

# West Virginia AGED NEWS and VIEWS

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

## *Agricultural Education Professionals Receive the National FFA's VIP Citation*

**WVU Professor to Receive National  
FFA Award - Honor Recognizes  
Contributions to Agricultural Education**  
by Lindsay Altobella

The National FFA Organization has selected a West Virginia University professor to receive a special VIP Citation for making significant contributions to agricultural education.

Harry N. Boone, associate professor of agricultural and extension education in WVU's Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences, will be honored during the 81st National FFA Convention Oct. 22-25 in Indianapolis.

The VIP Citation is one of the most prestigious awards a person may receive for supporting FFA and its programs.

**West Virginia Department of Education  
Employee to Receive VIP Citation**  
by Keith Burdette

Ron Grimes was selected by the National FFA Organization to receive the VIP Citation for significant contributions to agricultural education. Mr. Grimes has dedicated nearly all of his life to some aspect of career and technical education. He was a West Virginia agriculture teacher for over six years before joining the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), serving nearly fourteen years as a Program Specialist in Agricultural Education and State FFA Executive Secretary. During his tenure in the 1980s and early 1990s, he spearheaded many new initiatives, especially those which utilized computers and advanced technology in the classroom. His accomplishments propelled him to a number of other positions within the WVDE, including Executive Director for the Office of School-to-

Boone has served the organization in various capacities, including consultant to the National FFA's national officer selection committee, judge for numerous state-level FFA contests, official scorer and master of ceremonies for West Virginia state FFA career development events, coordinator for West Virginia national officer candidate selection procedure and as a member of the West Virginia Agricultural Education Joint Staff Committee.

"Because the FFA is dedicated to developing leadership, personal growth and exploring career opportunities in the broad areas of agriculture, it has the potential to influence the lives and careers of many high school students," Boone said. "It was an integral part of my life

Work and the Office of Partnership Development. Mr. Grimes left the state department of education in 2001 to serve as Vice President of Programs for Classroom, Inc. He returned to the WVDE in 2002 but has been retained by Classroom, Inc., to serve as a consultant for their rural expansion activities. In 2003, he was selected to be the Executive Director/General Manager of the Cedar Lakes Conference Center. This facility is a 260-acre facility owned by the WVDE which hosts a number of youth and community groups throughout the year. The center was originally established as the State FFA-FHA Camp in 1950 and has grown to serve as the home of the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair, one of the premier shows of its type in the eastern U.S. Mr. Grimes also initiated Winterfest, a six-week celebration of the

during high school, and as a result, I have devoted much of my professional career to helping others enjoy the many opportunities that I had as a student of agriculture education and member of the FFA."

FFA is a national youth organization with some 500,800 student members preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture. There are about 7,360 local chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. FFA strives to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premiere leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.



holiday season featuring music, crafts, and spectacular lights. In addition to securing millions of dollars for improvements and renovations at Cedar Lakes, he helped create the Cedar Lakes Foundation, a non-profit group which is currently seeking funds to construct a multi-million dollar assembly hall to better accommodate the West Virginia State FFA Convention and FFA leadership camps currently held there and attract additional education and civic groups to the facility. Mr. Grimes always challenges others to not be content with the status quo but to strive for excellence in any of life's ventures.

# *Editorial: Thoughts from the 2008 CDE Contests*

*by Harry N. Boone, Jr.*

The 85<sup>th</sup> annual West Virginia Career Development Events was a success. We had over nine hundred students participate in the fifteen events. The students were from fifty-five schools with seventy-seven agriculture education teachers. Overall the students were typical FFA members: polite, respectful, and well mannered.

Congratulations to Roane County for winning the 2008 Sweepstakes Award. Congratulations and good luck to the winning teams that will represent West Virginia at Indianapolis. Study hard and you will represent West Virginia well.

## **Scantron Forms**

Reflecting on the 2008 contest, I would like to offer a few comments. First, students must be better prepared to use the Scantron forms. I cannot remember analyzing a single contest over the past eight years where every student coded their school number, contestant number, and name correctly on the Scantron sheet. If they are making mistakes on the "givens," what are they doing on the crucial aspects of the scoresheet. In one contest, we had over 1500 blank and/or incorrectly coded answers. This does not include answers that were simply wrong.

As you prepare students for the contests, make sure each student knows their school number. These numbers were assigned in a manner that they will never change, however, the system is flexible enough to add new chapters/schools. Let's take the number 1131, Greenbrier East High School:

- 1 – The first number is a given – All numbers start with a "1."
- 13 – Greenbrier County is the 13<sup>th</sup> county when the fifty-five counties are alphabetized.
- 1 – At the initial assignment of numbers, Greenbrier East was the first name in an alphabetical list of the county schools.

