bless you all with a wonderful school year!

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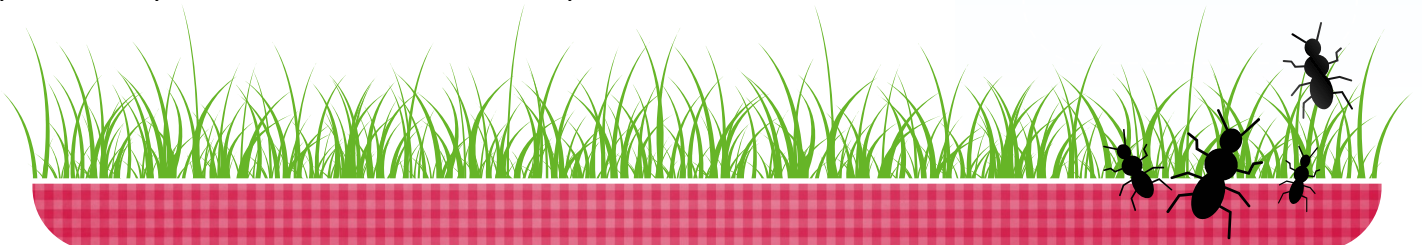
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Matt Harris: Southwest

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West Central Region VP - Marguerite Fields, Jordan Matthew High School

Greetings from the West Central Region. Hopefully you are gearing up for another wonderful year. The West Central Region had a great year last year with many success in award areas and chapter recognitions. We congratulate those outstanding achievements and wish you well at National Convention. These success stories have a lot to do with the great teachers, that give 100% everyday to their students, to make them a young adult that is prepared for life lessons in the real world. Our regions' membership has the potential for a greater improvement from years past. I challenge you to make that happen. The mission of this organization is to be a voice of all agriculture teachers, led by members who are well trained and knowledgeable of their duties and responsibilities to achieve the goals. It is also to provide a mentoring program where an accomplished teacher works with a new teacher in all aspects of teaching agriculture. If we work together as a region these two goals are easy to achieve. Take a new teacher or less experienced teacher under your wing and make your year and their year a successful one. If you need to contact me to become a member and come on board with this challenge my email is mfields@chatham.k12.nc.us.

West Region Vice President—Justin Gillespie, North Buncombe High School

The West Region is looking back on a busy and successful summer, while preparing for the fall semester that includes numerous CDE's on the Chapter, Federation, Regional, State, and National level. State Convention brought recognition to many of our students and chapters that worked hard throughout the 2015-2016 school year. FFA Camp was a time of relaxation, team building, and enjoying our beautiful NC FFA Center. I'm aware of numerous Chapters that have conducted Chapter Officer Leadership retreats: working on POA's and developing the many skills that will make them successful fulfilling their responsibilities to their chapter.

Looking forward: The NC Mountain State Fair is quickly approaching. The west region will hold a chapter and truck driving CDE that all Federations are invited to attend and compete in. Also the "Moo-Ternity Ward" is a high light for our FFA members. Each chapter will be responsible for the care of the Jersey dairy cows, from Small Acres Dairy, which are very close to calving as well as educating the visitors to the "ward". This has proven to be an enlightening experience for FFA members as the questions reflect the great gap that most Americans have about production agriculture. You can imagine the great conversations that take place between FFA members and fair goers, especially about the birthing process and where their milk really comes from.

Fall brings excitement to each member and advisor as the change of seasons gives opportunity for a new season of learning and involvement in agriculture education and FFA!

