



The Blue & Gold



The Official Newsletter of the Georgia FFA Alumni Association

Spring 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring is here and the Georgia FFA and FFA Alumni state conventions are just around the corner. I urge each FFA Alumni member to be in Macon on Saturday, April 28 for the Georgia FFA Alumni Convention. We had the largest crowd in recent memory last year. Let's make this year even better.

There is a full schedule of activities during the entire convention. There will be scrapbook and basket contests, as well as silent and live auctions, and the Alumni store to help support the FFA.

As we get ready to head to Macon to judge, award and celebrate all things FFA, it is a worthy time to ask ourselves as FFA Alumni, are we doing all we can to live up to our mission statement? Are we doing all we can to "secure the promise"? We have many opportunities to make certain that the FFA's future is safe and sound. Right now, you can be a legislative advocate for agricultural education in your congressional district. Just see Norman Gay, Joy Carter or myself at state convention to see how you can make a difference from your home.

Look at the great job that your alumni affiliate is doing at your local FFA chapter and ask yourself, what more can I do? Ask your agriculture teacher; there is always another way to make FFA better for their members. One small thing that every one of us can do is to simply encourage our FFA members and agriculture teachers. Let them know that the FFA Alumni supports their efforts. And remember to encourage fellow Alumni members; they must be doing a great job - just look at our FFA, their success is our success. Thank you Alumni, for all you do!

Joe Greene
Georgia FFA Alumni President

State Alumni Convention set for April 27-28 in Macon

The Georgia FFA Alumni Association will hold its annual convention Friday and Saturday, April 27-28, in conjunction with the Georgia FFA Association's state convention at the Macon Centreplex.

The annual Alumni Silent Auction will be held Friday, followed by the awards and business session and the live auction Saturday morning. All local alumni affiliate members are encouraged to attend. There is no cost to attend the convention, and alumni members can register for the convention Saturday morning beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Highlights of the convention will be the presentation of awards for Outstanding FFA Alumni Affiliate, Pioneer FFA Alumni Affiliate, Legion of Merit, Outstanding Achievement, Outstanding Agriculture Instructor and Outstanding Distinguished Contributor. Awards will also be presented to the Local Alumni Affiliate Scrapbook winners, Chapter Basket Contest winners and Display Contest winners.

During the business session, elections will be held for several vacant positions on the Alumni Council. More information about the council elections is included on the back page of this newsletter. Hope to see you in Macon!



Habersham County FFA Alumni Member Wallace Beggs receives the Distinguished Contributor Award at the 2006 Georgia FFA Alumni Association Annual Convention from Alumni Past President Jim East. Award presentations are a highlight of the alumni convention.

Alumni Convention Schedule

Friday, April 27

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 12:30-4:00 p.m. | Silent Auction |
| 12:30-4:30 p.m. | Alumni Store Open |
| 12:30-4:30 p.m. | Alumni Reception |

Saturday, April 28

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 9:00 a.m. | Alumni Convention Registration Room 306, Edgar Wilson Convention Center |
| 9:30 a.m. | Awards and Business Session and Live Auction Room 306, Edgar Wilson Convention Center |



PRESIDENT:

Joe Greene, *Carnesville*

PRESIDENT ELECT

Joy Carter, *Tifton*

PAST PRESIDENT

Jim East, *Colquitt*

MEMBER DIRECTORS

North Region

Jimmy Mock, *Jefferson*

Central Region

Alfredo Pearson, Sr., *Dublin*

Johnny Jones, *Lyons*

South Region

Bobby Richardson, *Colquitt*

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Skip Chandler, *Marietta*

Debbie Cripe, *Americus*

Kevin Walker, *Madison*

TEACHER DIRECTORS

John Barnes, *Gilmer Co. Young Farmers*

Amy Crump, *Habersham Central High School*

Lynne Cook, *Tift Co. High School*

EMERITUS DIRECTORS

Bill Lott, *Braselton*

Luther Wilkes, *Jefferson*

NATIONAL FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Joy Carter, *Tifton*

