

West Virginia

AG ED NEWS and VIEWS

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Harry N. Boone, Jr., Ph.D., Editor

Where Are They Now?

Harry N. Boone Jr.

Annually the agricultural education profession faces a shortage of qualified teachers. In 2001 the number of qualified potential agricultural education graduates actually seeking employment as teachers in the United States fell short of the net number of replacements needed by sixty-seven teachers. In addition, two hundred and forty-two non-certified teachers were hired with emergency teaching certificates. Thirty-five departments closed their doors because a qualified teacher was not located (Camp, Broyles, & Skelton, 2002).

Over the past few years West Virginia has faced similar problems. To date the state has not been forced to close a program because of a lack of teachers, however, positions have gone unfilled for extended periods of time and non-certified teachers have been hired to fill vacancies in the state.

West Virginia University is the only school involved in teacher certification for agricultural education teachers therefore the majority of teachers hired in West Virginia will complete their certification requirements at WVU. In 2001 I assumed the responsibilities for the "teaching methods" course, a requirement for all students who are certified as an agricultural education teacher in West Virginia. In an attempt to understand why we have experienced a shortage of qualified agricultural education teachers in West Virginia, I examined the careers of all students enrolled in "teaching methods" between 2001 and 2005.

In the five year period fifty-nine students completed AG EE 430, Teaching Methods in Agricultural Education course. Thirty-two students (54%) completed the requirements for certification as an agriculture teacher. Seven students (12%) are still enrolled at WVU and are scheduled to student teach during the 2006 Fall semester.

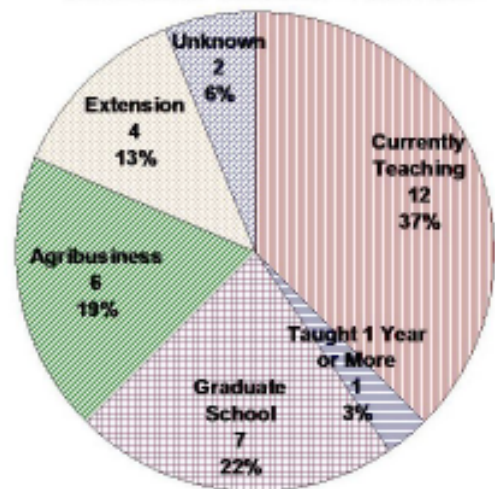
Two students (3%) left WVU without completing their undergraduate degree. Eighteen students (31%) graduated from WVU without completing the requirements for certification as a high school agriculture teacher.

Of the thirty-two certified teachers, twelve (38%) are currently teaching agriculture education. Nine individuals are teaching in West Virginia, one in Pennsylvania, and two in Maryland. One individual (3%) accepted a teaching position, however, he moved into a non-teaching position within a year. Nineteen individuals (59%) certified as an agriculture teacher are currently employed in a non-teaching career.

Of the twenty students certified to teach and employed in a non-teaching career, seven (35%) are employed by an agribusiness or government agency. Four graduates (20%) are employed by the Extension Service (West Virginia, Maryland and New York). Seven individuals (35%) are currently enrolled in graduate school. Two graduates (10%) are actively seeking employment, therefore, their status is listed as "unknown."

West Virginia University has produced thirty-two highly qualified teachers over the past five years. With a total population of ninety-two teachers in the state, you would assume that more than enough teachers are being prepared to fill the vacancies. The key words are "highly qualified." A highly qualified teacher is also a highly qualified candidate for numerous other positions in the private, as well as the government sec-

Teaching Career for Teaching Methods Students Certified as Teachers -- 2001-2005



tors. Many of our certified graduates are electing to accept employment outside of the high school education setting. Is that a problem? The answer is "yes" and "no." It is a problem when we have problems finding qualified candidates to assume the responsibilities of our high school agriculture education programs. It is not a problem when you look at the many options our graduates have concerning their career choice.

