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-from the FFA Creed

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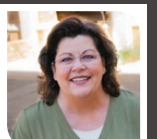
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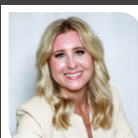
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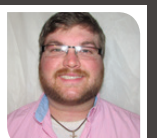
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# Alan Parker, Second Year In The Saddle as Ag Teacher for Pampa High School

By CALEB DORN  
pampanewseditor@gmail.com



Now into year two of being Pampa High Schools Ag/FFA teacher, Alan Parker is focusing on building a stronger program then in years past, and training up his students to be readily equipped for the real world. Parker taught in Pampa before, but most recently taught at Frank Phillips College.

“When I came back, the program wasn’t in good shape,” Alan Parker said. “We were missing a lot of things and not very organized. I know how important this program is and can be for kids so I want to provide everything I can for them. Anything they need, I want to be there, I’ll help them in anything they need.” The lack of supplies was a huge issue for the programs, but through grants and funding, the gaps have started to be mended. Along with these efforts, Parker wants to remind people that FFA isn’t just the livestock side of things.

“We have more than just livestock,” Parker said. “Sure it’s one of the bigger sides of things, but we have programs that teach students how to give speeches or take leadership in roles. We have so many things we can do, we just don’t have the students enrolled or informed about them.”

Although the majority focus now is livestock, there have been talks and consideration of bringing back things for the program.

“We do have a huge part of livestock, but there’s more to it that we have considered bringing back,” Parker said. “We’ve talked about maybe bringing back AG mechanics or venturing more into plant science. There’s a lot more to do than what we currently offer.”

This year the program is potentially going to have a team competing in every event at the Leadership Development Events level.

The enrollment for the program has also seen changes as well, with more students enrolled more than before, year before last the pre enrollment for the FFA program was at 80, with this years being at 174.

Although teaching here before, Parker left and taught in different places, but the Panhandle spirit is what brought him back.

“One of the things that made it so good to come back, was the support.” Parker said. “We get support from the community in more ways than I can say. We also get so much support from the school with the principals and superintendent.

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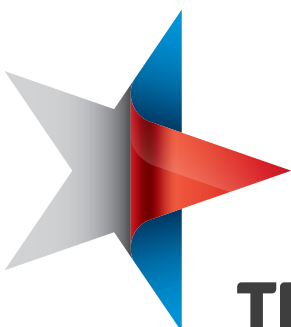


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Presenting of the flags at PHS Hall of Fame by FFA's Karter Fahsholtz and Mason Childress



# Gray County 4-H Upcoming Events

By VALERIE GRAY  
pampanewsreporter@gmail.com

For students enrolled in Gray County 4-H, there are year-round and seasonal events that they will be able to participate in. Joan Gray-Soria, the County Extension Agent and 4-H Coordinator spoke about the exciting upcoming events.

“A seasonal project that I am working on right now is our Foods and Nutrition Program,” Gray-Soria said. “We are teaching the kids about nutrition, meal planning, and meal preparation.”

In addition to the Foods and Nutrition Program, 4-H is preparing for two culinary-centered contests happening near the beginning of October.

“One contest is the Food Show. It is an individual contest where the kids prepare a dish. A judge will then interview the kid where they can showcase what they’ve learned,” Gray-Soria said. “The other is our Food Challenge contest. We have teams of 4-H members that have to work together. During the event, there are nu-

merous products on the table. Using those products, the team has to develop a recipe, cook their dish according to the recipe, plate their dish nicely, clean up their area, and prepare a presentation all in 40 minutes.”

Depending on what level the competition is categorized under, these events can take place in Pampa or Amarillo.

“The county contests are typically held in the Gray County 4-H Annex building in Pampa,” Gray-Soria said. “Our district contests are held in Amarillo. Most recently, those contests have been held at the Rex Baxter Exhibit building.”

Another seasonal project is Consumer Education. Members will learn about money management. At the end of the program, there is a judging contest called Consumer Decision Making. There will be products on a table and different written scenarios. Based on the criteria of the written scenarios, the members will have to rank the products by the best value.

Gray County 4-H has year-round events that 4-H members

can look forward to.

“Our Photography Program will start in October. We will be starting our Robotics Program in November,” Gray-Soria said. “We have had robotics for around 4 years. Last year, the robotics coach took the members to the Texas Tech University Robotics Competition in Amarillo. The team had wild-carded and ended up going to Lubbock.”

Programs based on technology are only some of the yearly projects that 4-H members can participate in. Animal-based programs are also happening year-round.

“We have our animal projects happening. Kids are preparing and buying their animals,” Gray-Soria said. “We have a livestock judging team that will be competing at the Tri-State Fair.

