

# Northern Lebanon County ag honors its own J.R.



J. Ray Bickel, of Northern Lebanon -- "Mr. FFA" -- in front of Young Farmer banner.

**BY DICK ANGLESTEIN**  
**MT ZION** — Northern Lebanon County agriculture has had its own "J.R." for more than a quarter century and its farming community turned out in force Thursday night to honor him as an educator, leader and motivator of youth.

While to TV viewers, J.R. represents a ruthless Texas millionaire, the man in Northern Lebanon — better known as J. Ray — is just the opposite. He's a man who has guided a couple of generations of farm youth from their days as energetic, aimless Greenhands in FFA to their present position as productive farmers and community leaders in the area described as "on the upper side of Rt. 422."

And in the long run, J. Ray is more wealthy beyond imagination in terms of the farming friendships he has achieved during his long tenure of service to the ag community.

The man, of course, is J. Ray Bickel, recently retired vo-ag teacher, FFA and Young Farmer advisor in the Northern Lebanon School District.

Former teachers, students, colleagues, community leaders and a whole bunch of friends turned out Thursday night at the Mt. Zion Social Hall to pay tribute to this man whose better known nickname is "Mr. FFA."

And what did these people have to say about J. Ray:

Harvey Smith, Area vo-ag consultant — "He has been the father of competition among FFA'ers in Lebanon County. But his contributions stretch far beyond the county. He has helped

bring more Gold Emblems back to the Northern FFA Chapter than any chapter in the state."

Clarence Krammes,, former Northern Lebanon principal — "He's many things — motorcyclist, boat enthusiast, water skier and grower of strawberries and blueberries. But most of all he has been an educator who motivated students to do their best."

Leory Gessaman, president of the Pennsylvania Young Farmers — "J. Ray is a good coxer and my standing up here tonight is testament to that."

Clarence Manbeck, former state senator and poultry industry leader: "He is among those men who is honored not only for what he has brought out in himself, but what he has brought out in others."

Dean Patches, representing FFA, Young Farmers and FFA Alumni: "I know from experience what a good pusher and motivator he is. He knew how to put the energy of youth to good use."

Carl Wenger, of Myerstown: "As a father of FFA'ers in ELCO for the past 20 years, I can attest to the competitive spirit he brought to FFA in Lebanon County."

And there were even some light-hearted moments of tribute. The only area man in ag who could realistically play the part, Guy Braxton, now an ag consultant, portrayed "Mr. T." of the A-Team



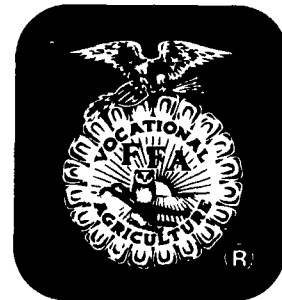
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE & FFA

and paid tribute to one particular area of FFA activities in which J. Ray has become legend — bringing home county and state parliamentary procedure championships.

And, finally, the man who everyone came to honor reminisced a bit from his career that had its start as a navigator in a World War II B-24, to being a veterans instructor and finally in vo-ag at Northern Lebanon.

He summed up his career philosophy in a few words:

"It's so good to see so many FFA'ers and Young Farmers here who have taken their place as leaders in the community."



"Helping to develop leadership and citizenship — that's what it has all been about."

## Luzerne plans tax meetings

**WILKES-BARRE** — Income tax meetings have been scheduled at several locations in Luzerne County to explain tax laws as they pertain to filing farm schedules.

According to County Agent E. V. Chadwick, changes have been made in methods of computing depreciation and investment credit. Farmers may wish to understand the expensing of capital purchases in filing the 1983 return.

The meetings conducted by the Luzerne County Extension

Association will be held at the following times and locations:

Feb. 3 — Briggsville Mt. Zion Church from 1 to 3:30 p.m.

Feb. 8 — Water Street Annex Extension Office at 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 9 — Northwest High School, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 15 — Ag Service Center, Nanticoke, 1 p.m.

Individual assistance will be provided by calling the Extension office for appointments. Phone 825-1701 or 459-0736 (Hazleton area).

### HAVE BAD WATER

We have excellent conditioners and purifiers, reasonably priced. "Money Back Guaranteed"

WORRIED ABOUT POULTRY FLU, swine disease and other ailments? Back to natural prevention is the answer. Our products are working on chickens too - about 17 flocks still healthy, even healthier than usual. Ask for literature.

Our customers crops are larger than their neighbors (ask for pictures) and much more nutritious.

### A Natural Mastitis Treatment That Works

It is rich nutrition in the feed. Costs only about \$2.75 per day, 2 feedings usually knocks it out except in old prolonged cases. Even those sometimes when drugs have failed. It is **Spirulina**, an algae that grows on water. Extremely rich in vitamins, minerals, trace elements, amino acids, chlorophyll and enzymes. It supplies the missing elements. Makes cows resistant. It is double purpose - nourishing the cow and treating the cause, not just the udder or symptom. Farmers say helps improve sick cows in a few hours.

**200 Tablets... \$18.95 Postpaid**

Good repeat orders prove that this mastitis treatment works. We also have another excellent natural product to use in combination for very stubborn cases and sick cows. Free literature. Dealerships available for both these becoming popular products.

**Eli Stoltzfus  
 Organic Center  
 717-354-7064**

**217 S. Railroad Ave.  
 New Holland, PA 17557**

## INSULATION

Distributor For  
**R. MAX URETHANE**  
 (4x8 or to your spec)

- ★ FIBERGLASS ROLLS
- ★ BLOWN IN



**WHEELING  
 CHANELDRAIN  
 ROOFING & SIDING**

Colors In Stock

- White
- Brown
- Silo Blue
- Avocado Green
- Plain Galvanized
- Light Green
- Gold
- Tan
- Red

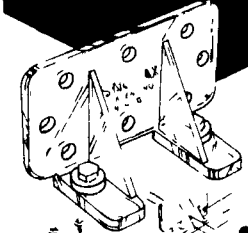
**ETTERVILLE  
 SALES**

RD2, Box 267, East Earl, PA 17519

Call us for low prices -  
 (717) 354-7561



**SNOWJAX**  
 PREVENT SNOWSLIDES!  
 AVOID COSTLY DAMAGE!



SEND \$2 FOR SAMPLE

- INVISIBLE
- INEXPENSIVE
- NO ROOF STAINS
- EASILY INSTALLED

Distributor For  
**ALUMAX ALUMINUM  
 ROOFING & SIDING**

**COMPLETE POLE &  
 OTHER BUILDINGS  
 TRUSSES**

