

Hinkletown

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three-R approach to education, which complicates the lives of those who find they later have to leave the farm.

"As these children quit school at 15, they go to work on the family farm or in the family home. Although some will remain on the farm, increasing numbers are forced to eventually leave the farm and become employed in other occupations. The farms are already of such a size that they cannot be subdivided among the children, and the number of farms in the area is decreasing so that additional farms cannot be purchased.

"As a result, these students are entering the labor market without any training or special skills, and those who do remain on the farm are forced to work in an increasingly competitive occupation without the benefit of suitable education."

Herr discussed the school's genesis and objectives one day this week in the office of Robert Simon, who is the school superintendent for the Garden Spot District. Simon, Herr said, has been instrumental in developing the kindergarten

through adult vocational agriculture program at Garden Spot, and has been keenly interested in plans for the alternative school.

"To our knowledge," Simon said, "this will be the first school of its kind in the state. Harrisburg is very much interested in our approach, because the school will be stressing educational basics, vocational training at an early age, and because we're trying to relate to the needs of our community."

Is this a terminal program, designed only to make an employable person out of a 15-year-old farm youth? "No, indeed," Herr said. "These kids are going to be getting a full academic workload. We're not substituting vocational training for academic work, we're integrating the two. The students here will be just as capable of going on to ninth grade and high school as students from other eighth grades. They might even be better suited, because we're stressing the basics."

Simon added that one of the school's main objectives was to broaden the horizons of the young people attending, so that they would have at least some exposure to a variety of work areas if

they did have to leave their home farms to find employment. The eight vocational areas in the program include: agriculture, horticulture, carpentry and cabinet-making, power mechanics, nursing assistant, power sewing, homemaking, and food trades and services.

"We chose these areas," Simon said, "because they're the ones with the greatest need for workers here in eastern Lancaster County and the rest of the county as well."

Herr added, "We want to create an interest in, and a good attitude toward available jobs. Local industries have already expressed a lot of interest in the program, and many of them have offered to send their people in to instruct some of the classes. Power sewing, for example. We'll probably have a training supervisor from one of the garment factories in here to teach the kids all about that subject."

Traditionally, conservative farmers have been very reluctant to try innovative programs such as the alternative school, but Herr said there's a waiting list for the first year. Offers of tuition students from other school districts have been turned down. And, Herr said, although the program was designed with children from conservative families in mind, any applicant would be considered.

The state department of education has paid for most of the equipment to be used in the school, and has also agreed to fund part of the instructional program. The building itself, presently known as the Hinkletown Elementary School is a brick structure built in 1962. Simon pointed out that the elementary school was due to be phased out of operation anyway, because of declining enrollment.

Over the summer, the building will be converted into an alternative school facility. Included in the renovation plans are classrooms for sixth, seventh and eighth grades, a multi-purpose room for power sewing, practical nursing and special areas, a library, and classrooms for agriculture and power mechanics, cabinetmaking and carpentry, and homemaking and food trades and services.

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Robinson is a past president of PennAg Industries Association. He is President of the Kreamer

Feed Store, Inc.

Robinson replaces Orville E. Hauck, owner of Hauck Feed & Supply at Kutztown, Penn., a feed and grain dealership.

William H. Sprenkle of Spangler and Sprenkle, Inc., York, Penn., was re-elected Chairman and Donald W. Parke, PennAg Executive Vice President, was re-elected Secretary of the Trust.

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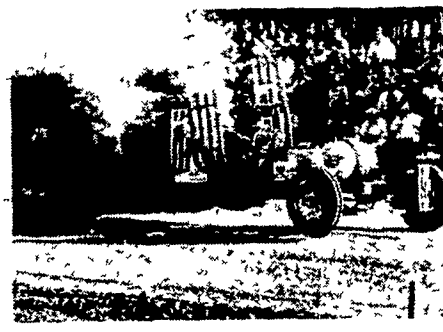
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INDIANA



Wayne Patchett had some fiery problems with his "Black Beauty" rail, but the flames were quickly extinguished by track crews and the Banter Bros. [Photo by ABAC]

KENTUCKY



Joe Tichenor, Fairfield, Ky. piloted his "Under Rat" rail down the track as over 10,000 people watched the pull on Mar. 1, 2, 3. NTPA photo.

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