

Stauffers Are Conservationists—And Much Else

By Mrs. Charles G. McSparran
Farm Feature Writer

Conservation is a familiar byword at the Aaron Z. Stauffer home on Stevens Road, Ephrata RD1.

Not only is Mr. Stauffer chairman of the Lancaster County Soil and Water Conservation District, a post he has held for two years, but he was elected president of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District Directors, Inc., at their annual meeting in Pittsburgh October 12, 13 and 14, 1971. He succeeded Clifford Tinklepaugh of Susquehanna County.

At the same time Mrs. Elva J. Stauffer, by virtue of her husband being elected state president, was elected state president of the Ladies Auxiliary. The Ladies Auxiliary of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District Directors, Inc., is only five years old, although the national auxiliary is older.

There are four state council and auxiliary meetings a year and Mrs. Stauffer's first meeting to preside over will be January 7 and 8, 1972. It will be held at the Agricultural Building across from the Farm Show Building, Harrisburg.

She and Mr. Stauffer will represent Pennsylvania at the National Association Conservation District meeting in Washington, D. C., February 13-17, 1972. The National Association of District Directors has representatives from all 50 states.

The ladies auxiliary does not have representatives from all the states because some states do not have auxiliaries, although it is the goal of the national organization to have an auxiliary in each state. They will also attend the Northeast Area Conference in August.

The state in made up of 455 District Directors, seven each from 65 counties. They have contests in FFA Conservation, Public Speaking and Land Judging each year.

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company gives awards to an outstanding farmer cooperator in each state. Each county district selects an outstanding cooperator, then the winner of the state and a district director can go to the Goodyear Company ranch in Arizona. Elmer Good, Amos Funk and Henry Hackman from Lancaster County have received this award in past years.

They sponsor a plowing contest each year which is held at



Mrs. Stauffer is at home in her kitchen where she enjoys baking in quantity for her family and friends.

Agricultural Progress Field Days at Pennsylvania State University's Rock Springs Agricultural Research Center. Also a Conservation Queen is selected at this time.

Committees functioning at the annual state session in October are: district operations, legislative, recreation and wildlife, water resources, resolutions, public relations, education and youth programs, forestry and annual conference committee. Mr. Stauffer was on the awards committee at the October meeting in Pittsburgh.

Mrs. Stauffer's duties as president of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District Directors, Inc., besides presiding at the quarterly meetings and representing the state at national meetings, are to hand out soil conservation materials at the Agricultural Progress Field Days, try to get schools to take children out to farms to see soil conservation at work, try to get different types of soil conservation books in school libraries, assist the District Directors with their work and help to get auxiliaries organized in the counties.

The county Soil and Water Conservation District is governed by a board of eight directors who are appointed by the County Board of Commissioners from a list of nominees submitted by county-wide organizations. It is composed of four farmers, two urban residents and one County Commissioner.

At the present time others serving as Lancaster County directors with Stauffer are Henry H. Hackman, executive assistant, hired on a part-time basis this year and working closely with Stauffer, Amos H. Funk, vice chairman, William Rohrer, treasurer; Mrs. Nancy J. Burkhardt, secretary; J. Everett Kreider, Kenneth C. Depoe; Robert K. Mowrer and Abram D. Dombach, commissioner member.

There are 1,530 farmer cooperators in Lancaster County.

The District and the following conservation team act to encourage the application of natural resource conservation: Lancaster County Agricultural Extension Association, Lancaster County Planning Commission, Lancaster County Agricultural Stabilization & Conservation Committee, Lancaster County Health Department, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pennsylvania Fish Commission, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture—Soil and Water Conservation Commission, U. S. Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Farmers Home Administration and some Ag teachers and FFA boys sometimes sit in on their meetings to observe their planning for conservation.

The District meets the first Wednesday of each month. There are also local water shed meetings held to get local farmers signed up as cooperators.

Bear in mind that appointed farmer and urban directors serve without pay and only limited funds are provided for their travel expense.

Lancaster County District Directors are vitally concerned about zoning. This has become a necessity, Stauffer explained, because of fertile agricultural land falling prey to building developments and industrial sites and also because of pollution of underground streams. Also in some cases the state is taking farm land for recreation areas.

At the present time there are four townships and two boroughs that do not have planning commissions in the county and there are two townships and two boroughs that have planning commissions, but are not working on a comprehensive plan. The rest of the townships and boroughs are zoning their areas with the help of consultants.

Lancaster County Soil and Water Conservation District took

24 boys from the city of Lancaster on a bus tour of county farms last summer. They were picked up at the Farm and Home Center and the Lancaster County Soil and Water District Directors kept them in different homes overnight. This was done to acquaint city boys with what is being done in the way of conservation. Stauffers entertained two boys.

The history of the Lancaster County Soil Conservation District goes back to October 19, 1938 when 15 of the southern townships organized February 24, 1950 the Lancaster County Soil Conservation District was organized on a county-wide basis.

