

2007-2008

Blue and Gold Page Guidelines



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(717) 626-1164

Dear Chapter FFA Adviser, Reporter and Officers:

On behalf of the staff here at *Lancaster Farming*, I would like to thank you for your interest in participating with the monthly Blue and Gold pages in *Lancaster Farming*.

Entering into our fourth year with the page, it was decided by the 2007-2008 officer team to redesign the page for this school year. The page will run the third week of the month in the paper and will have statewide coverage, a difference from the regional focus of past years.

To help your chapter with effective, quality stories and photos for consideration by the state reporter, the *Lancaster Farming* staff has compiled a short set of guidelines.

As always, do not hesitate to contact the state reporter or myself for any questions on preparing your submission.

Yours in Agriculture,



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What Should Chapters Submit for the Blue and Gold Pages?

The focus of the Blue and Gold page is chapter level FFA happenings. This year, the state officer team will author a column based on the statewide activities.

Ideas for consideration include chapter service projects, chapter events (such as local fair participation, banquets), area/county contests and other chapter activities. Some story ideas that were utilized last year included chapter heirloom tomato project, elementary ag education, tree planting service project, food drive service project and an Earth Day contest.

Chapter minutes do not equal a news release, if something “newsworthy” happened at a meeting, please format the information into a press release.

In writing the story, make sure to include the five “W’s”...who, what, where, when, why and how.

For photos, in addition to the traditional “line-up” shot, please consider action shots as well. For example, instead of sending a line-up photo of the parliamentary procedure team, a photo of them practicing it can give more interest to the story. The saying “a picture tells the story” can be very true. And, some stories are selected to run because of the strong photography.

For chapter reporters struggling with developing a news story, speak to the English teacher that works with your school newspaper for help. In most cases, they would be happy to give some guidance.

Format:

Stories should be about 500 words, double-spaced, due to page space limitations. It is recommended if typing in a word processing program (MS Word) also paste the text into the e-mail document, in case of problems with opening the document.

Pictures: If sending digital photos, make sure the camera settings are set for high resolution photos. *Lancaster Farming* requires photos have a dpi of 300 and are sent in a jpg format.

Always identify people in the photos. The caption can be placed at the beginning or end of a story. If sending more than one photo, identify the photo file name before the caption.

Photo tips:

With all photos, make sure they are in focus. Also, do not be afraid to get close to the “action” to get the shot and fill the photo frame. With action shots, please make sure that faces are seen. For example, if an FFA member is showing a group of children what hay looks like, the photographer should be positioned to get a side view of the FFA member and a few of the students looking at the hay.

Submission: All stories and photos are to be sent to Mike Brammer at the state FFA office for consideration.

Required story information:

Please include a contact name, e-mail and/or phone number with the submission, for questions.

Each story **MUST** have a headline, dateline (Town, State), byline (author) and photos must include people identification for consideration.

An example is as follows

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tunkhannock FFA Chapter
Tunkhannock Area High School
120 West Tioga St.
Tunkhannock, PA 18657
Contact: Steven Traver, chapter adviser
(570) 836-8241

FFA Chapter to Teach Elementary Students About Agriculture
SUSIE Q. MEMBER
Chapter Reporter

TUNKHANNOCK, Pa. – Members of the Tunkhannock FFA Chapter will be bringing the farm to school next week as part of their Ag in the Classroom project at the four elementary schools.

“The chapter has been preparing for months to discuss the importance of agriculture with elementary students,” said Frank Farmer, chapter president. “For many young students, this is the first time they are in contact with production agriculture.

The project is a annual tradition for the chapter.....

References:

For the proper use of FFA terminology and basic writing styles the National FFA Style Guide, located on the National FFA Website is an excellent reference.

http://www.ffa.org/documents/styleguide_.pdf

An expanded press release writing guide is located on the National FFA Website at

http://www.ffa.org/documents/ffa_news_release_guidelines.pdf

Press release examples are located in the National FFA Media Kit under news release guidelines at http://www.ffa.org/index.cfm?method=c_media.mediakit

4-H Newsreporter’s Handbook – available at your local extension office

The Associated Press (AP) Style Handbook – more advanced than the FFA documentation, style format for *Lancaster Farming*.