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Capacity crowd hears land preservation story

BY DICK WANNER

LANCASTER — Next to corn growing, farmland preservation is the hottest topic of conversation among farmers in southcentral Pennsylvania, according to Marion Deppen, an observer at Thursday's night's farmland preservation

meeting sponsored by the Lancaster Farm and Home Foundation.

Deppen is the assistant director for the Penn State Extension capital region, an eight-county area that includes Lancaster County. Interest certainly was evident at the meeting. Virtually all

of the 200 chairs set up in the Farm and Home Center auditorium were filled, with dozens of people standing in the back of the room.

Sprinkled through the audience, composed mainly of farmers, were township supervisors, planning commission members, at least one county commissioner and a state representative.

They had all come to hear about ways to save farmland, and they had come to ask questions of those who would devise and implement the means to do so. Through all of the comments and the questions that followed, there ran a current of concern about the property rights of individual landowners.

Amos Funk, a Millersville farmer, outlined a deed restriction program that would preserve farmland without damaging the property rights of farmers who sell their land. His proposal, which he hammered out with fellow conservationists, is now being worked on in the

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Chickies Cr. given thumbs-up

BY SHEILA MILLER

MANHEIM — It was almost unanimous, at least for the people attending the Thursday evening meeting on the Chickies Creek Watershed Project.

Those folks who attended the discussion of possible alternatives for the flooding problem, and that cared to voice their opinions, were in favor of the "non-structural" flood protection as explained by the Soil Conservation Service experts.

The meeting was scheduled by SCS and the sponsors of the watershed project to inform the public of the results of a two year study that the federal government recently completed. It looked into the possible solutions to the Manheim flooding problem.

The SCS technicians investigated sixteen alternatives to see if they were feasible. These included

flood control dams, concrete channels, a combination of the two, and what was termed non-structural flood controls.

One of the SCS staff members explained to nearly 130 people who attended the meeting that non-structural simply means that a dam or channel would not be constructed.

Instead, homes and buildings would be either anchored or reinforced to withstand flood conditions, raised to higher elevations, moved out of the floodplain, or floodproofed with dikes, walls, or architecturally.

Out of the sixteen alternatives studied, only two had a cost-benefit ratio that would qualify under the Public Law 566 program for protecting watersheds. These two were the non-structural solutions.

The SCS experts looked at the homes and businesses in

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Naaman W. Stoltzfus, R1 Kinzers, led Lancaster County in butterfat production. His Dimon-Acres Holsteins turned out 736 pounds fat. See related story on page 36.

Red Rose DHIA honors top milking herds

BY CURT HARLER

SMOKETOWN — Naaman W. Stoltzfus, R 1 Kinzers; and Tritown Farm, R 1 Leola, were honored Tuesday as the top producing DHIA herds in Lancaster County.

Stoltzfus led the Dairy Herd Improvement Association's butterfat production list with a 734 pound average for his 47 cow herd.

Tritown Farm was top in milk production with a 20,153 pound output from its 48 registered Holsteins.

The herds were among several honored at the Red

Rose Dairy Herd Improvement Association's Annual Meeting.

The highest producing Guernsey herd in Lancaster County last year belongs to K.D. and Else Linde, R 1 Oxford. Their 65 registered milkers produced 14,126 pounds milk and 658 fat.

Top Ayrshire herd in the county is owned by Harold G. Shelly, R 2 Manheim. His 18 registered cows made 14,331 milk and 569 fat.

The first place Brown Swiss herd also was at R 2 Manheim. Richard G. Wenger's 69 milkers

averaged 13,566 pounds milk and 564 pounds butterfat.

Top Jersey milking herd belongs to William P. Arrowsmith, R 1 Peach Bottom. His cows produced 11,786 pounds milk and 552 fat. It is a mixed grade and registered herd of 75 animals.

Dr. Paul S. Schantz, R 1 Ephrata, had the top mixed herd. His 31 assorted cows produced 14,423 pounds milk and 522 pounds fat.

The county milk production average for all cows was 14,963 pounds milk and 557 pounds butterfat.

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Colerain farmer displays his land use concerns

BY DEBRA STRICKLER

KIRKWOOD — Joseph T. Ferguson, a Kirkwood area dairy farmer, has made his opinion of farmland preservation quite public.

To anyone driving south along the Kirkwood Pike, Route 472, the sign "Don't Develop Farmland" is obvious along the barren stretch of road.

If the driver happens to take a glance in his rear view mirror, he may notice the words "Farmland Destruction in Progress." An arrow points across the road towards a mound of freshly dug dirt, soon to be replaced with a new home's basement.

Two weeks ago, Joseph Ferguson placed these signs on his father's farm

property. According to Ferguson, "I want to let

people know where I stand, and get people thinking."

Pyle Realty's April purchase of a neighboring 65

acre tract of farmland instigated Ferguson's concern.

Hervey Ferguson, a retiring farmer who is no relationship to Joseph, had no family members interested in the farm operation. He decided to sell his land. Pyle Realty, of Quarryville, was the highest bidder and thus the purchaser.

The thought of a housing development next to Joseph Ferguson's operation really hit home.

"Academically, this means there will likely be more developing in this area," he noted.

Ferguson appreciates the fact Amish families were able to purchase other farms

in the area and thus keep them from developers.

"Presently they seem to be at a stand still with finances," he commented.

He said he can not foresee farmers affording additional land at the present market price.

"Joseph Ferguson is entitled to his opinion," commented Ted Pyle of Pyle Realty.

"Even though a farmer can't afford land, he will not restrict the land, and take a lesser price," noted Pyle.

Farmers work all their lives to own their land and increase the property's value. Naturally as retirement approaches, they

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This sign was recently erected along Route 472, south of Quarryville. For Joseph Ferguson, the sign is a visual means to informing others of his concerns.