The system provides the flexibility of adding schools without disrupting the system. Under the new system it was easy to give Washington High School the number 1195.

Second, make sure all students know their student number. There are four members on each team and they are assigned 11, 12, 13, and 14 based on the order you provide their names on the registration form.

Third, the majority, if not all, of the scorecards require the last name first followed by the first name. The instructions on the sheet are clear. You will not believe the number of students who fail to follow these instructions. When these mistakes are made, I have to manually correct the problem in the analysis program. A solution to this issue is to use the names initially submitted on the registration forms. This would eliminate substitutions after the registration deadline.

## **Late Registrations**

This year we had five schools who registered late or showed up with un-registered teams. This practice cannot continue. We use the numbers to make copies of code sheets, distribute Scantron sheets, etc. The rules are clear on the issue. If we refuse to allow the teams to participate, the real losers are the students. The students are penalized for the dereliction of the teachers.

Let me explain our process before I offer a solution. When you send in your registration forms, you are asked to provide an email address. Alice Compton provides confirmation of ALL registrations within 48 hours. Usually this will occur within 24 hours. **IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE CONFIRMATION OF YOUR REGISTRATION**, we did not receive your forms. Call Alice at (304) 293-4832 ext. 4484 and make alternate arrangements to submit your registration.

We have discussed the issue and the following is a potential solution to the issue. If a teacher wants his/her team to participate in the events after failing to register the team(s) in a timely manner, there has to be a penalty. I am prepared to offer the follow suggestion to the Program and Policy Committee in November.

When the Career Development Event registration deadline is broken, the teacher will have an alternative method of registering his/her team(s):

If the teacher wants his/her teams to participate, a late registration penalty of \$100 will be imposed. The penalty must be paid at the time of registration with cash or a personal check. The late registration penalty will be donated to the West Virginia FFA Foundation in the name of the WV Career Development Events.

*(Note: On November 10, 2008 the Program and Policy Committee passed a motion to assess a \$100 FINE PER CONTEST for all late CDE registrations.)*

## **Awards Ceremony**

We constantly have trouble finding a location to hold the Awards Ceremony on Friday morning. Over the past eight years we have used three locations; the Blue-Gold Room at Towers, the Lyell B. Clay Concert Theatre at the Creative Arts Center, and the WVU Coliseum. Each one has its unique set of circumstances that limits its use for the awards ceremony.

The Blue-Gold room is not large enough for our group. Students are crowded in and many are forced to stand. The sound system leaves something to be desired. Parking is also an issue for the large number of buses involved.

The Lyell B. Clay Concert Theatre is large enough for our group, however, it relies on paid events for a portion of its income. As a result, our use of the facility is limited. Even when we have the facility booked, we are subject to being bumped if a paid event can be scheduled.

The WVU Coliseum provides a venue that can accommodate our group. The Coliseum, however, is used for classes on a regular basis. To use the facility we have to bump WVU students from their education activities. Another issue is the limited staff resources available to set up the Coliseum. If we use the facility on a football weekend, the staff are already committed to work at the football stadium.

I may be strung up for suggesting the following, however, I am going to do it anyway. I do not have a solution to the location problem, however, any discussion of possible award ceremony locations must include a discussion of alternative dates for the CDE events. Any effort to change the CDE dates must be fully investigated. All discussions must involve all stakeholder including Davis College administrators, the event coordinators, West Virginia's agriculture teachers, State Department of Education staff, and WVU's Agricultural and Extension Education faculty.

*The opinions expressed are those of the editor and do not necessarily represent official positions and/or opinions of the Agricultural and Extension Education program, the Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Consumer Sciences, or West Virginia University.*

# *1<sup>st</sup> Annual WVACTE Winter 2008 Conference December 12-13, 2008*

The WVACTE is sponsoring our first conference at Cedar Lakes in Ripley, WV. CTE is going through many changes that are positive in West Virginia at this time, and we want to offer this conference to discuss the End of Program Examinations. We have a panel that is made up of many area experts and led by Gene Coulson from the WVDE.

We are also bringing collaboration time to this conference as well. We want to provide our instructors time to discuss with other instructors those “Best Practices” that make all of our programs better for our students now and in the future. It is so important for instructors to have time to discuss with one another problems, praises and practices!

