

Behind The Scenes At Penn State Exhibit

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DAUPHIN (Dauphin Co.) — They're back at their desks piled high with phone calls that need to be returned, days of accumulated mail, plus all the other projects that were put on hold during the days at Farm Show.

Some of the Penn State exhibit staff dedicated eight days to keeping the exhibit functioning; others were able to be there only one day,

but no matter how many days or hours each individual spent at the Farm Show—they were working!

Like the sales people at the other exhibits the Penn State staff was there to sell. Their product? Education.

As Penn State employees and students, whether at University Park or extension staff from various counties, their mission was the same: to meet and educate individuals on how to improve their life and their community. Passersbys could learn facts about the College

of Agriculture—including a surprising factor that only 15 students out of 100 at the college grew up on a farm!

By using a computer test, hundreds of people learned about chemicals in the home. Workers noted how much easier it was for the younger generation to operate the "user friendly" computer while others preferred to take hand-outs and talk to the "experts" about safe ways to dispose of hazardous wastes.

Although the beeping of correct answers from the Food Safety quiz board was irritating at the beginning of each day by the end, the staff was able to block out the noise.

Participants faces lit up when they pushed the correct button. If participants pushed the wrong button, staff helped quizzers understand why they may have answered wrong.

It was always very evident when farm safety experts were preparing for another tractor safety demonstration. Drove of people huddled together to be able to see and hear what they can do to prevent fatal accidents on their tractors.

When the microphone didn't work, the staff shouted the information.

While the primary goal was to educate the public, but much more happened for the staff. For many it was a chance to work with long time friends or cement existing



Beeping noises revealed whether or not participants at the Penn State exhibit chose the right answers for the test.

friendships. However, it was also an opportunity for students to get acquainted with extension agents and specialists. Some had questions about careers while others just wanted to talk to people in the real world.

Sometimes visitors from one of the worker's county would stop by to catch up on the news. Farm Show offered time to share stories with other staff members, exhibitors, and friends from home.

To those readers who thought

your extension agent was on vacation or wondered why your phone call wasn't returned—the explanation is "no" it was not a vacation by any means. By the end of the day there were headaches, backaches, and sighs of relief when the staff's weary heads hit the pillow. Your phone calls will be returned and rest assured many hundreds of people gained a wealth of knowledge because of the staff behind the scenes at the Penn State Exhibit.

Maryland Ag Ed Foundation Holds Baltimore Fundraiser

BALTIMORE, MD — The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation launched its fundraising campaign with a kick-off dinner at Stouffer's Harborplace Hotel in November.

More than 250 people attended the \$50/person fundraiser, which raised more than \$15,000 to promote agricultural education programs throughout the state.

Speakers included Shirley Traxler, director of the "Ag in the Classroom" Program for the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Maryland Lieutenant Governor Melvin Steinberg; and Rev. David Simpson, a Methodist minister and former agriculture teacher.

The speakers emphasized the

importance of agricultural education to let all students know about the importance of agriculture to Maryland's economy and to increase the number of young people who choose agriculture as a career.

The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation was recently established at the request of Gov. William Schaefer to coordinate public and private support for expanded and improved agricultural education in Maryland's schools. Work is currently under way with the Maryland Department of Education to develop curriculum guides for including agricultural concepts in the elementary curriculum.



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