The solution is to increase the number of students who are certified as high school agriculture teachers. In order to increase our enrollment, we need you to assist us in identifying and recruiting students who will make good high school teachers. If you know a student who is interested in the Agricultural and Extension Education at West Virginia University, send us his/her name and address and we will be glad to send information on our program and the many career options they have with our degree.

Agricultural and Extension Education Alumni Profiles

William “Bill” Chaney, 2006 WVAAE Outstanding Teacher

I began writing this article per a request from Dr. Boone. I found it very difficult to write about myself but, after a long time of mental anguish, I have concluded that it may not be too bad. I have decided to discuss my thoughts and experiences over the past twenty years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the NAAE committee for the nomination and selection as the 2006 West Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators Outstanding Teacher. Being selected has been a real motivation for me. Again, thank you very much.

I believe that teaching is a business and we are producing a product. That product is the future of our country, today’s youth, tomorrow’s leaders. We as teachers have the responsibility to teach students marketable skills needed to enter college, technical schools, military and/or today’s job market. I believe that all students can learn, just at different skill levels. All students can find problems, but it is great when those students find solutions as well. I try to make certain all subjects discussed in class are not only educational, but fun and related to today’s world.

I have often been asked what I feel is my greatest accomplishment. My first reply is the birth of my two children. My greatest feeling of professional accomplishment comes from seeing students succeed and building their self esteem and confidence. Many students return to Hampshire High school to visit after graduating. We talk about life after high school and many times they thank me for something that I did or something we had discussed in class and how it has changed or had an impact on their lives. This is a feeling of accomplishment.

I am a traditionalist at heart. I was one of the teachers that was apprehensive of the move of the National FFA Convention to Kentucky. However, after the move, I must admit it was a great decision. The complex was secure and gave me and our board members peace of mind when students attended the convention. I feel confident that the move to Indianapolis will be a positive one as well. I guess what I am saying, is that change is inevitable. We must embrace it with open minds. A famous philosopher

once said “The only thing that is constant is change.”

While attending a recent class I was asked, “What makes a FFA chapter very successful?” The answer is simple yet complicated. The first thing that comes to mind was the members. However, after some thought, I found that there are many things that must be in place in order to have a good FFA chapter. First and foremost are the members themselves. Without them you have no chapter. Always remember to involve all of the membership, not a select few. I have experienced this, and the result is a chapter that becomes hateful. At times it may seem impossible to include the entire chapter, but you are wrong.

This brings me to my second thing to becoming successful. Communication is very important. Each and every member and advisor need to be informed about all of the chapter activities. You must inform all the members about picnics, meetings, contest practices and field trips, no secrets. This simple bit of advice will be beneficial to you as an advisor. There will be some students along the way that will try you, but don’t give up on them and they will not give up on you.

The community can and should be your ace in the hole; one that believes what you are doing is priceless. I have been fortunate to have such a community which includes agricultural organizations, FFA Alumni, businesses, individuals, faculty, school officials, advisory committee, local board members, and most of all our parents. The best way to get their support is by keeping them informed and involved in all chapter activities. Our community participates in judging teams, provides sponsorships, chaperones events, conducts showmanship workshops and always lends a helping hand.

Recruitment is another tool needed to have a successful chapter. We do this in a variety of ways. First, members plan many activities for younger youth of the community; FFA picnics, Read to Me Day, Arbor Day, FFA information day at the middle school and fair fun are a few of these activities. These youth see the fellowship, family and fun that the older students are having and the rest is history. We also complete many community service projects.

Some have included; cutting wood for the elderly, raking leaves, beautifying the community and completing many projects in agricultural science classes.



Some of my concerns are scheduling problems, testing, traditions, extended employment, students SAE’s, and competition in contests. Scheduling and testing are my biggest concerns. I have been fortunate that my classes have been successful in passing the state test, but what is going to happen if next year they don’t. Last year at Hampshire High School our extended employment was cut. I never imagined this happening. Thanks to the community intervention we did not lose all of our days. I am hopeful that we will get our days back, because I know the real loser in this situation will be the students.

