

4-H Computer project

EBENSBURG - When people think of 4-H, they think of cows and cooking and computers and... Computers? That's right. Pennsylvania is one of the first states to offer a new project that acquaints young people with microcomputers.

"The 4-H members are genuinely interested in computers," says Teresa Wilson, a volunteer leader from Cambria County. "They don't take the project just to kill time."

Mrs. Wilson taught the first level of the project in which 4-H'ers learn the parts of a computer. They learn to turn it on, to use the computer as a calculator and to load programs.

Mrs. Wilson and others who taught the project felt it was well organized. Developed by the University of Kentucky's Agricultural Engineering Department, the project's objectives are to make 4-H'ers and their families aware of the computer's many uses and its impact on their lives. The project allows them to use computers for "more than playing Pac-Man," says one leader.

After completing the introductory project, members can take a second project to learn to execute simple commands; write, read and run a program; and design a flow chart. In Project III, members plan and write programs using flow charts, variables, loops, arrays and other computer functions.

Pennsylvania was one of 10 states selected to pilot the project. "Starting a national 4-H project in this way is unusual," says Cindy Kauffman, state 4-H program assistant, who coordinated the project in Pennsylvania. "Most projects are prepared by Extension specialists or individual states," she added.

Five Pennsylvania counties participated in the pilot project. The 65 4-H members completing the project ranged in age from 8 to 17. Volunteer leaders included computer science graduates, a farmer who owned a home computer and a junior high school teacher.

Some leaders limited their groups to four to six members because of a lack of computers. Facilities were often a problem since the project is most successful when each member has his or her own computer to work with. Some leaders offered their own computers or used one at the local Extension office. One teacher used the computers at her school, while another used those at a nearby Penn State branch campus.

Some leaders felt the project moved too

slowly or that the visual aids in the project book were not helpful to members. Others felt it needed programs of more interest to the members.

Some leaders, like Mrs. Wilson, modified the project on their own. If the members weren't interested on how much feed a herd of cows ate, Mrs. Wilson wrote a program for something they were interested in. She also said she slowed down the project somewhat and had to review sections with her younger members before beginning a new lesson.

All members, leaders and Extension staff involved with the

project were asked to evaluate it. Their evaluations have been compiled with those of participants in the other nine states, and used by the developers at the University of Kentucky to revise the project. The State 4-H Office expects to receive the final project soon, says Kauffman.

In Pennsylvania, 214 members enrolled in the project this year. Those involved in Pennsylvania's pilot project feel that the project has great potential in the 4-H program. As Mrs. Wilson stated, "Computer knowledge is something everyone's going to need and these kids realize it now."



A crowd of 11,000 attended the Baltimore Blast's second annual "Milk Night" at the Baltimore Civic Center and cheered members of WIYY 98 Rock as they competed in a cow milking contest during halftime of the indoor soccer game.

Morning deejays Bob Lopez and Alan Courduff (center left and center right) received engraved miniature cow milking stools for competing in the contest. Pictured with them are afternoon deejay Chris Emry (far left), who provided the color commentary, and Maryland Dairy Princess Tara Woodfield, the official cow milking contest judge.

GLICK STRUCTURES

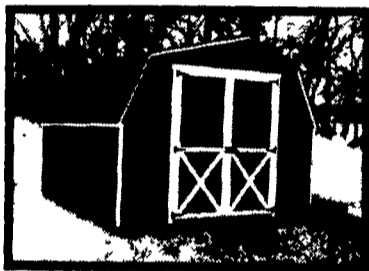
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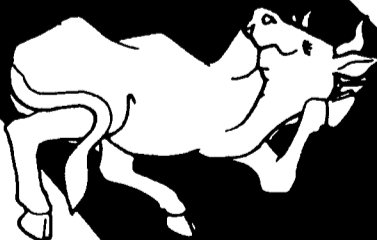
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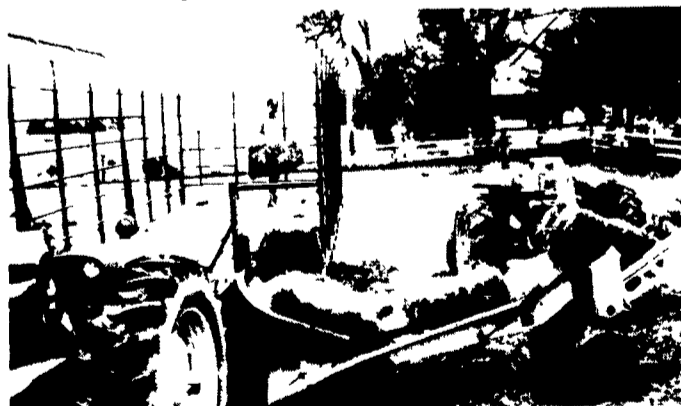
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