



NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION  
October 22-25, 2008

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## NEWS RELEASE

### FFA Emblem: Now in 3-D

By Sarah Jackson

Welding isn't typically an art form, but Turtle Lake (Wis.) FFA members Monica Lutz and Josh Thornwall have taken it to new heights. When Lutz took a welding class, her advisor, Don Dipprey, recognized her talents with the plasma cutter on small projects, so he suggested a bigger challenge—creating a life-size version of the FFA emblem out of steel.

“I had tried welding, and it was really fun,” Lutz said. Dipprey said he could tell from Lutz’ skills that she had a flair for larger artistic projects.

“She’s a pretty outstanding student,” Dipprey said. “From the project’s conception, it was done with the idea of donating it to the National FFA Alumni. I thought it would be a good project for her.”

Lutz started the project by taking a photo of the FFA emblem and projecting it onto sheet metal. After tracing the design on the sheet metal with a permanent marker, she cut out each individual piece of the emblem with a plasma cutter. Then, to finish the project, all of the pieces had to be arc welded back onto the emblem.

“I’m not a patient person, and it was pretty tedious work. You have to be really steady,” Lutz said. She did all the plasma cutting and some of the welding by herself.

“She had to make it 3-D,” Dipprey said.

While Lutz started the project, she was unable to finish it by the end of the semester, so fellow Turtle Lake FFA member Thornwall helped weld some parts together. After the emblem was finished, Dipprey donated it to the annual FFA Alumni silent auction at the 2007 National FFA Convention, creating a flurry of excitement.

“Everyone talked about it,” Lutz said. Dr. Troy Justesen, assistant secretary for vocational and adult education at the U.S. Department of Education, purchased the emblem and donated it to the National FFA Center.

“I was really excited that it was put in the National FFA Center,” Lutz said. “I’m thinking about being an ag teacher, and I think it would be awesome to go to the national convention and show my students something I made [that is displayed] at the National FFA Center. It was neat to accomplish something that will be recognized and that tons of people can see.”

Dipprey said they had no idea where the emblem would end up after it was sold. “We’re excited that it’s in Indianapolis. When we finally got word that it was being displayed at the National FFA Center, it was really an exciting time. It’s a real highlight that we could help contribute something to the National FFA Center besides our brick in the lobby,” he said.

Lutz will graduate from high school in May 2009. When she’s not in the welding shop, her SAE is raising dairy calves on her family’s 100-cow Holstein dairy farm.

The National FFA Organization, formerly known as the Future Farmers of America, is a national youth organization of 507,763 student members – all preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture – as part of 7,439 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The National FFA

Organization changed to its present name in 1988, in recognition of the growth and diversity of agriculture and agricultural education. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Visit [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org) for more information.

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