



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

Do something wild

Whenever it gets to be income tax filing time, I go a little crazy — searching through piles of paid bills for invoices to match check amounts as proof for deductions and whatever else the drudgery of farm bookkeeping requires.

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not totally disorganized. As a matter of fact, I masochistically enjoy entering those columns of figures which bring back memories of months gone by, and another goal accomplished. As each figure corresponds to another seasonal expense, I can watch the year go by in review.

Fertilizer, seed, and planting bills mark the beginning of another crop season. It's the time of year for long-awaited calves and greening pastures — and a busy time, despite the still-short days.

Summer months are accompanied by now-familiar bills from our AI technician, each a report card in our heat-detection education.

With fall comes crop-harvesting bills and calf registration slips. And following not far behind are entry fees and supplies listed on ragged, manure-stained slips of paper just recently dragged out of a forgotten showbox.

Another farming year under our belts — and some folks said we wouldn't make it through the first one.

Speaking of firsts, Pennsylvania is trying "something wild" and everyone filing a state income tax this year has a chance to cash in on the "fun."

With the logo, "Do something wild" featuring a checkmark-perched owl, the state has created a special "Wild Resource Conservation Fund" to be used for the

management and protection of nongame wildlife and wild plants. The legislation says nongame wildlife includes birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians not typically sought by hunters, trappers or anglers. Wild plants will include native species — excluding farm crops.

Who'll use these checkoff wildlife funds? The Department of Environmental Resources, the Fish Commission and the Game Commission.

To contribute to the Wild Resource Conservation Fund, all that's needed is a figure on line 19c of the PA-40 long form or on line 10c of the short form PA-40A. Whatever you write in will be the amount of overpayment the state can expect to retain from your tax check — they'll even keep some out of a reimbursement check of less than \$1.

Now, for those of us unfortunate enough not to receive anything back from the state income tax we've paid into the kitty all year, the state tells us we can join the other conservation-minded Pennsylvanians in donating to the conservation fund. "Simply make a check or money order payable to the Pennsylvania Wild Resource Conservation Fund. Mail it directly to Do Something Wild, Box 2063, Harrisburg, PA 17120."

If you really want to do something wild, tell the state to keep your entire refund check. Then claim it next year as a tax deductible charitable contribution on your federal income tax return.

Listen, maybe if this idea works, the state's agriculture department can finagle a line on next year's income tax form. Then taxpayers could donate to another endangered species — the farmer.

OUR READERS WRITE

Belgian breeder correction

As a native of Pennsylvania, I enjoyed reading the Jan. 15 issue of Lancaster Farming. I was reared "going to the Farm Show" and was especially interested to see the show results this year.

This was only the second time since the mid-1940s that my family did not exhibit Belgian horses at your ag-extravaganza. In some years they exhibited not only Belgians but also Percherons,

Merino sheep, hay, and wool.

I was disappointed to note an error in Dick Anglestein's article entitled "Twin first-timers win Belgian grands." The Orndorff who bred the grand champion mare, Orndorff's Congolaise Pinky, and her mother, Orndorff's Highland Lassie (grand champion mare at the Farm Show six times) was not Larry B. Orndorff but Charles B. Orndorff of

Waynesburg in Greene County.

Charles B. Orndorff (my grandfather) at age 86 is still very active in the horse business. In fact, he was in center ring on Jan. 10 to see Pinky named champion mare. Larry B. Orndorff may be an excellent horseman but he has had no connection with the particular mare in question.

Charlotte O. Dinsmore

Time to deal with EEC

One of our highest priorities in agriculture in 1983 will be convincing the European Economic Community that its right to swing its agricultural subsidy fist ends at Uncle Sam's nose.

Our American farmers are being hurt by the predatory trade practices of the EEC. Commodity prices are severely depressed for the third straight year, due in part to massive surplus stocks of farm commodities. Yet our farm ex-

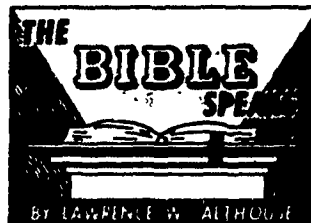
ports are declining for the second straight year. And, through the use of predatory export subsidies, the EEC has gone from being a net importer to a net exporter of grains, beef, poultry, sugar, and other commodities.

America would have no legitimate complaint if the EEC had gained these markets fairly. It has not. American farmers, the most productive and efficient in the world, hold a comparative

advantage on the world market. The EEC can export its farm products only through the use of massive subsidies that undercut the prices of all competitive countries.

