

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



# Lancaster Farming says...

## Enough is enough

The time has come for the Commonwealth to stop wasting money acquiring land and start investing funds in saving it.

Today 12.7 percent of the acreage in Pennsylvania is tied up by the Game Commission, State Forest, or State Park departments. While that doesn't count federally owned land, it still represents a lot of ground in the state.

Obviously one function of any forward-thinking government is to preserve open spaces. If it weren't for the City of New York setting aside the land now known as Central Park, it's likely there wouldn't be an acre of open space on all of Manhattan Island.

But enough is enough.

The Game Commission, which already owns over one million acres of land in Pennsylvania is gobbling up additional land at a rate of 22,000

acres per year over the past three years.

Acquisitions of state park and forest land continue at a slower rate.

There are at least three negative aspects to the constant acquisition of land by the state.

For starters, the wrong land is being saved first. There is no big rush of developers to develop rocky hillsides, backwoods timber stands or hilly brush. While these lands eventually may fall prey to developers, it is the open flat areas — farm lands — that are the prime target for building.

Why not use the same money that would go to buying up Game Land as incentive payments for farmers to keep land in agriculture?

It would be a shame if hunters some day are forced to chase deer through farmers' fields because all of the wooded mountain land is gone, but it won't be as bad as having

farmers reduced to cultivating rock slides because the prime agricultural land is sprouting buildings.

Second, the Commonwealth pays no tax on state park land and only 39 cents per acre on game and forest land.

Money goes 13 cents each to county, township and school tax. Although recently increased, this pittance in no way matches the tax paying capacity of any other acre of land in the Commonwealth.

It would be naive to suggest the state increase its tax on itself. And it could be carping to say the Game Commission's proud boast about operating in the black might not look as good if the Commission paid its full share of taxes.

Still, wouldn't it be more fiscally responsible for the state to save the land that will pay back the highest return in taxes first, perhaps using

the income from that acreage to save the rest?

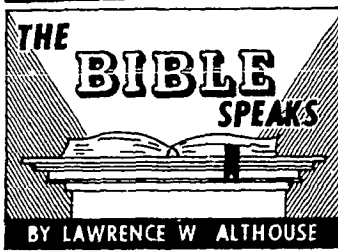
Third, we would argue that game lands, while open to all of the people, actually benefit a relative handful of the population.

Farm land, on the other hand, while owned by few, benefits everyone.

The widespread state parks and game lands are one of the joys of living in Pennsylvania. They should be maintained for posterity as they are today. But again we would say, enough is enough.

Commonwealth tax dollars would be better spent saving the land most endangered by creeping development, the land which will return the most to the tax pool; the land which, in the final analysis, will do the most good for the most people.

That land is the state's agricultural base.



### THE "CORRECT" DISCIPLESHIP January 4, 1981

Background Scripture:  
Matthew 5

Devotional Reading:  
Colossians 3:5-17.

Before each one of these columns is written, I spend some time reading and

reflecting upon the "Background Scripture" assigned by the Uniform Lesson Committee. Sometimes I have to wrestle with the passage for quite a while before I find the perspective from which I will reflect and write. Occasionally, however, my reaction to the prescribed scriptural passage is one of extreme discomfort.

#### What Christ Expects

That's the way it was this week with Matthew 5. The familiar words which I have read and heard so many times fell on me as an accusation. How many times I've waltzed through these passages with a fleeting

appreciation of their beauty and depth. I've loved the analogies, "You are the salt of the earth" and "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13, 14). But somehow this week the verses immediately following them leaped off the page at me:

but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men (5:13b,c).

A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house (5:14b,15).

As I read these verses it

occurred to me: That's what you're supposed to be — but are you? Am I really "the salt of the earth"? Do I bring a unique Christian flavor to the lives of those around me? Or do I simply reflect the values of my society?

And am I a "light" for my world? Or do I simply contribute to its darkness? What difference does it make that I am a Christian.

Then there's my church. Is it the distinctive "salt" and "light" Jesus expects of his followers? Or is it simply just another institution that perpetuates itself with a thin religious veneer?

#### What The World Sees

There are standards by

which we can find answers to those disturbing questions and we need look no further than Matthew 5. Read this chapter and then ask yourself: what is the picture of disciple of Jesus Christ that is drawn here? Read the Beatitudes and ask yourself whether that is a portrait your community sees in you, your church and Christendom. While Christians haggle over "correct" Christian beliefs, see what Matthew 5 says about discipleship: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (5:16). The "light" and the "salt" are not so much

distinctive beliefs as they are distinctive acts of love. It's not enough for a disciple to refrain from killing, but also anger and hate. Truthfulness and purity carry the disciple beyond the law and moral codes. Love and magnanimity define "correctness" more than any doctrine or creed.

Is this what my neighbor and my world see in me and my church?

