

Time off school

BY DONNA McCONAUGHEY
Staff Correspondent

Can you imagine the Pennsylvania Farm Show without 4-H and FFA exhibitors? There would be no naming of the grand champion steer to draw the news media. Keystone Farmer Degrees would have to be presented on the weekend. No 4-H'ers would demonstrate their skills at the Penn State exhibit. 4-H and FFA members would not even be able to visit as spectators.

What about no youth exhibitors at KILE? The junior dairy show would have to be scheduled during the summer months as would the national 4-H horse show.

If you think these changes are not possible, just talk to 4-H and FFA members or their parents in Texas and Oklahoma. In these two states there are restrictions on the number of days children may be absent from school due to participation in "outside of school" events.

Oklahoma young people are limited to ten days per year for 4-H and FFA events with a maximum of 8 days per semester for all events. This includes all events that take the young person out of school. Even school-sponsored events count. Think of music events, field trips, vo-tech activities, Future Business Leader of America contests, sports activities, and the infinite number of programs young people become involved in.

The only way to gain exception to this rule is to have the particular event approved by the state's

Board of Education which requires much lobbying to influence legislators to pressure the Board of Education for approval.

If you are thinking "It will never happen here," think again. With the current emphasis on evaluation of our school systems, this is a prime time for just such activity.

I learned of this situation during a conversation with the father of one of the Jersey Queen contestants at the national contest. Although very willing to discuss the problem, this man talked with tears in his eyes. He realizes first hand what it will mean to his family and the 4-H program he supports.

"I just did not believe we would ever see it happen. I knew about the Texas ruling but I did not do anything. My daughter is here for the contest, but if she wins, I don't know how we will ever arrange for her to stay for the shows," he said.

He went on to say that his daughter missed exhibiting at two events this year and would not be able to attend the National 4-H Congress as a delegate unless she was granted an exception.

The Oklahoma Board of Education was then considering granting an exception for the National 4-H Congress and the National FFA Convention. However, they will not consider national livestock and dairy shows, judging contests, or other national exhibitions.

It does sound unbelievable, but it could very easily be a reality on the east coast soon. Let's not allow

this to become another one of those issues that we do not do anything about until the final decisions are being made.

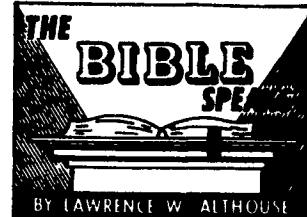
Parents, when your children attend a 4-H or FFA event do you ever tell the teachers, principal, or superintendent what was involved in the event? Do they have any perception of the educational value of the event? When national shows are involved, try explaining the process that has taken place for your child to reach this level of competition.

Follow-up is just as important. Be proud and teach your children to be proud of awards won. Most elementary classes have show and tell time when young exhibitors can talk about the event they participated in. Even if school days are not missed a talk about a 4-H project can be educational for the entire class.

FFA advisors and 4-H leaders need to plan to meet the challenge of educating the educational system regarding the value of their program and related events.

This is one issue we cannot afford to forget. It is still not too late to follow up on your child's absence from school for Farm Show. Educators are well aware of the need to stay current in their field. Tell them how attendance at Farm Show is similar to attending a seminar where the latest advances in agricultural engineering and technology, the current trends in selecting livestock, and products and knowledge needed to operate a business in agriculture are presented.

Farm Show without those blue FFA jackets and livestock barns full of kids "learning by doing" — imagine it!



OPEN YOUR EYES!
February 3, 1985

Background Scripture:

John 9

Devotional Reading:

John 8:48-59.

On the surface, John 9 seems to be about a blind man and Jesus who heals him. But, when we delve more deeply into this chapter, we find that, much more important than the young man's physical blindness, it is the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees that concerns John. Ultimately, the young man born blind was able to see both physically and spiritually and recognize Jesus as the Light of the world. But the Pharisees were the ones who were truly blind. Although their eyes were wide open, their hearts were closed and they could not really "see" that Jesus is the light.

AN ACT OF WILL

One might be tempted to chalk up the Pharisees reaction as simply a difference of opinion over the young man's healing. But, when we look at the data, it is apparent that their skepticism was in the nature of a willful act. In order to be that skeptical, they had to work at rejecting what their eyes saw. If they were spiritually blind, they were blind by choice.

That sounds like a very harsh judgement, but I believe it sometimes applies to us, too. Sometimes, we can continue to

disbelieve and doubt only by working at it very hard.

Consider the Pharisees in John 9. One thing that certainly blinded them was their preoccupation with the sins of others. Finding the young man who had been healed by Jesus, they demand, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner" (9:24). When the young man tried to reason with them, they angrily retorted, "You were born in sin, and would you teach us?" (9:34). They were deeply concerned about the sins of others. In fact, we might say they were blinded by that concern.

NOT FROM GOD

A second reason they were spiritually blind is that they were obsessed with determining where or from whom Jesus had come. "We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from" (9:29). In another encounter, they voice the same concern: "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the sabbath" (9:16). The implication is that Jesus is from Satan, although at this point they only suggest it.

Strangely enough, we are still often obsessed with our conclusion to know where someone is "from." Some Christians worry today that some good works might be merely counterfeit works of the Devil. To them, the young man's reply is most applicable: "You do not know where he comes from and yet he opened my eyes...If this man were not from God, he could do nothing" (9:30,33).

Indignantly, the Pharisee demand of Jesus: "Are we also blind?" Jesus answers with neither a "yes" or a "no." Instead he challenges them to open their eyes so that they might see the light. It is a challenge he still makes to us today.

