



# Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

## Just for the experience

As you stroll across Penn State's Ag Hill, it almost seems like time has stood still — except for a few traffic-routing changes.

The Creamery, with its delectable dairy dishes, still dips one of the best ice creams in the entire state onto cones that seem to vanish all too soon. And across the street, the Pavillion still provides a roof for some of Penn State's students to make their debuts on the show floor — even though nowadays the shows are theatrical events rather than livestock expositions.

All across the tree-adorned campus of the College of Agriculture, architectural ancestors to their modern counterparts stand proudly — a link between generations of students who learned the ABCs of agriculture from dedicated professors and went on to carve a name for themselves in the 'Farmers Hall of Fame.'

But, there's one thing that's changed over the years on Ag Hill, and that's the type of students entering those time-worn classrooms to glean an understanding of horticulture, forestry, agronomy, dairy science, animal science, engineering, economics and education.

For one thing, there are more women than ever in the College of Agriculture. 1980-statistics reveal that 38 percent of the 2,569 student enrolled were women. Those of the female persuasion not only enjoy floriculture and flower arranging, but don hip boots and coveralls to tackle less dainty tasks of manuring and castration.

And, there are more students from nonfarm backgrounds who are going back to the land to earn their livings. In 1980, almost 75 percent of the ag students came from nonfarm backgrounds, which means that the closest three of every four students came to pulling a wagon with a tractor before enrolling at Penn State was towing their little red Express wagon with a pedal-powered tricycle.

Whether this is an indication of the good life farming actually provides, or just a fad, it has created a special problem for professors and advisors at Penn State.

Take for instance the case of one nonfarm student who found herself surrounded by country colleagues in a first-level animal science course. She innocently queried the professor as to the meaning of the term 'freshening.' Her ignorance provoked a wave of snickers and guffaws from classroom peers which were squelched immediately by the instructor's stern warning, "In this class, there are no stupid questions!"

But what about outside the classroom?

How do you impress a student with research ideas on best management practices for top alfalfa yields when they have never had the

practical experience of seeing a normal alfalfa stand? And what about alfalfa wilt or a field riddled with leafhopper damage? Could they even identify the problem?

Without the on-farm background of their Ag Hill predecessors of a decade or so ago, these graduates will be heading for careers in Extension, ag businesses, the Soil Conservation Service, and other areas with B.S. degrees in textbook education and 'M.S.' degrees in practical experience — that is, 'Missing Something.'

To help these Penn Staters overcome the handicap of being raised in the suburbs or in town, the College of Agriculture implemented a pilot program last year to introduce these students to first-hand encounters with 5 a.m. milkings, 100 degree hay mows, and sunup to sundown working days.

For the second consecutive year, Penn State agricultural students will once again be eagerly looking for summer jobs on farms. This work experience will extend their education far beyond textbooks to the harsh reality of agriculture as a career.

Coordinating this effort to find work-experience for students is Grant Sherritt of Penn State's Animal Industries Department. Sherritt already has begun his search for farmers who are looking for summer help and would be interested in 'hiring on' a 'green' Ag Hill student.

Last year, 52 farms and one agricultural business responded with interest to Sherritt's inquiries. The names of these potential employers were given to Penn State students who contacted them — and 16 landed jobs down-on-the-farm.

"Most comments we received were highly complimentary of the students' interest and willingness to work," stated Sherritt. "We also heard that it was a good experience for the student and farm family."

Sherritt confessed that one of the major complaints about the program was that students were inexperienced, especially in the 'art' of making hay. "We know the students lack background and understanding of farming," he said, pointing out the whole idea of the summer work-experience program is to gain that needed experience.

Looking forward to the summer of 1982, Sherritt stated there are already 35 farms that have expressed an interest in having Penn State ag students pitch in with the farm chores.

If you're a farmer who wants to give a 'city slicker' a taste of country life and a chance for a better understanding of agriculture contact Sherritt as soon as possible at 324 Animal Industries Building, University Park, PA 16802; telephone 814/865-1362. It'll be an experience.

## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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### TO KEEP FARM EQUIPMENT IN GOOD CONDITION

This is the time to replace those worn or damaged parts and tires on your farm machinery.

