

Lexington FFA Banquet 2023 honors members

BY CASSIE BAKER, REPORTER

This year's FFA Banquet was held on April 16, 2023. This banquet is held yearly to honor people who are just beginning their journey in FFA to those who have earned the highest honor in FFA. Furthermore, we celebrate the retiring officer team and install the 2023-2024 officer team.

The highlight of this year was Beth Clark becoming the first woman from our chapter to receive the American Degree. This degree is the highest honor in the FFA organization.

Cayden Baker and Will Pearce both received State Degrees. Hannah Botkin, Cori Pearce, Preston

Wiltz, and Chase Price all received the Chapter Degree. Joe Cheever, Ellie Doll, Blaine Friedmansky, Meredith Grunloh, Cassie Baker, Avery Poppe, Jillian Reimer, and Reese Seeman all received the Greenhand Degree. Mandy Hacker and Weston Botkin received the Discovery Degree.

All seniors, Cameron Baker, Michael Grunloh, Klayton Botkin, Will

Pearce, Payton Atkins, Hannah Hopkins, and Tyler Atkins, were individually recognized and each received an award. Michael Grunloh, Klayton Botkin, Will Pearce, Payton Wiltz, Tyler Atkins, Beth Clark, and Jordan Reimer all re-

ceived scholarships.

Lastly, your FFA Lexington Chapter Officers for 2023-2024 are Cayden Baker – President, Preston Wiltz – Vice President, Chase Price – Secretary, Hannah Botkin – Treasurer, Cassie Baker – Reporter,

and Cori Pearce and Jillian Reimer – Sentinel.

Congratulations to all those that celebrated accomplishments this year. Lexington FFA looks forward to the start of another busy and exciting year in FFA!



Beth Clark, a sophomore at Illinois State University, receives the FFA American Degree, the highest honor in the FFA organization.



Seniors, from left: Tyler Atkins, Michael Grunloh, Klayton Botkin, Hannah Hopkins, Payton Wiltz, Cameron Baker, and Will Pearce.



FFA 2023-2024 officers, from left: Jillian Reimer and Cori Pearce, sentinels; Chase Price, secretary; Cayden Baker, president; Preston Wiltz, vice president; Hannah Botkin, treasurer; and Cassie Baker, reporter.

Lexington High School Senior Awards 2023

IPA Student Recognition.....	Cameron Baker, Ella DuBois
Minutemen Excellence.....	Isabelle Bennett, Reagan Haase
Minutemen All-Around Student	Alec Thomas, Wil Pearce
Minutemen Activities Award	Kaden Farrell, Cameron Baker, Matthew Muir
Minutemen Perseverance Award.....	Josie Hardt, Alyna Therien
Minutemen School Service Award.....	Payton Wiltz
	Tyler Atkins, Samantha Shives
Minutemen School Pride Award.....	Gray McCue
Minutemen Student Council Leadership Award.....	Addison Meints, President, Isabelle Bennett, Vice President
Minutemen Scholastic Letterman.....	Reagan Haase, Owen Wright
Beryl Kauth Minutemen Spirit Award	Addison Meints
HOIC Academic All Conference	Tyler Atkins, Cameron Baker, Isabelle Bennett, Zach Bork, Ella DuBois, Reagan, Haase, Josie Hardt, Nadia Henson, Sawyer Hilt, Addison Meints, Matthew Muir, Wil Pearce, Samantha Shives, Alec Thomas, Candace Watson, Owen Wright
HOIC CTE Scholarship Winner.....	Payton Wiltz
HOIC Male Athlete Scholarship Winner	Alec Thomas
Illinois State Scholars	Isabelle Bennett, Reagan Haase, Wil Pearce, Owen Wright
BACC Technical Honor Society.....	Klayton Botkin, Sawyer Hilt, Alexis McArdle, Samantha Shives, Alec Thomas
DAR Nominee	Ella DuBois
SAR Nominee.....	Zach Bork
Lexington Agriculture Advisory Scholarship	Tyler Atkins, Payton Wiltz, Wil Pearce, Klayton Botkin, Michael Grunloh
Lexington Booster Club Award.....	Alec Thomas
Lexington Fireman Scholarship.....	Ella DuBois, Alec Thomas, Zach Bork
American Legion Citizenship Award.....	Addison Meints, Payton Wiltz
Elmo Hill American Legion Scholarship.....	Addison Meints, Ella DuBois
Kiwanis	Ella DuBois, Reagan Haase, Alexis McArdle
Ruth and Don Cavallini Scholarship.....	Nadia Henson
Rick "Doc" Stephy Lexington Community Scholarship	Payton Wiltz
Lexington Chamber of Commerce.....	Tyler Atkins, Connor Feit, Klayton Botkin, Samantha Shives
LEA (Lexington Education Association) Scholarship	Alyna Therien
L.E.A.F. Scholarship	Isabelle Bennett
T.M. and Helen Patton Scholarship	Reagan Haase

'My Dad, FFA Advisor'

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It's not often that many people can say that their dad is the FFA advisor. However, this year at Lexington, one of our seniors is lucky enough to call the FFA advisor, Dad. Now you make think that this could get awkward, but that has never been an issue. I asked Payton Wiltz what has been his favorite moment with his FFA Advisor as his dad and he said, "Spending time with my dad and learning about the organization together over the last 5 years. It has been a great experience for both of us."

Happy to share those experiences with his son, I asked Brian Wiltz what it was like to have a son who this year was a senior who has served in the FFA organization for so long.

His response was, "Being an Ag teacher/FFA Advisor is an extremely busy schedule. There are lots of extra hours and duties, but being able to do these activities with Payton and now Preston has made it a family affair. It would have been impossible to be away from the family so much with activities, but sharing these activi-

ties has made it incredibly special. Even more so, going to events for the first time for both of us is quite unique. Hopefully, making sure our program and these events are good experiences for my own kids and all the FFA members in our chapter will be the legacy I eventually leave."

As you can see, there is no sign of awkwardness between the two, but their relationship has grown over the years. Having your dad as your FFA advisor is not only fun but one that creates memories that last through the years.



Brian Wiltz, FFA Advisor, with his wife Mandy and their children. From left: Brian, Micah, Preston, Payton, Macy, and Mandy.