

Navajo Future Farmers “set the bar high” for gratitude



2018 Navajo FFA officers. From left: Lincoln Muller, Destinee Bryer, Jaden Lingle, Kolton Hurst, Karlee McCombs, Braleyn Lingle, Dallas Cox

That Agriculture Council of America (ACA) has declared March 20th as National Ag Day in America. Events across the nation will center around gratitude to ag producers and ag industries. We at Southwest Rural Electric decided we wanted in on the gratitude, as our cooperative was largely founded by ag producers and to a large extent remains owned by them today.

While there are many organizations, businesses and individuals to celebrate on National Ag Day, we turned our attention to the future—The Future Farmers of America, to be exact. Although FFA originally stood for Future Farmers of America, it is now simply known as the National FFA Organization.

According to the National FFA Organization’s website, the FFA’s mission is to “make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.”

The Navajo High School FFA accurately demonstrates this mission through many of their community activities, including a children’s stock show, leadership camps and speech competitions.

Several of the students interviewed said they had joined FFA out of family tradition or because they had an interest in showing animals, however, they all agreed that the organization itself was worth so much more than that.

“I would say FFA teaches us to take initiative in things like food drives and coat drives. It sets the bar high for our school and community and for giving back to the community.” FFA Treasurer, Jaden Lingle, said.

FFA President, Karlee McCombs, stated, *“It’s taught me to be a leader, it’s showed me not to be afraid in situations because we’ve gone to multiple camps and it has showed me that you can make friends wherever you go, you don’t have to be afraid, you don’t have to be shy, you just have to get up and be yourself.”*

The students spared no detail when they explained the importance of agriculture. Put simply, without it we would all be naked and hungry. For that reason and many others, the Navajo FFA officers wanted to share a message with all of the farmers and ag businesses: *“Thank You.”*

SWRE Manager's Report



Positive Change Coming Soon with Operation Round Up

In previous columns, I have mentioned a new opportunity our coop is offering our members, by the name of Operation Round Up (ORU). For those of you who don't know about the program, this is a voluntary program in which members round-up their monthly bills to the nearest dollar and donate the change to our charitable foundation. On average, participants donate \$6 a year. With 100% going back into the communities, this small change adds up to a very big difference.

The Operation Round Up program has been adopted by over 252 rural electric cooperatives nationwide. Since its inception 29 years ago, the program has donated several hundred million dollars in assistance to charitable causes around the country.

In September, our employees formed a project team who would specifically work on establishing this foundation. Through many months the team interviewed many participating cooperatives in attempt to understand the best practices for beginning our own ORU program.

After gathering an abundance of ideas and recommendations, the team began the process of creating the by-laws that will govern our charitable foundation. This was no small feat.

The Operation Round Up team has now submitted official documents in order to gain official status as a charitable foundation. This

foundation will operate independently from Southwest Rural Electric Association, Inc. and will be governed by an independent board of directors.

The employee team is currently designing promotional ideas and activities to help launch this program in the near future. Part of our promotional process will include speaking to civic and other community groups around our area. These types of groups will be able to apply for ORU grants when the program is up and running.

Through ORU, your pennies, nickels and dimes can help raise thousands of dollars every year. And those dollars will be used to help your neighbors right here within own communities. Health and rescue organizations, food banks, educational projects, child welfare programs and individuals with special needs are just a few of the possibilities for your Operation Round-Up donations.

You can expect more information on Operation Round Up in our April newsletter.

If you are interested in having one of our employees come speak to your civic group or organization about ORU, contact Haley Hoover at 580-667-4413 for more information.



National Ag Week

March 18-24

Thank you ag producers and ag businesses!

Biggs and Whitman attend 2018 Youth Leadership Summit



Molly Biggs of Frederick and Lane Whitman of Vernon represented SWRE at the 2018 Touchstone Youth Leadership Summit in Oklahoma City on January 27.

Pictured with Biggs and Whitman (right) is Rhett Laubach, event leader.

Biggs and Whitman won the right to participate in the leadership summit through her performance in the electric cooperative's 2017 Youth Tour Essay Contest held last spring. Both students received a \$250 scholarship from SWRE and Touchstone Energy.

The leadership summit was held at the Chesapeake Finish Line Tower in Oklahoma City's Boathouse District. The Oklahoma River section of the North Canadian River is pictured in the background.

Molly is the daughter of Randy and Jill Biggs of Frederick. She is a senior at Frederick High School.

Lane is the son of Brian and Paula Whitman of Crowell. He is a senior at Vernon High School.

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Vernon – Herring Bank, Waggoner Bank, Bank of the West

NOTE: When paying at a bank, allow 10 days prior to the bill's due date.

What's Cookin' in the SWRE Kitchen

Chris Petty's Spicy Pretzels



Ingredients:

- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp lemon pepper
- 1 ½ tsp garlic salt
- 1 package of dry Ranch-style dressing
- ¾ cup vegetable oil
- 1 bag of pretzels -any style (15oz or more)

Directions:

1. Mix dry ingredients in a gallon size ziplock bag.
2. Add oil and mix.
3. Pour in whole bag of pretzels and shake well.
4. Marinate for at least 2 hours, turning bag over periodically or every 10-15 minutes to ensure even coating.
5. Enjoy as a delicious snack!

SWRE News

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For sale: Black aluminum pick-up-bed tool box with key. Paid \$270 but selling for \$100; just like new; has been stored in barn. Call 580-335-5848.

For Sale: Red Angus bull and heifer sale. April 25, 2018. www.superiorlivestock.com or attend live at Altus, Oklahoma Expo Center located at 412 Todd Lane. Call Cody Cribbs for more details: 580-481-9449 or 580-482-7423.

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For Sale: 2002 Exiss SS/310 LQ 3 horse slant, been in barn and kept like new. Used very little. Elect. jacks, new tires, new air conditioner. Selling due to health issues. \$19,000 I can send pictures or come take a look in Vernon, TX. cell-760-455-9140 or cell-760-587-3441.

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