There are many programs in 4-H that can appeal to the interests of every child. To see what the Gray County 4-H members are up to, check out their Facebook page: Gray County Extension and 4-H.



## Gray County 4-H Achievement Banquet

By VALERIE GRAY  
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This year’s Gray County 4-H Achievement Banquet was held on August 9th . Joan Gray-Soria, the County Extension Agent and 4-H Coordinator, explained the concept behind the banquet as well as the awards given.

“We have our achievement banquet every fall,” Gray-Soria said. “It is sponsored by our 4-H council. The council is comprised of a group of teen members who plan out the banquet and host it.”

The achievement banquet is a time to gather, have fun, and give acknowledgement to the hard-working members of the 4-H and Clover Kids. There are multiple awards for different categories given out to the 4-H and Clover Kids members. Of the awards presented, the most notable are the Gold Star Award, Rookie of the Year Award, and the Friend of 4-H Award. Gray-Soria gave a description of some of the awards.

“Our Rookie of the Year Award goes to a 1st year 4-H member that has done an outstanding job,” Gray-Soria said. “The Friend of 4-H Award is given to an outside institute that has contributed to our 4-H program.”

Recognition is also given to the volunteer team leaders and adults who have dedicated their time in helping the 4-H program prosper.

“We have an opportunity at the banquet to recognize the adults that

also contributed to our program and the volunteer team leaders,” Gray-Soria said. “As well, we recognize two outstanding leaders that were chosen by our youth. They are volunteers that have gone above and beyond.”

The 4-H achievement banquet is a special opportunity to reflect on the progress and passion the 4-H members have put forth into their program. This year’s banquet was quite sentimental for Gray-Soria.

“I do attend the banquet every year as I am the advisor to the 4-H Council. The kids always do a spectacular job,” Gray-Soria said. “This year was more difficult because I had some

kids in their senior year, whom I’ve grown very close to throughout their time in program, in which this was their last banquet as a 4-H member.”

The memories, skills, and bonds that the 4-H and Clover Kids members have gained in the program will last their entire lives.

Special congratulations to the Gold Star Award winner, Rebecca Scott, winners of the Outstanding Leaders nomination, Krista Clark and Audrey Hopkins, and to the Friend of 4-H Award winner, Phillips 66.

To see the winners of all the awards presented at the 4-H achievement banquet, check out their Facebook page: Gray County Extension and 4-H.



Top O’ Texas FFA District Greenhand Camp in Canadian



# McLean FFA



## Cali Pontnack First Year as McLean’s FFA Forerunner

BY VALERIE GRAY  
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McLean’s newest agricultural teacher, Cali Pontnack, is excited for her first year as FFA forerunner. Pontnack is from Winchester, IL, and attended Black Hawk Community College where she was on the Equestrian Team. Pontnack then transferred to West Texas A&M University where she also participated in the Equestrian Team and got her degree in Agricultural Education. Pontnack has started her teaching career at McLean High School where she finds herself overseeing a multi-

tude of classes and events. “I’m loving it,” Pontnack said. “It’s definitely new and there’s so much to it. I juggle regular classroom duties, FFA responsibilities, and I’m starting to teach a mechanics class.” Overall, Pontnack has had a positive experience working for McLean. “I love the faculty and administration here,” Pontnack said. “The community is great! I feel very much at home.” Regarding FFA activities, Pontnack teaches an abundance of classes vital for future agriculturalists like animal management, livestock production,

mechanics, and principles of agriculture classes geared to 8th and 9th graders. Pontnack spoke about the current events her FFA students have participated in. “We just had our District Greenhand Camp and District Meeting,” Pontnack said. “We have the Area 1 Greenhand Camp coming up soon. I’m also taking a Plant Identification Team to the Tristate Fair.” The opportunities for experience don’t stop at FFA events. Thanks to FFA, Pontnack has had remarkable development with students connecting with their peers. “When students join the FFA, they get more involved with other students in their area, different districts, and across the state,” Pontnack said. “The students meet other students and agricul-

tural teachers from all over Texas.” As well, FFA cultivates public speaking confidence within students. “Leadership Development events offer speaking experience,” Pontnack said. “These events will make the students better public speakers. That gives them the ability to do increasingly well in interviews and hold officer positions in the FFA whether it’s chapter, district, area, or state positions.” Another bonus of FFA is that it increases the knowledge of students regarding their future careers and agricultural interests. “They gain more knowledge whether it’s for speaking or judging events,” Pontnack said. “Networking, speaking, and knowledge are the 3 biggest things FFA can teach students.”

