

Chester County Places First in "Take Pride In PA" Contest

WEST CHESTER (Chester Co.) — Chester County Commissioners announced that the County Parks and Recreation Department has been named a first place winner in the 1989 Take Pride in Pennsylvania Awards Program. As a first place winner, the Parks and Recreation Department will automatically be entered in the national awards program, "Take Pride in America," to compete against winners from other states.

The award was presented to the Department at a ceremony in Harrisburg, on December 6, and in turn presented to the Commissioners at their weekly public meeting on December 12.

The Take Pride in Pennsylvania Awards Program is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. The national program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

"Naturally, the Commissioners are pleased that a county project has been recognized to exemplify the Take Pride in Pennsylvania

philosophy", said Commissioners' Chairman, D.T. Marrone. "The Take Pride in America campaign, and its state affiliated awards programs, reflects the partnership of public and private organizations which are committed to ensuring the wise use of the resources which belong to all of us".

The Department won an award in the area of Local Government for the Springton Manor Farm Project, opened in September, 1988. The eight-year project involved the acquisition and restoration of a 300-acre abandoned farm, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and its transformation into a demonstration farm and environmental resource center. The state award specifically recognizes the Department's efforts in the areas of soil conservation, environmental protection and preservation of cultural resources.

"I am pleased at the project's emphasis on promoting agriculture in Chester County", said



This is the side-view of the barn complex on Springton Manor Farm in Chester County.

Commissioner Patricia M. Baldwin. "The Springton Manor Farm project not only interprets the role of farming in the county's development, but stresses its importance for the future."

The 300-acre Springton Manor Farm property in Wallace Township, was acquired by Chester County in 1980. The entire site was placed on the National Historic Register that year. From that time through September 1988, the County embarked on a restoration plan guided by the Springton Manor Farm Master Plan, completed in 1982, and financed by over \$1 million in private gifts and federal and state grants.

A conservation plan, by the U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service, entailing over two miles of storm water diversions, a 1/2 mile grass drainage swale and over three miles of tile drainage systems was completed. Erosion

ditches were repaired; some fence rows and many huge boulders were removed from fields; and contour farming and strip cropping practices were instituted.

Springton's building restoration program began in early 1981. New roofs were placed on most structures through both private contract and Department staff. All buildings were stabilized to prevent further deterioration, and at present, 80% have been fully restored. The Department anticipates that over 90% of the restoration will be completed by the end of 1991.

Extensive work including pasture restoration and improvements to the barns and outbuildings to handle farm animals was completed. A new two-lane road system, replacing the old farm lane, and parking lots were constructed. Farm animals were purchased in early 1988, and an animal man-

agement program guides in the purchase, breeding and sale of farm animals.

Springton Manor Farm became part of the Wallace Township Agricultural Security Area on August 16, 1989. This was the 17th Agricultural Security Area to be adopted in Chester County as part of the county's continuing commitment toward farmland preservation. Since that time, four additional Agricultural Security Areas have been adopted, giving Chester County nearly 52,000 acres so designated.

Chester County now possesses the greatest number of Agricultural Security Areas in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Department is continuing its restoration efforts and subject to funding, will concentrate its work on the Environmental Education Center to be placed in the 'L' wing of the Great Barn.

Lebanon County Tractor Safety Club

The Lebanon County 4-H Tractor Safety Club once again is gearing up for this year's program. Fran Bushong of Lebanon, organizational leader for the club, states that this year's program will start Tuesday, January 2, at 7:15 p.m. at the county Extension office in Room 12 of the Municipal Building. At the meeting, Extension engineering agent Pat Ritchie will demonstrate tractor roll-over simulation and speak to the group on the importance of farm safety. All are invited to attend. The 4-H Tractor program gives youth an opportunity to "learn by doing."

The course, which would be particularly beneficial to youth operating lawn and garden tractors as well as farm implements, will meet on consecutive Monday nights from 7:15-8:15 p.m. starting January 15, 1990. At the meeting members will learn that better, and safe, tractor care results in longer tractor life, more power, and lower operating costs. Because 4-H'ers will learn how to do many small but important tractor maintenance jobs, they will get

better production from farm units and will cut down on costly breakdowns.

While learning to care for tractors, 4-H'ers should also learn how to be a safe operator. Another important goal of this program is to help form good safety habits so operators can think and act safely at all times.

Equally important with learning tractor care and safety is the 4-H goal of helping members to become a sound-thinking citizen. The training they receive will be very beneficial to them throughout their lifetime.

Anyone interested in working on a farm this summer should become a certified tractor operator. One segment of the 4-H Tractor Program, the Occupational Hazard Course, offers 13- and 14-year-olds the training required to be certified to operate farm machinery. This is the only time this course and examination will be offered.

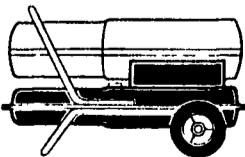
For questions, contact Fran Bushong at 867-2071 or Ken Winebark at 274-2801, Ext. 350.



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