

# Stamford Regional FFA News

Fall/Winter 2011-2012



2011-2012 Officer Team (Not all pictured)

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*This is your president saying, HAVE FUN!*

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## Welcome, from your Chapter President

Welcome!

I just want to say to everyone that we are off to a great start for the year! I have met with the freshman classes and can already tell that we are going to have shining stars this year. Being in the Agriscience program is all about having fun, and taking advantage of the wonderful opportunities that will cross your way. We offer everything from Doggie Daycare to plant propagation. All in all being in the program is a wonderful opportunity! So FFA members and families this is your president saying, HAVE FUN!

*Ashley Northcutt, Stamford Regional FFA Chapter President*

## Message from the Freshman & Junior Student Advisors

As another school year begins, we find ourselves feeling all different sorts of things. There's the excitement to see friends that we haven't seen in awhile, and the sadness over the ending of a perfectly unproductive summer. Let's not forget the horror of having to wake up before sunrise for the next nine months without saying "5 more minutes please!" Adding the nervousness of joining a huge school with tons of new, often scary-looking people and I daresay we have a perfect description of what it feels like for the newest additions to Westhill High. Welcome aboard Freshmen! Welcome to what will be your home away from home for the next four years, a place with crazy people and crazier traditions. But more importantly, welcome to Ag! Within a massive community of over 2,000 students, we 86 Aggies are like a little family, brought together by our interests in cute dogs, fluffy cats, wicked fish, or unique plants and we are all thrilled to have you guys join us. More the merrier!

The year has gotten off to a bit of a rough start, but after seeing how successful the chapter meetings, scrapbook and Doggie Daycare have been and how quickly everyone handed in their dues, it's easy to say this year is going to be filled with nothing but awesomeness. Remember, attending scrapbook meetings and Doggie Daycare are easy ways to get those 50 hours for your Ag 1 SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience) requirements. And speaking of dues, congratulations! You guys were the first class to hand in all your dues. Suffice to say, we are impressed. Now, a good two months into the year, everyone should be settled in for the road ahead. This road will take you down a path filled with fun events and some of the greatest memories which you will never forget! We have some great events coming up, starting with our annual Thanksgiving feast! We're ecstatic to have you guys and wish you an awesome year at Westhill.

*By Astha Patni, Stamford Regional FFA Chapter Junior Student Advisor & Sonia Sahota, Stamford Regional FFA Chapter Freshman Student Advisor*



Michael Hopkins grooming, his own dog, Maddie

*"...be on the lookout for our annual Dog Wash in the spring!"*

## Doggie Daycare

Doggie Daycare is a student-run program in the Stamford Regional Agriscience & Technology Program. Ms. Jeffries teaches dog grooming, behavior and training.

We see dogs of all sizes, from a ten pound Yorkshire Terrier to a 115 pound Newfoundland. Students are able to groom, train, exercise and socialize the dogs. There is never a time that the students aren't busy working with the dogs.

Students and teachers dogs come for the daycare, it's not just for the people outside of the program; it's for anyone. My dog, Oscar, a dachshund, loves it here, he never wants to leave. He has made so many friends since my freshman year, especially this year when another dachshund, Dalia, came to daycare. She follows him everywhere, it's so cute.

Mr. Albinder's dog, Rowdy never wants to leave when he comes to pick him up. It is almost like Rowdy says, "Dad, can I stay with my friends?" Casey, a shy, nervous dog, has come out of her shell since last year. You see so much of a difference in her; it is like she's a whole new dog.

Doggie Daycare is on Tuesdays until 3:30. But at this time we are completely out of kennel space for any new incoming dogs. But we do accept dogs occasionally for grooming. Also, be on the lookout for our annual Dog Wash in the spring!

**By Hunter Farrell, Stamford FFA Chapter Reporter & Doggie Daycare Lab Manager**

For any questions you can contact Ms. Jeffries at [djeffries@ci.stamford.ct.us](mailto:djeffries@ci.stamford.ct.us) or Hunter Farrell at [farrell.hunter@hotmail.com](mailto:farrell.hunter@hotmail.com)



Melissa Betancur and Lydia St. Jacques playing with Bella

*"...Won scrapbook two years in a row..."*

## Scrapbook

The Stamford regional scrapbook is very important to our FFA program. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to get the scrapbook to become the finest display of work yet. We thoroughly enjoy working on the scrapbook. At our meetings we not only work on the scrapbook, but we try to keep as organized as possible by weekly planning and preparation. We layout and number our pages to keep an orderly scrapbook throughout the year.

The Stamford regional FFA team has won first place for our scrapbook two years in a row at the CT FFA State Convention. We hope our talents will continue to demonstrate the top notch quality we are capable of producing. We can accomplish anything if we set our minds to it. Our goal is to work collaboratively as a team on the scrapbook and make it absolutely amazing, so that we can place FIRST once again. I know it is going to take a lot of time and commitment but the students who attend the meetings are very talented and creative which we will use to our advantage. The scrapbook is a great way to meet new people and learn to work together.

