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FFA awards honor teachers, firm

By Danielle Nadler

The Winchester Star WINCHESTER " The Massanutten Federation of FFA has named five annual awards in honor of four former Frederick County teachers and a business. The federation is comprised of 13 chapters of FFA (formerly known as Future Farmers of America), seven of which are in Frederick County.

The endowed awards were announced during a dinner meeting at *MidAtlantic Farm Credit* recently, at which Frederick FFA students thanked longtime donors and supporters.

Each endowment is worth \$500 and will cover an award for a student who achieves the highest honor in an FFA career development event.

The endowments was named in honor persons (and a veterinary medicine center) who have made contributions to the program.

"These people were chosen for various reasons, " said Aylor Middle School FFA sponsor Kim Black, who organized the event with James Wood High School FFA sponsor Missy McDonald. "Mostly because of their steadfast support and interest in our programs and their willingness to give their time to students in agricultural education and FFA. It really is the ultimate example of paying it forward. "

The Massanutten Federation raised more than \$4,000 at a golf tournament in 2009. After paying for Frederick County and Shenandoah County FFA student awards and plaques, the organization had enough money to pay for the five endowments.

They are:

\* The Northern Area Small Engines High Individual Award was named after Robert L. Sutphin, a James Wood agricultural teacher from 1972 to 1983. He works as a salesman at Winchester Equipment Co. and continues to support FFA programs.

\* The Dairy Foods Career Development Event High Individual Award was named after the late Robert B. Harper, who taught agriculture and served as an FFA adviser at James Wood from 1973 until his death in 1982.

His children Phillip Harper and Marsha Gochenour accepted the honor on his behalf.

\* The State Extemporaneous Speaking Award was named after Douglas C. Rinker, who taught agriculture and served as an FFA adviser at James Wood from 1984 to 1990.

Rinker, a leader in the local agricultural industry, has served as president of Winchester Equipment Co. 1990.

\* The Middle School Food and Fiber High Individual Award was named after Ruth M. Boden, who taught agriculture and served as an FFA adviser at Aylor Middle School from 1990-1993.

Boden, residential manager of the valley region of MidAtlantic Farm Credit, volunteers to help with FFA, the

Frederick County Fair, and other local organizations.

\* The State Veterinary Science High Individual Award was named after the Animal Medical Center of Frederick County.

Drs. Brian Cather and Bruce E. Welch, who opened the clinic in 1998, were recognized for their contributions to educating students who want to study veterinary science. They graduated from James Wood in the 1980s and were active in the FFA program.

Frederick County has one of the highest agricultural education enrollments in the state, with more than 1,000 high school students, about 1,400 middle school students, and more than 500 FFA members in seven schools.

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