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JORDAN HAMILTON
Alabama FFA President
Sand Rock Chapter

Seasons greetings to all across the state of Alabama!!!

I am writing this installment of the Alabama FFA Reporter excited and motivated about our organization! In October I had the opportunity to attend the 78th National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. It was awesome to see fellow members from Alabama having the time of their lives with over 52,000 FFA members from across the nation. For those of you unable to attend convention this year, I hope you were able to view many of the sessions live on RFD-TV.

With the thoughts of national convention, I realize that the 78th Alabama State FFA Convention is just around the corner. Planned for May 31st-June 2nd, the state convention at Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama attracts over 1,200 members to compete in career development events, accept proficiency awards, and listen to motivational addresses delivered by the keynote speakers.



Alabama FFA Association Delegates to the 2005 National FFA Convention. Front (L-R): Brittany Beasley, Gaston; Joanna Stewart, Woodland; Brooke Head, Marbury; Kimberly Henderson, Enterprise. Back (L-R): Jonathon Martin, Gaston; Karen Baggett, Moulton; Jared Beasley, Gaston; Matt Wilson, Jacksonville; Jordan Hamilton, Sand Rock; Katie Gann, Cherokee; Caleb Colquitt, Marbury

I would like to take this moment to encourage you to begin preparing for state convention. Whether you are preparing for a career development event or applying for a proficiency award, now is the time to develop your skills needed to excel in these areas for I am sure there will be stiff competition in each. State convention is a time for FFA members from across the state to come together and discover all the many things we have in common and the things that make us unique.

One of my personal favorite activities of state convention is the musical entertainment provided by the string bands and quartets. These competitions are an excellent way for

the talent of FFA members to be showcased. Many of these string bands and quartets performed at the national convention in Louisville. Without question we have some of the most talented members in the nation!

We, the state FFA officer team, are hard at work planning this exciting event. It is our goal to plan an experience that all members will enjoy. I encourage your attendance and participation this June at the 2006 Alabama State FFA Convention! I welcome any suggestions that you may have to make our convention the most enjoyable experience for everyone, and I hope to see you there!!!

THE ALABAMA REPORTER

August/September 2005

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Sand Rock Chapter

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State Department of Education



BROOKE HEAD

**Alabama FFA Vice-President
Marbury Chapter**

This year's National FFA Convention was one of the most exhilarating experiences that I have had, by far, in the FFA. The best part was being able to represent the Alabama FFA Association, and the Marbury FFA Chapter in the Parliamentary Procedure Career Development Event. The team, which included : Brittney Rawlinson, Marlin Harris, Sarah Thebo, Corey Helms, and Caleb Colquitt competed against over 40 teams from across the nation. We placed ninth and received a gold medal, which has never been done by an Alabama team in this CDE. I am more than proud of all the dedication and practice that these team members, along with our advisor, put forth to achieve this accomplishment. I would

like to thank the other state officers, and Mr. Davis for showing their support for our team. Alabama also had members competing in other various CDEs: the Dairy Cattle team from Lamar County High, the Floriculture team from Etowah High, the Horse Evaluation team from Hanceville High, the Nursery and Landscaping team from Citronelle High, the Creed Speaker from Jacksonville High, the Extemporaneous Speaker from Woodland High, the Prepared Public Speaker from Jacksonville High placed with a Bronze medal. Alabama's team from Beulah competed in Ag Mechanics, the team from Curry competed in Livestock Judging, and the Pell City team competed in Poultry, all received a Silver emblem. In addition, the Bibb County Forestry team won a Gold medal.

On behalf of the State Officer team, I would like to commend all of the teams that made it to the National Level in their respective CDEs. Making it to a national contest is an accomplishment of its own, and I know that it took much time, practice, and diligence to make it that far. I would also like to thank all of you for representing the Alabama FFA Association at this years National FFA Convention.



MATT WILSON

**Alabama FFA Secretary
Jacksonville Chapter**

For those of us who were fortunate enough to attend the 78th National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, it was truly a time of growing and learning. One way the FFA members in attendance spent their time was through attending the general sessions offered by the convention. Convention attendees were given the opportunity

to attend all ten general sessions. The sessions were held in Freedom Hall, the arena of the Louisville Cardinals. An hour before the assembly was set to begin members would pour in through the doors of Freedom Hall and make their way to their seats. The session would always start with a pre-session program. The activities on stage before the actual session would begin were at times hilarious. A past national officer and a good friend of the state officer team, Stacia Berry, led the activities. Activities ranged from musical chairs to lassoing a horse dummy. Prizes were awarded to all competitors and all had a good time.

At the conclusion of pre-session, general sessions usually began with an awesome laser show depicting spectacular scenes from across America. I recall the laser show from the very first general session as being especially remarkable. A quick musical clip was played from each state along with laser images of that state on a screen in the auditorium. When Alabama's turn came and Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama" was played, the crowd was ecstatic.

In addition to the laser shows, general sessions consisted of motivational and inspirational speeches from people like Amanda Gore, Sam Glenn, Arnold Fields, Stedman Graham, and Bill Irwin. With Bill Irwin's inspirational story and Sam Glenn's pure hilarious, drop to the floor comedy, the speeches during the general sessions will never be forgotten.

Among the speeches, laser



shows, and music, excitement was added to general sessions by the awarding of medals and plaques to the nations top agriculturalists. Awards were given in categories of Star in Agribusiness, Star in Agricultural Placement, Star in Agriscience, and Star Farmer. A number of members from Alabama also received their American FFA Degree.

