



A young man from Anna York's third-grade classroom at Jefferson Attendance Center held a three-week-old duckling.

Horses and ducks focus of AITC

By Ryan Smith
AG LITERACY COORDINATOR

February and March have been exciting months for White County Ag in the Classroom. Students were able to learn about horses and ducks, their uses on the farm and the process of domesticating the animals.

During February, I spoke with the White County second- through fifth-graders on the many uses and breeds of the horse. From agile and strong Quarter Horses to tiny Miniature Horses, we compared and contrasted the many purposes to each breed. Two favorite breeds, both in the classroom and among Native Americans, were the American Paint Horse and the Appaloosa. After learning about the different painted symbols of the Native American War Horses, students were able to paint their own horse using markings we learned.

Students in White County had

some very special visitors for Ag in the Classroom in March. I visited Lincoln Jefferson and Washington school in Carmi, along with NCOE and Booth schools to teach students about ducks. In addition to learning about the Kaki Campbell breed, students were able to learn about the Rouen and how it is used for decoration, the peculiar Indian Runner and the common Pekin. Unbeknown to most students, more ducks are hatched in a hatchery than raised by a hen. Students were able to hold the ducks and examine the duckling's feed. After playing with the ducklings, students and I discussed the many predators in the area to domestic poultry, and how to best protect domestic birds from predators.

I would like to thank the members who donated to Ag in the Classroom through their 2016 membership dues. Your support allows us to bring more ag lessons to our students.

YL Pistol Shoot to be July 16

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 6th Annual Young Leader Pistol Shoot. The event is scheduled for Saturday, July 16, at the Carmi Rifle Club. The steel target shoot will include five stations, with one person winning a Browning Buck Mark pistol. Competition will begin at 9 a.m. and will include lunch. After lunch, test your aim with a Marksmanship competition. Sponsorship opportunities are available. With a \$100

sponsorship, you will receive a sponsor sign at the event, your company's logo on our website, registration for one shooter, and recognition during event promotion. Contact the White County Farm Bureau at 618-382-8512 if you would like to be a sponsor.

More information on the YL Pistol Shoot can be found at whitecfb.com.

Teachers: Take part in SAI

This summer, White County AITC will be partnering with Wayne, Wabash, Lawrence and Edward counties for the 2016 Summer Ag Institute. This year we will be touring urban agriculture in Chicago from June 13-16.

The cost of the tour is \$200, which includes most meals, transportation and lodging.

Teachers will be able to earn 20 Professional Development Credit Hours. Space is limited and will fill up. Do not wait to register!

If you have any questions, please call Ryan Smith at 618-302-3944.

Southeastern Illinois Summer Ag Institute



Keep good irrigation records!

Beginning in 2015, farmers who own a high-capacity water well were required to maintain records of their water usage, and report them to the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS). A high-capacity well is one that is rated at 100,000 gallons per day or more (or 70 gallons per minute). Most irrigation wells in the area can pump between 500 gallons and 1,250 gallons per minute; well over the threshold. The requirement applies to both surface and sub-surface water pumps.

As part of the law, agricultural irriga-

tors can "aggregate" their data through a unit of local government. The law also allows for the use of an estimation method such as inches per acre, or gallons per minute, to calculate the daily usage. By aggregating, farmers can achieve limited usage anonymity. The water survey likely already knows the location and owner of your well, when it was drilled and who drilled it.

Some farmers may be inclined not to report their data. According to the Illinois Farm Bureau, if the ISWS sees this happening, they will likely

ask the state legislature to put some "teeth" in the law to compel farmers to report. Farm Bureau advises farmers against pushing ISWS to the point of encouraging a new penalty for non-compliance.

After the 2016 harvest, the White County Farm Bureau will host a meeting where farmers can aggregate their usage with other irrigators in their reporting zone.

Record-keeping forms are available at www.sws.uiuc.edu/gws/iwip/irrigation.

