

Ag Progress - something for everyone

By JOANNE SPAHR
ROCK SPRINGS, Pa. - There was a little something for every farmer - male, female, tall, or small - at Ag Progress Days this week.

While the majority of the men could be found sauntering through the machinery displays, moseying through the hay and silage shows, or ardently sizing up the plowing contestants, the most popular draw for the women appeared to be the family living demonstrations and the theater tent.

Just as the men watched the machinery of the future in action, the women viewed the futuristic microwave oven bake up candy and a scrambled egg in the wink of an eye.

In that tent, solar energy units were also on display, including one with a windmill to generate electricity. A variety of wood burning stoves, one model featuring experimental sawdust burning, were also out for spectators to view. New energy-saving appliances were demonstrated twice daily.

And, in a nearby theater tent, the games of the future turned out to be the games of the past, as spectators became wrapped up (literally) in string and wooden games for the family. Jerry H. Reyburn, associate professor ag extension 4-H, along with his children, showed spectators how to play entertaining folk games of the past, illustrating the fact that the simple string and handmade wooden games can be more fun than the elaborate plastic manufactured playthings of today.

"These are energy crunch games," Reyburn told his audience. "In the future we will have to return to doing things the way they were done several years ago."

That same tent, later in the day, was transformed into a theatre for the arts when one handy craftsman demonstrated chain saw sculpturing. Amidst buzzing and flying sawdust, the ear protected artist shaped the form of a woman before the eyes of spectators.

For the person whose spice of life isn't art, but houseplants, Penn State specialists gave pointers from their latest home horticulture experiments.

Other events going on in the theater tent during the three-day event were tractor rollover safety, a USDA multi-media show, a demonstration on energy today and tomorrow, and a lecture on the effect of the new vehicle code on farmers.

And, while there were no animal events taking place at this field machinery dominated show, there was a livestock tent to cover that part of farming.

American La Mancha doe kids were probably the most unusual aspect of that tent. American La Manchas look like other goats, except for one thing - they don't have the long, hanging type ear normally associated with goats. As unnatural as the ears appeared, a sign on the pen read, "The ears are natural."

Other live animal displays in the tent were Chianina and Simmental cattle, live examples of the different yield grade types, and Penn State crossbred animals.

Sheep shearing, ultrasonics, and spinning and weaving were also demonstrated in the tent.

And, as could be expected, farm youth were also represented at Ag Progress. The 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and the Future Homemakers of America joined forces in one tent to show Ag Progress visitors what their organizations were all about. Extra added events put on

by the youth included programs on rocketry, dog care and training, square dancing, bicycling, arts, and crafts, and horticulture.

And, for the wee folks who hope to grow into big farmers, but couldn't quite stay interested in the big farmers' exhibits, there was storytelling, flannelgraph,

finger plays, ghost stories, and puppet shows.

Something for everyone, in other words.



Square dancing was an added extra of the youth tent at Ag Progress Days this week.

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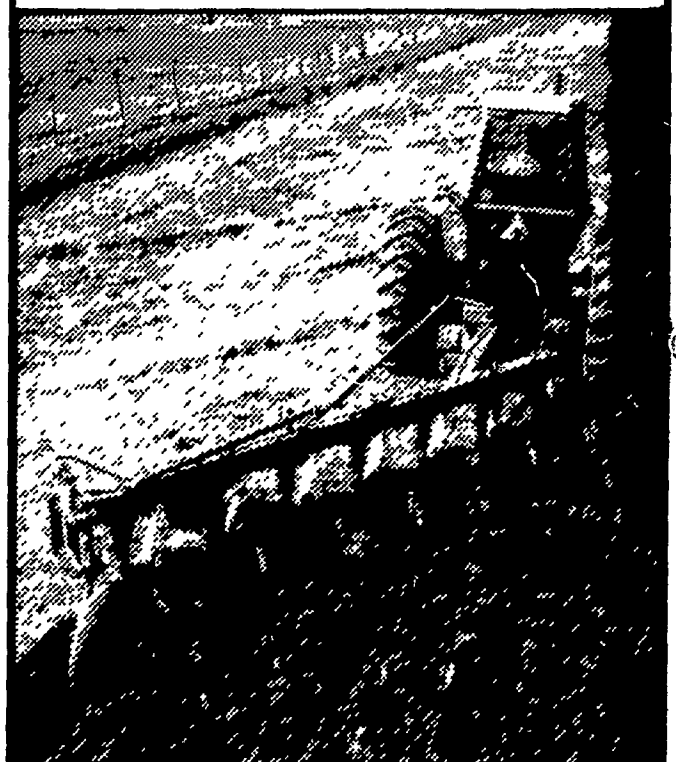
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