Jim East, *Colquitt*

Norman Gay, *Perry*

Rachael McCall, *Abbeville*

STATE PROGRAM MANAGER OF

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

John Wilkinson, *Atlanta*

REGION EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

North - Blane Marable, *Athens*

Central - Ricky Wheeler, *Swainsboro*

South - Justin Sealy, *Tifton*

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FFA Alumni Basket Contest

One highlight of the alumni convention is the Chapter Basket Contest. Baskets should uniquely represent your local county or area by including products native to your county and distinct items of interest. All baskets will be auctioned off at the FFA Alumni Silent Auction Friday afternoon or on Saturday morning during the alumni convention. All proceeds from the basket contest will be used to support activities of the Georgia FFA Association and the Georgia FFA Alumni Association.

Baskets will be judged on the following criteria: best showcase of the FFA/ FFA Alumni; best representation of your city, county or area; most creative use of the term "basket;" most attractive; most unusual and best representation of agriculture.

Baskets can be brought to the alumni table Thursday afternoon, April 26, or to the silent auction Friday morning, April 27. Baskets must be delivered by noon on Friday.

FFA Alumni Basket Contest Awards

ALUMNI AFFILIATES

1st place Plaque and choice of either a scholarship to the National FFA Alumni Leaders Conference in Portland, Oregon, or a Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship

2nd place Plaque and \$50

3rd place Plaque

FFA CHAPTERS

1st place Plaque and \$550 Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship

2nd place Plaque and \$50

3rd place Plaque

COLLEGE ORGANIZATIONS

1st place \$100 for a Pizza Party

New Display Contest

Check out www.ffaalumni.org for contest rules!

Silent and Live Auctions

The Alumni Silent and Live Auctions have become a tradition during the Georgia FFA Alumni Association's annual convention and are great fundraisers for the Georgia FFA Alumni Association. The silent auction begins Friday, April 27, at 9:00 a.m. in the rotunda of the Edgar Wilson Convention Center at the Macon Centreplex. The bidding will end Friday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. The live auction will be held immediately following the awards and business session Saturday morning at 9:30 a.m. in Room 306 of the Edgar Wilson Convention Center.

Consider a Donation for the Silent and Live Auctions

If you or your alumni affiliate would like to donate items for the silent or live auctions, please do so. Donations may be brought to the alumni table during State FFA Convention registration Thursday afternoon, April 26, or items may be brought to the alumni table Friday morning, April 27. All donations for the auctions will be greatly appreciated.



Alumni Becomes FFA Convention Sponsor

The Georgia FFA Alumni Association recently presented a check to the Georgia FFA Association for sponsorship of the 79th Georgia FFA Convention. Georgia FFA Alumni President Joe Greene presents a check to State FFA President Sean Blankenship and State FFA Executive Secretary Ben Lastly. Looking on are alumni members and council members.

CONGRATULATIONS... to Jackson Co. FFA Alumni member Dustin Wilkes for being named one of ten finalists on Nashville Star! Dustin is a native of Jefferson, Georgia, and is the son of Alumni Emeritus Director Luther Wilkes. Dustin has performed at the Georgia FFA Convention, the National FFA Convention and the National FFA Alumni Convention. He currently lives in Nashville and is pursuing a career in country music.

2007 State Leaders Conference

The National FFA Alumni Association will hold its annual State Leaders Conference July 10-15 in Portland, Oregon. This conference is a wonderful opportunity to meet and discuss issues facing the FFA and FFA Alumni with members from across the country.

The total cost of the conference is \$400, and all registration forms and fees must be postmarked by June 1. The Georgia FFA Alumni Council has approved partial funding for alumni members to attend the conference. Alumni members interested in attending and needing monetary assistance should visit www.ffaalumni.org for more information.



The 2006 State Leaders Conference was held in Nashville, Tennessee, last summer. Pictured at left are the Georgia FFA Alumni members that attended the conference.

