

# GVATA News & Views



Georgia Vocational  
Agricultural Teachers  
Association

### Special Points of Interest

- > NAAE National Convention, St. Louis, MO November 15-19, 2011
- > GVATA Mid-Winter Conference, FFA-FCCLA Center, Covington, GA January 17-18, 2012
- > GVATA Summer Conference, The Classic Center, Athens, GA July 8-11, 2012

## President's Message

First, let me thank you for becoming a GVATA Member again this year. If you are a first year teacher, let me

Education and Georgia FFA. Many battles have been fought to save parts of our program which have made us the envy of many states. As I attended the NAAE Region V conference this summer in North Carolina, I realized how blessed we really are in Georgia. Many teachers in other states have worked 20 or 30 years and do not earn what a first year agriculture teacher makes in Georgia. Other states do not have the number of state staff that we have in Georgia. We are

the only state in the nation that has a Young Farmer program with full time teachers devoted solely to that part of the program. Even though we have had cuts over the past few years, we are still far better off so let's stop and give thanks.

**President's message  
continued on page 4**

**Hugh Lanier  
Bainbridge High School**



welcome you to GVATA. Our members have worked hard for many years to reach this place in Agriculture

## PRC Update—Todd Dobson, Jasper Middle School

On September 19, 2011 the PRC Committee met at Camp John Hope. The purpose of the meeting was to go over goals and initiatives for the committee and Bobby Carrell for the upcoming session.

The committee will meet quarterly just like the GVATA board, so if you have issues, please report them to your

area rep and they will bring them to the table for the board to discuss. If the board feels action needs to be taken, the directive will then be given to Bobby to act on. Following this protocol will help us be more productive as an organization.

I want to remind you that positive contacts now with

your legislators can be so beneficial for us in the future. Please make sure that when we need you to make the contact and ask for help that it is not the first contact you have made.

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**Joe Green will representing Region V in the Ideas Unlimited Award Area at the NAAE Convention in November**



**"A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron."**

**-- Horace Mann**



**Phil Gentry will represent Region V in the Outstanding Postsecondary/Adult Education Award Area at the NAAE Convention in November**

### Area 1 Report—John Clark Pettit, Gilmer County High School

Ever wonder how your life would have turned out without that special person or persons who truly impacted your life? For me, there have been a number of people who have had a positive impact on my life. For many, it's that special uncle or dad or grandfather, but in a time when the family structure seems to be crumbling many of our student's are left to the chance of blindly stumbling across that individual who truly has a positive impact on their lives.

As far as my life story goes, my grandfather, a WWII veteran and EX-POW probably had the most impact on my personal life. A man who survived the fight across

France and Germany only to be captured during the "battle of the bulge" and held as a prisoner of war for six months during what was the coldest winter in nearly a century for Western Germany, then come home to live through the pains of his experience, including losing the use of one arm and amputation of both legs not to mention the emotional pains that only he could realize, and not once did I ever hear him complain about his status in life. I often find myself worrying or complaining about some certain circumstance in my life, then I think of him and how much he suffered physically and mentally and never once in my life did I ever hear him complain or

even regret the things he went through and experienced during his lifetime. The remembrance of his embrace of the opportunities that life provides regardless of individual circumstances quickly returns my mind and senses to focus on the big picture. While my Grandfather impacted my personal life for the better others have made a difference in my public and professional life.

It is not always clear what path we will end up following as we travel down the roadway of life. As a stereotypical teenage boy, I found my interests to be football, girls and more football and that's all I needed in life to be happy.

**Area 1 Report continued on page 3**

### Area 3 Report—Jessica Bowden, Lagrange High School

I am so honored to be serving as your Area III Director. I know from talking with other teachers throughout our area that we are all running full speed with CDEs, livestock shows, and class projects. This has been an exciting and fast paced start to a new year. It seems like just a few weeks ago everyone was starting the first day of class and now we have the Georgia National Fair at our heels.

I want to thank each of you for your commitment to your GVATA professional organization. I feel very fortunate to be part of such a great team. I am constantly reminded of the passion that we have for our profession that sets us apart from others in education. It is my goal to be 100% before we get to Mid Winter Conference in our enrollment. One of the most obvious outward evidences of professionalism from an agriculture teacher is membership in GVATA. I would

also like to stress the importance of paying into PRC and encourage any teachers that have not contributed to do so. If I can be of service to you as your GVATA director please don't hesitate to contact me.

