

DER CHIEF

(Continued From Page 1)
voted to add \$6000 to the Conservation District's budget to hire a conservation technician.

That technician will be Abner Houseknecht, who has been with the Soil Conservation Service for some 39 years. Houseknecht will retire from his post as conservation technician at the end of March, and will begin working for the District on April 1. Another technician will be hired to replace Houseknecht on the SCS staff, which means the county will have two technicians instead of one.

Orval Bass, who is in charge of the local SCS office, said Houseknecht will be working on farm planning and conservation applications. "That means the SCS staff will be able to devote more attention to some of the urban problems we've been running into," Bass said. "Lancaster County is probably unique in the state, because we have tremendous conservation problems in both agricultural and urban areas."

Bass said his office is trying to set up some method of dealing with the tremendous demand that could develop for conservation planning on county farms. "We're holding meetings with farmers in every school district in the county, and we're inviting the vo-ag teachers to participate," Bass said. "Hopefully, the teachers will be able to help the farmers with some of the conservation plans."

Vo-ag teachers were also mentioned by Secretary Goddard as possibly being able to help farmers develop conservation plans.

In response to a question from a farmer in the Dairy Conference audience, Goddard said he did not foresee the day when farmers would be required to keep all their cattle out of streams. He did say that manure runoff would have to be controlled, though, if farmers were to comply with clean streams regulations.

"I don't want to leave anybody with the impression that DER is out to get farmers," Goddard commented. "We're not. Last year, in fact, our department prosecuted only two farmers for clean streams violations, both in Westmoreland County."

Goddard commented also on the clean and green concept which would allow farmland to be taxed according to its use, rather than according to its market value as a potential development property. "I'm not overly enthusiastic about the concept," he said. "Simply lowering taxes for a

time will not do the job. We need another way to protect farmland and open space.

"I'd like to see governments buying development rights to properties. By that I mean paying the farmer not to develop his property. Say, for example, he has a farm worth \$200,000 - as a farm - and his property has a development value of \$250,000. The government pays that farmer \$50,000 for his development rights and puts a permanent lien against that property. The farmer can still sell for \$200,000, and he would get a total of \$250,000. But he couldn't sell it for development. The nice thing about this system is that we can preserve open space without having the government buy land outright. All the land would still be privately owned, but it just couldn't be developed. By buying development rights, we're preserving private property and at the same time preserving open space."

Development rights in Lancaster County are very often worth more than the land. "What happens," Goddard was asked, "when you have a piece of land that's worth \$50,000 for farming, but development rights are worth \$200,000? That's what we have in Lancaster County. How do you preserve open space here?"

The secretary thought about the problem for a minute and replied, "Maybe it's too late for Lancaster County."

State Grange Names Youth Award Winners

Young people from Mercer, Lawrence, Berks and Chester counties have been named the 1974 Youth Representative Award winners of the Pennsylvania State Grange.

Selected on the basis of merit, leadership potential and membership building accomplishments, they will represent Pennsylvania in National Grange competition, according to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth L.

Schlegel of Fleetwood, chairmen of the State Grange youth committee. First place winners were: 14-17 years, George Rodgers, Slippery Rock, RD3, Lawrence county, and Debbie Heath, Grove City, RD1, Mercer county; 18-25 years, Jeffrey Holmes, Clarks Mills, Mercer county, and Jane Hill, Kutztown, RD3, Berks county; 26-29 years, Robert Steese, Grove

City, RD1, and Betsy Huber, West Chester, Chester county.

Mark Courtney, Mercer RD6, and Darlene Gruber, Greenville RD5, Mercer county.

Runners-up were: 14-17 years, James Jacobson, Lowellville, RD2, (Ohio) Lawrence county, and Cindy Decker, Volant RD2, Mercer county; 18-25 years,

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Conservation District Plans To Inventory Recreation Facilities

A comprehensive inventory of the profit and non-profit private outdoor recreational facilities is being conducted by the Lancaster County Conservation District for the Lancaster County area according to Aaron Z. Stauffer, Chairman of the District Board of Directors. The inventory will be an integral part of the nationwide effort of more than 3000 local conservation districts to inventory these facilities during January and February.

The inventory will reveal the types of outdoor recreational facilities presently in existence in the county as well as the extent of development. All information will be of an impersonal statistical nature and can be supplied without additional research by the owner or manager. Accurate current inventory data is the basis for planning future recreational areas and facilities within the county and throughout the state and nation.

Public demand for outdoor recreational opportunities is at an unprecedented level. Private facilities will have to supply an increasingly large share of the nation's outdoor recreational needs to meet this demand.

The local conservation district office is located at Farm & Home Center, Rm. 4, 1383 Arcadia Rd., Lancaster, and can be contacted by phone at 299-5361 should more information on the inventory be desired.

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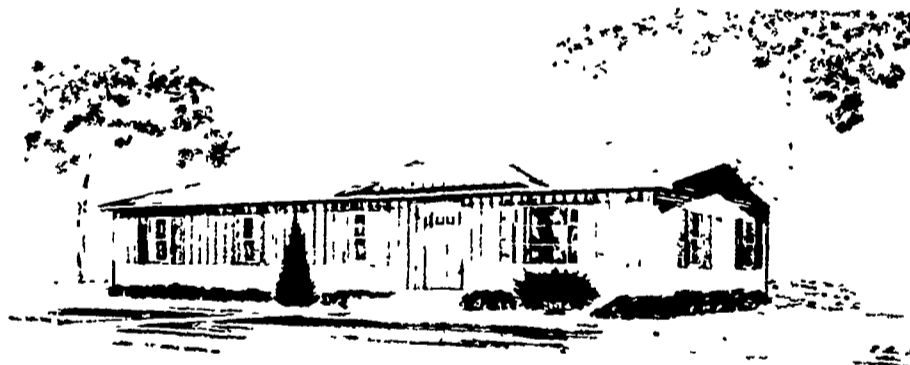
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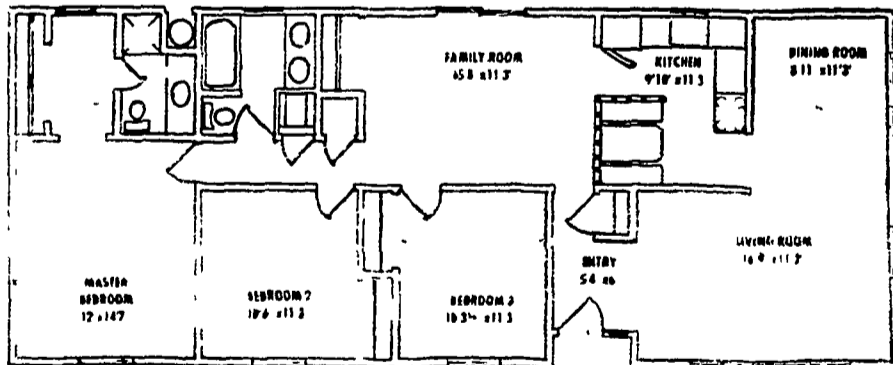
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