\$1,000 Grants Available

The National FFA Alumni Association will again award \$1,000 grants to local FFA chapters during the National FFA Alumni Convention in Indianapolis in October. The grants are awarded for chapters to use to strengthen their chapter's program and/or member support. Seven Georgia chapters received the grants last year, more than any other state. Receiving grants were Fannin Co. FFA, Franklin Co. FFA, Jasper Middle FFA, Morgan Co. FFA, Oconee Co. FFA, Perry High FFA and Southeast Whitfield FFA.

Grant applications are available on the National FFA Alumni website, www.ffa.org, and must be postmarked by July 1. The grants are sponsored by Tractor Supply Company.

Alumni Affiliate Membership Due Now!

Georgia Agriculture License Plate Supports Georgia FFA and Georgia 4-H

A new license plate honoring Georgia agriculture is now available, and proceeds from the sale of the ag tags will benefit the FFA and 4-H programs in Georgia. The proceeds will be evenly distributed between the two organizations and will fund special initiatives to promote agriculture, agricultural awareness and environmental education.

The idea for the ag tag's design came from FFA and 4-H members attending the Governor's Honors Agriscience Program. The students researched other states' ag tags, came up with their own ideas of what should be on the tag and then completed a draft design. Artist Mike Parsons of Winder took their draft design and created the final ag tag design. To view the tag, visit www.ffaalumni.org.

The tags can be pre-purchased now by calling or visiting your county tag office. There is an initial \$25 manufacturing fee and an annual \$45 registration and specialty tag fee for renewal. Once 1,000 orders have been placed, the tags will be manufactured and shipped to purchasers.

Alumni Council Elections to be Held at State Convention

The Georgia FFA Alumni Council approved election procedures for the alumni convention at their recent meeting in Perry, March 21. The election procedures for this year will realign the state council with the bylaws approved last year at the 2006 Georgia FFA Alumni Convention.

Once these officers are elected and the term limits are served, the officers will then be elected on the regular 3-year term as stated in the bylaws.

If any member has a question concerning the election procedure, please contact any of the Georgia FFA Alumni Council members. The council encourages all FFA alumni members to complete an application for office. The application forms are available online at www.ffaalumni.org.

For information on how to start a local FFA alumni affiliate, visit www.ffaalumni.org.

The officer positions open for election and the term limits include:

NORTH REGION

Area 1 - Elected for a 3-year term. This office is currently vacant.

Area 2 - Elected for a 1-year term. This office is currently held by Jimmy Mock.

CENTRAL REGION

Area 3 - Elected for a 3-year term. This office is currently vacant.

Area 4 - Elected for a 1-year term. This office is currently held by Johnny Jones and Alfredo Pearson, Sr. Under the old bylaws, two officers were elected from each region instead of each area.

SOUTH REGION

Area 5 - Elected for a 1-year term. This office is currently held by Bobby Richardson.

Area 6 - Elected for a 3-year term. This office is currently vacant.

**FFA alumni members in each area will vote on their area director.*

DIRECTORS AT LARGE - Three directors will be elected at the convention, and the terms will be staggered. The one receiving the highest number of votes will serve a 3-year term, second highest votes will serve a 2-year term, and the third highest votes will serve a 1-year term. Elections will then be held every year for one director at large since the bylaws call for directors at large to serve a 3-year term. The current directors at large are Skip Chandler, Debbie Cripe and Kevin Walker.

TEACHER DIRECTORS - Three teacher directors will be elected at the convention, and the terms will be staggered. The one receiving the highest number of votes will serve a 3-year term, second highest votes will serve a 2-year term, and the third highest votes will serve a 1-year term. Elections will then be held every year for one teacher director since the bylaws call for the teacher directors to serve a 3-year term. The current teacher directors are John Barnes, Lynne Cook and Amy Crump.

**All FFA alumni members present at the convention can vote on the Directors at Large and Teacher Directors.*

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