

Thomasville Auction to re-open Wednesday

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THOMASVILLE — From a massive pile of twisted, charred metal and black, smoking timbers, a York County agriculture industry landmark has been resurrected.

On January 14, 1980, fire swept through the Thomasville Livestock Market along Route 30 west of York, destroying the familiar sales barn where buyers and sellers had gathered for 33 years for the Wednesday evening livestock auction.

This Wednesday evening, the Thomasville market will again come alive with the chanting sing-song of auctioneers, lowing cattle, squealing hogs and the hum of trucks waiting in line to unload at the back-in chutes.

Resplendent in its shiny new barn-red metal exterior, Thomasville Livestock Market, Inc., is set to pick up right where it left off, with a few new surprises for clients.

Guiding hand of the auction's restoration has been Leroy Williams, president of the farmer-stockholder corporation that five years ago purchased the sales facility to assure continued nearby markets for meat producers.

Even as the bulldozers chugged through the debris, clearing wood ashes and concrete chunks, the stockholders met to plan a new era for the old auction.

There was a little left that was salvageable.

Smoked foundations traced the old outlines of the sprawling building and the slanted floor of the unloading area remained. Part of the massive old weigh scales could be used.

As farmers are wont to do in times of disaster, volunteers began arriving from all directions, offering donations of time, materials,

machinery and, most importantly, moral support.

Leroy Williams smiles as he pays tribute to the over 400 hours of volunteer time given to help rebuild the maze of pens and gates that fill the 152-foot long by 145-foot wide pole building.

Mostly, the volunteers hammered. And then hammered more. Some 2500 pounds of nails hold together the estimated nearly ten miles of board feet of oak, pine and treated fir lumber and posts.

More intricate contracting work went to the firm of J. Paul Mellinger, a builder from nearby Abbottstown. Rebuilding began in earnest in April, when the first posts were set in the ground.

A new corrugated metal roof with skylights has replaced the old roofing-paper style, and peaks over 30-foot center posts, giving the holding pen complex a lighter, cooler and much more airy interior. One new addition is a broad, fenced catwalk that stretches from the second floor arena seating out over the pens, where buyers can assess groups of livestock in all corners of the holding area.

"We can handle 800 head of hogs and cattle," Williams assures customers waiting for the Wednesday evening opening. "We plan to sell the consignments in order just as they come, to be fair to every seller."

"A building within a building," is what Williams labels the new sales arena itself, with semi-circular seating rising above the ground floor auction ring. Built of over 9000 12-inch cement blocks, the new sales area construction adheres to strict Labor and Industry building codes for fire safety. Updated amenities to the many families that frequent the auction include a spacious ladies lounge on the second floor, plus a



Thomasville Livestock Market president Leroy Williams studies the rebuilt facilities from the new

snack bar and comfort facilities just inside the ground floor entrance.

New offices, including a public phone, are also just inside the entrance for customer convenience.

While the surroundings will be new and modernized, most of the staff of 18 are experienced ringmen, auctioneers, livestock herders and office employees, many of whom have been with the Thomasville market for several years.

As in the past, auction activities will begin at 6:30 p.m., with small items like poultry, eggs, fruits and vegetables first on the sales block. Livestock follows immediately.

On November 5, Thomasville will host the annual York-Adams beef show and sale, a 4-H event the facility has supported for the past 22 years. On the following Friday evening, November 7, a special feeder sale is planned, the first of what Williams said he hopes will become a regular event.

catwalk addition.



Workmen hang one of the last of a hundred gates designed to facilitate the movement of cattle through the sales process.



FFA completes corn test plot project

ELVERSON — Members of the Twin Valley FFA chapter, Morgantown, have recently completed a most important chapter project.

In cooperation with several local seed corn dealers and farmers they have put into operation part of the FFA motto—"Learning To Do - Doing To Learn." Members have completed yield checks on the thirty varieties of corn in the chapter test plot, located on the Calvin Kurtz farm, RD2 Elverson.

The test plot enables local seed corn dealers and farmers to compare many popular varieties throughout the growing season. Yield checks performed by chapter members provide another means of comparison among varieties.

According to Ronald Frederick, vocational agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Twin Valley, students also learn to identify corn insects and disease problems while doing yield checks, and

identify any weeds found in the field.

The test plot was planted on May 20, 1980 by Gary and Marvin Stoltzfus, local farmers. It includes varieties provided by the following dealers - Mr. Christ Esh, Eastland; Mr. Ben O. Stoltzfus, Doeblers; Mr. Titus Beam, Northrup King; New Holland Agway, Agway; Mr. Elmer Hertzler, Trojan; Smith Brothers, Cargill; Mr. Joseph Kennel, Funks; Mr. Vernon Orr and Mr. Milton Howe, Pioneer; and Mr. Ira Nissley, DeKalb. Varieties planted are selected by requests from farmers as well as by the contributing companies and salesmen.

Each variety is hand yield checked by harvesting one-one hundredths of an acre. Plant populations are calculated, as is the percentage of stalks broken over below the ear. The moisture at harvest is measured to make yield calculations at a standard moisture of 15.5%. Finally the average ear weight is calculated.

Information from this year's test plot is now available from any of the salesmen, the vocational agriculture department at Twin Valley High School, or the co-chairmen of this year's plot - Tim Kurtz, Nelson Beam, or Don Stoltzfus.

Chester leaders hold banquet

CHESTER — The 1980 Chester County Leaders Appreciation Banquet was held on October 14 at the Po-Mar-Lan Firehall.

Sixty-four leaders and guests attended this banquet with certificates being

presented to all 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 year leaders. William Lindley from the State 4-H office spoke on different aspects of being a 4-H leader, and the role that the leader plays in the life of many young people.



Following a January fire that leveled the original structure, Thomasville Livestock Market is ready to go back into service with a brand new modern look and expanded services.



In sunlit silence, long alleyways and sturdy pens wait for the first steer to come charging through, signalling a new chapter in the history of the 33-year-old Thomasville Livestock Market.