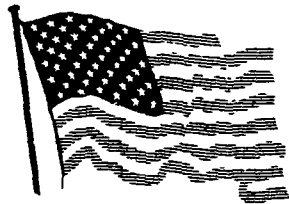




# Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor



## Free to farm

Independence Day conjures up a feeling of patriotism and pride in most Americans, especially in the farming community. Each July 4th, Americans celebrate their forefather's declaration of independence from foreign rule and religious oppression — a celebration that has been going on for the past 204 years.

What piece of legislation has rivaled this document drafted by a rebellious, proud group of men? And what other government policy has been rehearsed and recited by as many school students?

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness . . ."

This eloquently written document has established a nation where citizens have the greatest freedoms in the world.

From the framework of this 205 year old act, legislators today mold and meld ideas to continue to govern the citizens of the United States under the auspices of democracy.

Just this past week, our Commonwealth's governing officials listened to the cries of farmers and others interested in preserving farmland. After a lengthy trip through the House and Senate, House Bill 143 was signed into law by the Governor, creating a tool for local municipalities who want

to safeguard their agricultural land.

At the same time, where else but in these United States could animals and vegetables have legal rights? And where else would governments permit people to organize to try to prove animals have feelings and need to be treated like humans — humanely? All the while these vegetarian and animal rights groups' efforts are causing concern and financial hardship on fellow human beings — the farmers.

And where else could a local conservation group go on record in opposition of a potentially hazardous dump in an old clay mine?

As we celebrate our nation's birthday this weekend, most everyone will have countless things to be grateful for — knee-high or higher corn, wheat that yielded better than expected, the freedom to choose to continue to slave and sweat as farmers no matter what the economic rewards are for each person.

Because of these freedoms and the dedication of farmers, other Americans are free to choose to follow other professions rather than growing food and fiber. While some American farmers will be spending the holiday aboard a combine that cost as much as their suburban neighbor's ranch home, other Americans will be able to recreate at the pool, tennis courts, or on the golf course.

One of our farmers, however, will not be on board a tractor or climbing the silo to

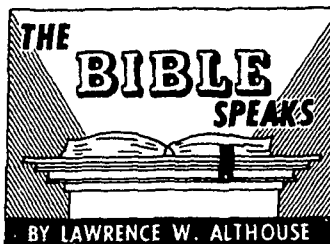
check out the panoramic view of amber waves of grain this Saturday. Benjamin Oberholtzer, formerly of the Metzler Church area of Lancaster County and now a hog and beef farmer in Shiloh, Ohio, will be watching and waiting to see not only how his crops turn out, but how his future in farming will work out.

On February 21, Oberholtzer's farming career was brought to a tragic halt when he was crushed under a wall of frozen silage which he had been trying to pry loose in his upright silo. He was pinned beneath the frozen heap for more than 20 minutes until farmers and emergency crews could free him. The accident left him with a broken pelvis and internal injuries for which he was hospitalized for 20 days.

Still handicapped from his injuries, Oberholtzer has had no way of farming his 80 acre farm, or the additional 50 acres he rents, since he was released from the hospital. But, in the truly American spirit, friends and neighbors have come to Oberholtzer's aid, lending helping 'hands'. Actually, they donated their time and equipment and lined up 10 abreast to plow 90 acres and plant 20 acres of corn.

People helping people — that's the tradition of the American farm family.

Tomorrow, as we watch the fireworks dance across the blue-black sky and wave those red, white, and blue flags, let's keep in mind how lucky we are to be farming in America.



THE REASON WHY  
July 5, 1981

Background Scripture:  
Deuteronomy 5.

Devotional Reading:  
Romans 5:6-11.

"Tell me why!" is one of the signs of the times in which we live. Many people look back wistfully to a bygone time when — as we remember it — it was sufficient to lay down the rules, laws, mores and moral principles. Not everyone followed the rules, but few people questioned them.

But that is not our world of today. People no longer are satisfied with an authoritarian approach to living, whether the authority be governmental or religious. Our age-old goal of teaching people to "think for themselves" seems to have backfired and we long for the "good old days" when people essentially did as they were told.

The Lord Who

We might long debate whether the "good old days" were as "good" as we remember them in retrospect, but perhaps the questioning of authority is neither so unusual or decadent as it may seem. The Book of Deuteronomy is helpful to us in this regard. When we examine it closely, we see that it represents Moses' legacy to the people of Israel. The book opens with the tribes of Israel poised on the plains of Moab for an attack on the promised land of Canaan.

Moses knows that he will not be crossing into the promised land with them and so he calls together the people of Israel for three addresses to prepare them.

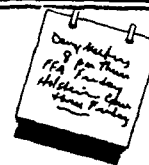
Most of us remember only the second address in which he sets forth for them once again the Ten Commandments. But in order to rightly understand the Ten Commandments and all the rules and regulations that follow, we must see them in the context of the first address in which he gives them the reason WHY behind the WHAT of the commandments. In effect, Moses is explaining why they should obey the commandments which he brings to them.

