



Winter 2010

Passing the Torch



Old Yeller

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Crawford, Ladner—Turning the Key in Nashville

NASHVILLE—When one's peers select him or her as a standout, the compliment is truly meaningful. The members of the Oregon Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association did just that for Wes Crawford last summer, and he put that compliment to work by making the most of his selection as the Oregon Teacher Turn the Key Award winner. The award, which offers an outstanding young agriscience and technology teacher in his or her first three years the opportunity to partake in unparalleled professional development opportunities at the NAAE convention.

In 2009, Wes Crawford of Sutherlin was selected as the Oregon winner, an honor for the young AST instructor. "Anytime you are recognized by

the professionals you work with, it is a great honor. Being selected to attend the Teacher Turn the Key programming at the NAAE National Convention shows confidence in you by others, and that is always something to be proud of."

Along with Crawford, Melissa Ladner of Henley was also selected to go as Oregon's reserve winner. The two were overwhelmed with the professional development opportunities presented for the Turn the Key recipients. According to Crawford, "The NAAE Convention quite literally had more opportunities for workshops than you could fit in; it was a matter of necessity to coordinate with fellow Oregon teachers which workshops you were going to attend so that you

could cover them all."

Unlike many professional development situations, however, Crawford felt the workshops at the NAAE convention were very applicable to his everyday classroom environment. "There were several workshops involving food science, and with this inspiration I have prefaced my Animal Science Production and Products semester with a food science unit. The hands-on activities while including concrete career skills and science knowledge have made this a fun unit to teach."

For any young OVATA members interested in the Teachers Turn the Key Award program, applications are available both on the NAAE and OVATA websites.

Coming Up

- State Officer Candidate Letters and Apps Due—February 19
- National FFA Week—February 21-27
- National Teach Ag Day—February 25
- Oregon State FFA Convention, OSU—March 19-22
- CDE Registrations due—April 2
- CDE Days, OSU—May 3-4

NAAE National Conference

NASHVILLE—The Oregon Vocational Agriculture Teachers' Association was well-represented at the NAAE Convention here, November 19-21, 2009, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort. Taking part in numerous workshops and activities were the OVATA officer team, as well as Oregon's two Teachers Turn the Key Award winners, and a handful of Oregon Ag Teachers attending for the three day professional development opportunity.

The Convention, held in conjunction with the ACTE's annual event, provided a number of professional development opportunities for agricultural educators. From Ready-to-Use Biotechnology curriculum, to workshops that focused on readying teachers and students for career development events, the conference was jam-packed with opportunities



Oregon was well-represented in Nashville

for educators to better their classroom environments, increase relations with other content areas, and build stronger

clout with administrators.

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“Never approach a bull from the front, a horse from the rear, or a fool from any direction.”

President’s Message — “Some Assembly Required” by Tim Ray, OVATA President

Agriculture Education in Oregon is a good product right out of the box, but as we modify the Agricultural Education model to fit our individual communities, some assembly may be required to make it great. Ad Ed has and will continue to be an educational model that other disciplines try to emulate and make their own. It has been tried numerous times in the past by many other content area teachers to varying levels of success and failure. Why has Agriculture Education been so successful where others have failed? In my opinion, we not only believe in the model, it is who we are as professionals. The model was conceived by people who had similar core values that we still hold today.

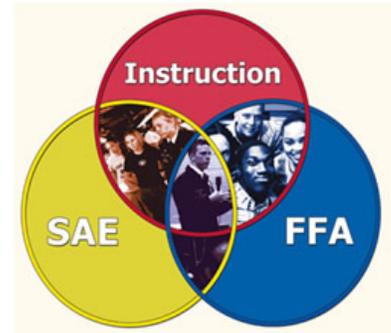
As agriculture teachers we constantly strive to push our students out of their comfort zones and experience new and exciting things. We know if we do not push our students to explore new areas, they will not experience the richness of what agriculture has to offer. As professionals, we model this learning style by attending more professional development than probably any other teacher in our buildings.

Over the past few years, I alone have acquired more professional development credits to renew a teaching license just through out professional organizations (NAAE and OVATA). This does not include the different events sponsored by my school district and ESD. It is because of our belief in our model that we have the ability to have such great professional development opportunities to refocus our efforts where they are the most effective. We must not lose focus on any on part of the model, or the model is not effective for as professionals or the students we serve.

As we work toward a statewide program of study, we must keep professional responsibility in mind as we focus heavily on the instruction component of the model. We will be asked to look at standards based education and the advantages it holds for our students, but we must not lose site of the hands on and experiential learning that takes place out of the classroom through SAE and FFA participation.

The next few years could be a challenge to Agricultural Education in Oregon, but I believe that if we apply the model by which we live every day to the

obstacles in front of us, we will not only survive but also thrive in the face of adversity. I challenge each of us to push ourselves out of our comfort zones, open our minds to possibilities we have never imagined and look at thins in a new light. Look at the opportunities we have to make an impact on Agriculture Education, not only in Oregon, but around the country as we strive to better not only ourselves but the students and organizations we serve. Take every opportunity you can to improve yourself, your program and your organization.



