

Home improvements may be wave of the future

YORK — Spring thaws bring thoughts of new and new-old houses to many would-be homeowners. Realtors, contractors and home improvement specialists are stepping up their visibility to capitalize on the seasonal interest. According to Joan Lamberson, Extension home economist, this year, the home improvement field may be more active than new home buying.

"If the trend to improve includes you, evaluate your neighborhood, your home, and your skills before you join the ranks of the improvers," says Phyllis Marcus, Extension housing specialist at Penn State.

Investing \$10,000 in an older home with a current market value of \$40,000 makes little sense if most of the homes in your neighborhood are valued at a lower figure. However, if the neighborhood shows signs of change and some residents are making home improvements, investing in an older home could be a wise use of housing dollars.

Ask a reputable contractor to evaluate your home for remodeling possibilities and costs before you begin. Check wiring, plumbing, heating, and op-

portunities to make the house more energy efficient. These may not be the glamorous changes you have in mind, but there is no point in having the latest kitchen or the perfect family room if the working parts of your house do not function as they should.

Once you are ready for the changes you can see, concentrate

LANSDALE — All pygmy goat breeders and fanciers are invited to attend a special organizational meeting for the Mid-Atlantic Pygmy Goat club and an area 4-H Pygmy Goat Club. The meeting will be held Thursday, May 17th at 7:30 p.m. at the Montgomery County 4-H Center in Lansdale.

The goal is to establish a National Pygmy Goat Association affiliate club for adults and a 4-H club program for youth ages 8-19. According to Montgomery County 4-H Coordinator, Nancy Kadwill, these groups will help breeders to provide and share information on goat management, encourage the breeding and sale of goats that conform to breed standards and to promote the joy of pygmy goat

first on those that add value to your home such as a modern kitchen or a second bath.

You might even take a hint from the great room of the New American home and convert several small rooms into one large, airy, multi-purpose room for entertaining and comfortable living.

And then there's the question of skills. If you have home-building

abilities or the time and interest to learn them, by all means follow the wave of the future and do it yourself. However, if your schedule is busy, if you have health problems, or if you are not "handy" you'll need help.

Home contracting has turned into big business. Not all firms are large, but more and more of them

are entering the field all the time. Ask your friends and neighbors for names of reputable builders and contractors. Ask for references and take the time to see samples of their work before you sign on the dotted line. Always put agreements and costs in writing. It is important for both you and the contractor to sign the agreement before any work begins.

Mid-Atlantic Pygmy Goat Club to organize

ownership. Future aims include educational programs, promotional efforts and possible local NPGA sanctioned shows.

A 4-H project book has been developed in Montgomery County and is currently being used in 16 states. Kadwill says that pygmy goats can be an excellent 4-H project since they help young people learn the responsibility and fun of animal ownership. In addition, pygmy goats are smaller and therefore easier to handle and require less room than larger livestock. Through 4-H involvement young people also learn self-confidence, leadership and management skills.

Penn State Extension Service offers programs on a non-

discriminatory basis to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, creed, National origin or age.

The 4-H Center is located near Lansdale on Snyder Road off Rt. 363 (Valley Forge Road) between

Allentown Road and Sunnyside Pike. For more information or directions please contact Nancy Kadwill at the Cooperative Extension Service office (215-277-0574).

Franklin County seeks contestants

MERCERSBURG — All single young women between the ages of 16 and 22 and from a farm background are eligible to compete for the title of 1984 Franklin County Dairy Princess.

The winner of the Dairy Princess pageant, to be held June 9 at Kauffman's Community Center at 7 p.m. will be eligible to vie for the title of Pennsylvania Dairy Princess.

Twenty-six state princesses and

hundreds of county princesses have served as spokesmen for the dairy industry in Pennsylvania. They appear in shopping malls, fairs, supermarkets and on radio and television to educate consumers about the dairy farmer's product.

Young women interested in entering the Franklin County contest should contact Phil Wagner at Franklin County Extension Office by May 25.

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