

Lancaster youth get a taste of travel

BY SUZANNE KEENE

LANCASTER — Long months of planning paid off last week for a group of Lancaster County 4-H'ers who traveled to Bay County, Michigan as the first part of an exchange program.

Sixteen 4-H'ers and three adult chaperons flew into Detroit last week and spent several days exploring the area and enjoying the hospitality of the Michigan 4-H'ers who opened their homes to the Lancaster youths.

Next year, Lancaster County 4-H'ers will return the favor by showing the Michigan 4-H'ers Lancaster County.

"It's a big education for the kids to see what the rest of the world is like," Lancaster 4-H agent Zoann Parker said. And, she added, exchange trips offer an opportunity to "see how other 4-H groups work."

Planning for the trip began last January, when members of the Exchange Club, led by Paul and Orpha Strausbaugh of Manhiem, selected areas they would like to visit. The group chose the deep south, west and middle America, then followed up by contacting 4-H groups in each area. The Michigan group responded to the Lancaster 4-H'ers' inquiries with an invitation to visit them, and the trip plans began.

The group held two fundraisers — a food stand at a farm sale and a pizza sale — to raise travel money, Zoann said. The fundraisers were so successful that each 4-H'er who traveled to Michigan had to contribute only \$38 for the week-long trip.

During their stay the Lancaster teens had ample opportunity to scrutinize the area.

"We were impressed by the straight roads," club leader Paul Strausbaugh noted. Land usage is very organized with 640 acres to a section and six square miles to a township. Drainage ditches run into larger ditches that run parallel to the roads and into lakes and rivers, he continued.

The main crops in the county were navy beans and sugar beets. Paul's wife and club co-leader, Orpha Strausbaugh, was impressed with the size of the barns, which are much smaller than the large dairy barns here. The barns are smaller, she explained, because the navy bean farmers do not have to store their crop. The companies that purchase their crops come to the farm to harvest the beans and take them the same day.

The Strausbaughs' two children,



This group of Lancaster County 4-H'ers traveled to Bay County, Michigan last week to get a look at how people in other parts of the country live.



One day of the trip was devoted to a tour of Frankenmuth, a German Bavarian town that featured great shopping. Here a glockenspiel clock portrays the story of the Pied Piper.

Matthew, 16, and Amy Jo, 14, also went on the trip. Amy Jo especially enjoyed a trip to Frankenmuth, a German Bavarian town that offers excellent shopping. While in Frankenmuth, the visitors saw a glockenspiel clock that told the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

But while she enjoyed this town the most, Amy Jo also had fun fishing for perch in Lake Huron. And, like her parents, she was impressed with the area's straight roads.

A member of the Elm-Penryn and Mastersonville Clubs, Amy Jo said she came home with a new appreciation for the 4-H leadership here. "The leadership in Pennsylvania is really good," she noted.

Another member of the Elm-Penryn Club, Kevin Hess enjoyed horseback riding and canoeing in Michigan. His host family, the Lynches, had two horses, and he rode them in the family's meadow. The canoe trip on the Rifle River was a group activity planned and led by Matt Strausbaugh. They were treated to an overnight trip to

Mackinaw Island by their host family. Dale Roberts and his daughter Tammy, showed their Lancaster County guests this remote island where there is no motorized transportation.

Julie said the group also toured the Dow Chemical Plant, where many Bay Countians work.

She enjoyed having the opportunity to see how people in other areas live. "They never drank water," she noted. "They drank soda — and they called it pop."

The Michigan hosts made sure their guests got to visit the area's Corn Festival and Farm Show. The Corn Festival, held in Alburn, consists mostly of rides, gambling and beer tents, Orpha Strausbaugh noted, while the Farm Show is more like our county fairs, only much smaller.

While the 4-H'ers said they enjoyed their trip, most seemed happy to be back home in Lancaster County. However, they would be leaving periodically as they plan 4-H's annual overnight trips with

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