

Flickering flame symbolizes decades of York 4-H

BY JOYCE BUPP
Staff Correspondent

BAIR—A flickering candle light caught onto the edge of the paper and the bright orange flame glowed steadily as the mortgage on the York County 4-H Center turned to ash.

As the flames died, an audience of 4-H'er's, parents, friends and guests of the clubs who had gathered Sunday afternoon to witness the ceremony collectively rose to its feet and applauded in appreciation.

With the official burning of the mortgage on the York County 4-H Center, a dream that commenced back in the early 1960's was fulfilled, and the 4-H home is now owned debt-free.

Burning the note were long-time 4-H supporters Ralph Snyder and Robert Stover. Both received recognition plaques from county

extension agent John Smith. Snyder and Stover have served on the Center's board for many years and were instrumental in bringing the building to reality from a proposal made nearly twenty years ago by far-sighted 4-H members.

Friends of 4-H certificates went to Emerson Gentzler, who donated ten acres of ground for the center site and to Mr. and Mrs. John Shearer for their donation of approximately an acre that squared the plot and included the driveway.

A slide and movie presentation narrated by county agent Tony Dobrosky and Center board president Walter Keeney traced the history of the site selection, groundbreaking and actual building construction. The groundbreaking ceremony, held in June, 1970, had concluded with furrow out a symbolic foundation excavation.

Dobrosky, who serves as the extension's advisor to the Center's board, was presented the first of a series of numbered commemorative bread trays crafted in honor of the note-burning.

The Center's first meeting was held in November, 1970, and since then some 3,500 meetings have been hosted at the building, an average of nearly 300 per year.

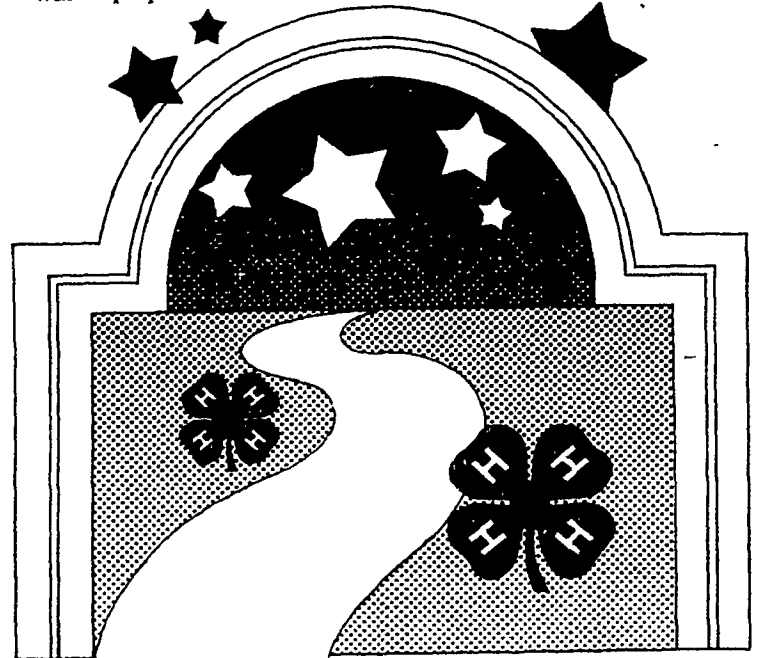
Since the official dedication on August 29, 1971, the look of the Center has changed. A commercial kitchen with suitable equipment, demonstration kitchen, paved parking lots and driveway, painting, paneled stage with curtains and a Hall of Fame Gallery have been added to the Center.

Taking part in the program were 4-H Alumni Gordon Shive, who served as emcee, and the Reverend Jeff Roth, who offered the invocation. Current County


Council president Beverly Eisenhart and vice-president Tom Beck led the American and 4-H pledges.

Approximately two years ago, an endowment fund was established with a goal of \$50,000 toward perpetual care of the

Center. First contribution into that fund was a \$2,000 donation given by the York Farm Credit association in honor of Robert Stover, the Production Credit's former manager. That fund is currently at \$17,500.

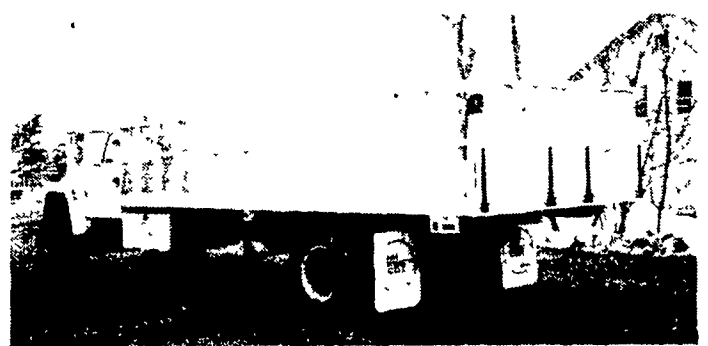


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