

## Enlarged gift house

Recently, Swartz has enlarged the gift house, begun a Morgan horse operation and a carriage ride, and built the "Gem Mill Junction," where visitors can pan for gems at a waterwheel built from material from an old corn barn.

Swartz said he became involved in conducting tours at Circle L after speaking to a local extension agent. The agent "planted a bug" in Swartz's ear, he said. "He said that Penn State has no way to show people anything about agriculture," particularly in this area of the state.

Also, Swartz recently read an article in *Lancaster Farming* ("Rep. Stairs Proposes Mandatory Ag Education," Vern Achenbach, in the May 16 issue). Swartz said he believes that people are becoming agriculturally ignorant.

"Their ag IQ is about zero," he said. "So I thought that these people from the city, I mean, sure, farm people would find my tour probably somewhat boring... but these people from the city, their ag IQ is zero. They know nothing."

## 45-minute tour

The 45-minute tour describes the farm acreage, the history of the land, and the lineage and characteristics of Texas Longhorn cattle.

"Most of these people coming out here, you know, they think, where do you get beef? Where do you get milk? They have no conception of where anything comes from."

Swartz said the tour will be geared to the basics of farming to provide some education into how a cow/calf farm is managed. But Swartz said the ideal tour guide would be a farmer.

"It sure would be nice if we had some farmers to give these tours, though, rather than train a guide to do it," he said. "A guide will just have rote memory, and he'll just say what he's supposed to say." However, according to the veterinarian (who works at the Londonderry Animal Hospital in Middletown), a farmer "can interject little things" about personal experience in farming.

## Simple things

"I don't tell them anything fancy," he said. "Just simple things,

like, animals graze in a pasture. We make hay in this field."

Swartz said the Texas Longhorns have "a lot of attributes that are very durable and very desirable, that carry into other breeds."

Historically, the cattle were introduced into the Southwest by the Spanish. By the 1840s, there were millions of them running at large in the Southwest, according to Swartz. But because they offer a leaner carcass, and weren't as beefy looking as some of the other breeds such as the Herefords, for a time the Longhorns fell into disfavor.

"I think the reasons Texas Longhorns are so popular is because they're highly fertile animals," he said. "They are very easy calvers."

## Used to crossbreed

Swartz said because they provide a smaller calf, Texas Longhorns are used extensively to crossbreed with cattle such as Herefords or Angus.

Swartz said the Texas Longhorns are known for their forageability, also. "On a poor quality forage, they will do very well."

"From what I gather, they are

the lowest fat and cholesterol beef that's known," he said. "Supposedly, their fat and cholesterol is even lower than a skinless piece of chicken."

Swartz said he enjoys giving the tours (which cost \$2.50 for adults and \$1.50 for children) because "I like to teach. It's the teaching instinct in me."

## Appreciation of farming

He said he hopes visitors will

"come away with some understanding and appreciation of farming in America as we know it."

Swartz said he speaks about the area and its many contributions to agriculture.

"I just want them to go away with a little bit, maybe, of Americana. It's like panning for gemstones out there. It's like the caverns. I want them to feel that they've learned something when they get off that wagon."

## Dairy Goat Showcase June 13

LEHIGHTON (Carbon Co.) — The Delaware Valley Milk Goat Association (DVMGA), the oldest organized goat club in Pennsylvania, will be holding their annual Dairy Goat Showcase on Saturday, June 13 at the Carbon County Fairgrounds.

There will be shows for bucks, senior does, and junior does along with the Alpine Specialty Show for District II of the American Dairy Goat Association.

The DVMGA show has been run annually for more than 40 years. More than 200 of the best

dairy goats from five states converge on the fairgrounds to compete for the "Best in Show" honors.

There will be a raffle table with items donated by crafters and business people as well as crafts and goat-related items for sale. A food wagon from Sublet's Catering of Lancaster will be on the premises from morning until close of show.

For more information, contact Joan Stump, show chairman (215) 723-5415 or Lorraine Yankovich (215) 965-9744.



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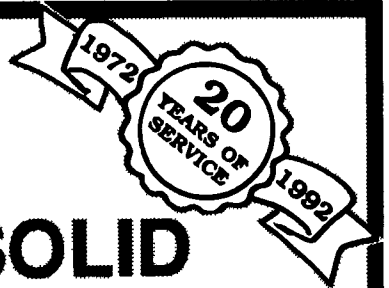
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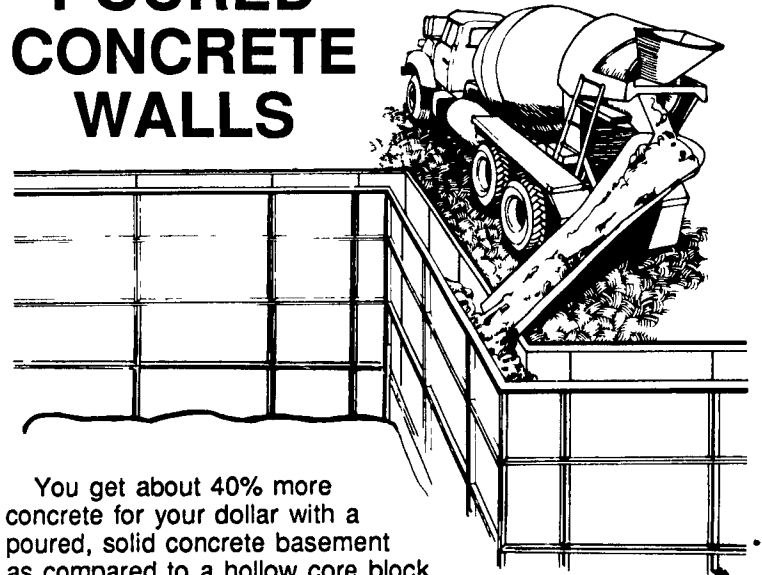
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