

# Governor signs volunteer bill

HARRISBURG — Legislation introduced by a Lancaster County Republican to spur volunteerism in Pennsylvania's state parks and forests has been signed by Governor Dick Thornburgh.

Rep. Noah Wenger, the prime sponsor of House Bill 145, says his measure would authorize the Department of Environmental Resources to establish and operate a volunteer program to assist in park and forest activities.

The Ephrata lawmaker said the new act allows "volunteers to assist in visitor services, interpretive programs, maintenance, conservation measures and other activities."

Wenger noted that the legislation will be beneficial in two ways: "First, it provides experience to young people with environmental interests, and second, the general public benefits through improved services at parks and forests."

In the past, insurance complications have prevented volunteers from working in state parks. Under Wenger's legislation the volunteers would not be paid, but would be entitled to insurance and reimbursements for expenses.

"In light of recent changes in federal funding, encouraging voluntarism is especially important," Wenger added.



Rep. Noah Wenger, R-Lancaster, (seated at left) looks on as Governor Dick Thornburgh signs legislation Wenger introduced to encourage volunteer work in state parks and forests. Rep. Paul Wass, R-Indiana, a

cosponsor of the bill and Environmental Resources Secretary Peter Duncan (standing) also attended a brief signing ceremony in the governor's reception room.

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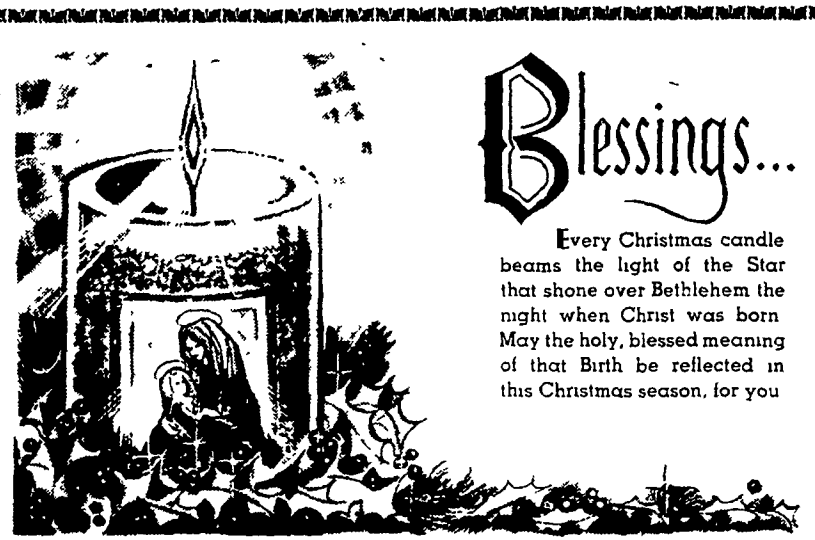
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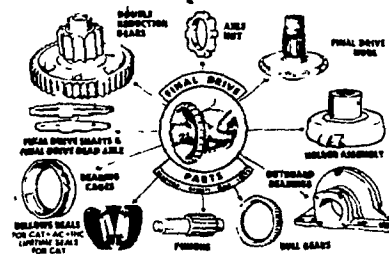
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