I do have one comment about contests. Contests are an extension of what we should be teaching in class. They are to be educational and fun, not winning is everything. I want my students to learn something from the contest, not memorize things for a contest.

Being creative and having a positive attitude will be our key to succeeding in the future. With smaller budgets and stress making it difficult at times, remember how rewarding it truly is when a student says “Thank you. I appreciate all you do for me.”

We as agricultural educators need to send a uniform message to our elected officials, parents and especially to our students. The message is simple. “We believe that our students are important and we are taking on a great responsibility in training young minds to become America’s next great leaders.”

William completed a B.S (1984) in Agricultural Education from West Virginia University and is currently teaching agricultural education at Hampshire High School.

Agricultural and Extension Education Alumni Profiles

James Beatty, 2006 WVAAE Outstanding Young Teacher

Why do we as agricultural educators do what we do? This question is meant to elicit many answers, with the underlying meaning that we teach agriculture for the benefit of the students. Are we doing everything we can as professionals to ensure that our students are prepared to enter the competitive world of agriculture. When was the last time a change was made within our programs? Do we change enough to match what is happening in the world? Futurist Ed Barlow states that “by the year 2010 technical information will double every 72 hours, and 80 percent of the jobs today’s kindergarteners will occupy sometime in the future don’t yet exist.” These statements should make each one of us seriously think about what we are doing to prepare our current students to enter a world that will involve so much technical information and jobs that we haven’t even conceived yet.

Most of us spend our required work days in the summer visiting students, attending the state agricultural education in-service, taking students to state convention, participating in county fairs, assisting at the state fair, and getting prepared for the next year of school. Are we really prepared? Are we really delivering what our students need? Will they graduate and be productive citizens of West Virginia? How do we know for sure?

Several questions have been posed to make us reflect on what we do, how we do it, and if it is really the correct way. Two years ago we were given a yellow disk titled LifeKnowledge and were told it was great material, we should check it out. Randy Vlasin, a fellow agriculture teacher from Nebraska, demonstrated the power of LifeKnowledge through an actual E-moment, while setting context, and giving effective directions. What impact did these activities have on us? Were classes changed in our curriculum to match what was demonstrated? What further development have we pursued to ensure that these concepts are being presented to our students?

West Virginia agricultural education is very dynamic. We try to keep our standards for our students high, we have end of course tests, accountability, and are constantly changing our standards to better suit the students. All of these things are great but we should be seeking professional development in: improving our presentation methods, integrating skills students will need to be suc-

cessful in life, and ensuring the reason we are teaching today is the same as when we graduated from college. When was the last time we had an evaluation of our teaching methods from someone outside of our administrator? Have other agricultural educators visited your program when you were teaching and provided feedback on what you are doing? Do we really know it all and not need any help?

The following is a disturbing fact: in the first two years it has operated, only one teacher from West Virginia has participated in the National FFA Delta Conference. This conference is a professional development opportunity that allows teachers from across the country to participate in a one week training that focuses on you as a teacher. There are no applications to fill out, no CDE secrets are given. It is an opportunity to complete real work in real time that allows you to examine critically your teaching methods and what your students are actually gaining from your classes. I repeat there is only one teacher from WV to attend this conference. What is wrong with this? If we are on the forefront of agricultural education why has there been only one of 89 teachers from the state participate in a major National FFA effort? We have hay to be made, we have all of the activities previously mentioned to complete, and there isn’t enough time. All are excuses to avoid making a change that could impact thousands of students in our state.

A quote from the New York Times in 1958 about change should really spark some thought; it is “After you’ve done a thing the same way for two years, look it over carefully. After five years, look at it with suspicion. And after ten years, throw it away and start all over.” Are we doing this? Are we stagnant? Are our students getting all the information they need to be successful. Sometimes we are unconsciously incompetent when it comes to this question. We think we are preparing them for the real world when in our mind we are uncertain ourselves. Has anyone outside of your community or county that is not directly involved with your chapter commented on how great your students are prepared for the world, workforce, or life? How do we know?

