

# Pa. Dairy Month dawns in different ways

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Dairy Month was ushered into Pennsylvania this past Monday in many and different ways. Here are just two of these contrasting openings for the observance of the Commonwealth's largest agricultural enterprise.

In the Capitol Building, the harsh glare of TV and other flood lights mercilessly beat down on Gov. Dick Thornburgh as he signs the official Dairy Month Proclamation — just one of 10 special citations issued in an hour-long, production line proclamation session.

Meanwhile on dairy farms, business goes on as usual amidst gentle, warming sunshine spiced with cooling breezes throughout most of the day.

By decree of state officialdom and in rapid-fire succession of frenzied movements, June — as Dairy Month — is shared with Recreation and Parks Month, the 150th anniversary of New Cumberland, Safe Boating Week, Jazz Month, Lady Keystone Open Week, the Muscular Dystrophy poster child, the Pa. Ambassadors of Music, Newsboy Day of the Variety Clubs of Philadelphia and a photo session to publicize safe driving for the reopening of schools even before they close.

Back in the pastures, the only movement is the occasional, casual step or two as a member of the herd ambles toward a more succulent clump of grass.

The governor grabs a promotional beach towel and models it for cameramen. Its message is part of the Real Food Campaign, proclaiming "Milk. It's the soft soft drink."

In more than one Lancaster County pasture, cows lounge beside a stream — the real rural sunbathers. They blend harmoniously into the picturesque

countryside of a lazy stream, rich green meadow and recently cultivated fields stretching off into the horizon.

Another Star Wars-spawned robot abruptly injects its futuristic self into the Dairy Month Proclamation Ceremony, joking with the Governor and turning him into his comedic straight man.

If only the land and grazers fall into your gaze, time appears to stand still in the dairy pastures and possibly even turns back. The scenes may have been similar in these pasturelands for a century, possibly even two or more.

As the governor moves from one proclamation to another, they seemingly clash directly with each other. Now, I ask you sincerely — should it be jazz in Dairy Month?

As Dairy Month dawned, the herd more likely was milked to the softer, more lamenting tones of country and western or music accompanying the morning devotions.

Off on the sidelines, the DER awaits its turn to promote parks and recreation and the duffers stand ready to bally-hoo the Lady Keystone Open.

Will this become another pasture or segment of farmland to fall prey to a recreation area or golf course or, even worse, another residential or commercial development?

Thus another segment of Americana becomes part of an electronic media event. Just as TV has moved into a position to call the shots in everything from the way we elect presidents to when a time-out is called in a football game, it now dominates proclamations, such as Dairy Month, turning them into assembly-line mini-productions to save the wear and tear on cameramen and announcers.

It's miles and another world away as Dairy Month begins on the farms. Let's hope that separation continues and it remains that way forever.



## as television media event & on the farm