In looking over replanting of trees to improve air quality and runoff, county farms which are contoured, highway banks which are planted to prevent erosion, farm ponds, recreation areas which include boating and fishing facilities, wildlife preserves, as well as picnic areas, we see that great strides have been made and yet much remains to be done in the field of soil and water conservation.

Along with new housing developments comes the problems of securing adequate pure water supplies. Also steps must be taken to prevent pollution of our streams.

Lancaster County has had Soil and Water 4-H Clubs for about six years. They had one in the northern part and one in the southern part of the county, although there was none the past year in the northern end. Vincent Hoover was club leader for the southern club. Club members make projects to show how to take care of the land. The County Soil and Water District holds picnics for them.

Mr. Stauffer and John Herr, Annville, Lebanon County, invented a bottom silo unloader four years ago. A local company made it first. Now Flying Dutchman, Inc., of Smithville, Ohio, of which Mr. Stauffer is vice president, sells it. It is patented and is known as "Flying Dutchman Bottom Silo Unloader." Mr. Herr sold out his half to the company.

constructed silos. Quite a few are sold locally but more are sold in the midwest where it is manufactured. Some are sold in Canada and England.

The Stauffer Farm

Stauffers own and operate a 68 acre farm near Ephrata. They have been on this farm 24 years and Aaron is the third generation to own it. The whole farm, except three acres of tobacco, is in corn. They have two silos. They also farm 20 acres of corn on the halves with another farmer on a nearby farm. They buy their straw.

They raise 170,000 broilers a year. Until seven years ago, they had a 23 head dairy herd and kept 500 to 600 laying hens which they raised from chicks. They built a 400 foot long broiler house and a smaller one.

They now start 34,000 broiler chicks five times a year and keep them eight or nine weeks. They are raised on contract. The first 10 days they must be tended to by hand, but after that the feed and water is automated.

They have 24 gas brooders in two houses. Each accommodates 1,100 chicks.

They also finish 80 head of steers a year. Some buyers come to their farm to buy the steers, but most of them are sold at New Holland and Vintage.

The Children

Stauffers have three children. Ronald is 19. He took the Ag course at Ephrata High School and graduated in 1970. He was in the 4-H Soil and Water Conservation Club four years. He

won an FFA Conservation Foundation Award and a state conservation tour over the eastern part of the state.

Ronald was in the Lancaster County 4-H Baby Beef Club six years. He always had an Angus steer. He won with one steer at Lancaster and placed fourth in Harrisburg. He does most of the farming at home this year, since Aaron is away so much. He is a real sports fan, enjoys all kinds of sports and knows all the athletes.

Clark is 18. He also took the ag course at Ephrata High School and graduated in 1971. He won a trip to Kansas City on a FFA meat judging team. He was on a parliamentary procedure team. He was in the Cloister Chapter FFA and received County Red Rose degree in 1969. He won Keystone FFA degree in 1970. He won at Ephrata FFA local chapter public speaking contest and placed third in the county. He was in the 4-H Soil and Water Conservation Club and won a trip over the western part of the state. He also won a tractor driving contest at County Soil and Water Conservation plowing contest a couple of times.

Clark has a Hereford steer in the 4-H Baby Beef Club and has



Aaron Stauffer
Conservationist, Farmer

had a Hereford each year. He won a showmanship award on his steer at Lancaster in December 1970 and placed second at Harrisburg. He works full time for Stauffers of Kissel Hill at landscaping. He likes it, but also wants to be a farmer. He helps some on the farm in the evenings, especially in the field in the summer.

Shirley is 13 and in eighth grade at Ephrata Junior High School. She takes part in school athletics. She has an Angus steer and has been in the 4-H Baby Beef Club two years. She was also in the 4-H Sewing Club two years, but likes anything outdoors better than sewing or housework. She likes to bake.

Other Activities

Stauffers are members of Hinkletown Mennonite Church where Mr. Stauffer teaches the men's Sunday School class. Mrs. Stauffer belongs to the sewing circle. They make quilts and layettes and send soaps and blankets to mission stations.

The quilts go to the Morgantown Relief Sale. Mrs. Stauffer helps to sell coffee at the Relief Sale. The whole circle of 20 or 30 ladies goes to the Mennonite Central Committee at Ephrata once or twice a year to do quilting.

Mr. Stauffer is a member of the Pennsylvania Farmers Association. Once a month about eight or ten families get together for a council meeting where they discuss local issues and legislation. There are a few such groups across the state, three of which are in Lancaster County.

Aaron is a member of the Ephrata Chamber of Commerce which meets once a month. He is serving on the Agriculture Committee.

He is chairman of the Farm

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Mrs. Aaron Z. Stauffer, president of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District Directors, Inc., gavel in hand, looks over some of the conservation literature.