The following should be completed in West Virginia if we want to ensure that the answers to all of these questions are what they should be .

- 1.) Five teachers minimum apply for the 2007 Delta Conference.
- 2.) Develop a West Virginia Delta Conference that is a 2 or 3 day event available to those who can’t take a week to go to a National Conference.—This would be separate from the Ag Ed In-service
- 3.) Have all pre-service teachers go through training in addition to methods and materials in teaching agriculture on how to present and prepare lifeknowledged lessons.
- 4.) Evaluation of our programs by our peers in the agricultural education profession.
- 5.) Reevaluate the importance we have put on contests and winning plaques—are we teaching contests or are we teaching students?



Changes need to happen in West Virginia if we are going to continue success in the future. It is about the students; let’s take steps to ensure we are following through with that statement.

If you are interested in participating in a 2 or 3 day training on LifeKnowledge on a regional level or if you are interested in attending the National FFA Delta Conference in 2007, please email me at jcbeatty@access.k12.wv.us. I will see that you receive the materials necessary to apply and attend. Any feedback or comments related to this article are also welcomed via email. Any questions you may have will be answered promptly. Please consider what was presented here and realize this is an opportunity for all of us, not just a few. Seasoned teachers as well as new teachers can be successful and make changes through participation in the National FFA Delta Conference, as well as other initiatives offered that help us to change our programs for the students.

James completed B.S (2001) and M.S. (2004) degrees in Agricultural Education from West Virginia University and is currently teaching agricultural education at Elkins High School.

Ten Tips for the Successful Ag Teacher

Keith Burdette, 2006 Southern States Leadership Award Winner

Teaching agriculture continues to be one of the most rewarding, yet challenging, careers in education. It is my belief each teacher must have a sound personal philosophy about what agricultural education is and can do for its students if that teacher is to be successful. A personal philosophy will guide one's actions.

With that in mind, I would like to offer some suggestions that may help establish or reshape your personal philosophy about agricultural education. These aren't my own ideas, but a collection of suggestions gathered through the years from teachers I would put in the Ag Teacher Hall of Fame – teachers who were effective in helping students be successful; teachers who made an impact. These ideas are undoubtedly consistent with the advice given in teacher preparation classes, but I've come to realize we all need reminders and encouragement from time to time to help us maintain focus about what our program can provide students. Here's my top ten list (in no particular order):

1. Teachers should attend the annual state teachers' conference and state FFA convention. My personal belief is that you cannot afford to miss these events other than for sickness, death, some other job responsibility in conflict with the dates (i.e., local fair), or a once-in-a-lifetime family opportunity. The intention is not to lessen the importance of these conflicting events, but to emphasize that these state meetings provide some of the best opportunities for idea exchange. Dialogues with other teachers can help you deal with problems you may be experiencing. How can your FFA chapter feel it is really part of the state association without representation at the convention?

2. Don't be afraid to ask for help and things. In most cases, people are eager to help the agriculture program and/or FFA chapter. Parents and community leaders who are familiar with your program often either have resources you need or know how to get them. Don't be afraid to tell your school and county administration of your wants. It allows you to share your vision for the future and demonstrates initiative and enthusiasm administrators may not see from teachers in other departments.

3. Develop time management skills. Some of the best agriculture teachers developed good time management skills early in their careers. Most accomplish this by looking weeks and months ahead, establishing deadlines, and "backward planning" - planning with the end in mind. For the day-to-day tasks, sometimes just maintaining a small dry-erase board in the office will do the job. Take five minutes each morning to update the "To Do" list, prioritize, and get moving. Ask yourself – Am I normally submitting requested information: a) before the deadline; b) on the deadline date; or c) late?

4. Clean house and organize (classroom, ag mechanics lab, greenhouse, meats lab, etc.). Agriculture teachers have large areas and countless resources to keep organized. Add to that the paperwork required by the school, county, and state, and then toss in some student work that needs graded, and suddenly, the teacher can hardly find his/her desk. I am also convinced teachers are so giving of their time to help individual students achieve that they neglect the attention their classroom, labs, and storage areas need. Dedicate some of your planning time each week to catching up on the housekeeping chores. Throw a lot of things away. Simply ask yourself a couple of questions: If someone asked for anything (a paper, requisition, textbook, or tool), could I find it in less than one minute? Can an individual walk through my lab area(s) without having to step over something?

