

Pa. Ag. Dept. Develops Rural Housing Program

Unemployment and the decline in housing construction will be the targets of a Rural Housing Rehabilitation program to be launched by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, it was announced last week by Secretary Jim McHale.

The department, with an award of \$375,000 in federal funds, will begin to recruit workers to renovate and rebuild rural houses in certain target areas in Mifflin, Juniata and Snyder Counties Feb. 15.

McHale said he has contacted county commissioners and other local officials in the three counties to attend a meeting on the pilot project Jan. 14 at 3:30 p.m. at the Green Gables

Hotel, Lewistown.

"For many years the lack of job opportunities and the consequent outmigration from Pennsylvania's farming communities have left rural housing in a state of decay. The current recession is nothing new to many rural communities," said McHale. "There's a larger percentage of substandard houses in rural areas than in the cities and, at least, we have now received some seed money to start turning the situation around."

The project, McHale explained, will begin with surveys, interviews and cost estimates in various rural target areas in the three counties. The project is designed to employ the elderly, the handicapped

who can perform some task, and youth from low-income families.

"We want to employ older people who have skills in carpentry, masonry and so forth and have them work with and train younger people," said McHale. "Hopefully, these young people will develop skills to enter the private construction job market."

McHale said farm houses and homes in isolated rural communities will receive top priority in the reconstruction program. A second priority will be delapidated homes in communities of 5,000 to 10,000 people.

McHale noted that as the pilot project moves ahead, an effort would be made to secure additional funding from HUD, the Farmers Home Administration and other agencies.

The one-year \$375,000 grant for the pilot project derives from an allocation by the U.S. Department of Labor Manpower Administration under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973.

Besides funding, the secretary said the department would seek donations of building materials from local communities and private businesses who might be able to claim the donations as tax writeoffs.

The meeting at Lewistown is to inform local officials of the scope of the program and to enlist their aid in pinpointing rural homes in greatest need of rehabilitation.



John Phillips

Phillips Joins Bank

John Phillips has joined The First National Bank of Strasburg as a Trust Officer. His responsibilities will include personal trust accounts and corporate accounts.

Prior to joining the Strasburg Bank, Phillips was employed by New Holland Farmers National Bank as head of their Trust Department. A graduate of Lebanon Valley College, he has over ten years experience in the Trust area.

Phillips is a member of the American Institute of Banking and the Lancaster County Estate Planning Council. Active in civic affairs he is the 1974-75 President of the New Holland Lions Club and served as a commissioner of the Boy Scouts of America.

Phillips and his wife Mary reside in Leola.

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Similarly, animal acceptability of treated, low-moisture timothy silage, stored in small metal experimental silos, was measured using 42 mature ewes. Results indicate that applications of organic preservatives (1 percent to 1.5 percent of wet forage weight) to hay compares favorably with heat drying, both chemically and in terms of animal performance.

Results from the low-moisture silage test indicate that an organic preservative may have some feeding advantage over non-treated silage in that animals fed treated silage ate more, refused less, and gained more weight than ewes fed non-treated silage.

Grange News

Nearly thirty Grangers went Christmas caroling with the Fulton Grange 66 on December 23rd. In a brief business meeting, Master Donald Trimble appointed a committee to send a telegram to President Ford asking him to sign a bill raising the support price of milk.

A meeting was held on January 13th with State Trooper Edward Rowland speaking on safety. The Junior Grange met on January 11th.

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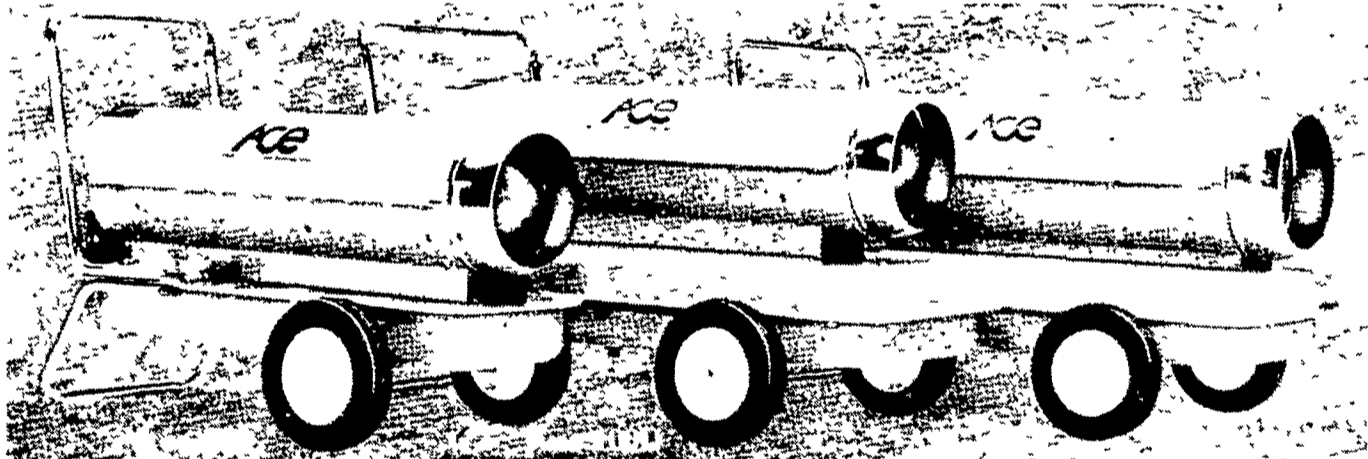
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