



OPINION

The Vo-ag Teacher That Did It For Me

Today through next Saturday is National FFA week, and we salute the more than 420,000 Future Farmers of America members across the nation in 8,200 chapters. And while we sometimes throw these big numbers around, we need to realize that each of these members is an individual person, boy or girl, who has individual talents, personalities and aspirations. But each of these chapters provides the framework for the development and advancement of each of these talents, personalities and aspirations.

Beside the classroom and shop instruction, you often find the vo-ag teacher out on the farm or in the home of the individual student to check on a project or provide a bit of council. Maybe more than any other teacher in our school system, the vo-ag teacher becomes involved in the problems and the triumphs of his students because of the nature of the work.

The theme for the week is "FFA-Leaders For The New Fields of Agriculture". And if this theme is to become a reality, the individual vo-ag teacher will largely be responsible.

In any discussion of FFA, we must of course include the pressures on the program and on the individual instructors. With the reduced emphasis on vo-ag at the

local level because of diminishing farm populations and moneys available, the vo-ag teacher and the administrator in the state office are called upon to do more than should be required of them. Without a doubt, lack of funds has caused a hardship for the FFA program as we know it.

One bright spot is the FFA Foundation, Inc., which has a fund-raising effort to address these needs of FFA. Moneys raised by the foundation are used to fund awards, contests, scholarships, judging teams and leadership activities. All these things that get cut from a local FFA program when money is short.

Yes, any way you look at it, FFA provides an experience for our young people we don't want to lose. And while it often takes a number of years after we are out of school to appreciate our teachers and what they have done for us, we usually end up remembering at least one teacher with affection. One who provides encouragement or reprimand at just the right time. And we would venture to guess that in a few years from now, most of these 420,000 FFA students will find themselves thinking the same thing. They will look back on their high school experience and say, "Yes, it was my vo-ag teacher that did it for me."



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Broadcast Legumes

Alfalfa and red clover growers who are planning to broadcast the seed into a stand of winter wheat or barley should be preparing their seed now. Research and experience have both proven that early March seeding will give the best results. It's the time of year when the ground freezes and thaws frequently, creating a "honeycomb" condition to the top soil. This is an excellent way to give the seeds a light covering of top soil. If the broadcast seeding is made in late March, this condition may not prevail.

The seeds should be of top quality and should be inoculated

with legume bacteria before seeding.

To Mend Pasture Fences

Pastures can provide cattle a lot of good nutritious forage, and they offer cattle a place to get fresh air, exercise and sunlight. Before too long, we will be turning our cattle out to pasture, but let's not turn them out too soon. It's best to let the sod develop and the ground firm up. Spend the time now to fix fences and pick up trash and debris before the grass gets too tall and before you're tied down with spring field work.

It might also be helpful to section off the pasture in order to make best use of the grass. For example, wet areas and flat areas may be fenced off from other areas. This will enable you to keep cows out of wet areas until the ground firms up, and could help prevent the development of foot problems. During the early spring flush of pasture growth, you could keep cattle out of the flat area; save it for hay, and feed it to the cows later in the summer.

To Store Supplies Safely

Many farmers have purchased and accepted early deliveries of seeds, fertilizer and other supplies. Proper storage of these items is important. I have seen bags of fertilizer stored too close to a barn door, or to an open window;

the same with farm seeds. Extra moisture on these materials, or under them on a damp floor, can cause problems.

Also, it is very important to keep seeds away from chemical weed killers. These herbicides may reduce, or kill, the germination of the seeds. Children, pets and livestock should not have access to stored seeds or farm chemicals. All of these materials become more expensive each year. It's only good management to store them carefully.

To Prepare For Dormant Sprays

Many types of trees are infested with various kinds of scale insects. These pests attach themselves to the bark and twigs and shrubs and suck strength from the plant. One of the best treatments is to apply a dormant spray oil before the buds start to open. The date of the spray will vary with the weather. However, on many fruit trees and shrubbery this will be late February and early March. The spray should be applied before the buds open. In addition, a spray during May or June while the insect is in the crawler stage is strongly suggested; materials for this spray can be Malathion or Sevin. Scale insects should be controlled — the way is to use a dormant spray.

The Cooperative Extension Service is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution

meeting, Plumsteadville Firehall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, February 26
Franklin County Estate Planning for Farm Families, County Administration Building, Chambersburg, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Lancaster County Conservation Tillage Day, Farm and Home Center, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"Smart Farm Decisions" workshop, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 9:30 a.m. to noon.
Estate Planning seminar, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.

Small Grains/Soybeans meeting, Dover High School ag room, 7:30 p.m.

Ephrata Area Young Farmers meeting, Pole Buildings and Farm Shops tour. Meet in parking lot outside Ephrata High School ag shop at 9:15 a.m.

Dairy meeting, "Milk Market Update," Hunterdon County Extension Center, 8 p.m.

Wayne County Sheep and Wool Growers Association annual meeting, Belmont Corners Firehall, Pleasant Mount. Dinner reservations requested.

Friday, February 27
Swine Finishing meeting, Rothville Firehall, 8:45 a.m.