Stay alert for planting

This time of year poses a high risk of injury for farmers as fatigue, stress and pressure build as they spend as much time as they can in the fields. Not only are hours long and the workload heavy, but farmers also have to deal with equipment breakdowns and weather-related issues. Staying safe during planting is challenging. Contact with machinery presents the biggest risk for both injuries and fatalities, but there are ways to avoid them and stay sharp.

- ▶ Eat balanced meals.
 - ▶ Set realistic work priorities.
 - ▶ Consider hiring help for the busy weeks of planting; don't try to do it all yourself.
 - ▶ Stay well-hydrated to maintain awareness.
 - ▶ Get a good night's sleep.
 - ▶ Be as rested as you can be; if necessary, shut down for a few minutes and take a nap. Even a 20-minute break with a short nap can really help improve alertness.
 - ▶ Take a short walk; it's unhealthy to sit for long periods of time.
 - ▶ Always have your cellphone on your person; see it as a safety feature.
- Remember to share the roads safely with vehicles as well as farm equipment.

Pistol raffle to raise funds for AITC

The White County Farm Bureau is selling raffle tickets to raise funds for the White County Ag in the Classroom program. This year's raffle features a Ruger LC9s pistol. The 9mm pistol features a 3.12-inch blued barrel with a glass-filled nylon frame, adjustable 3-dot sights, and a crimson trace laser. The MSPR is \$599.

Raffle tickets are \$5 each, and are available at the White County Farm Bureau office. The winner will be drawn during the Member Appreciation Lunch in August.

The winner must be over the age of 21, and have a valid FOID Card. A 72-hour waiting period will be enforced.

This AITC Gun Raffle is sponsored in part by Six Shooters in Carmi.

Stay legal on road

In case you missed our "On the Road with Kevin Rund" program in March, we've posted an update to IFB's Selection of Motor Vehicle Rules & Regulations on our website.

The downloadable PDF includes contact information for relevant agencies, updates on Farm Vehicle Driver and Covered Farm Vehicle exemptions, information on whether you are exempt from the CDL and medical card, as well how to calculate what class of license you need to have.

Go to www.whitecfb.com and click on "Motor Vehicle Rules for Farmers."

Is your tractor safe?

The farming occupation is inherently dangerous. Frequent contact with tractors, machinery, tools, animals and extreme working conditions place farmers under substantial risk of injury. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 750 farm workers are accidentally killed each year. More than half of these fatalities are tractor related.

Many tractor-related injuries can be attributed to unsafe tractors: those tractors that are old and poorly maintained, lack safety guards and devices, and steer, brake and drive in an unpredictable, dangerous manner. Farm tractor drivers should avoid this unnecessary hazard by inspecting their tractors regularly for potential dangers.

Every tractor operator is responsible for ensuring that the tractor does not present an unnecessary hazard to him/her, other farm workers or innocent bystanders. Don't wait until it's too late before you take tractor safety seriously.

This was an excerpt from an article written by David W. Smith, Extension Safety Program, for National Ag Safety Awareness Week.

TRACTOR SAFETY CHECKLIST

- Roll-over Protection Structure.** Is the tractor equipped with a ROPS in good condition?
- Guards/shields.** Are guards and shields including the master Power Take-Off (PTO) shield in place and securely fastened?
- Seat safety switch.** Is the seat safety switch connected and functional to prevent the tractor from being "jump started" from the ground?
- Brake system.** Are the brakes properly adjusted and the fluid level correct?
- Tire pressure.** Is the air pressure in each tire appropriate according to the tire manufacturer's recommendations?
- Lights/signals.** Are all headlights, flashers and brake lights working correctly, clean and visible to other drivers?

- Hydraulic system.** Are all hydraulic hoses and connections free from leaks and hydraulic levels correct? Caution: Use a piece of cardboard or wood to check for leaks. Hydraulic fluid under high pressure can penetrate human skin.
- Steering system.** Does the tractor steer and react properly when negotiating turns and traveling at highway speeds? Is the steering fluid level correct?
- Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblem.** Does the tractor have a clean SMV emblem located at the rear of the tractor that is visible by other drivers?
- Cleanliness.** Are the steps and cab area free from mud, dirt, ice, oil, or any other combustible object or fluid?