

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says... Farmers needed to make Expo fly

As the tractors and pickups from the South and Midwest roll into Washington D.C. farmers in Pennsylvania will be setting their sights on Harrisburg. But the purposes for the trips will be quite different.

Farmers motoring to the Capital City this coming Thursday, Friday and Saturday will be headed for the Second Farm Machinery Exposition.

Despite efforts by promoters to the contrary, it is inevitable that the Expo be viewed as a Farm Show in miniature.

There will be livestock at the Expo for the first time this year. A major all-breed swine show will be held during the Expo, Friday. And a big sale is set for Saturday, at 11 a.m.

Goats, noticeably absent from Farm Show in light of their increasing popularity among both back-to-the-soil types and commercial farmers, will be present this year at Expo.

Horses, a popular feature in 1979, will return with a draft horse and mule show on Thursday morning. Those animals will sell on Thursday afternoon. In between times there will be a tack sale.

If traditional horsepower isn't good enough for you, check out the Pennsylvania Stock Farm Tractor Pull Championship on Saturday.

Contestants won't be running the super-stock or modified hogs which grab most of the spotlight at other shows. All pullers will run stock machinery—tractors that may have been hitched to the spreader at home before hooking up to the weight sled at the contest. It's tractor pulling the way most farmers can understand it.

An unfortunate loss to most farmers at the Expo will be the absence of a Farmers' Fun Night.

Any of those who watched or joined the fun at the Fun Night last year are sure to feel the same way about its passing as most older folks do about the loss of carousels in parks.

It was a barrel of laughs for a minimum of expense.

In its place will be the Pennsylvania Young Farmer Volleyball tournament. Action gets underway just after the preliminary rounds of tractor pulling—so grab a seat in the

Large Arena sometime between 12:30 and 1 p.m.

The game to watch, depending on the draw and match-ups, should be the contest between the Ephrata Area Young Farmers and Solanco. Ephrata last year took the championship at the summer picnic. Solanco, we're told, is hot for a shot at the group from up-county which put them back as runners-up.

With all of the spectacles on tap for the visitor the question of excitement is answered. But how about the business end?

Serious questions have been raised about the ability of a state like Pennsylvania to support three major agricultural shows.

Farm Show certainly is the grand old patriarch of the clan and shows no sign of decline.

Ag Progress Days, with live demonstrations of both equipment and crop growing, has to be the favorite of those who are interested in no-frills farm displays.

But the Expo still has a way to go. Most major farm equipment manufacturers are not showing at

the Expo. They say they figure it is too close in the year to Farm Show and too similar in format. They'd rather stick with a proven winner.

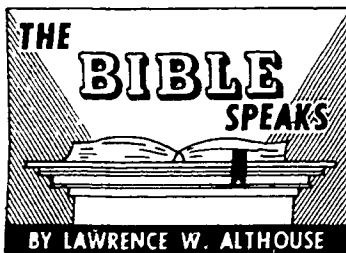
While Farm Show rightly is limited to farm-related firms, the Expo has a hodge-podge of exhibits, some with only marginal relationship to farming.

The answer to the question of support, in the end, will be given by farmers. It's one case where they can ballot with their feet... by coming to Expo if they feel it worthwhile, by forgetting it if they feel it redundant.

While last year's crowd was small it was interested in buying, most dealers said.

If there is to be a 1981 Expo farmers will have to support this year's Expo at least as well as they did 1979's.

Exhibitors will show up only where farmers want them to be. And if a February-March show is what the farm community wants, farmers should be in Harrisburg February 28, 29 and March 1 for the second Expo. If it's worth having, it's worth supporting.



BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

THE MAN BORN BLIND

Lesson for February 24, 1980

Background Scriptures: John 9.

Devotional Reading: Isaiah 35:5-10.

The story of "The Man Born Blind" is one that could

just as easily be taken from the pages of your newspaper as the Gospel According to John. People have not changed all that much since the day when Jesus healed that man.

It is a very dramatic and significant story. John regards it as more than just another healing, rather as a "sign" that points to beyond the restoration of a man's sight to a vital truth about Jesus Christ: "I am the light of the world" (9:5).

Who Sinned?

What a glaring contrast between this sublime pronouncement and the revealing, self-incriminating questions people pose to him.

The first of these comes from his own disciples: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (9:2). People then as now are always preoccupied with sin when they find someone in trouble. So it was with Job and his friends and so it is even today, despite Jesus' forthright reply: "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him" (9:3). His disciples, typically, were focusing upon human sin when they should have been concentrating on the glory of God. We still do that today, don't we?

When the man had been healed by Jesus, his friends and neighbors looked at him and asked, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" The answer should have been obvious, but how typical and contemporary are the replies: "Some said, 'It is he'; others said, 'No, but he is like him'" (9:9). Because they were not prepared to believe he could be healed, they refused to acknowledge the obvious fact that that was precisely what had happened. Today we would say the young man had been incorrectly diagnosed or that his blindness had been psychosomatic or that the

whole thing was a clever fraud.