The \$50 dollar registration for this conference includes all meals and the fee for conference. Accommodations are the responsibility of the participant (Rooms are approximately \$36 for single, \$18 for double occupancy).

College (Graduate) credit is available through Marshall University.

The deadline for registration for the conference is December 1st, 2008.

### **Friday’s Schedule—Dec. 12**

- 5:30-6:00 Social—a time for educators to collaborate.
- 6:00-6:45 Dinner
- 6:45-7:00 Dr. Stan Hopkins—Keynote
- 7:00-7:15 Comments
- 7:30-8:00 Lights Walk / Hot Chocolate
- 8:00-8:45 Division / Business Meetings
- 8:45-10:00 Social Mixer

### **Saturday’s Schedule—Dec. 13**

- 7:30-8:15 Breakfast
- 8:15-9:00 Collaboration
- 9:05-10:00 CTE Panel Discussion—Course and Student Evaluation  
-Chaired by Gene Coulson
- 10:00-10:15 Break
- 10:15-11:00  
Division Breakouts  
-or-  
Grant Writing Workshop
- Participants will choose one of the sessions to attend.
- 11:00-11:30 Collaboration
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch

Please note: Checkout time is at 11:00am. Utilize one of the break times to check out of your rooms

### Registration Form

Sign up for:	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE REGISTRATION	\$50.00

The deadline for registration is Dec. 1, 2008. To register, complete this form, tear off from flyer and place in an envelope along with check. Mail to the address on the back of this form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment

Check

PAY AT THE CONFERENCE

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

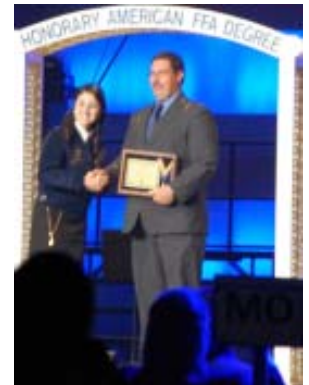


*For additional information contact David Bourgeois at [davebourgeois@yahoo.com](mailto:davebourgeois@yahoo.com).*



### ***Jackson County High School Teacher of the Year***

Jackson County Teachers of the Year are selected annually at each instructional level. This year’s high school teacher of the year was David Bourgeois, agricultural education teacher at Ripley High School.



### ***Three West Virginians Receive the Honorary American FFA Degree***

Three West Virginians received the Honorary American FFA Degree at the National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana on October 22-25, 2008. The three included Robert Morris, Agricultural Education Teacher at Clay County High School; Jason Hughes, Coordinator Agricultural Education, West Virginia State Department of Education (former Agricultural Education Teacher at St. Mary’s High School); and Ronald Hudson, Agricultural Education Teacher at Pendleton County High School.

# 2008 West Virginia Career Development Expo



Sweepstakes Winner -- Roane County HS



Dairy Cattle -- Hundred HS



Agribusiness Management -- Roane County HS



Dairy Products -- Musselman HS



Agricultural Mechanics -- Mineral Tech Ctr.



Entomology -- Roane County HS



Agronomy -- Roane County HS



Equine -- Jefferson County HS

# Career Development Events



Floriculture -- Hampshire HS



Nursery Landscape -- Hampshire HS



Forestry -- Roane County HS



Plant Pathology -- Ravenswood HS



Livestock -- Jefferson County HS



Poultry -- Pendleton County HS



Meats -- Tyler Consolidated HS



7th & 8th Grade Agriscience-- Moorefield Middle

# ***Research in Action: Perceptions of Agricultural Education teachers on Involving Students with Exceptionalities in their Classrooms and Laboratories***

**by Watts, A. D., & Boone, D. A.**

Given the laws and the push for inclusion of students with exceptionalities into the classroom, one can assume that some of these students will be involved with agricultural sciences education and the FFA. Since agricultural science education and the FFA are an integrated part of the public school system, access cannot be denied to any individual with exceptionalities who would like to participate. P.L. 94-142, The Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975 states that a "free appropriate education" is offered to students with exceptionalities (National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities, 1996). Since this act, P.L. 98-524, and the Vocational Education Act of 1984 are in effect, it is important that agricultural educators understand the needs of students with exceptionalities and are prepared to include these students into their classrooms and laboratories.