Who’s Gonna Fill Your Shoes? by Marty Campbell

I know it’s getting old. The posters with the handprint, the emails and articles on “tagging your replacement.” But, yes—it is important.

As I sat in the Strategic Planning Committee meeting at the NAAE Convention, the rest of the nation fought tooth and nail for us to place in our Strategic Plan a line item calling for the NAAE to actively recruit teachers from industry. Far be it for me to argue against such recruiting, seeings I am an industry-certified ag teacher myself, but it seems to me that there must be a drastic shortage of prospects for our next generation of ag teachers when we are trekking down such alternate avenues for teachers.

As the National FFA Organization continues to grow, our ranks grow smaller. Why aren’t our students attracted to our profession? What other profes-

sion do you get paid what we get paid to have the fun that we get to have?

The other day, I got to take a day off from the classroom with my best kids to watch them perform to the best of their ability in front of a number of adults and community members who were effectively assessing my teaching. What an awesome experience! That’s the kind of days we need to share with our students to attract them to our profession.

I think every one of us can point to our high school ag teacher as one of the most influential people in our young lives, and we are now serving that role in these students’ lives. If we can wield that influence to recruit them to the profession, aren’t we doing their kids a service?

I don’t know the answer to the question, but I know it’s worth the effort. Teach ’em up!

“The next few years could be a challenge to Agricultural Education in Oregon, but I believe that if we apply the model by which we live every day to the obstacles in front of us, we will thrive.”—Tim Ray



“Behind every successful rancher is a wife with a job in town.”

National Teach Ag Day—Thursday February 25, 2010

You are passionate about your profession. You know full well the extremely important role agricultural education plays in preparing students to lead their generation. Doesn't it make sense then to set aside a day to celebrate the profession of agricultural education and to show your students what a great career it could be for them as well?

Have a “dress like your ag teacher” contest. Let your students be the teacher for a day. Host a current college aged major as a guest speaker. However you do it, please be sure to celebrate the first ever National Teach Ag Day on February 25, 2010!

NAAE has developed a variety of resources to help you celebrate the day, including lesson plans, work-

sheets, games, a video and more. We also have a contest for collegiate ag ed organizations that can help them win money for their club. Visit the official National Teach Ag Campaign website to find all these great tools and ideas. www.naae.org/teachag/ag-teachers.php

National Teach Ag Day is also being used to raise the general public's awareness of agricultural education and the need for agricultural educators. Congressman Travis Childers of Mississippi has filed a resolution with the U.S. House of Representatives to officially designate February 25, 2010 as National Teach Ag Ed Day, and ag teachers all over the country are being tapped to help spread the word about agricultural education.

National Teach Ag Day is an initiative of the National Council for Agricultural Education's 10x15 project, and is being led by the National Association of Agricultural Educators. Several companies have contributed funds to help raise awareness of the need for agricultural educators, including Campbell Soup Company, Landmark Nurseries (as a special project of the National FFA Foundation), Delmar Cengage Learning, and James Allen Insurance Company.

Make plans to celebrate National Teach Ag Day. For more information, visit www.naae.org/teachag/teachagday. If you have questions or would like to get involved in helping us spread the word about agricultural education, contact Ellen Thompson, National Teach Ag Campaign Coordinator at ethompson.naae@uky.edu.

Teach AgEd Campaign is Coming to Oregon

The Oregon Vocational Agriculture Teachers' Association will be coordinating three workshops at the Oregon FFA Convention to promote our profession. A representative from the National Association of Agricultural Educators will be attending convention to provide Teach AgEd workshops to students and advisors.

A one-hour session will be available to all students attending convention and a special invitation only session provided to students nominated by FFA advisor to The special two-hour invitation only is designed to provide specific information to students who possess the skills, talent, and desire to become an agriculture teacher. More about nominating students will be provided in an email soon.

OVATA will also be coordinating an advisor only workshop to help provide you with tools and resources for engaging students in conversations about becoming an agriculture teacher. More about specific times and location for these sessions will be released soon. For inquiries about this opportunity in the meantime, please contact Dan Jansen at dan.jansen@case4learning.org.



Crane's Frank OVATA's Latest Celebrity

The caption says it all—“With hip shades, a soul patch and an iPod featuring everything from Texas country to punk...”

Rob Frank has made the big time. The agriculture and technology instructor from Crane Union High School, situated in the high desert of southeastern Oregon, was featured in the Oregon Farm Bureau's flagship publication *Oregon Agriculture* this last fall. Touting the benefits of agricultural education and incorporating the fine example of one of Frank's students and his success with his SAE-turned ranching operation, the article highlights one of Oregon's finest up and coming agriculture instructors.

Penned by Anne Marie Moss, the article perfectly showcases not only Frank's teaching talents and his passion for agriculture, the piece perfectly epitomizes what agricultural education is truly about. The model of hands-on experience combined with classroom learning and leadership opportunities is outlined with perfect detail, and Frank presents a strong case for agricultural education's pertinence in today's education.