## Roberts County 4-H Enrollment and Upcoming Events

BY VALERIE GRAY  
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Roberts County 4-H has had an eventful competition season this year. Sterling Scott, Roberts County 4-H Coordinator and County Extension Agent, explains the requirement for becoming a Clover Kid or 4-H member. “The age range to join the Clover Kids Club is kindergarten through 2nd grade,” Scott said. “There are a variety of noncompetitive programs that Clover Kids can participate in.” As for children wanting to enroll in 4-H, the requirement is 3rd grade through 12th grade. 4-H members can enroll in either competitive or noncompetitive programs throughout the year. Scott expands upon the enrollment deadline for 4-H. “If a child wants to be a 4-H member with the intention of competing, they will need to be enrolled before the next contest,” Scott said. “Our fall enrollment has since closed. Anyone who would like to be in 4-H can enroll in the spring.” Roberts County 4-H has had numerous groups participate in com-

petitions around the panhandle area. Scott had glowing remarks about 4-H’s most recent achievements. “We have had a lot of 4-H members who have done extremely well this season,” Scott said. “Our two most recent achievements were something special. Landry Dukes placed 3rd at the State Contest for Recordbook Judging in the Beef Category. We also took a team to Clarendon and won the livestock judging contest.” Roberts County 4-H members have big events to look forward to. The Amarillo Tri-State Fair is a notable event where 4-H members of all districts go to compete in. Scott is also excited for the Big Fun in D1 district shows where members of all ages compete and show off their knowledge. “We’re looking forward to the Fall Big Fun in D1,” Scott said. “As well, in the spring there’s Archery, Trap, Skeet, and Shotgun Shooting programs to look forward to.” To find more information about enrollment and events happening in Roberts County 4-H program, go to their website at <https://roberts.agrilife.org>.

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# White Deer FFA's Outstanding Members

BY VALERIE GRAY  
pampanewsreporter@gmail.com

White Deer's Future Farmers of America has been thriving under the tutelage of Mark Arnold. There are two exemplary students that have dedicated their time to the FFA organization who encapsulate the core values the program is consisted of. Kaydee Sue Damron and Ben Woodward are the outstanding representatives of White Deer's FFA organization.

Damron is a senior at White Deer High School. She is the Chapter President of White Deer's FFA and Area 1 FFA Vice President. Damron began her FFA journey when she started high school.

"I started in freshman year," Damron said. "Before FFA, I wasn't active in things like this before."

Her experience in the organization has been rewarding and overwhelmingly positive.

"It's so cool. There are so many opportunities and learning experiences," Damron said. "Just looking around and seeing everybody before me, there's always something happy going on. It's so much fun."

Thanks to the FFA, Damron has been in numerous competitions and events. Damron noted the most remarkable achievements she has made throughout her time in the organization.

"I've gotten my Lone Star Degree, it's the highest degree the FFA gives

out," Damron said. "Being an area officer is very important to me."

Damron's family and friends have been incredibly supportive of her participating in the organization.

"My family has really supported my activities in the FFA," Damron said. "All my support comes from my family and the people within the program."

As this is her final year at White Deer High School, Damron has ambitious plans for her educational endeavors and career prospects.

"I applied and have been accepted to West Texas A&M University," Damron said. "I'm going to major in animal science and hopefully become an animal biotechnologist or a veterinarian."

Damron is appreciative of her time in the FFA. She offers her advice to others who may be interested in the program or are looking to try something new.

"I think the FFA is great. There's a place for everybody. The FFA provides some of the greatest memories anyone could ever have," Damron said. "I encourage everybody to try and join the FFA. It provides a lot of good memories. For people who don't always have the best outside of the program, they could always count on the FFA to give happiness and joyful opportunities."

Woodward is a junior at White Deer High School and has served as the Top O' Texas District Presi-

dent for a year. As well as being in the FFA, he has worked with 4-H and has a background of raising livestock alongside his family. As for his experience of being District President, Woodward has appreciated it so far.

"I've been enjoying it quite well. It's been nice meeting new people and interacting with my officers which I had not met until I got elected. It's been a learning experience for all of us," Woodward said.

Throughout his life, Woodward has been surrounded by agricultural ventures. "I've been involved in FFA just about my whole life, be it working within the program or outside working for farmers or helping my family," Woodward said. "We raise livestock. Before I could judge livestock through the FFA, I judged livestock through the 4-H about 3 years ago."

Regarding future FFA events, Woodward is hard at work preparing for these matters. "I've been working with my team for the Senior Skills," Woodward said. "In the spring, I plan to compete on the livestock judging team."

For having a very productive FFA background, Woodward notes his astounding achievements within the past year.

"Last year, I was awarded the Area 1 Star Farmer Award and made it to state. I got a plaque at both Area and State levels," Woodward said. "It

was a great accomplishment for me because I had to work on my record book and do extensive checks for both area and state level. I'm glad that I passed."