I would like to wish each of the Area III state winning teams a big GOOD LUCK as they are preparing to head to the National FFA Convention this October. Phillip Gentry from Perry High School will be representing Area III in Meats Evaluation CDE and Argene Claxton from Perry High in the Nursery Landscape CDE. Ashley Whiddon from Veterans High in Agricultural Sales and Floriculture CDE. Bill Waldrep from Mary Persons High in Land Judging. Ronnie Thomas from Houston County High in the Dairy Evaluation CDE. Doyle Floyd from Bleckley County High in the Environmental Natural Resources CDE. I wish these teachers and their students the best of luck in their competition areas!! We are

so lucky to have so many state winning teams from Area III. I would also like to congratulate the 2010-2011 Big Owl winners from Area III. Argene Claxton from Perry High School won from the high school division and Ashley Denton from Perry Middle School won in the Middle school division. With more CDEs and Livestock shows around the corner, I would like to encourage everyone to continue the hard work. Take the opportunity this year to try something new in agriculture education. Try a new CDE, fill out Form II of the National Chapter Application, attend a conference at the FFA Camp, try your hand with a new livestock project or help a student fill out a proficiency application. Good Luck to you in these new endeavors and with all the other upcoming competitions. Once again, Thank you for all that you do for your students and agriculture education.

## Area 5 Report—Donald Gilman, Worth County High School

On the way home today from making a SAE visit, I noticed an abundance of wildlife; several wild hogs and five deer all grazing over freshly plowed peanuts. I thought briefly about the harvest that was about to be gathered and how it provided more than just financial compensation for the grower that had staked his fortunes on this year's bounty. Even the wildlife were able to take part in the feast

laid out before them. It doesn't take long to realize that this is a special season for South Georgia. There is a certain smell, that of fresh dug peanuts, that gives off a fragrance that's unforgettably tied to September and October.

Thinking about this harvest season also reminded me of the success of Area V and how, as a group, we have all pulled together to pay our GVATA dues and

contribute to PRC. Area V has a 98% membership and we expect that number to soon be 100%. There is no "magic bullet" that has led to this success other than the desire of the membership to support our organization; for that Area V, I would like to extend a huge THANK YOU for stepping up to the plate and supporting the GVATA and PRC.

## Area 1 Report (continued from page 2)

Blind to the fact that once high school was over neither of my two interests would lead to a career or productive life, especially for an athlete that stood a humble 5'8" and ran the forty in something like ten seconds. Football was not going to get me anywhere after high school! In my professional life my 12<sup>th</sup> grade Agriculture Teacher truly made a difference. It was a combination of the multitude of those unplanned, unscripted opportunities that he provided, that led me to the agriculture industry and eventually Ag Education. It was Governor Perdue's inaugural year in office, the first Agriculture Awareness Celebration at the State Capitol that I, a high school senior, realized the importance of agriculture and Agriculture Education. That single event, combined with other learning opportunities helped me get to where I am today. A long ways from the interest of my younger childhood, but with the ability to offer the same opportunities that my Ag Teacher offered me.

I write about my experiences just to make a short simple point. When you leave the school or barn or greenhouse at the end of the day

can you say to yourself, I tried to MAKE A DIFFERENCE today? With all the stresses we face as ag teachers on a day to day basis it is easy to forget what our job truly is. More than critiquing lesson plans, making room reservations or the many arduous tasks that we are faced with every day, have we provided our students with the opportunity to be better? No doubt any teacher of any subject could say the same sort of thing about "making a difference", but how many have the opportunity to actually do just that, MAKE A DIFFERENCE. We as Agriculture Teacher's are given the opportunity to get to know our students on a personal level and heck we even get paid for an extra hour every day. Use that time wisely, not shut up in your classroom making lesson plans or room reservations. Open your doors and use the opportunity we have to truly MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Just a minute of time for a student, could lead to a lifetime of greater opportunities.

We in Agriculture Education have so much to be proud of that it is hard to cover it all. There are a number of Area 1 Teachers and Ag Programs that have excelled in

providing opportunities this year and really have MADE A DIFFERENCE. Be sure to congratulate these people if you see them and strive to offer you students more opportunities in the year ahead. The following individuals or schools have been recognized as the best in Georgia and will be competing or recognized on the national level in just a few days, including a number of Agriscience fair projects that will be judged on the national level.

