

# The Dairy Business

By  
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## Return of Halley's Comet

There is just a little bit of superstitious nature in all of us. I find it comforting to leave a little of my fantasy to the "signs" of nature, and forget about real science for awhile.

All my life I have looked forward to 1986 and the return of Halley's

Comet. I have searched the journals of science and read books about the heavenly phenomenon that have fired the imagination of people down through the ages.

With the exception of the Christmas Star, none have received more attention than

Halley's Comet, especially since Halley proved that it is the same one that appeared every 76 years for several thousand years of recorded history.

I bought a pair of binoculars last fall, just to be prepared. They are pretty powerful, 10 to 25 power, with 50mm objectives. I have been observing the Comet on every clear night since early December, and have tracked its progress across the constellations. It changes position slowly but surely, on its way toward the sun.

There is nothing very spectacular about the appearance of Halley's right now. It is just a faint glow of light, a ball much larger than a star's point of light, but still very fuzzy looking.

The tail is very faint, probably because we are only able to see it head-on as it approaches the sun. It would not inspire any excitement this time around, even if it could be seen with the naked eye.

But the fact that it has returned as predicted, is in itself cause for excitement and conjecture. The last appearance was in 1910, and my older sister who is now in her

84th year, remembers the excitement that it caused then, even though she was only 7 years old. She is one of those privileged few who will see it twice in their lifetimes.

The ancients looked at the night sky more than we do. They slept among the stars, and became intimate with every constellation and observed the movements of planets. Of course, they noticed immediately when a new one appeared in the sky, and comets always caused a stir.

They attributed many events on the earth to the movements of the heavenly bodies, and developed many hypotheses, myths and metaphors which related life on earth to the heavens. They didn't know as much about the scientific facts, but they knew much more about how those heavenly lights affected their lives.

Some of that superstition still exists in our modern culture. My father liked to dig fence posts in the dark of the moon, so they would stay down. Also, wood shingles should be applied only during the "down sign", and potatoes and

garden root crops planted in the same sign. Most above ground crops thrived best in the more favorable "up sign". Just consult Baer's Almanac, 1986, for all the proper details.

Now I don't for one moment actually believe that the return of Halley's Comet portends anything bad or good for me personally. I'm just glad for the chance to observe it, even with binoculars.

But it might be fun to conjecture that the Comets' appearance in 1986 is a good sign for all of us. With all the negative signs that seem to be facing farmers right now, we need something to cause us to look upward and be glad.

Look for the light, even if it is hard to see. You might discover something very beautiful that you never saw before.

The planet Jupiter is visible in the west, and with good binoculars you can see four of its moons. The constellation Orion is high in the East, and the beautiful glow of the nebula in Orion's sword is spectacular. The night sky is gorgeous, even to the unassisted and uneducated eye.

Halley's Comet has made me look at the heavens with more reverence and introspection. Nothing that happens on this earth will ever change the heavens. The changes that occur there are Eternal and out of our hands. But they arouse hope and cheer when we take time to look up and wonder at their glory.

## Lancaster tobacco winners named

LANCASTER — The Annual Lancaster County Tobacco Show was held at the Farm and Home Center Wednesday, Jan 8. The show, which is sponsored by the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, is a preliminary event to Farm Show competition.

Don Rohrer, Lancaster, received the Pennsylvania type championship and Timothy Breneman, Millersville, received the top smoking leaf honor.

Judges for this year's show were Jeffrey Ranch, Domestic Tobacco; Stanley Goldstaff, General Cigar, both of Lancaster. Below are the top five placings in each class.

### Wrappers

1. Donald Rohrer, 2. Dawn Rohrer, 3. Roger Rohrer, 4. Kandy Rohrer, 5. Judy L. Witmer.

### Filler

1. Sallie Burkholder, 2. Bob Burkholder, 3. Raymond Burkholder, 4. Gary R. Neff, 5. Lois Burkholder.

### Binders

1. Kevin Bauman, 2. Donald Rohrer, 3. Roger Rohrer, Kandy Rohrer, 5. Gary R. Neff.

### Bottom one-third

1. Christopher Neff, 2. Neff Brothers, 3. Gary R. Neff, 4. Kandy Rohrer, 5. Robert Miller.

### Middle

1. Timothy S. Breneman, 2. Robert Miller, 3. Roger Miller, 4. Brian Barley, 5. Kandy Rohrer.

### Top one-third

1. Neff Brothers, 2. Jeff Barley, 3. Raymond Burkholder, 4. Kevin Bauman, 5. Gary Neff.

### Vocational Agriculture Classes

#### Wrapper

1. Mike Cassel, 2. Laurie Barley, 3. Steven Sensenich, 4. Tobin Shank, 5. Jeff Hollinger.

#### Filler

1. Steve Sensenich, 2. Tobin Shank, 3. Tony Bitts, 4. Eric Herr, 5. Rick Hess.

#### Pa. Grown Smoking - Bottoms

1. Becky Barley, 2. Greg Barley, 3. Tony Bitts, Laurie Barley, 5. Henry Hank.

#### Pa. Grown Smoking - Middles

1. Becky Barley, 2. Tony Bitts, 3. Henry Hank, 4. Laurie Barley, 5. Becky Barley.

#### Champion of Show - Smoking

Becky Barley  
Pa. Grown Smoking - top one third  
1. Greg Barley, 2. Duane Hess, 3. Tony Bitts, 4. Laurie Barley, 5. Henry Hank.



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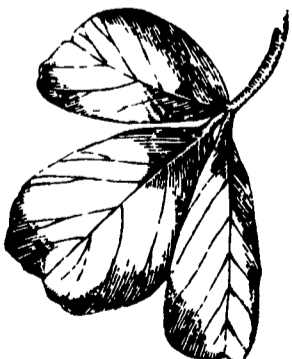
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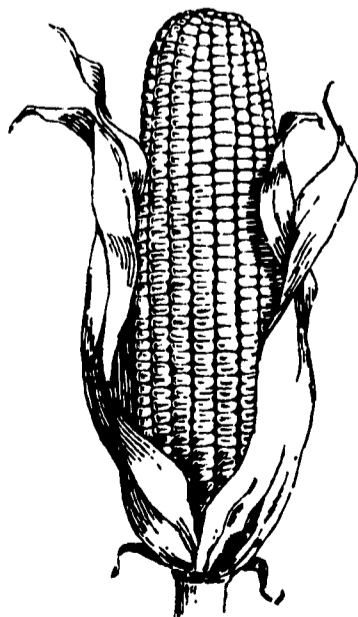
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