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of West Virginia agricultural educators on involving students with exceptionalities in agricultural classrooms and laboratories. The objectives of the study are reflected in the following research questions:

1. What is the nature and extent of students with exceptionalities in West Virginia agricultural education classrooms and laboratories?
2. Do agricultural education teachers feel prepared to work with students with exceptionalities in their classrooms and laboratories?
3. Have agricultural educators adapted/changed curriculum and/or facilities to accommodate students with exceptionalities?
4. Would additional training improve the way agricultural educators work with students with exceptionalities?
5. How do agricultural educators feel students with exceptionalities are viewed by other students?

## ***Research Design***

A descriptive research design was selected to collect data from agricultural educators. The accessible population included 91 West Virginia Agricultural Education

Teachers employed during the 2008 spring semester. Of the 91 questionnaires, 48 surveys (52.7%) were returned.

## ***Demographic Characteristics of Respondents***

Thirty-five (77.8%) of the respondents were male and 10 (22.2%) were female. Of the respondents, 16 individuals (34.8%) held a Bachelors degree; 29 (63.0%) individuals held a Masters degree; and one individual (2.2%) held a Doctoral degree. The median age category of the respondents was 41-50 years of age.

Twenty eight individuals (60.9%) had taken no credit classes on exceptionalities. Eight individuals (17.4%) had completed 1-3 classes on exceptionalities while six individuals (13.0%) had 4-8 classes on exceptionalities. One individual (2.2%) had completed 9-12 classes on exceptionalities and three individuals (6.5%) had taken greater than 12 classes on exceptionalities.

When asked if classes or training on working with students with exceptionalities should be required of teachers, 32 (68.1%) agree they should be required to attend classes on working with students with mental exceptionalities. Thirty of the respondents (63.8%) agreed they should be required to attend training in working with students with physical exceptionalities, while 28 (59.6%) agree they should be required to attend classes on working with students who have socially maladjusted exceptionalities.

## ***Number of Students with Exceptionalities in West Virginia Agricultural Educator's Classroom***

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of students they had with exceptionalities. The number ranged from zero to five students in a class with a mean of .68 ( $SD= 1.07$ ) students with physical exceptionalities. The number of students with mental exceptionalities ranged from zero to 51 students with a mean of 7.69 ( $SD= 9.74$ ). The number of students with socially maladjusted (behavior) exceptionalities in a class ranged from zero to 24 student with a mean of 4.44 ( $SD= 5.09$ ). The number of stu-

dents who required an aide in a class ranged from zero to sixteen students with a mean of .96 ( $SD= 2.54$ ).

## ***Preparedness in Working with Students with Exceptionalities***

Agreement with a series of statements was determined by adding the number and percentage of agree and strongly agree responses from the Likert-type questions. Twenty (42.6%) of the teachers agreed they felt well prepared to teach students with physical exceptionalities, while 18 (38.3%) agreed they felt well prepared to teach students with mental exceptionalities. Eleven (23.4%) of the respondents agreed they felt well prepared to teach students who were socially maladjusted (behavioral). Only 10 (21.3%) teachers agreed they felt well prepared to teach students with physical exceptionalities when they started their teaching career. Five teachers (10.6%) agreed they felt well prepared to teach students with mental exceptionalities when they first started teaching, while four (8.5%) agreed they felt prepared to work with socially maladjusted students when they first began teaching.

Twenty-eight (59.6%) of the respondents agreed they felt confident to teach students with physical exceptionalities. Twenty-four respondents (51.6%) agreed they felt confident to teach students with mental exceptionalities. Only 18 respondents (38.3%) agreed they felt confident to teach students with socially maladjusted exceptionalities.

When asked if they felt confident to teach students with exceptionalities when they started their teaching careers, nine (19.2%) felt confident teaching students with physical exceptionalities, five (10.6%) felt confident teaching students with mental exceptionalities, while four (8.5%) felt confident teaching students who were socially maladjusted.

## ***Adaptations in Agricultural Education Classrooms***

When asked if any adaptations were made in agricultural education classrooms, 35 teachers (77.8%) answered yes adapta-

# ***Research in Action: Perceptions of Agricultural Education teachers on Involving Students with Exceptionalities in their Classrooms and Laboratories*** (Continued)

tions had been made to their classrooms for students with exceptionalities.

Adaptations that had been made included: following IEPs; developing individualized instruction like modifying assignments and allowing extra time for tests and assignments, simpler projects, reading exams to students; moved classroom and students around to accommodate those with exceptionalities; learned sign language; working with special education teachers; and created special groups for extra help.

## ***Adaptations Made in Agricultural Education Laboratories***

Twenty-eight teachers (60.9%) indicated adaptations had been made in laboratories to accommodate students with exceptionalities. The teachers, who answered yes to whether or not adaptations had been made in their laboratories to accommodate students with exceptionalities, listed the following accommodations: use of service learning for more one on one interaction, special groupings for students with exceptionalities, special projects, simpler projects, handicap accessibility, and extra time for projects.

