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## 4-H'ers Bring Their Love Of Horses, Helping Kids To National Spotlight

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Lancaster Farming Staff  
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — For Spring Younts, the most memorable and cherished moment came when the child, Alexander the Great rode the horse Ivan the Terrible.

No, it's not ancient history which spurs her 4-H horse experience (no pun intended), but the relationship between a handicapped boy and a horse which, for a few moments, meant a lot to the boy.

The love of horses and helping people combined to unite the talents of two Lancaster County 4-H Horse Club members, Spring Younts and Megan East. Spring and Megan will travel this weekend to Louisville, Ky. for the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup.

There, they will compete against at least 35 other teams from across the country in the therapeutic riding contest.

The event culminates many years of showing and demonstrating their talents in the Silver Shoes 4-H Therapeutic Riding Program.

The presentation itself makes use of Killer, the fearless teddy bear (borrowed from Tyrel, Spring's little brother) used to demonstrate rider positions, and shows techniques which aid riders with a wide arrange of needs. Children of all ages who suffer from a range of disabilities are aided by the program.

Spring, 17, daughter of Melodee and Richard Younts, New Providence, said the experience of being in the program has provided many benefits. "I became friends with special people and their parents," she said.

Megan East, in the 15-minute demonstration, said the program helps the disabled and specially

handicapped children with the ability to improve both psychologically and physically. The program helps children with a variety of disabilities, including cerebral palsy, spina bifida, blindness, mental retardation, autism, and learning disorders. The horse is an "equalizer in an unequal world," according to the 4-H'ers.

Megan East, 15, daughter of Will and Tina East, Kirkwood, said that helping as a volunteer and learning horses provided a lot of inspiration to her. Many of the children who were scared became calm and relaxed completely when riding the horse. Megan said she has a cousin with cerebral palsy.

The team traveled to the Solid Gold Horse Event in Springfield, Ill. the first week of October. But the event in Louisville is the capstone to a year of competition, including the state championship in August at Penn State.

## Water Policy Will Affect Agriculture

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Concerns about water quality and availability are prompting changes that will affect Pennsylvania agriculture, rural businesses and residents, says a water quality expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"The 1991 drought put water on the agendas of interest groups, government agencies and legislative committees," says Dr. Charles Abdalla, associate professor of agricultural economics.

"At least 18 bills related to Pennsylvania water resources have been introduced during the 1991-92 legislative session," he says. "Any of these changes would have major implications for agriculture and other sectors of the state's economy."

"Many people see Pennsylvania's water use rules as outdated, fragmented and ineffective," Abdalla says. "They believe that protecting existing uses and improving overall water use requires a better defined set of legal rules and institutional arrangements."

Pennsylvania has no comprehensive law establishing the

rights of water users. Consequently, every water conflict must be resolved on a case-by-case basis in the courts.

For example, existing water allocation rules treat surface water and groundwater differently. "Surface water is allocated by the 'riparian rights' doctrine," Abdalla says. "Riparian property is bordered or crossed by a stream or other water body. In Pennsylvania, riparian property owners may take water to use on their land, as long as other users aren't unreasonably harmed."

Groundwater rights are subject to a different standard. "Landowners may draw water from beneath their land for beneficial uses on that land regardless of the consequences to neighbors," Abdalla says. "The landowner with the deepest well or most powerful pump wins."

An estimated 14.3 billion gallons of water were withdrawn from ground and surface sources in 1985. Agricultural withdrawals amounted to 81 million gallons per day (mgd). Thirteen percent of these withdrawals went for irrigation, with 86 percent of irrigation water coming from surface sources.

Withdrawals of water for livestock accounted for 70.4 mgd, or 87 percent of total agricultural use. Almost 90 percent of the water for livestock was obtained from groundwater.

Most water used for irrigation and livestock is consumed in the process and not returned to the source. "As a result, agriculture accounts for 12.2 percent of consumptive water use in the state, even though it represents less than 1 percent of total water withdrawals," Abdalla says.

Growing recognition that water is shared resource with interdependent users fuels the drive to refine the state's water policies. "Control over water management should be shared among all users," Abdalla says. "Those concerned about water issues must recognize this political reality."

Abdalla says that agricultural films and organizations need to make a long-term commitment to study water issues, to work with government agencies and other organizations on mutually acceptable solutions and to be active in discussions and debates.

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