Phil Donahue talks to ag experts

BY SALLY BAIR
Staff Correspondent

Perhaps it was coincidence, but the day after Laura Heuser told guests at the Pennsylvania Cornucopia that they need to get organized to have a voice in the political arena, Phil Donahue's daily television program featured American agriculture, with Pennsylvania Farmers Association President Keith Eckel as one of the panel of experts.

At one point in the far-ranging discussion Donahue said, quite candidly, "You are fragmented.

You have no political clout. It sounded like a replay of Heuser's speech. Furthermore, he was right. As he allowed the panel, callers and the studio audience to comment, it was evident that there is a wide diversity in thinking about just what agriculture needs in this troubled time.

Along with Eckel, there was the president of the American Agriculture Movement in Missouri, a Texas farmer and the son of a farmer who committed suicide when he was forced to sell the family farm. The audience

consisted of consumers and farmers of all kinds.

Although there was a lot of talk of farm subsidies and the part they play, Eckel was quick to point out that 50 percent of agriculture has no subsidy. Consumers seemed sympathetic to the farmers' plight, but were left wondering just who is getting the money.

No consensus could be derived from the comments made on that nationwide TV show, but it was evident that the two percent of the population who are farming do not have a single voice as to what should occur during this all-important year of writing a new farm bill.

over long periods of time risk a disabling disease called "farmer's lung." As the dust accumulates in the lungs the tissue hardens. This can lead to a variety of respiratory ailments including bronchitis and tuberculosis. If the condition is not diagnosed soon enough, irreversible lung damage may occur.

Preventing farmer's lung doesn't require any elaborate or expensive equipment...a simple mask when dust can't be avoided...for example when handling dry bedding, sweeping dusty walls or walks or grinding and mixing feed.

Keeping the overall level of dust down is also helpful. Therefore as soon as feed sacks or chemical containers are emptied they should be discarded. Regular housecleaning of work areas is another good idea. Not only will the area look better...you'll feel better without all that dust in your lungs.

(Turn to Page A34)

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent
Phone 717 394-6051



To Transfer Silage

Many temporary silos were used last fall to store the real good corn crop that was harvested. Our Agronomy Specialists tell us that any silage to be moved from a temporary storage to an upright storage should be done in cold weather. When moved in warm weather (over 40°F) there will be more changes of heating and molding. Make the transfer in cold

weather and do it as rapidly as possible. No additives or preservatives should be needed in this process. By transferring to the upright silo, you can utilize the mechanical feeding equipment in your upright silo.

To Protect Your Lungs

Be it in the coal mines or on the farm...dust can destroy lungs. Farmers who are exposed to dust



Saturday, February 2

Ephrata Area Young Farmer's Banquet, 6:45 p.m., Mt. Airy Fire Hall.

Pre-Teen Retreat Program for parents and 4-H leaders, Bradford County Extension, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sunday, February 3

Del. Valley Milk Goat Association panel discussion on normal and problem birthing of goat kids. Boyertown Municipal Building, 1 p.m.

Monday, February 4

York County Swine Producers Seminar, 4-H Center, Bair Station, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, February 5

Chester County Cattleman's program, 7:30 p.m. at Owen J. Roberts High School, Pottstown.

Family Living Advisory Committee meeting at Bradford County Extension office; 10 a.m. to noon.

Montgomery County Sheep Producer's Meeting, "Lambing the Ewe and You," 7:30 p.m., Western Montgomery County Vo-Tech School.

Wednesday, February 6

Lancaster County Dairy Reproduction Workshop (by reservation) at Farm and Home Center; 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sheep Producers meeting, Cumberland County extension office, Carlisle, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 7

Delmarva Corn and Soybean Conference, 9:15 a.m. at Wicomico Youth and Civic Center, Salisbury, Md.

Regional Small Fruits Meeting, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Biglerville Fruit Research Lab.

Lancaster County Beef and Sheep Club Banquet, Farm and Home Center at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, February 8

Regional Manure Conference, Berks County Ag Center, Reading, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Lancaster-Chester Swine Producers Banquet, Blue Ball Fire Hall, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 9

Cumberland County Holstein Banquet, Penn Township Fire Hall, Hantsdale.

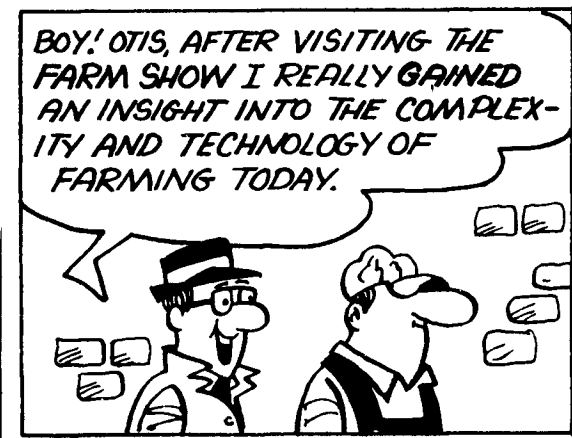
Wednesday, February 13

1985 Winter Tree Fruit Meeting, Rutter's Restaurant, formerly Avalong's, east York, intersection of Route 30 and Route 24 (Mt. Zion Exit).

Hydroponic Vegetable Conference, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, 9:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.
York County Commercial Tree Fruit Growers meeting, 9:40 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Rutter's Restaurant.

Thursday, February 14

Atlantic Breeders Co-op, Northern Lancaster 1, Blue Ball Fire Hall, 7 p.m.



DANE CARPENTER