We can see this WHY even in the statement which introduces the first commandment: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Deut. 5:6). Thus, before he commands them to "have no other gods before me," he tells them the reason, which is: what he has done for them again and again throughout their history. Actually, the whole first address of Moses which constitutes the first four chapters of Deuteronomy (through 4:40) is a detailed recitation of all the things God has done for them. It is only in the context of what he has done, therefore, that he asks them to do certain things.

That It May Go Well

Even so, God lays down the commandments not as payment for what he has done, but for the sake of the people. Each one of the commandments represents, not an arbitrary whim of a capricious God, but behaviour that in the long run will provide for the welfare of the people in general, and each person in particular. The commandments of God, like everything else in this world, are intended, not for the satisfaction of the Creator, but the welfare of his Creation.

## Farm Calendar



**Monday, July 6**  
Pa. Vegetable Growers Assoc. annual summer tour, York County, continues into tomorrow.  
Cumberland County, New Jersey Fair, Millville, New Jersey, until Saturday 11.  
Rural Clean Water Program.  
**Tuesday, July 7**  
Franklin Co. Conservation District

directors meeting, County Admin. Building, Franklin Farms Lane, Chambersburg, 7:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, July 8**  
Pennmarva Young Cooperator meeting, Hunt Valley Inn, Md., concludes tomorrow.  
Pa. Junior Judging school, Clarence and Earl Stauffer

(Turn to Page A12)

## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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### TO "TAKE CARE" WHEN HARVESTING WHEAT

Wheat is a valuable crop to the economy of Lancaster County. Last year we planted nearly 23,000 acres of wheat which had a value of nearly 3 million dollars.

We need to follow good harvesting practices when combining this important crop. Make sure the combine is in top mechanical condition, and most importantly, be sure it is properly adjusted.

Another thing, you can have all these things just right, but if you travel too fast through the field, you'll throw more grain out with the straw than all your proper adjustments can save.

So, when we harvest this important wheat crop, let's take time to do a good job.

### TO DECIDE ON FUTURE HERD NEEDS

What will your cows be eating this summer, or several months from now? This will be determined largely by your cropping and harvesting activities this summer. Glenn Shirk, Extension Dairy Agent, recommends farmers first decide what type of feeding program they would like to have. Then, based on these plans, anticipate your herd's needs for the year—what feeds to grow? which ones to purchase? how much will be needed? What quality of feed is needed by each segment of the herd? how will it be stored in and fed out?

Knowing this, you can then plan your harvesting operations and your storage needs accordingly. It will also help guide your cropping and feed purchasing decisions. As

you are harvesting, you might be able to store different quality feeds separately. For example, you may want to keep poorer quality feeds out of the silo. This way you won't have to put all that poorer quality stuff through the milking herd.

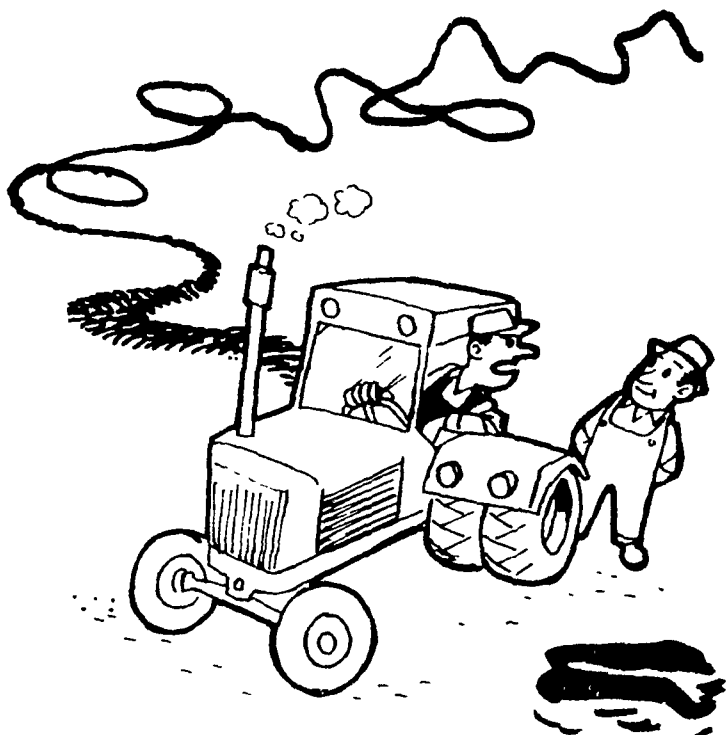
Remember, a lot of your profit comes from peak production of early lactation cows, and you don't want to sacrifice that!

### TO CONSIDER LIGHTNING RODS ON SHADE TREES

How many times have you driven past a pasture field and seen dozens of cattle or other livestock grouped together under one or two large trees. During severe thunderstorms, livestock will gather under these trees. If lightning strikes the tree, many of the animals will be killed.

(Turn to Page A12)

## HAY HAWS



I brewed some of my own 140-proof ethanol and put in a tankful. But I just can't steer it in a straight line.