Scrapbook meets on Tuesday's afterschool until 3:00. Check with Caitlin Santasiero, Ashley Northcutt or Hunter Farrell for any cancellations, re-scheduling, or extra scrapbook meetings.

**By Caitlin Santasiero, Stamford FFA Chapter Historian**



*Our 1<sup>st</sup> place scrapbook at State Convention in May 2011; In the picture from left to right: Caitlin Santasiero, Jasmine Padilla, and Ashley Northcutt*



## Guiding Eyes for the Blind

Guiding Eyes is an internationally accredited, nonprofit guide dog school which provides seeing-eye dogs to those in need. If it weren't for volunteers and donation support, guiding eyes would not be possible. The Stamford Agriscience Program has recently become a part of this program! Ms. Jeffries has become a volunteer and helps raise many of the dogs in the Southwest Connecticut region. These lucky dogs get to come to school every day and work with our freshman and sophomore classes. Students gain knowledge in dog behavior and learn how to train the guide dogs through positive reinforcement.

Guiding Eyes is in need of NEWSPAPERS, especially large ones. If you have any newspapers you would like to donate, please email Ms. Jeffries or drop them off at the Agriscience building.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, raising a puppy, or participating in any other areas of Guiding Eyes you can visit their website, [GuidingEyes.org](http://GuidingEyes.org), or contact Ms. Jeffries who can get you in touch with the local region which meets weekly in Westport. This is also a great way for students to earn SAE hours!!!

*By Ms. Jeffries, Agriscience 1 and 2 Teacher*



Jack, Ms Jeffries' dog, playing with one of the Seeing Eye dogs, Sandy

## Why didn't we go to Durham Fair?

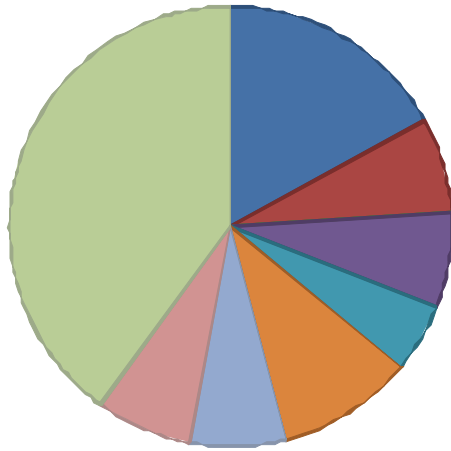
It was a sad day for most students of the Stamford Regional Agriscience and Technology program. The day before our annual field trip to the Durham Agricultural Fair we were informed by our teachers it had to be cancelled. The trip is paid for by a grant that the program has received in the past.

However, this year the terms of the grant were changed and this prevented us from using it to pay for the trip until the money physically arrived. The program director, Dr. Lisy, said he tried every possible way to pay for the trip, but it just wasn't in our cards this year. The good news is we now have the grant money and are able to go on our other field trips that take place in the spring.

*By Tom Addison, Stamford FFA Chapter Treasurer*

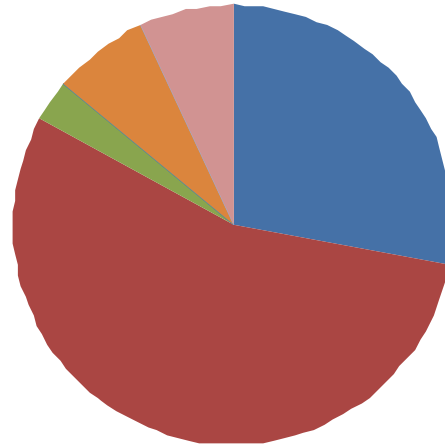


### What are you most looking forward to?



- Doggy Daycare
- Dog Wash
- Spring Plant Sale
- Winter Shop
- Grooming
- Food Science
- Field Trips
- Learning about different animals
- All of the above

### What school would you be at, if you weren't in the program



- Westhill High
- Stamford High
- AITE
- Trinity Catholic High
- Brien McMahan
- Norwalk High
- Greenwich High
- Other

Earlier this year we conducted a survey for the freshman. The two charts shown above show the results. As you can see that many freshman are looking forward to everything that is in store for them. Many of the freshman that go into the program are out of district from Stamford High School but chose to apply to Agriscience to go to Westhill High School.

## STAFF

The Stamford Regional Agriscience and Technology Program is revitalizing **STAFF**, which stands for the **ST**amford **A**lumni **F**riends and **F**amily. Even though it has the word "alumni" in it, it is somewhat of a misnomer because it is not only for alumni, but parents, community members, and anyone else who wishes to support the Regional Agriscience Program at Westhill High School. You do not have to have a student in the program to be a member of STAFF. Anyone can join.