Perhaps the greatest testimony to Frank is in the story presented about his student, senior Jacob Scott. Scott, with Frank's leadership and guidance, applied for a young farmer loan through the Farm Service Agency. Because of his knowledge, communication skills, and record-keeping prowess he

gained through Frank's classes and the FFA, Scott received the loan and is now running his own ranching operation.

According to Scott, “Mr. Frank is an awesome teacher. He has helped us broaden our horizons as agriculturists and has taught us that we need to speak out and tell people that we're proud of what we do, what we produce for society, and that we care for our animals, our land, and our way of life.”



Harney County's finest—Mr. Rob Frank

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We're on the web!

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Buckskin Mice and Illiterate Cows by Marty Campbell

Yeah...I'm a Rancher?

I have a confession to make. When I teach poultry, I have to cram the night before. When chicken folk start talking about vents, I'm usually thinking about the dashboard in my Dodge. By and large, I am not a friend to the feathered.

That's changing. With a great deal of urging from my bride, I have become, as of late, a chicken rancher. Yes. This situation has required me to swallow a great deal of pride. I mean, how do you ranch chickens? I am in my mid-thirties, and I am having to relearn things that I thought I would only have to know once. You cannot ranch chickens in the same fashion that you can ranch cattle—and leave it to a gunsel like myself to figure that out the hard way.

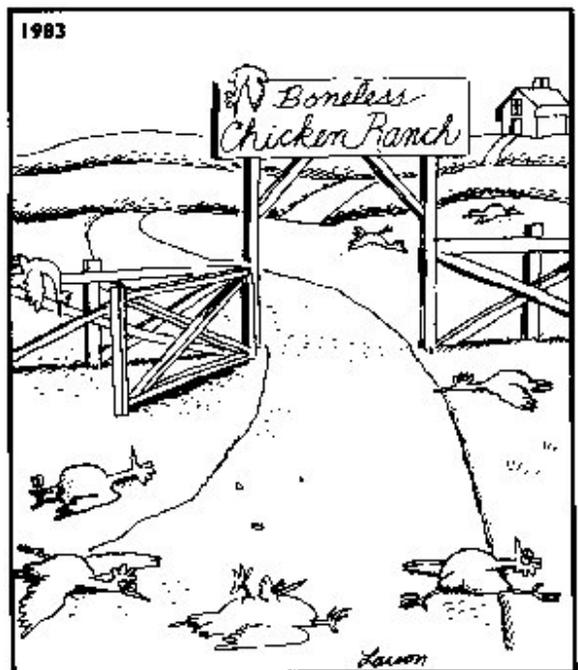
Before we made the big purchase, my bride recruited me to build what is lovingly referred to by the Mother Earth News crowd as a—chicken tractor. Now, this is not what you may suspect. I told my cousin about it, and he asked who was driving—the chicken or the rooster? After my experience with this whole deal, I gave him a pretty solid answer. "It may be the rooster driving, but I'll guarantee you the hen's giving directions."

We first got this bunch of birds, and the first thing I'm thinking is that we have got to get these little critters processed and identified. So I got me a bag of Y-tex tags, a bottle of 8 way and went to looking for the little boogers' ears while my bride was filling guns. Where do you put an ear tag in a chicken?

We took us some coat hangers and made branding irons for the gals, and the prettiness immediately left the picture. I don't know if you have ever smelled feathers burning, but it ain't near as romantic as the smell of burning hair. Not only that, we couldn't find a chicken table on which to perform this delicate, incendiary operation. Priefert, to my knowledge, is not working on a chicken head catch, nor a squeeze chute for fowl. No problem. I consider myself a little bit of a cowboy, so we just went to roping 'em. When you heel a chicken, however, her little nose goes directly into the dirt. If it's muddy, you need a mugger to keep her from drowning!

I truly am not looking forward to *egging*, though. I believe that is the chicken equivalent of *calving*. If one of them little boogers comes out breech, how do you know? And if I've got to pull one, exactly how do you keep the chains from slipping off?

We do have them branded, and all is well. If you come by, we'll show you the tractor and you can see where a chicken's ear is. Well, it's where I think it is, any way. Branded feathers are a treat to see, as well. Well, I'm off to an OCA meeting—the Oregon Chickenman's Association, that is. Good night, and good luck.



NAAE, Continued

In addition to professional development, the convention also included business sessions and NAAE committee meetings where decisions were made concerning a number of items, including the recruiting of agricultural educators, budget items, and legislative issues. Award winners were recognized in areas such as Teacher of the Year, Teacher Mentor of the Year, and many others.

The Region I Conference for the NAAE will be held April 21-24 in Great Falls, Montana. Registration is open online on the Montana FFA website. There is currently a call for presenters at the conference.

What do you do on FFA Week?

We host a Teacher/Staff Appreciation Breakfast one morning during the school week. We also invite our community partners to the breakfast. It has been a big success. We sponsor a school-wide Ag Scavenger Hunt, any student in the school can go to the computer lab during home-room and answer Ag related questions from selected Websites. On Friday we do a drawing on the participants with a \$25 gift card as the prize. Since our normal chapter meeting is the 3rd Thursday of the month we have a meeting with a little extra refreshments. —Henry Paris