

By Joe Craig/Taylor McCormick

Students

On Nov. 11, 2009, 16 of the 29 members of the Perkins County FCCLA Chapter departed from the high school at 6:30 a.m. and arrived at Mid Plains Community College in North Platte.

Here, the 2009 FCCLA District 13 Leadership Conference was held. All six of the districts chapters attended, including Perkins County, Chase County, Dundy County, Medicine Valley, Creek Valley, and Wallace.

The morning was busy with getting everyone checked in, getting all the posters and creed-speaking contestants organized, and going through the opening ceremonies. The two activities held that morning were the poster contest and the creed-speaking contest.

Each chapter could make posters that had something to do with this year's motto, "Fight the Good Fight with FCCLA." The first, second and third places are awarded based on

how well the poster incorporated the motto and its overall appearance.

The FCCLA organization has its own creed that it follows, for this contest any member could present the creed in front of judges.

There was a junior division, which consisted of ninth graders, and a senior division, which consisted of 10th through 12th graders.

All contestants needed to recite the creed and the senior division also needed to give an interpretation of the creed. The contestants were judged on poise, appearance, clarity, eye contact, memorization, and enthusiasm.

Once the contests ended, everyone met in the theater for the opening ceremony. Perkins County was assigned to the flag ceremony. Tori Osler sang the National Anthem and then led the district in the Pledge of Allegiance. Following the flag ceremony, District officer Shelby Breazeale read the results for the District Service Project. Every year each district chooses a project to work on together. This year District 13 chose Hugs for Heroes, a 100 percent volunteer-run non-profit organization. Founded in July 2004, Hugs for Heroes has shipped nearly seven tons of goods to our soldiers in Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine units located in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As a district it sent \$172 total and Perkins County donated the most with \$60 of that amount.

The highlight of the morning was Maile Boeder, the executive director of the leadership center in Aurora, who came to speak to the FCCLA Chapters.

Maile is an inspirational speaker and has been speaking to many different groups for over 15 years delivering inspirational messages to people of all ages. Claiming she can talk for days, she had to squeeze her speech into a 45-minute time frame.

The three topics she talked about were purpose, character and integrity, and action. "If you know what your purpose is and if you believe in character, integrity, and action then anyone can be a successful person," said Maile.

After lunch all six chapters met back in the theater where State Officer Chris Allen from Maxwell discussed the sessions that were set up for us to attend. There were six different sessions to choose from each lasting 30 minutes.

There was a break dancing session where a lady taught the group some of the basic moves of break dance.

There were three state officer sessions where a few of the state officers talked about the different types of projects that you can do in FCCLA as well as ways to get you to think outside of the box.

Another session taught the groups how to make a quilted tortilla warmer. With this unique craft idea each person sewed two-quilted fabric pieces together to make a pouch that keeps your tortillas warm while they are setting out on the table.

For the last session, Milt and Jan Bemis from David City came to speak about organ donations.

They shared their touching story about how they lost their little boy in a drowning accident 25 years ago. They decided to donate his organs and his liver went to a one-year-old Lisa who had tumors on her liver that acted like cancer. It was the first successful organ transplant in Nebraska.

So far the 2009-2010 year has been a successful one for the Perkins County FCCLA Chapter, according to Taylor McCormick, public relations for the chapter.