(INDIA & NEPAL, "A Spiritual & Cultural Journey," with Larry Althouse, March 20 to April 10. For information, write New Dimensions Center, 1st U.M. Church, Ross & Harwood Sts., Dallas, TX 75201)



## NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent  
Phone 394 6851

### TO PRACTICE FARM POND SAFETY

No doubt most farm ponds have been a very popular place during the past week. Ice skating is a very enjoyable form of winter recreation and most ponds will attract skaters of all ages. Pond owners should be

prepared to rescue anyone who breaks through the ice. In most ponds there is a part that does not freeze as fast and the ice is thinner; this is especially true with spring-fed ponds. Rescue equipment such as a wooden ladder, wooden boards or planks, or an inflated inner tube with rope attached should be at the pond. If they are kept in a nearby building, it may take too long to make the rescue. The idea that another person can go

out on the ice and pull the victim from the water by hand is not a good practice; in too many cases both persons will end up in the cold water. Be prepared for farm pond rescues at all times.

### TO BE PREPARED WEATHER-WISE

Winter storms continue to kill folks throughout the country. Deaths from automobile accidents, overexertion, falls, and carbon monoxide poisoning often appear in the news media. The first step in preparing

for these severe acts of nature is to be informed by the Weather Service and to become familiar with weather terms. A storm "watch" means that severe weather may be coming into your area. A storm "warning" means that severe weather is headed your way and immediate action should be taken to protect life and property. A "blizzard" is the most severe of all winter weather. This means a considerable accumulation of snow, strong winds, and very cold temperatures. The

objective is to be informed and to be prepared for the worst.

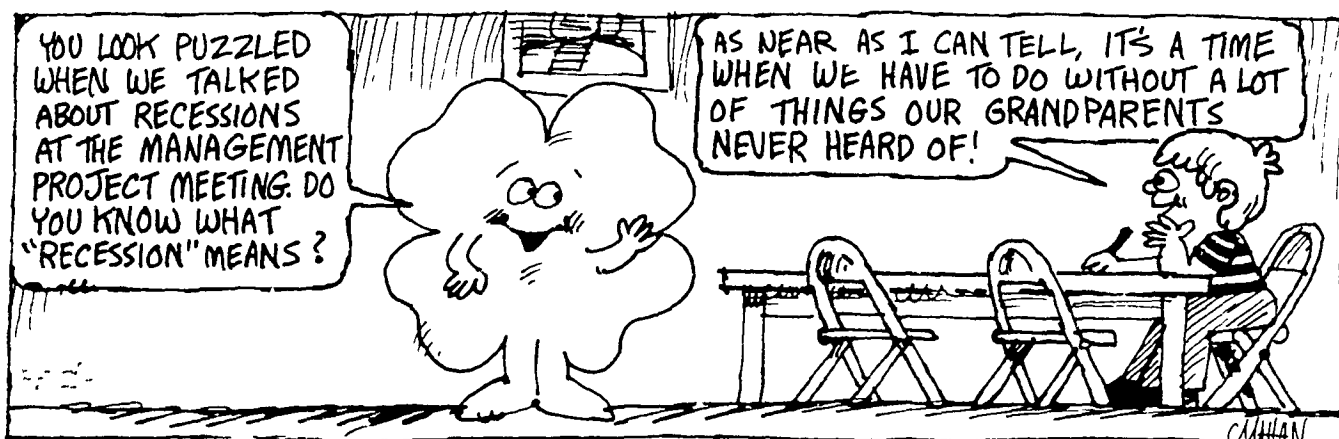
### TO CHECK FOR FEED WASTE

Feed grain costs are a big factor in all livestock and poultry operations. In addition, it appears that grain costs may go even higher in the next few years. This means that feed efficiency is very important in making any profit. In this article I'd like to call attention to the feed that is wasted on too many farms. In some cases it is faculty feed bunks and

troughs; in other cases it is the self feeders that are not adjusted properly and too much feed is let down at a time. Operators are urged to inspect their feed bunks and feeders to be sure that all the feed is getting into the birds or the animals; feed is too high priced to have it going any other place. Some automatic feeders that are in outside feedlots allow strong winds to blow the grain away from the feeding bunk; in this case a windbreak may help put the grain where the

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## CHRIS CLOVER



## Farm Calendar

Today, Jan. 3  
Mid-Atlantic Grange Leaders Conference, Embers Motor Lodge, Carlisle Concludes today

Tuesday, Jan. 6  
Farm tax meeting, Embers Restaurant, Carlisle, 9.30 a.m.  
8th Annual Cornell Dairy Days, Morrison Hall, Ithaca, NY Concludes tomorrow

Lancaster County tobacco show, Farm and Home Center, youth judging at 10 a.m., adult judging at 1.30 p.m.

Northeast Weed Science Society, Philadelphia Sheraton, 9 a.m. Continues through Thursday.  
Stray voltage meeting, Union Grove School, Rt 625, Terre Hill, two miles north of Rt. 23, 7.30 p.m.

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