

Carroll County dedicates new Extension office

BY SALLY BAIR
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WESTMINSTER, Md. — Last Saturday was a day of celebration for Carroll County's agricultural community as they dedicated their new county Extension office located on the grounds of the Ag Center in Westminster.

Carroll County has boasted an ag center since 1954, built through private donations and administered by a Board of Directors. The county extension offices remained housed in county-provided space in the city.

Now the spacious offices offer meeting facilities and plenty of free parking to make it easy for those wishing to avail themselves of the services of the Extension office.

Through a unique arrangement with the agricultural center and the county commissioners, the new office building is built on private lands with public funds.

County Extension Chairman Robert Jones explained that the county holds a 99 year lease on that portion of the property, with the annual payment to be \$1.

President of the County Com-

missioners Louis Scharon called the new building "a good example of what can happen when the public and the private sector get together. It is also an example of local government being dedicated to agriculture." He added that it is a "most unusual project."

United States Congresswoman Beverly Brown called the office building "testimony that Carroll County has grown but hasn't changed all that much. Its values are still very strong in agriculture."

Other speakers, from both the public and private sector, pointed out that county government is very responsive to agriculture. Homemakers' Representative Julia Gouge said, "We've got a good working relationship with our county government. The whole county will benefit greatly from these new buildings."

County Commissioner Norman Graham noted that Carroll County has had an agricultural zoning law since 1978 and that its land preservation act is leading the state in keeping farmland in farming.

Edwin Rash, a grain farmer



A host of local and state officials participate opening the new Carroll County Extension office in Westminster, Maryland.



County Extension Chairman Robert L. Jones extends a thank you to the people of Carroll County for the construction of a new office facility for the extension staff. The new building is built on lands owned by the Ag Center, but was constructed with county funds.



Debbie Water, Extension agent for 4-H and youth, shows off the new oven in the demonstration kitchen of the Extension office building located at the Ag Center in Westminster, Maryland.

speaking for the Ag Center, added that "The commissioners have farming at heart and we've got the finest Extension staff in Maryland."

The University of Maryland was represented by Dr. A.O. Kuhn, executive vice-president who said, "This building is a tribute to the good solid people who have worked to make county government one that works for the people and with the people."

Indeed, in this case the people seem delighted with the building which will satisfy so many needs in one location.

In addition to the spacious offices for the 17-member Extension staff, it offers several unique features. There is a complete demonstration kitchen housed in a meeting room which can be divided for smaller groups.

There is a spacious workroom for the educational material prepared and mailed by the extension service, and an inviting library open to those using the

facilities. Two conference rooms will offer space for small meetings.

There is also an apartment for the custodian who will live on the premises to care for both the Ag Center and the new office building. The office portion is an extension of Burns Hall, an auditorium built for use as part of the Ag Center. The Center also has facilities for housing animals during shows and fairs.

According to Jones, the building is designed to take advantage of passive solar heat in the office area, and has a hot water solar collector on the roof.

Carroll is the fourth largest county in the state of Maryland and ranks second in the state for milk production. Jones said there are over 300 dairy herds in the county, which makes dairying the county's largest agriculture industry.

The new office building is situated on land which had once housed a Dairy Herd Improvement

testing laboratory. When the decision was made to construct the building, it was decided to move the DHIA facilities to the new building. Now the DHIA work is done in the basement of the office building.

In his part of the dedication service, Jones said, "We pledge to work harder than ever and better than ever to warrant the trust and the confidence you have placed in us in this fine facility. This is not our new building; it is your building."

Farmers, homemakers and community leaders were clearly delighted with the new space. Over 300 showed up to tour the facilities following the dedication and the ribbon cutting ceremony.

With the opening of the Extension office, the Ag Center becomes truly a "center" for the agricultural community and will be an asset to the whole county as it assumes its leading position in Maryland agriculture.

Federal regs tighten food stamp eligibility

HARRISBURG — An agreement clearing the way for new federal regulations that tighten eligibility for food stamps has been reached in federal court.

A suit brought by welfare advocacy groups had sought to delay reduction or elimination of food stamp assistance to recipients whose benefits were affected by the stricter federal eligibility guidelines.

The agreement will lead to re-evaluation of food stamp eligibility, starting with those recipients receiving food stamps in January 1982.

The Department of Public Welfare had already sent notice to all households receiving food stamps, explaining changes in federal regulations and how to appeal a reduction in benefits. This mailing specified both the existing level of benefits and the amount of food stamps allocated under the new guidelines.

Under the agreement in the suit, the Welfare Department will send out an additional notice within 30 days that further clarifies appeal rights and shows each household the figures used in computing the new level of benefits. The Welfare Department has agreed to develop by June 15, 1982, a new notice form for any future change in food stamp benefits. The new form will

explain the reason for any change, specify how to appeal any reduction in benefits, and state the figures used in recomputing food stamp eligibility.

In a related federal court case earlier this month, a three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals stayed a lower-court order preventing the Commonwealth from putting federally-mandated Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) cuts into effect.

Following the stay, the Department of Public Welfare began a review of the state's AFDC caseload to determine new benefit levels. The Circuit Court has not yet issued a final ruling on the

legality of the lower court order, but it has denied a request to have the case reheard by the entire nine-judge court.

Welfare Secretary Helen B. O'Bannon said the implementation of the new federal regulations can proceed now that legal obstacles are resolved.

"There was never any question that the new regulations and changes would go into effect," Secretary O'Bannon said. "These two law suits related only to the kind of procedures and notice necessary to give recipients adequate information about the changes and notice of their rights."

Chester Extension to hold annual meeting

LANCASTER — The Chester County Extension Service of Penn State, will hold the annual meeting on Monday, January 25, at 8 p.m., at the Extension Meeting Room, 235 W. Market St., West Chester. The meeting is open to the public and all are invited to attend.

The meeting program will include an opportunity to meet members of the Extension board and staff. For d'oeuvres, dessert,

and beverage will be served. A short business meeting and election of officers will follow. Entertainment will be provided by Grace Miller, a Pennsylvania Dutch humorist.

There is a small fee to cover cost of refreshments. Reservations are due by January 21. For further information, contact the Extension office at 696-3500.