The purpose if STAFF is a support group for students in the Stamford Regional Agriscience and Technology Program. Ideally, STAFF members would help provide scholarships for seniors, help at after-school functions, help during school hours (when needed), help at events like the end of the year banquet, holiday shop, spring plant sale, dog wash, etc. In addition, STAFF members could help at the State Convention, National Convention, and District speaking contest judging. We know that everyone is busy so we do not want you to think that joining is like signing up for the army, but you could help out whenever or wherever you can. What STAFF is NOT is an advisory or curriculum committee (we have professionals who help with that). STAFF would help the agriscience program offer the best possible experiences and opportunities to our students.

Two years ago we had STAFF up and running again. Unfortunately, some important people in the organization have moved on and we are once again in need of some help. We would like to breathe new life into this important ag program component, but need some fresh faces willing to take on this task. Ideally, three or four parents who are willing to get the ball rolling are all that is needed. The former STAFF president has agreed to come back and help us achieve this goal. Please email or call Dr. Lisy for more information or to volunteer.



*By Dr. Lisy, Agriscience Program Coordinator*

## HOLIDAY SHOP IS IN THE AIR!

Well, guess what time of year it is? Well, hopefully you guessed, our annual Holiday Shop!

We will be selling Poinsettias in all different colors from 4" to 8", starting at \$3.75. Zygo cactus (Christmas Cactus), frosty fern and cyclamen, that start at \$2.00. Now, isn't that a bargain, if I don't say so myself.

Other than selling those items, we are selling wreaths and holiday centerpieces. You can also order a specific wreath or centerpiece with the request of way you want it to look like and what you would like on the wreath and the centerpiece.

So, wouldn't you want some of our plants, wreaths, and centerpieces, that all of our hard work is put into to make this Holiday Shop actually happen and run very smoothly? Well, come to the Agriscience Building located on Westhill High School campus on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> from 8am-1pm and buy some.

Don't be afraid to come, everyone is very nice, and we are here to help you with your selections and maybe even advice on other things.

Other than being open on the first two Saturdays of December, we are also open for business during the week from December 5<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:30am-1:30pm. So if you can't make it on the weekend, and can make during the week, come on down. But call first to check for staff availability

All of the proceeds from the Holiday Shop help provide scholarships for our Agriscience seniors. So come and support us for the seniors!

Each student in the Agriscience is required to attend at least half of 1 of the Saturday sessions. But, they can certainly attend more! This is also a way to get SAE hours, and a very easy way too.

Also, check News 12 for any weather related cancellations. It will also be posted on our facebook page(s) by our President, Ashley Northcutt. (See last page with all of the contact info)

See attached flyer

*By Hunter Farrell, Stamford Regional FFA Chapter Reporter*



Alex Smith & Tom Addison tending to some of our poinsettias in our greenhouse.



Astha Patni working on making a plain old wreath get into the holiday spirit.



Some centerpieces that were showcased for sale at last year's Holiday Shop



Back

The Stamford Agriscience Program is selling blue sweatshirts this year to students, parents, alumni and the public. If you are interested in purchasing one for \$20 please see Dr. Lisy. There are only certain sizes left get yours soon! They make wonderful holiday gifts. :)



Front

## Agriscience Students Excel on CAPT

		MATH		SCIENCE		READING		WRITING		Average		Difference
		AGRIC.	OTHER	AGRIC.	OTHER	AGRIC.	OTHER	AGRIC.	OTHER	Ag	Other	
<b>WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>243</b>	238	<b>261</b>	240	<b>252</b>	238	<b>260</b>	254	<b>338.67</b>	323.33	15.33
	<b>2010</b>	<b>258</b>	238	<b>260</b>	243	<b>240</b>	231	<b>249</b>	247	<b>335.67</b>	319.67	16.00
	<b>2011</b>	233	238	<b>253</b>	246	<b>247</b>	234	<b>266</b>	255	<b>333.00</b>	324.33	8.67
		<b>244.67</b>	238.00	<b>258.00</b>	243.00	<b>246.33</b>	234.33	<b>258.33</b>	252.00	<b>335.78</b>	322.44	<b>13.33</b>

Stamford Agriculture Students raw score average is higher than the rest of Westhill student body CAPT score average by 13.33 points.

### Upcoming Events

- Doggie Daycare/Scrapbook** Every Tuesday's afterschool
- Chapter Meetings** Nov 17, Dec 22, Jan 5, Feb 16
- Holiday Shop** Saturday: Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>  
8am-1pm  
Weekdays: 5<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>  
8:30am-1:30pm

### Contact Info

- Dr. Lisy: [lisology@hotmail.com](mailto:lisology@hotmail.com)
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- Mrs. Ritchie: [dritchie@ci.stamford.ct.us](mailto:dritchie@ci.stamford.ct.us)
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