5. Don't sacrifice agricultural education in the name of FFA. The FFA organization provides countless opportunities for student recognition. It can be a fabulous public relations tool. It is a mistake, however, to sacrifice sound education in order to have a successful FFA chapter. FFA should be an outgrowth of the program, not a substitute for it. Try to hit that perfect blend of FFA activities that complement the agricultural education program. Remember in the long run that as agricultural education goes, so goes FFA.

6. Establish a network of program support. You may try to do it all, but you'll tire of it after some time. Establish and regularly meet with your advisory council. Ditto for an FFA Alumni or Boosters

organization. While you may need to provide some organizational leadership to both groups, especially in their infancy, don't view this as



another thing on your already congested "To Do" list. Rather, view this as the way to allow others to be engaged in your program and help you accomplish so many things you would never be able to do alone.

7. Make supervisory visits a priority. Probably some of the most valuable time you'll ever spend in your job is involved with student supervision. Be visible to your students and in your community. And be sure to check record books while making visits. Whether you like or dislike the way students keep records in West Virginia, it's the only book teachers have endorsed at this time. I believe a better record book and/or system will eventually emerge, but until then, be sure to insist that your students maintain quality records in the currently endorsed book.

8. Encourage scope in SAE. I have an unsettling feeling that we may be losing the concept of scope in supervised agricultural experience programs. Before you throw down this article in disgust, please understand that I am aware of many students with substantial scope and investment. Some of the American FFA Degree applicants I see when visiting those being considered for Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessperson have very impressive operations. I am not so far out of touch that I don't remember how difficult it is for some students to develop meaningful SAEs – how good it felt if each student was at least doing something which bore a semblance of a SAE. I realize students can learn valuable information and skill in SAEs with limited scope. I fear, however, that many students who begin with "project" SAEs are never challenged to grow beyond that in their upperclassmen

(Continued on page 5)

Agriculture in the Elementary Classroom

Deborah A. Boone

Many of us who were grew up on a farm and with agricultural experiences all around us, just assume that everyone else is as versed in agriculture as we have been. Unfortunately, that is not the case and the number of folks with no direct links to an agriculture based lifestyle is growing.

Several years back when we lived in Lexington, Kentucky we had a good friend who was a retired research chemist, highly respected in his field and once named Inventor of the Year by National Gypsum, but Bob knew little about agriculture. Our small garden plot outside of town fascinated him and he often accompanied us on our trips to the garden. One evening as we prepared to harvest the bounty of our numerous tomato plants, Bob looking over the garden asked “where are the potatoes”? He had no idea they grew under ground, and was delighted to “gravel” out a few to say he had dug potatoes. He also had to pull an ear of corn so he could call his friend in New York and tell him he had finally experienced a real garden!

That experience, I often relate to students as just a glimpse of the challenges we face as we attempt to educate others about agriculture and the impact agriculture has on their lives. We can not wait till they reach our middle school and high school agricultural education classes. We have to get their attention much earlier. So the Department of Agricultural and Extension

Education has teamed up with the West Virginia Farm Bureau and the West Virginia Cooperative Extension Service to sponsor the Agriculture in the Classroom Summer Institute for Teachers.

The Institute is designed to provide teachers with hands on agriculture related activities they can incorporate into their classroom curriculum. We provide them with lesson plans that include the state CSO’s (Curriculum Standards and Objectives), offer them the opportunity to participate in many hands on activities and provide numerous web-based resources for their classroom use. One goal of the Institute is to share insight into the numerous agricultural related careers with teachers who are often surprised at just how many careers, besides farming, are agriculture related. We also shatter many teachers’ conception of the typical farmer as a man in bib-overalls, wearing a straw hat and holding a pitch fork. Teachers are surprised to learn just how many science, math and technology concepts they can incorporate in their classroom that relate to agriculture. This summer during the two day conference teachers were enthralled to make their own butter and lip balm, put their hand in a fistulated cow’s stomach, candle eggs, explore forestry lessons and grains around the world, build an egg obstacle course and experience the new food pyramid, learn from the “bug guy”, experience just how many germs remain on their hands through

the Germ City activities, and explore a wide range of literature links to agriculture.

