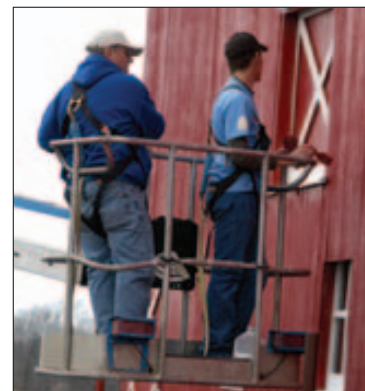


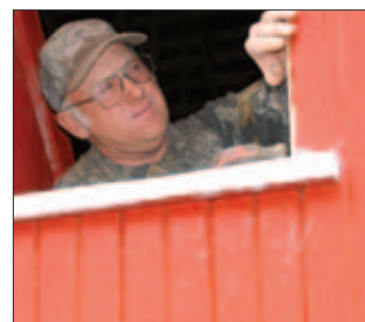
NewsWatch



SPRUCING UP: FFA members painted fences leading up to the Cotterill barn as well as the structure. Pictured are (clockwise from left) Brittany Wheatly, Cheyenne Trout, Shanna Hare, Amber White, Andrea Hucke, Shannon Blaes and Dalton Fosnight.



WINDY PERCH: National FFA Alumni President Sam Atherton (left) and Cherryvale FFA Vice President Clint Diver braved strong winds in the lift to paint trim on the Cotterill barn.



NEW WINDOW: FFA alumni Wayne Blaes framed a new window for the Cotterill barn.

‘Soup My Barn’

By P.J. GRIEKSPoor

GARY Cotterill's old barn has a new lease on life.

On March 6, 7 and 8, Fredonia and Cherryvale FFA members were joined by FFA alumni and community volunteers as they painted the barn and installed new windows and doors.

The effort, Barn Reviving 2009, is a national program sponsored by Campbell Soup Co. and the National FFA Alumni organization to revitalize five barns across the U.S. each year. The Cotterill barn, located on a cattle, sheep and horse ranch northwest of Cherryvale in southeast Kansas, is the second of this inaugural year's projects.

An Illinois barn was updated last month, and plans call for a project in Tennessee in April and barn upgrades in Oregon and New York in May. Campbell's has pledged \$250,000 to FFA for educational and sustainability efforts, in-

Key Points

- Kansas barn is second of five in U.S. chosen for 2009 revitalization projects.
- FFA looks for locations where chapters and alumni support is strong.
- Contest rules require that the barns chosen be on working farms.

cluding the barn preservation work.

Lucy Whitehead, program manager for the National FFA Alumni, was on hand for the Cotterill event. So was National FFA Alumni President Sam Atherton.

They were joined by more than two dozen FFA students and FFA area alumni, including folks such as Wayne and Mike Blaes, who are neighbors and friends of the Cotterills.

Whitehead says she contacted alumni groups across the country for nominations for the Barn Reviving program.

"We have especially strong FFA chap-

ters and alumni support in southeast Kansas," she says. "I submitted nominations and photos to Campbell Soup, and they made the final decision."

Whitehead says the "Soup My Barn" contest rules require that a barn be on a working farm, be used in farm operations and be structurally sound.

Valspar donated 25 5-gallon buckets of "Campbell Soup Red" paint for the Cotterill project. Campbell's covered the costs of other materials, food for the working crews and a Washington Leadership Conference scholarship worth \$550 for each participating FFA chapter.

Cotterill holds a day job as vice chairman and senior agronomic officer at Community National Bank in Fredonia.

"We've been extraordinarily blessed to have the opportunity to manage this property," Cotterill says. "Being chosen for this project is a great honor."



GOOD FRIENDS: Gary Cotterill thanked Cherryvale FFA President Erin King. King is planning a career in ag education and hopes to teach in southeast Kansas.



THE CREW: These FFA members and alumni volunteered to paint the Cotterill barn red and trim it in white as part of "Soup My Barn," an effort sponsored by Campbell Soup Co. and the National FFA Alumni organization.



FINAL RESULT: Local FFA volunteers gave Gary Cotterill's 80- to 100-year-old barn a new coat of paint and installed new windows and doors.