As for his plans for his final year in high school, Woodward has clear goals of what he wants to accomplish.

"I plan to run for area office and achieve higher things for FFA such as obtaining my Lone Star Degree," Woodward said. "Hopefully I'll get my American Degree sometime soon too."

Woodward's plans after graduating White Deer High School are just as inspiring for his plans for next year.

"After I graduate, I plan to attend Oklahoma Panhandle State University where I intend to major in agricultural education and animal science," Woodward said. "Then I'll get my masters at Oklahoma State University. I plan to become an Agricultural Teacher."

With his past and future endeavors, Woodward thanks his family for their support.

"My family has been very supportive. Both of my parents are teachers. My dad is actually an ag teacher. I've had to work and help him for 3 years now," Woodward said. "It's definitely provided me with an experience, and it seems like something I want to do. It's a lot of fun."

Woodward has greatly enjoyed his time in the FFA and offers advice for those looking to join.

"Like Kaydee said, there's a place for everybody in FFA. I've met people that feel like they don't belong but inside the program and at leadership camps, they're different people. We're all having the time of our lives," Woodward said.

Damron and Woodward are representative of what FFA offers to its members. The core values of FFA are instilled in these two students. The experiences and memories students make in FFA will last them all their lives.



Ben Woodward, Top O Texas District President, Kaydee Sue Damron, Chapter President/Area 1 Vice President

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# White Deer's Momentous FFA Program

By VALERIE GRAY  
pampanewsreporter@gmail.com

With the help of the students and administration, White Deer's FFA program has been prosperous. Mark Arnold has been the agricultural teacher and FFA leader for White Deer for 7 years. Thanks to funding, Arnold's students have a large workshop space, tools, and materials to create anything their heart desires.

"We've been very blessed. We've got a lot of great funding," Arnold said.

The workshop space is indeed impressive as it is ornamented with welding stations created and organized by the students themselves. Though the most remarkable space is the classroom attached to the workshop. The walls of the room are adorned banners that the FFA members have won over the years.

"What I'm most proud of is the banners. Every banner you see here is all because of the kids," Arnold said. "When I got here, there were 3 banners per year. Now, there has been between 25 to 30 banners per year."

Each banner specifies the competition the FFA members won and what year they won it.

"We won the District Leadership Sweepstakes for the last six years," Arnold said. "It's a huge accomplishment for us."

The FFA has numerous events and competitions members can participate in. White Deer's FFA has taken advantage of every opportunity to engage in these events.

"We've had kids go to State in the Leadership category. We've won the Area Spanish Creed award," Arnold said. "We won state in the Agricultural Science Fair. That group of students went on to win 3rd place in the nation."

Arnold has been a teacher for over 30 years. When he came to White Deer High School, he had one objective: student participation.

"My goal when I came was to get the students to participate," Arnold said. "There are 95 kids in White Deer High School. 82 kids are in agriculture and out of those kids, 57 will be on leadership teams."

The involvement of students has made the FFA program increasingly

successful.

"It's allowed us to win the sweepstakes each year," Arnold said. "That's been a huge accomplishment."

There is no shortage of events that members can participate in. White Deer's FFA is always busy throughout the year.

"In the fall and spring, we show livestock. We do a lot of the career development events such as the judging categories, agricultural mechanics, and food science," Arnold said. "We train around 10 to 12 teams in the spring and travel to contest."

One event that White Deer's FFA has been competing in is the Amarillo Tri-State Fair.

"Tri-State Fair has been going well. We had 8 sheep and 1 goat compete. This week, we will have 2 steers that will be there," Arnold said. "Soon, we will have 4 livestock judging teams competing."

Arnold reminisced about past FFA events his students have participated in and what accomplishments they achieved.

"Over the years, the area officers go to State Leadership Camp. When

they come back, the officers host the Area Camp," Arnold said. "We had 7 kids at the area camp. In between that, we've had State Record Check. As well, we had a student interview for a scholarship, and she won it."

The past year has been incredibly eventful for White Deer's FFA program. There are future events that the program is preparing for.

"During State Record Check, we came back and had an electric camp at Frank Phillips College in Borger. We did a state convention in Fort Worth," Arnold said. "We had a lot of kids walking the stage. Kaydee Sue Damron got her Lone Star Degree. I have another student in the process of getting her American Degree. We will be traveling to Indianapolis in a few weeks for that."

FFA has a large quantity of circulars that will surely capture the interest of any student. White Deer's FFA is always looking for more students to join the program.

"We try to be as diversified as we possibly can," Arnold said. "We try to cater to kids of all sorts. We try to find something every kid can be involved in."



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