Maintaining and restocking needed spare parts should be a must before the really busy spring season is under way. Have the tractor engine tuned by your local dealer. Consult the operator's manual and adjust field machines according to manufacturer's recommendation.

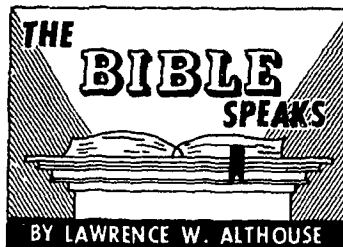
Order a supply of oils, filters and greases that are needed to maintain tractors and other equipment. It pays to take time out to start a system of recordkeeping for each machine. Keep good records of maintenance and repairs you can save money in this highly mechanized farming operation.

Remember, a breakdown at planting time is costly. The best preventive is good maintenance.

### TO REVIEW FORAGE CROP FERTILIZATION

The correct use of fertilizer is extremely important in times of tight margins. Many agronomists feel that too many farmers do not use enough fertilizer on their grass and hay crops. In general terms we can expect about \$3 in return for every dollar spent for fertilizer on the average farm crop. On many forage crop acres this return can be greater when properly fer-

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JESUS  
DO-GOODER  
January 31, 1982

Background Scripture:  
Matthew 5:38-48;  
Luke 6:27-38.

Devotional Reading:  
1 John 3:1-10.

There's a lot of liberal Commie propaganda that one gets tired of hearing spouted from pulpits and church meeting press releases! Really, aren't you just sick and tired of these 'do-gooders' and their left-wing, humanistic garbage?

"Such as?" you want to know.

Such as "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you."

Such as "To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer him the other also."

Such as "Give to every one who begs from you, and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again."

Such as "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned."

And Do Good

"Do good to those who hate you" Isn't that what's wrong with this country today, too many do-gooders? Too much Marxism perverting and corrupting our national moral fiber? Too many fuzzy minded intellectuals contaminating the minds of our young people?

At least that's what the editorialist in my local newspaper thinks. His editorial in this morning's paper says both implicitly and explicitly the sentiments I've

indicated above in italics

"O.K.," you say, "so you read an editorial this morning that annoyed you." And I respond by assuring you that it was not just this morning's editorial. The view expressed by this morning's editorialist is commonly found on this particular editorial page, and that it is a view shared by many people in our country today. There seems to be a sizeable proportion of our population manifesting this common disdain for "do-gooders."

Now, lest you jump to conclusions, let me assure you that I do not classify myself as a "liberal." Neither do I look upon myself as a "conservative." Frankly, I despise and eschew all such labels because, for one thing, I find myself at odds with people in both groups, and, furthermore, because the claims of Christ, I believe, supercede one's political orientations.

Sons of The Most High

What motivates these lines I write today is the recognition that what many people call "do-goodism" is nothing more than an honest attempt to follow the radical teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. The call to "love your enemies," turn the other "cheek," to "give" and "judge not," comes not from Karl Marx or any other Communist ideologist. Neither does it come from the John Birch Society or the Klu Klux Klan. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ — the good news that goes beyond both liberalism and conservatism, Democrats and Republicans. If we don't like those ideas — well and good, that's our privilege — but let's make sure we acknowledge just whom it is we are rejecting. Jesus Christ was and is a "Do-Gooder" and he called his disciples also to "do good..." and our problem today is not that there is too much of it, but too little.

## OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

### Thanks, but no thanks

I would like to thank you for the thorough coverage of Inter-State Milk Producers' Cooperative's meetings. We appreciate the attention that you give to farmer meetings.

In the most recent article, (Lancaster Farming Jan. 23, 1982 issue), however, I was severely misquoted.

In the article, the authors stated that I said that Inter-State members produced 1/5 of the CCC purchases in 1981. This is not true, on the one hand, and it not what I said, on the other.

I was attempting to bring abstract numbers into some sort of

focus for our dairy farmers. Just saying that in 1981 10 percent of the production in this country was purchased by the CCC is an abstract number that most people really can't grasp the significance of. Therefore, I stated that the surplus products purchased by the CCC would equal 5 times what Inter-State members produced in 1981.

The only way Inter-State members could have produced 1/5 of the CCC surplus would have been for the entire Inter-State production to be purchased by the

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## HAY HAWS



"Where did you say you learned crop dusting?"