When respondents were asked whether they were seeing more students with exceptionalities in their classrooms then previously, 30 respondents (63.8%) stated they were seeing more students with exceptionalities in their classrooms then previously, while thirteen teachers (27.7%) said no. Four teachers (8.5%) responded don't know.

## ***How agricultural educators feel students with exceptionalities are viewed by other students***

A majority of the respondents agree that students with physical (n = 40, 85.1%) and mental (n = 30, 63.8%) exceptionalities could become productive members of society. Twenty-two respondents (47.8%) agree students who had socially maladjusted exceptionalities could become productive members of society.

When asked whether or not they agree that other students would be uncomfortable having students with exceptionalities on a competitive team (ie. CDE's – parli pro), 22

respondents (46.8%) agreed students would be uncomfortable with socially maladjusted students were on a competitive team. One respondent (2.13%) agreed students would be uncomfortable with a student with physical exceptionalities and 14 (29.8%) agreed students would be uncomfortable with students with mental exceptionalities on a competitive team.

Eighteen respondents (38.3%) agree that students would be uncomfortable having students who are socially maladjusted on an officer team. Three respondents (6.4%) agree that students would be uncomfortable having students with mental exceptionalities on an officer team, no respondents felt students would be uncomfortable having students with physical exceptionalities on an officer team.

When asked whether they agree with the statement the challenge of being in a regular classroom will promote learning for students with each of the following exceptionalities. Ten respondents (21.3%) agree that the challenge of being in a regular classroom will promote learning for students who are socially maladjusted, 29 (61.7%) agree it will promote learning for students with physical exceptionalities and 20 (42.6%) agree it will promote learning for those with mental exceptionalities.

## ***Conclusions***

The following conclusions are based on the interpretations of the data collected in this study. A majority of West Virginia Agricultural Education teachers have students with exceptionalities in their classrooms and laboratories. More than three-fourths (77.8%) have made adaptations in their classrooms to accommodate students with exceptionalities while more than half (60.9%) have also made adaptations in the laboratories to accommodate students with exceptionalities. A majority of teachers (63.8%) have seen an increase in students with exceptionalities in their classrooms.

Agricultural teachers feel confident and well-prepared to work with students with exceptionalities; however, they did not feel confident or well-prepared to work with students with exceptionalities when they first started teaching agriculture.

Teachers were split on whether or not they have attended classes/training offered in working with students with exceptionalities. The majority of teachers (31.9%) feel classes/trainings should be required of teachers who work with students with exceptionalities.

Teachers believed their classrooms and laboratories were safe for students with socially maladjusted (behavior) exceptionalities, physical exceptionalities, and mental exceptionalities. However, teachers do not believe their classrooms or laboratories are well-equipped for socially maladjusted (behavior) students. They do feel their classrooms and laboratories are well-equipped for students with physical and mental exceptionalities.

## ***Recommendations***

The following recommendations are based on the results of this study of West Virginia Agricultural Education Teachers perceptions on involving students with exceptionalities in agricultural classrooms and laboratories.

1. It is recommended that additional research should be conducted to determine the nature of the exceptionalities of students in agricultural science programs.
2. It is recommended that schools offer training and support teachers with regards to working with students with different exceptionalities.
3. It is recommended that schools further explore the needs of teachers with regards to working with students with exceptionalities in their classrooms and laboratories.
4. It is recommended that schools provide additional training for teachers on how to better deal with socially maladjusted (behavior) students in agricultural classrooms.

*Ashley Watts earned Bachelor of Science (2006) and Master of Science (2008) degrees in agricultural education from West Virginia University. Dr. Deborah Boone was Ashley's graduate advisor. The complete thesis can be accessed at <https://eidr.wvu.edu/etd/documentdata.eTD?documentid=5693>.*

### Important Dates

Nov 10	Program and Policy Meeting	Morgantown
Jan 23-25	Winter Leadership Conference	Cedar Lakes
Feb 5-7	National Ag Ed Inservice	Indianapolis
Feb 21-28	National FFA Week	
Mar 8-9	State Ham, Bacon and Egg Show and Sale	Charleston
Apr 3	Governing Body Meeting	
Apr 10	Beef Expo and WV Grasslands Contest	
Apr 23-24	WV Envirothon	
Apr 25	FFA and 4-H Equine Judging Contest	Keyser

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