Small Grains/Soybeans meeting, John Marsteller Farm, Stewartstown, 10 a.m.

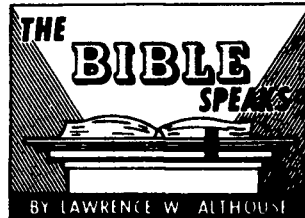
Grassland FFA Chapter, Garden Spot High School donkey basketball game, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 28
Chesapeake Bay Conference, Gettysburg College.

Berks 4-H Leader/Member Breakfast, Berks 4-H Center, 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Woodland Conference, Cook College, New Brunswick.

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THE FIRST AND THE LAST
February 22, 1987

Background Scripture: Revelation 1.

Devotional Reading: Revelation 21:1-4.

Some twenty years ago I was part of a team of American churchmen who were visiting congregations of the German Evangelische Kirche (Protestant Church) in Bavaria. One night, I was assigned to stay with a family in Nuremburg and I remembered that, as I got into bed, I was feeling considerable anxiety about several things related to the tour.

In the middle of the night, I was awakened — or so I thought — by the awareness that someone was in the darkness of my room. He was standing at the foot of my bed and suddenly my bed began to vibrate as if he were shaking it with great power. As this was happening, I realized that the "person" was Christ. I didn't dare look directly at him, but I heard him say in a commanding voice, "Fear not!" The vibrations stopped and I realized I was once again alone.

A DREAM?

"Was I dreaming?" I asked myself. "No, it was no dream," I told myself. "It was all too real — I felt the bed shake and I heard the voice." Or did I? Perhaps it was a dream, but it didn't "feel" like a dream. (Later, I was to learn that very often in the Bible, the writers use the same word for either a

"vision" or a "night dream.")

That was a long time ago that I had my dream or my vision (take your pick), but I remember it vividly and I recall that it gave me the confidence to rise above the challenges that had been making me feel anxious. In the midst of my fears, God had somehow reassured me that he was in charge, not only of my life, but of all life.

God's messages of reassurance may come to us in many, many different ways, but we all have times in our lives when we need them. We need to know that, although everything seems to be falling apart, God is holding the world together and me along with it. "Fear not!" is the message he sends us in times such as these. We may not always hear that message or recognize it if we hear it, but I am convinced he sends it.

This is what the Book of Revelation was in the early days of the Christian Church — a message from God saying to the church in the middle of persecution: "Fear not! I'm in charge!" That was exactly what the early Christians had to hear, because, from what they could see with their eyes, powerful men and nations, not God, were in charge of the world. But the visions of John were given him to promise them that beyond what they could see with their physical eyes, there were realities that can be seen only in dreams and visions.

ALPHA AND OMEGA

John saw a vision in which he first heard a voice speaking to him and then saw a person "like a son of man." John says, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand upon me, saying, 'Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades'" (Revelation 1:17,18).

There are many times in life when we need to be reassured that Christ is, as John wrote, "Alpha and Omega," "the first and the last." We need to know that he is both before and after everything in life. Before adversities come, he is on the scene, determining the course of history. And after our anxieties have come and gone, Christ will still be here and at the end of time itself. He is, in every human situation, both the first word and the last word. Principalities and powers may hold sway for a while, but, in the long run, it is Christ who has the world in his hands.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, February 21
York County 4-H Alumni Night, 4-H Center, 7:30 p.m.

Cumberland Valley Cooperative Annual Meeting, Shippensburg Senior High School. Luncheon, 11:30 a.m., business meeting, 1 p.m.

Monday, February 23
Pa. Game Bird Conference, Keller Building, Penn State University; continues through tomorrow.

Cumberland Cooperative Sheep and Wool Growers Annual Meeting, S. Middleton Firehall, Boiling Spring, 7 p.m.
Fayette County Agronomy Day, Pesticide Update, Fairgrounds.

N.J. Vegetable Meeting, Hope Grange. Call Warren Co. 475-8000 Extension 657 for details.

Tuesday, February 24
W. Pa. Turf Conference and Trade Show, Pittsburgh Expo Mart/Marriott Hotel, Monroeville.

Berks County Cattlemen's Association meeting, Berks Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.
Vegetable Producers meeting, Shippensburg Valley Bank, Shippensburg, 9 a.m.

Farm Management Series, Cumberland County Extension Building, Carlisle, 12:30 p.m.

Pa. Holstein Convention, Wilkes-Barre, Sheraton-Crossgates; continues through Feb. 26.

Central Jersey Nurserymen's meeting, Farmingdale.

Ephrata Area Young Farmers meeting, Vegetable Growing Opportunities, Ephrata High School ag department, 7:45 p.m.

Hamilton Bank Agri-Education Seminar, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

McKean County Crops Day, Seneca Highlands Vo-Tech School, Port Allegany, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 25
York/Lancaster Vegetable Growers meeting, Rutters East York, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Cumberland County Dairy Clinic, Penn Township Firehall, Huntsdale, 9:30 a.m.

Making Smart Decisions Seminar, session 3, Chambersburg.

N.J. Grain and Forage Producers Association Conference and trade show, National Guard Armory, Lawrenceville.

Bucks County Extension annual

