

Delaware Valley Student Writes

Editor's Note:

The following article was submitted for publication by Jennifer Reed, senior agribusiness major, Delaware Valley College at the request of professor, Dr. John Avery.

Can you imagine yourself chaperoning an overnight trip to Washington D.C. with twenty-one college students? Well our instructor, Dr. John Avery, did as part of our Food and Agricultural Policy class. The objective of the trip was to spend two days in D.C. researching a current policy that we were interested in. Then writ-

ing a ten to fifteen page paper on our personal opinion and whether we would endorse the policy or pan the policy. We were to arrange meetings with Senators, Congressmen, Lobbyists, etc. to question them on their position and how they felt about our topics. To us students it sounded like two days of misery.

These two days of dreaded torture turned out to be two of the most educational days of our college career. We researched various topics, a few examples are: The Wetlands of New Jersey, Nutrient Management, International Development and Trade Policy, Effects of Fertilizer and A Beginning Farmer Bill. We found

everyone to be very helpful and quite informative. Our two days in Washington allowed us to see future laws, regulations and policies taking form. Also that there are a lot of potentially good things happening but we, the voting public, need to take a more active role in researching them and then encouraging our elected representatives to support these policies and bills that could be of great benefit to our society.

One of my classmates, Brad Longenecker, met with his Congressman, Mr. Robert Walker, to discuss the subject of Nutrient Management. Congressman Walker stated that he believes strongly "on helping the young farmer and giving aid to the 'small farmer'." Congressman Walker is

a representative for Lancaster Co. PA which is largely a rural, farming based area.

Another classmate, Jill Edwards, met with Mr. Ronald Phillip from The Fertilizer Institute whose organization acts as a lobbyist. They are concerned with preserving quality and quantity of water. Mr. Phillip referred to a past study of water samples that found "Two and one half percent of rural and only one percent of city water had over the standard rate of nitrate..."

Again, these are just a few of the subjects discussed. However it can openly be declared that there is a lot of information out there just waiting to be read and debated. I, as a graduating Agribusiness major from Delaware

Valley College realize how crucial it is to have good, reliable reference people in the Washington area who can assist you in finding the right contacts and information.

If you are a Pennsylvania resident and are interested in contacting your Senators for information on a subject you are concerned about, the following are their Harrisburg addresses:

Senator Arlen Specter, 1159 Fed. Building, Harrisburg, PA 17101; and Senator Harris Wofford, Fed. Square Station, P.O. Box 55, Harrisburg, PA 17108.

Grange

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costs, management, overhead and profit margin.

Depending on the focus of the farmer, the system might include crop management, nutrient management, erosion and sedimentation control and pest management.

A number of other workshops, ranging in topic from abused men and women to recreational opportunities with the Rails to Trails program, were also held for members' benefit.

Legislators from almost every county in the state, senators and representatives, and also some federal representatives, such as George Gekas, attended the banquet and sat with constituent members to discuss, over dinner, issues of concern and to get to know each other better.

"This banquet is our way of saying thank you to the legislature for the hard work they do," said Brenda Shambaugh, Grange legislative director. "It also give our members an ideal opportunity to discuss one-on-one the problems facing them.

Shambaugh addressed the crowd also, covering the Grange's stance on several issues.

Included were such topics as nutrient management legislation which the Grange supports for the protection of farmers and consumers alike.

The Grange also continues to support a bottle bill which would create a return to the bottle deposit. The purpose is to make empties valuable and provide an initiative for their cleanup and proper disposal.

A college loan forgiveness program as an incentive for veterinary and agriculture graduates to stay in Pennsylvania to practice in rural areas, rather than leaving the state for better paying jobs.

According to Shambaugh, the Grange wants to see the passage of HB 1492, which is a rural leadership development program to help elevate the abilities of rural people to take over local leadership.

In addition to other legislative measures supported by the Grange, Shambaugh said the continued cuts of state funds to agriculture is of extreme concern. Of particular concern, she said, is the fact that no appropriations were proposed for the School of Veterinary Science at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania State Grange represents about 35,000 rural people, and was formed shortly after the Civil War as the state's first organized farm movement.

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