One of this year’s participants wrote, “I was honestly amazed at how much I learned. It was a most enjoyable experience. I have spent the last five years of my teaching career in a rural community with a high percentage of students who come from a farming background. The sessions at this conference have given me a better understanding of those students’ backgrounds and more knowledge upon which to make a connection with them.” Another participant said, “I never realized how much agriculture touched my life, I can’t wait to use ‘A Day without Agriculture’ with my students.”

One of the Ag teachers who attended the Institute saw the activities as a great recruitment tool for future students. It helps when students actually know what agriculture is before they get to high school. He plans to share the materials with elementary teachers in his county and use the opportunity to build liaisons with fellow teachers at all levels.

We hope that agricultural educators will encourage fellow elementary and middle school teachers to attend the Institute next summer as we continue to be advocates for agriculture at all levels within our school systems.

Ten Tips for the Successful Ag Teacher (Continued)

years. Perhaps my fears are unfounded but they are based upon: a) the number of chapters that have (or rather don’t have) State FFA Degree recipients; and b) the number of State FFA Degree applications reflecting SAEs of a market animal each year or unpaid hours on the family farm. I am not saying these are not legitimate enterprises, I am simply asking if you are encouraging students to expand beyond “project agriculture.”

9. Be professional and accountable. Look and act like the best teacher and to some, you’ll be the best teacher. Stay on task and your students are likely to do so as well. Be able to defend that your instructional practices and FFA activities have educational value. Have data

– in today’s age, student performance carries more weight with stakeholders than the “warm and fuzzy” FFA stories we like to share (although those can help!).

10. Tell everyone who will listen what you do. Either because of modesty or busyness, we don’t often do a good job of telling others what we do and how successful our students are. Spread the word!

11. BONUS – Attend a quality professional inservice. Teachers have the opportunity to attend a number of great professional development activities. Many of these exist in West Virginia, but I would encourage teachers to participate in regional and national activities as well. We have

some outstanding things happening in our state, and you may not realize how good things are until you attend activities with your counterparts from other states.

It is unlikely any agriculture teacher needs to completely retool his/her personal philosophy about the program, but all of us need to periodically review our mission. I challenge teachers to scan the list one more time and find one or two suggestions on which to focus in the 2006-07 school year.

Keith completed B.S (1982) and M.S. (1990) degrees in Agricultural Education from West Virginia University. He is the WV State Coordinator for Agricultural Education and serves as State FFA Executive Secretary. He was an agriculture teacher for 18 years before joining the department of education staff in 2000.

2006 Ag Ed Program Travel Course a Success

Stacy A. Gartin

The Ag Ed Program travel course was extremely worthwhile. Teachers and teacher educators have been talking about conducting such a travel course for the last 20 years. The concept of this type of travel course has always generated a great deal of positive talk, but never materialized because of a lack of teachers actually registering for the class. However, it did happen this year and we're glad it did. The class was everything we hoped it would be. We are proud to report that agricultural education is alive and well in West Virginia.

The WV agriculture teachers whom we visited are truly having an impact on their students and agriculture in their respective communities. They also made an impact on our lives as well. There is nothing quite like seeing another teacher's facilities while discussing issues of curriculum, SAEs, FFA, adult education, community expectation and administration support. It was also exciting to visit with agricultural producers, the agriculture faculty and Provost Odell at Potomac State College, and to experience a SAE visit to State FFA President, Adam Judy's.

