

York shepherds' banquet features lamb, Australia

BY JOYCE BUYP
Staff Correspondent
YORK NEW SALEM — The women of the York New Salem Fire Company have roasted dozens of turkeys, hams and rolls of roast beef for community and banquet dinners.

But lamb? Well, they'd never tried that as the entire before. Planners for the first banquet of the York County Sheep and Wool Producers, though, were adamant in heading up the menu with their commodity.

So lamb it was, roasted to a juicy tenderness and polished off to the last sliver by the 100 members and guests who attended the initial annual meeting of the fledgling shepherd's group.

Interestingly enough, it was not only the first chance for many of the guests to taste lamb, but for some of the sheep producers as well.

For guest speaker Julie Travia, an exchange student from Australia, the dinner meeting marked her first major public speaking engagement and her first taste of lamb, the Australian national dish, since she arrived last summer. A native of the city of Perth, in Western Australia, Julie is a senior at Dallastown Area High School.

In her slide and filmstrip

presentation, "Australia, Welcome to the State of Excitement," Julie noted that her country produces one-sixth of the world's total sheep population. Merinos are the most predominant breed, and the largest "station", or sheep ranch, includes flocks numbering up to 70,000 head.

During the business meeting, president George Dutrey and director Greg Lau briefed members on the results of the successful 1980 field day and sheep sale, and announced plans for a second annual event.

Increasing demand over the past few years for 4-H project market lambs and breeding stock is largely responsible for the formation of the York Sheep and Wool Producer group. In response to the 4-H needs, an ad hoc committee met early last year and charted plans for the first sale.

"It turned out to be one of the better sales in the state last year," Dutrey related.

A total of 35 market lambs averaged \$66.57, while 25 purebred ewes sold for an average of \$141.98 and 15 rams averaged an even hundred dollars.

Aiming at a successful repeat of the field day-sale, the shepherds have scheduled their 1981 sale for

Saturday, May 16, at the county 4-H Center.

Prior to the noon auction, which begins with a fleece sale, a morning educational session promises judging events and demonstrations on spinning, shearing and lamb carcass cutting.

To one lucky youngster, who qualifies under a brief set of guidelines, will go a registered ewe lamb, with the winning name to be drawn at random. Winner of the gift is expected to return to the club the first ewe offspring, to continue the "lamb chain."

Among the sale consignments are 100 market lambs, 54 purebred ewes and 16 rams of major breeds, plus some entries of Fin-Dorset crosses.

Members were asked to consider the formation of a York area "wool pool," perhaps held in conjunction with the present Cumberland Wool Pool. Most fleeces produced in the southcentral Pennsylvania area are graded, priced and sold at the Cumberland County location Traveling distance and waiting time once at the pool are two factors that have led the York shepherds to consider a closer sales site.

Also discussed was the problem of weight limits on



Australian exchange student Julie Travia accepts a ceramic sheep memento from York County Sheep and Wool Producers' president George Dutrey.

sheep classes at the state Farm Show. Since most market lambs are bred and raised primarily for Fall markets, holding the animals until the January competition is causing problems in maintaining the lambs under the weight limitations.

Some competitors contend that they must actually "shrink the carcass on the hoof" in order to conform to class requirements. Disgruntled lamb exhibitors, and those with steers as well, are suggesting that perhaps the time has come to do away with 4-H market lamb

and steer competition, as known up to now, at the January Farm Show.

Sheep and wool producers, or related agribusinesses, interested in membership in

the shepherds' organization are invited to contact George Dutrey, Dallastown R2, or county agriculture extension agent Tony Dobrosky, at the York Extension Office.

Donkey basketball planned

NEW HOLLAND — A donkey basketball game will be held at Garden Spot High School at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 7, pitting the Garden Spot faculty against the Grassland FFA.

Basic rules require that all shooting must be done while sitting on the donkey and

loose balls must be recovered while holding on to the donkey.

Advance tickets are available from any Grassland FFA member. Prices are \$1.50 for students and \$2 for adults. All tickets will be priced at \$2.50 at the door.

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