I particularly enjoyed the retiring addresses from the national officers. Each officer had a message on his or her heart that he or she presented with a true passion. Rachael McCall, former Southern Region National Vice-President, presented her retiring address on the “moments” of life. She stressed the phrase, “It’s not the number of breaths in life we take that counts but the number of moments that take our breath away.” Rachel’s comparison to the lights of Hollywood and the moments in our life was captivating.

I’m sure that all 52,000 FFA members in Louisville had a tremendous time. The Alabama FFA Association sincerely appreciates the loving hospitality of the generous people of Louisville, Kentucky. It will be fun to try Indianapolis next year, but Louisville will be missed. I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude for my five fellow state officers for such a wonderful time. Thank you Jordan, Brooke, Jared, Karen, and Kimberly for being a wonderful team.



JARED BEASLEY
Alabama FFA Treasurer
Gaston Chapter

“Who are those people sitting in those chairs on the floor, and what are they doing?” I remember thinking exactly this while attending my first National FFA Convention. I didn’t realize the importance of those 475 individuals dressed in blue corduroy FFA jackets. I later learned that those 475 FFA members were serving as delegates. Not only were they representing their state associations, but these district and state officers have the power to change our organization as we know it today.

I never realized what a big responsibility it was to serve as a delegate at our National FFA Convention until this year. I remember listening as Seth Derner, delegate coordinator, explained our duties to us. He told us that we will shape the future of our organization and that we have the responsibility of making it a bright future for generations of FFA members. I couldn’t help but think about how awesome it would have been to have

served as a delegate in 1968 when delegates were contemplating whether or not to allow women to serve in our organization. Could you imagine what the FFA would be like without female involvement? The delegates in 1968 shared the same responsibility that this year’s delegates did, to make the best organization better!

It has been an honor to serve and represent Alabama as a State FFA Officer and as a delegate. As you serve this year as a chapter officer, think about what kind of impact you can make on your chapter members. Set a positive example for them to follow and allow them to grow through our organization as they become involved. Our state FFA officer team would like to wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year as we begin another exciting year with the FFA!



KAREN BAGGETT
Alabama FFA Reporter
Lawrence County Chapter

Wow, the 78th National FFA Convention was a great year to end our seven-year run in Louisville! Our trip was filled with almost sleepless nights, wishing we had



Pictured above are the members and advisors of the Alabama FFA Association that could make the scheduled time for Alabama’s State Photograph at the 2005 National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. Alabama had over 500 students, advisors and supporters registered for the National Convention. Make it your chapter’s goal to be included in this photograph at the 2006 National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

packed more cold weather friendly clothes, running across roads to make meetings, cheering on CDE participants from Alabama and most importantly, voting on issues that will affect FFA members for years to come. During convention, we served as YOUR voice on issues such as adding community service requirements to attain degrees, increasing the amount of money earned to attain the American Degree, adding more opportunities for middle school age members and many others that you will have to adapt to in upcoming years. As delegates, the six state officers; North and Central District presidents, Jonathan Martin (North) and Caleb Colquitt (Central); National Officer Candidate hopefuls Brittany Beasley and Joanna Stewart; and past state officer, Katie Gann, served as part of the governing body for the week. Once assigned to the nine selected issues, we had committee meetings to discuss each one in depth and weigh the possibilities of our decisions. Then, we had public hearings to allow all members, sponsors and the public an opportunity to express their concerns about each issue. We then made our final committee recommendations to the entire delegate body in the delegate business sessions. At this point each state was represented by a certain number of delegates and Alabama's eleven represented you, the members, together. Here, the entire delegate body amended motions, passed motions and defeated motions before making our final recommendations to National FFA.

It's hard for me to believe that half of my year as a state officer is already over! But instead of looking at what has already happened, I am going to look forward to the next half and start getting ready for what 2006 has in store for the Alabama FFA Association. May each of you reading this have a blessed holiday season!

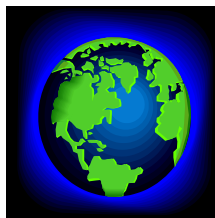


**KIMBERLEY
HENDERSON**
**Alabama FFA Sentinel
Enterprise Chapter**

Imagine lights flashing, 20,000 FFA members surrounding you, and not to mention the butterflies in your stomach! This was just some of the feelings numerous talented FFA members from all over Alabama encountered as they began to perform at the National FFA Convention! Eadie Caver from the Billingsley FFA Chapter represented Alabama FFA members by participating in the National Chorus. Jake Walker from the Leroy FFA Chapter and Ashley Nicole Mims from the Marbury FFA Chapter demonstrated their instrumental abilities by performing with the National Band. Alabama had three Quartets and four string bands to perform for National Talent. The Quartets include Enterprise, Ider, and Red Bay. The String Bands included Enterprise, Pell City, Montevallo, and Sand Rock. Each of these entertaining groups brought a different sound and a little bit of their own style to the stage.

Throughout the week of convention all of these individuals

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had the task of entertaining FFA members and citizens of Louisville, Kentucky around town. The locations included the main stage during sessions, the National Agricultural Career Show, convention meal functions, civic club meetings and the talent revue. Some of these FFA members even got some air time on television! These talented FFA members made memories that I am sure will last a lifetime!

While I was at convention it gave me great pride to see Alabama so well represented on the national level! We have such talented FFA members in Alabama. To see them grow and mature through participating is one of many ways to benefit from our organization and it is truly amazing. National Chorus, Band, and Talent is just another example of wonderful events that you can get involved in as an FFA member. I want to encourage you to find your niche in the FFA, just as these musically talented FFA members have. Keep up the good work FFA members! I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and safe and happy holidays!

**THE STATE STAFF
WOULD ALSO LIKE TO
TAKE THIS
OPPORTUNITY TO WISH
EACH OF YOU A MERRY
CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY
NEW YEAR!**