This year's travel course took us to Preston High School where we visited with Ron Wilson, Laah Woolford and Jeff Carpenter. Some of the interesting situations

there were: due to safety related issues, Mr. Wilson has an agreement with his administration that there will only be 15 students in classes where the agricultural mechanics laboratory is utilized as an instructional area; we toured Mrs. Woolford's new greenhouse which was creatively connected to an existing horticulture preparation facility; and the numbers of animals which Mr. Carpenter and his students process yearly (285 beef, 3000 hogs and produce approximately 13,000 pounds of sausage for the Buckwheat Festival).

Charles DeBerry, former agriculture instructor at Mineral County, showed us his vegetable production operation, while explaining the importance of timely planting, harvesting and marketing strategies. His use of different colors of plastic on his raised beds as well as his strawberry research was quite interesting and mentally stimulating.

retirement in 1976 he was Supervisor of Agricultural Services.

During his career he was extremely active with 4-H and FFA (Future Farmers of America) groups throughout the state. As a teacher, leader, and judge, Jim Copeman was a presence at many county and state 4-H and FFA camps and meetings. He was a member of the West Virginia Star Farmer selection committee for 50 years.

Jim was honored as a Friend of 4-H and received many state awards: the Honorary State FFA Farmer Degree, 4-H All-Star Award, Gamma Sigma Delta Special Certificate of Merit for Distinguished Service to West Virginia Agriculture and the Award of Merit from the West Virginia Vocational Association.

Nationally he was presented the Friend of 4-H citation and the National FFA



Jeff Carpenter, Ron Wilson, Tom Brand, Russell Dotson, Laah Woolford, Shannon Boswell, Renee Chambers, Kathy Duffield

Mr. DeBerry was quick to remind our tour group that his operation was a continuation of his high school SAE. He also noted that vegetables will continue to be a worthwhile experience program for secondary agriculture students.

The agriculture faculty, under the leadership of Provost Kerry Odell, has significantly changed the face and importance of agriculture at Potomac State College. The farms and facilities have been renovated and the students are excited about the education they are receiving. It is great to have them

Personal: James Copeman, Long Time Friend of FFA Passes Away

James L. Copeman, of William Road, Fairmont, died at Wishing Well Manor, Saturday, July 29, 2006. He was born Feb. 6, 1910, at Kingwood, Preston County, a son of John F. and Otta E. Schaeffer Copeman. Better known as Jim, he was a graduate of Kingwood High School and West Virginia University, where he was a member of the football team. At the time of his death he was the oldest living WVU football letterman. He was graduated from WVU in 1933 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

He was an Assistant County Extension Agent in Ritchie County and County Extension Agent in Taylor County before joining Monongahela Power Company in July 1937 in the Rural Land Building Department. He was project director of the Farming for Better Living program from its introduction in 1940 through 1970, when the program ended. At the time of his

Distinguished Service Award. Jim was a member of the West Virginia Agricultural Hall of Fame, and the West Virginia 4-H Hall of Fame.

He never met a stranger and knew people in every county in West Virginia. Everyone he met was greeted with his famous "firm" handshake. He was a big tease and one of his favorite jokes was to order two eggs, one sunny side up and one over easy for breakfast. When the waitress served him, he would tell her that she got them mixed up and made the wrong one sunny side up. Of course, he always wanted ketchup on his eggs.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to WVU Foundation, Jackson's Mill Restoration Fund, P.O. Box 1650, Morgantown, WV 26507.

2006 Ag Ed Program Travel Course *(continued)*

as colleagues and collaborators. Provost Odell provided a wonderful social picnic to allow for faculty and student interaction. It was well received and greatly appreciated.

Paul Roomsburg took time at Hampshire High to explain the facilities and diverse curriculum taught by the four faculty. The state-of-the-art mechanisms in the greenhouse made great sense as well as his research being conducted in the high tunnel greenhouse. It seemed that questions and issues associated with the Ham and Bacon contest were raised at each stop on the tour.