National AgriScience Teacher of the Year Finalist:

Ms. Sara Clark  
NAAE Ideas Unlimited Finalist:

Mr. Joe Green  
State Proficiency Winners:  
Kristin McCurdy, Gordon Central-  
National Finalist  
Jordan Worthley, Pepperell  
Amber Kay, Sonoraville  
Aly Rattazzi, Pickens County- Gold  
Emblem

Malia Tucker, North West Whitfield-  
Silver Emblem  
Taylor Langford, Gordon Central-  
Gold Emblem  
Collan Sanford, Gilmer County-  
Silver Emblem



**Meredith Arrington will represent GVATA in the Teachers Turn the Key Award Area at the NAAE Convention in November**

**"It is not what is poured into a student that counts but what is planted."  
-Linda Conway**

**Allen Nasworthy will represent GVATA in the Teachers Turn the Key Award Area at the NAAE Convention in November**



## PRC Message (continued from page 1)

As economic times are tough for everyone, I personally want to thank each and every one of you that made contributions to the PRC. Many of you have heard it being referred to as an insurance policy, believe me, it is that important if not more. Mr. Carrell spends countless hours in Atlanta on our behalf to make sure we are represented well when the cuts start coming.

Here is a summary of the contributions that were collected at Summer Conference:

	PRC	# of Contributors		Average Contribution
Area 1	\$6,300	53/62	Area 1	\$118.87
Area 2	\$9,065	70/85	Area 2	\$129.50
Area 3	\$6,845	48/62	Area 3	\$142.60
Area 4	\$6,297	43/55	Area 4	\$146.44
Area 5	\$8,715	61/63	Area 5	\$142.87
Area 6	\$5,500	42/56	Area 6	\$130.95
State Staff	\$3,575	24/24	State Staff	\$148.96
Other	\$350	2	Other	\$175.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$46,647</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>STATE AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$136.00</b>

## Georgia Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association

Providing agricultural education for the global community through visionary leadership, advocacy, and service



### GVATA

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## President's Message (continued from page 1)

I had the opportunity to serve on the Agriculture Education Legislative Oversight Committee in August. We have great support in the legislature. If you have the opportunity to visit with your legislators, thank them for all the support they give agriculture education. I was encouraged to see the wonderful way that Sallie McHugh, Ira Tucker, and Phil Gentry represented Agriculture Education. Mr. Bridges and the state staff did an excellent job of organizing the entire program. At the end of the meeting, I realized just how important our standards are and how crucial it is that we hold ourselves accountable within our profession. To be honest with you, I think the standards have played an integral role in sparing

our program deeper cuts over the last few years. As I listened to the senators and representatives talk, I realized the man who sits in the governor's office today is one of the greatest examples of the impact our program has made in Georgia. Their comments made me reflect on my life and the great influence agricultural education and FFA had on a shy and reserved ninth grader. Like many of you, I am a product of this program. I invest myself this way because I see the value in working with students and helping them have the same opportunities I had - if not more. I have never counted days or hours. I believe in working until the job is done. Sometimes discouraging days appear, but I often run into former students

who recall their experiences in agriculture class or FFA and it charges my batteries again to keep on keeping on.

My passion for this program runs deep. When I hear people complaining about cuts and standards or I feel that someone is attacking our program, it makes that passion rise up. We are a blessed people. Let's not become complacent in our charge, but work harder to make agriculture education and Georgia FFA stronger. I leave you with this quote from Henry Ford, "You will find men who want to be carried on the shoulders of others, who think that the world owes them a living. They don't seem to see that we must all lift together and pull together."



GVATA is an affiliate of the  
National Association of  
Agricultural Educators



## ***Mid-Winter Conference Agenda*** ***January 17-18, 2012***

### **Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>**

10am: Executive Board meeting

1pm: Tactical Plan Committees

3:30pm: UGA ALEC Advisory Committee

3:30pm – 5:00 pm Registration ..... Mobley Hall

5:30pm – 6:30pm Opening Session ..... Mobley Hall

6:30 Dinner/Hall of Fame

### **Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>**

7:00am – Breakfast

8:00am – 10:00 am Career Development Enrichment

9:15 am – 10:30 Breakout Sessions

12pm-1pm - Lunch

1:15pm – 2:30pm -Business Sessions

2:45pm – 4:00pm - Region Meetings

### **Mid-Winter Conference Registration Fees:**

**Hall of Fame Dinner .....\$ 15.00**

**Conference Registration..... \$ 35.00**

**Non -Member Conference Registration..... \$75.00**