

Russell County FFA attends KY State FFA Convention

By **Bethany Garmon**

Thirteen Russell County FFA members attended the 93rd Kentucky State FFA Convention held in Lexington at the Central Bank Center at Rupp Arena.

The chapter started the week by receiving the State Gold Emblem. This award is given based on the entire years worth of participation in a variety of activities and contest designed to enhance FFA members. Only about 20% of the chapters in the state earned this award.

While at convention, members heard Governor Andy Beshear and Agriculture Commissioner Dr Ryan Quarles address the over 2400 KY FFA members and guests. Both speakers stressed the importance of agriculture and influenced members to continue their FFA careers and spread their knowledge of agriculture.

Russell County FFA members competed in Career Development

and Leadership Development Events.

Sophie Shearer in Fruit & Vegetable Impromptu Speaking

Chloe Robertson in Horse Impromptu Speaking

Hannah Yates in Small Animal Impromptu Speaking

Abby Wolford in Extemporaneous Speaking

Brandon Leach in Swine Impromptu Speaking

Olivia Pierce in Greenhouse Impromptu Speaking

Bryanna Smith competed in Dairy Impromptu Speaking and the Employability Contest.

Cass Foley, Morgan Taylor, and Jaren Fischer competed in Ag Sales Team.

Callie Reynolds was awarded the state winner plaque for being high individual in the state horse judging contest held last fall.

Bryanna Smith won the Dairy Impromptu Speaking Contest. This is Bryannas third state title she has earned as a FFA member. She previously won the high individual junior livestock judging state contest and the state beef impromptu speaking contest.

Morgan Taylor was the 3rd high individual overall in the Ag Sales Team Contest.

Cass Foley, Sophie Shearer, Morgan Jones, Elly Richardson, and Morgan Taylor received their KY State FFA degree. Of the over 14,000 KY FFA members only about 400 earn this degree.

Russell County FFA Chapter definitely left their mark in Lexington at the convention.

Russell County FFA Advisors are Bethany Garmon and Dustin Gosser.



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Callie Reynolds was named winner in the state horse judging competition held last fall.



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BLAIR,

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Roger Dale Blair and family.

Auction - where he also served as a real estate broker.

In addition to the titles of "Cowboy, Auctioneer, Broker, Husband, Daddy, and Papa," Roger's family takes great pride in another title: Solider.

Blair served in the United States Army and rose through to the rank of Master Sergeant.

In his 20 years of service, he fought in the Vietnam conflict, and was a recipient of a Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Now, posthumously, Blair is being honored again.

During Roger's time of service, he came in contact with a tactical herbicide mixture known as "Agent Orange."

The dangerous chemical was used throughout the Vietnam war and was discontinued in the 1970's, but is known to still have harmful impacts today.

Many Vietnam Veterans suffered from the side-effects of the chemical and it was concluded that Roger's death had a link to his exposure all those years ago.

In honor of those veterans, the Vietnam

Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) created the "In Memory" program.

They believe that "all Vietnam Veterans should be honored and remembered for their service."

Since its formation in 1993, the VVMF has added the names of more than 5,000 veterans to their honor roll.

On June 18, Roger will be one of four Kentuckians and one of 513 servicemen inducted to the "In Memory" program.

Hosted on the East Knoll of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C., each honoree's name will be read aloud.

As a part of the honor, Blair's family will receive a printed, personal tribute certificate along with a 2022 yearbook highlighting this year's honorees.

Roger's photo and name will also be featured on the VVMF's mobile exhibit, "The Wall That Heals" when it is displayed in Kentucky.

"Our family is so honored to be included in this event," Roger's daughters, Hope and Summer, stated. "What a way to spend Father's Day weekend watching our dad be honored

for the sacrifices he made for his country and family, and knowing he's looking down from heaven and seeing how many lives he's touched. Some he never met and some that he meant the world to! All gave some, some gave all. He will forever be our Hero! Happy Father's Day Daddy, we love and miss you so much!"

Roger is survived by his wife of 51 years, Judy Blair, two daughters, Anna Hope Hanson and Summer (and Ron) Beaty; five granddaughters, Morgan (and Brandon) Kerr, Ashley Antle, Candace (and Elliott) Benningfield, Shelby (and Jason) Russell, and Hannah Bell (and Cody Roberts); two step-granddaughters, Valley Beaty and Scarlett Beaty; four great-grandchildren, Aedan Abell, Liam Brown, Ellora Russell, and Elaina Benningfield; a special daughter by choice, Christina (and Tim) Howell; granddaughter, Taylor (and Corey) Clark; grandson, Logan Howell; great-granddaughter, Abijah Jones; two brothers, Dean Blair and Larry (and Patricia) Blair; two sisters, Marilyn (and Randy) Ford and Lesa (and David) McDonald; a host of nieces and nephews; life-long friends.