Our stops in Hardy County included; East Hardy with Rodney Hardman, Moorefield Middle with Roy Harper and Moorefield High with Arlyn Haslacker. All three programs have spacious facilities with lots of community and school support. Mr. Hardman is in the process of completing his smoking and curing rooms. He is also enjoying his relatively new greenhouse. The tour group was inspired by Mr. Harper's enthusiasm for the unique learning opportunities created for his students at the Middle School. Mr. Harper and his students provided the tour group with a delicious prime rib sandwich luncheon. Superintendent Whetzel was delightful to visit with over lunch. He is extremely proud of his Hardy County Ag Ed Programs. It was a treat to see the remarkable changes that have taken place at Moorefield High. It was extremely clean and well organized. Mr. Haslacker is being very creative in his use of computer technology in offering independent ag ed instruction to students early in the morning before school starts.

The tour group enjoyed their interaction with Ron Hudson at Pendleton County High.

The one time leader in aquaculture continues to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of his students. Mr. Hudson now finds that horticulture, meats and agriculture mechanics to be of great interest to his students. His students recently finished the restoration of a vintage International tractor. It is the pride of the students and is being exhibited in parades in the area.

Elkins High under the direction of James Beatty is "on the grow." His forestry and horticulture offerings are a real hit with the students. Mr. Beatty's students and program are strongly supported in the community. The students respond by growing specialty native plants in the greenhouse that are desired in the area. Mr. Beatty noted that he is going to put additional emphasis on agricultural mechanics in the future.

Space and student interest continue to be issues which Gene Hovatter faces at Barbour County. The modern leader in secondary aquaculture is re-evaluating the amount of space utilized by the large aquaculture tanks in his agricultural mechanics laboratory. Mr. Hovatter has a vision of conducting more scientific aquaculture research



Dan Shockey, Ron Hudson, Russell Dotson, Kathy Duffield, Shannon Boswell

with his students. He believes that the best way to conduct such research is in smaller tanks. He too, is wanting to put more emphasis back into agricultural mechanics.

The last stop on the travel course was with Steve Tennant at Grafton. Mr. Tennant was actively engaged with the Taylor County fair during our visit. It was interesting to hear from Mr. Tennant how attendance and participation at the fair had decreased in the last decade. It did seem that the quality of animals was as good even though numbers were down somewhat. Some discussion took place related to the number of sheep showed and tail-docking and the lack of a needed maximum weight on market hogs to be sold.

The 2007 Ag Ed Program Travel Course is in the making. Please let us know when you would like to see such a course offered. We hope you make plans to join us in this annual activity.

Transitions

Individual

Tyrell Childers
Marsha Coggins
Danny Cummings
Danny Dewhurst
Kathy Duffield
Robert Herrod
Jason Hughes
Lynn Lechtner
Charity Marstiller
Russell Moore
Dottie Planck
Lee Rurak
Nathan Taylor
Gary Walbrown

Former Position

Martinsburg HS
Jefferson County HS

Hannon HS

Wirt County HS
St. Mary's HS
Lincoln HS
Charles Town Jr.
Roane County HS

WVU - Grad Student
Mason County Tech Center

Current Position

St. Mary's HS
Resigned Position
Roane County HS
Mason County Tech Center
Summers County HS
Lincoln HS
WV State Dept. of Education
Retired
Jefferson County HS
Retired
Charles Town Jr.
Martinsburg HS
Wirt County HS
Retired

Important Dates

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Aug 21 | First Day of Classes - WVU | Morgantown |
| Sep 2 | WVU Football - Marshall | Morgantown |
| Sep 9 | WVU Football - Eastern Washington | Morgantown |
| Sep 14 | WVU Football - Maryland | Morgantown |
| Sep 27-29 | WV Career Development Events | Morgantown |
| Oct 14 | WVU Football - Syracuse | Morgantown |
| Oct 26-29 | National FFA Convention | Indianapolis, IN |
| Nov 10 | Program Policy Committee Meeting | Morgantown |
| Nov 11 | WVU Football - Cincinnati | Morgantown |
| Nov 25 | WVU Football - USF | Morgantown |

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| | | |
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