One Thing I Know

Next comes the inevitable question from the Pharisees: "how were your eyes opened?" (9:10). Notice, the emphasis is upon "how," not "who." They knew "who," but what they wanted was some way of discrediting him. "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the sabbath" (9:16). Instead of rejoicing over the miraculous healing of a blind man, the Pharisees did their best to find fault with the healer. A few, however, pondered the obvious: "How can a man

who is a sinner do such signs?"

We can see the frustration of the Pharisees mounting, for instead of discrediting Jesus, he seemed to be gaining ground. Give God the praise," they order, "we know that this man is a sinner" (9:24). The young man's answer is a masterpiece of sincerity and courage: "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see" (9:25).

Furious, the Pharisees confront Jesus: "Are we also blind?" (9:40). And for once they have asked the right question!



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
Phone 394-6851

However, some farmers like to use their own seeds, or the seeds produced by a neighbor.

In these cases we strongly recommend the seeds be sent to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture seed laboratory for testing. Details are available from any of our Penn State Extension offices.

With the increasing cost of seeding crops, it is poor management to use seeds of unknown performance. Poor

germination, unwanted weed seeds, or diseases can quickly bring about a crop failure.

TO MAKE PLANS FOR TOP-DRESSING WHEAT
At this time we do not know the exact condition of our winter grains. The weather has been very dry and without snow cover. This means that our winter grains are in an uncertain condition.

At the recent Crops and Soils Day meeting, the

manager of our local Penn State research farm, John Yocum, discussed the subject.

He strongly advised the use of 30 to 50 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre this spring on winter wheat. This same treatment can be made on winter barley providing lodging is not a problem.

The fertilizer application should be made around the middle of March when vegetative growth is star-

ting. Increased yields of both grain and straw can be expected from this extra nitrogen.

TO BEWARE OF NYLON TOW ROPES

Our safety engineer at Penn State, Dennis Murphy, reports that nylon ropes are becoming very popular around the farm for towing purposes. They are light in weight and very strong.

However, they have the property of stretching under a pull, similar to a spring. The recoil provides extra pull to dislodge a vehicle or a stationary object.

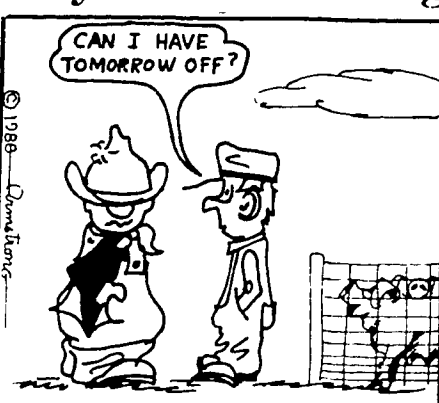
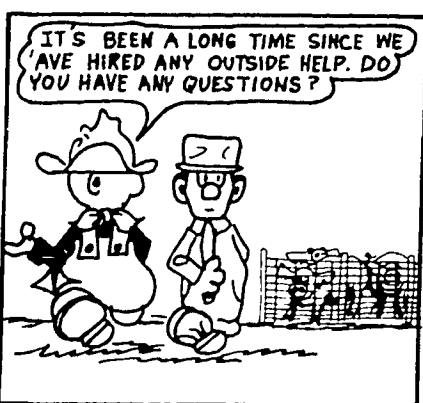
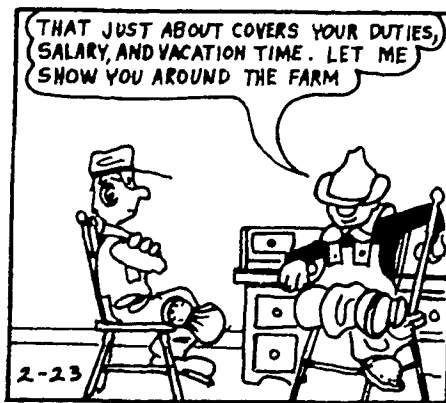
This recoil can cause a serious accident if you're not extremely careful.

There should not be a clevis, shackle, or chain on the end of the rope. Hook only to hitch points that are very sturdy. Keep bystanders at a safe distance when making a heavy pull with nylon tow rope.

As you may recall, several years ago a group of picnickers were having a tug of war with a nylon rope. The rope broke and the recoil

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RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong

Farm Calendar

Monday, February 25
Adams County Extension Farm Estate Planning Meeting; 9:30 a.m.; West Street Branch Gettysburg National Bank.
USDA public meeting in Lancaster; 10:00 a.m. at the Treadway Resort Inn.
Maryland Agricultural Week

Exhibits; Valley Mall; Hagerstown, Maryland; continues through March 1.
North Jersey Regional Christmas Tree Growers Meeting; 7:30 p.m.; Extension Center; Flemington, New Jersey.

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