

How Do I Preserve My FFA Memorabilia?

A Basic Archival Preservation Guide for the Tennessee FFA

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As a Tennessee FFA member, state officer or even national officer, a person often accumulates a wide variety of materials that document his or her time in the FFA organization. This document serves as a basic guide for helping to preserve and conserve these resources in an archival safe way to help ensure the longevity and historical memory of the resources.

Making an Archival "Friendly" Scrapbook

Often times many people want to consolidate their documents, photographs and news clippings into a scrapbook. If you choose to make a scrapbook of your items, it is important to follow some basic conservation procedures to best preserve the resources for the future.

- Use archival acid-free sleeves for storing documents and photographs. These sleeves can be clear so you can still see the photo or document. Usually these sleeves will already come with holes on the edge to easily place them in a binder or notebook.
- Do not use tape or glue to adhere your items to a page. Over time, the adhesive deteriorates the documents or photos by yellowing the items on the edges. Instead of using adhesive, you can purchase archival pages that are static cling where you can place several items on the same page. The static cling pages usually have holes on the edge that can be placed in a notebook.
- Remove all metal items from your documents such as staples, paper clips and brads because these items eventually deteriorate and rust onto the documents over time. After the metal pieces have been removed from the documents, plastic paper clips or special non-rusting archival paper clips that are supplied by archival supply companies can be used to hold the items together.
- News clippings often fade and deteriorate very rapidly. In order to preserve them, they need to be photocopied on acid-free paper. The photocopies of the news clippings would then be placed in clear archival sleeves with holes on the edge in the notebook.
- If you choose to create an archival safe scrapbook, it is important to place this item in an acid-free flat size box. You will need to measure the dimensions of the notebook, so you obtain the right width and height to house it.

Storing Archival Items

Tennessee FFA members also may have a collection that they would like to store in boxes. If you wish to create a storage space for your collection, it is important to follow some basic conservation steps.

- Documents need to be stored in archival acid-free boxes and folders to help protect and preserve the documents for a longer period of time.
- Remove all metal items from your documents such as staples, paper clips and brads because these items eventually deteriorate and rust onto the documents over time. After the metal pieces have been removed from the documents, plastic paper clips or special non-rusting archival paper clips that are supplied by archival supply companies can be used to hold the items together.
- Photographs need to be placed in archival acid-free sleeves. Ideally, each photograph should be placed in an individual sleeve because the chemical properties of the images may leak on one another over time.
- Oversize and panorama photographs should lay flat, be placed in oversize archival folders, and be put in acid-free flat size boxes. By having the photos lay flat it ensures less wear and tear than if the panorama photos were rolled up. In addition, it allows users to quickly see the oversize images without having to unroll the photos to see the content.
- Artifacts are stored in acid-free archival boxes and wrapped with acid-free tissue paper. By wrapping the items in archival tissue paper, it helps protect them from breaking or receiving damage when they are moved from one place to another.

Proper Archival Storage Environment

In addition to having archival safe materials to house the resources, it is important to have a proper storage environment.

- One of the best ways to maintain records for a long time is to have them in a stable physical environment. The optimum conditions for archival paper records are between 55-65 degrees Fahrenheit and between 30-40% relative humidity.
- Archival materials should not be exposed to ultraviolet rays of light for an extended amount of time because it will cause the documents to deteriorate more quickly and fade more easily.
- It is important to keep your storage area clean to prevent pests such as rodents and insects infesting the collection area. To avoid the introduction of insects and rodents, archival collections should not be located near staff lounges, kitchens, or trash receptacles. In addition, food and drinks should not be allowed near the collection. If new archival materials are introduced to the collection, it is important to inspect them to make sure that you are not introducing bugs to your collection.

Archival Supply Companies

To help protect and preserve your resources for a longer period of time, it is important to purchase proper archival materials for housing your resources. Several companies specialize in providing conservation resources for archival and museum collections.

Hollinger Corporation

P.O. Box 8360

Fredericksburg, VA 22404

Phone: 1-800-634-0491

Web Address: www.hollingercorp.com

E-mail Address: hollingercorp@earthlink.net

University Archival Products

P. O. Box 101 South Canal Street

Holyoke, Massachusetts 01041

Phone: 1-800-628-1912

E-mail Address: info@universityproducts.com

Gaylord Brothers, Inc.

P.O. Box 4901

Syracuse, NY 13221-4901

Phone: 1-800-448-6160

Web Address: www.gaylord.com