Frankly, this situation is intolerable. As a Congressional spokesman at the recent Ministerial Conference of the General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs, I made it clear that

(Turn to Page A11)



LEARNING FROM A CROOK
January 30, 1983

Background Scripture: Luke 16:1-13, 19-31.

Devotional Reading: Amos 5:6-15.

The parable of the Dishonest Steward in Luke 16 is likely not a very popular one in the churches. For the most part it is simply ignored in the lectionaries and collections of sermon resources. Those who stumble upon it are likely to race on without a backward glance.

The reason, of course, is self-evident: Jesus' parable is about a crook who cheats his employer and then is commended for it. How embarrassing! Surely there must be some mistake here.

TURN IN THE ACCOUNT

If we examine the parable more closely, however, we find there is some important teaching here for us from Christ. The steward is clearly dishonest — in fact, that's the point Jesus is trying to make. If a dishonest steward is smart enough to use worldly goods to secure his future, shouldn't the followers of Christ do even more?

Look at the story carefully. The steward is first in jeopardy because charges were brought to his master that the man is "wasting his goods." Threatened with the loss of his position, the dishonest steward now begins to use the material goods to protect

his future. Because he is a dishonest man, he uses these goods in a fraudulent way to insure his security. Oddly enough, when the master learns of this skulduggery, he shocks us by commending the crook for his crafty strategy.

Jesus does not condone the man's deceit, but he is telling us that we must be no less intelligent in our own use of material goods. "For the sons of this world are wiser in their own generation than the sons of light." The choice confronting the followers of Jesus is not between being moral or being wise, but of being both. Just because the Christian chooses to be good is no reason for him to allow himself to be stupid. In the parable it is apparent that resourcefulness is a quality that God looks for in all his children.

THE TRUE RICHES

The parable Jesus told about the dishonest steward is meant, not to shock us, but to shame us. Even the dishonest servant is a better steward than some of God's honest servants. Being honest is not enough — although it is a good start — for we are also expected to be good stewards of what God give us. If "the sons of this world" do a better job in being crooked than we do in being honest, that is a judgement upon our stewardship. The servant who hid his talent in the ground didn't do something evil with it, but his failure to do something worthwhile made him an "unprofitable servant."

Once again, let us understand what Jesus is saying in this parable: let not the dishonest, but enterprising, steward stand at the top of the class when it comes to using material things wisely. Let the "children of light" be even more enterprising in order to fulfill their stewardship in God's sight.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent
Phone 717-394-6851



To Reorganize Fertilizer Values

Since the cost of commercial fertilizers continues high, we should take a look at other sources of plant food; I am referring to farm manure and legume sods in the crop rotation.

The 1983 Agronomy Guide gives a very good comparison of these fertilizer values on page twelve.

With the amount of manure that is being applied to some of our livestock and poultry farms, it is quite possible that very little commercial fertilizer will be needed.

Alfalfa sod can add as much as 75 pounds of nitrogen per acre. This is one advantage to having legumes in the crop rotation.

A complete soil test will reveal the needs of each field. Then the needs can be met by using farm manures, legume sods, or commercial fertilizer. Careful handling and storage of manure will preserve many of these valuable fertilizer elements.

To Make Sure Ponds Are Safe

Over the last two weeks I've noticed a lot of people, both young and old, ice skating on farm ponds. It's good exercise and an excellent sport. But, be sure you are prepared in case of an accident. Owners should be certain that rescue equipment is handy and not in the barn or garage several blocks away. Wooden ladders, boards or other items can be shoved out to the person in the water if needed; it should be large enough to distribute the weight of the person making the rescue. A

rope is also a good item to pull people out with.

Skating is a very enjoyable winter-time sport. Don't be the victim of an accident that could have been prevented.

To Exercise Dairy Cows

The importance of turning out the dairy herd each day from stanchion or comfort stalls should not be overlooked. As we expect more production per cow, the stresses are greater, and if not given exercise, more breeding problems will result. Dairywomen with free-stalls have the opportunity of observing heat periods all the time. However, cows that are confined to stalls present a problem with heat detection. There are very few days that the weather is so bad that the milking herd should not be turned out for a few minutes. If the dairyman is alert and observing, cows that are in heat can be observed and bred. We seem to be having breeding problems in many of our good dairy herds. Exercise might help.

To Update

Pesticide Certificate
Most of you farmers have license/permits to buy and apply restricted use pesticides to cropland, livestock and poultry buildings. These are usually issued for three years. Many are scheduled to expire on September 30, 1983, reminds Arnold G. Lueck, Extension Agent, Agronomy-Horticulture. This means you will need to attend a meeting where current pesticide uses and recommendations are discussed

(Turn to Page A11)

OTIS

