

# Wrights Receive Guernsey Award

(Continued from Page A1)

sion. Lyle, however, has a more modest answer.

"We just try to do what our feed people tell us to do. We have the feed company do our feed program for us. That's part of it. And we just try to balance their rations."

Laureen, who oversees the herd's milk production, determines how much feed each cow gets. "One thing that has helped is we bought a meter to measure how many pounds the cows are milking. This provides a better, overall accuracy than simply relying on the milk tester who comes once a month."

The Wrights feed their herd corn silage which Lyle distributes from a feed cart prior to milking. "It saves a lot of work," he said, commenting on the cart's efficiency.

The herd also gets feed pellets eight times a day. The pellets are distributed automatically by a magnetic feed car that runs on a rail around the perimeter of the stalls. Laureen sets the magnetic codes in front of each cow to determine how many pellets that cow gets.

"We used to feed high moisture corn," said Laureen, "but the crop hasn't been that great in the last two years, so we switched to pellets."

In their latest DHIA report, the Wrights' herd average was 15,663 pounds, with 546 in protein, and 716 in fat for 46.7 cows. In 305 days, their top three cows were Brenda, with an average of 20,480 pounds, 696 in protein, and 890 in fat; Pixie, with a 19,324 average, 654 in protein, and 888 in fat; and Brandy, with a 17,542 average, 626 in protein, and 851 in fat.

Laureen also keeps a close watch on somatic cell count and plate count. The lower these counts, the higher their milk premiums are with Eastern Milk Producers in Waverly, N.Y. The incentive has worked to make the Wrights a Gold Seal winner and recipient of the Eastern Milk Producers Quality Award.

The Wrights have a milking herd of 61, 50 of which are Guernseys, with Holsteins making up the rest. The total Guernsey population at Way View Farm is 90 head (including dry cows and young stock).

Lyle oversees the breeding and dispensing of medicine when needed.

Their cows' comfort is a priority to the Wrights. The recently remodeled barn has 61 stalls. Eliminating 11 stalls in the process, Lyle said of the new stalls, "We

made them all bigger, longer. It's more comfortable for the cows and easier to handle."

Another example of Lyle's concern for their animals' comfort is evident in the homemade wrappings around the legs on various cows. The wrapping consists of a piece of carpet as a padded bandage adhered to the legs of cows with injured hocks.

"We've had great success with this type of bandage," said Lyle. "The trick is to first cut up your wife's rug." His chuckles faded as he pointed to a bandaged cow and on a more serious note added, "it saved her life." He further explained that her injury had been so severe that the padded bandage not only helped prevent further damage to the leg and enabled it to heal, but also helped ease pain and stress on the leg. Without it, Lyle was certain, she would have died.

When their morning chores are completed and the Wrights leave the barn, they have a hired man come in to watch over the herd throughout the day during the winter. In the summer months, when the cows are pastured, he helps Lyle and Laureen with field work.

On the 370 acre farm, the Wrights plant about 70 acres in corn, and have about 100 acres in hay, of which 15 acres are reseeded annually. Corn silage is stored in two silos measuring 18'x60' and 14'x60'. Haylage is stored in an 18'x50' silo and 6-8,000 square bales go into the barn.

When they're not working on the farm, the Wrights are active in their community church. Laureen

is the organist and Lyle is chairman of the East Canton United Methodist Church Building Project. The church is in the process of doubling the size of its sanctuary and making the Sunday school room and fellowship room larger.

"We're planning a work camp," said Lyle. "You know how the Mennonites get together to build things...we're planning on doing that this coming summer."

"It'll be for a three-week period," added Laureen. "We went on a work camp this last summer...between Jersey Shore and Williamsport."

"We went down there to work on one so we would know what to expect," said Lyle.

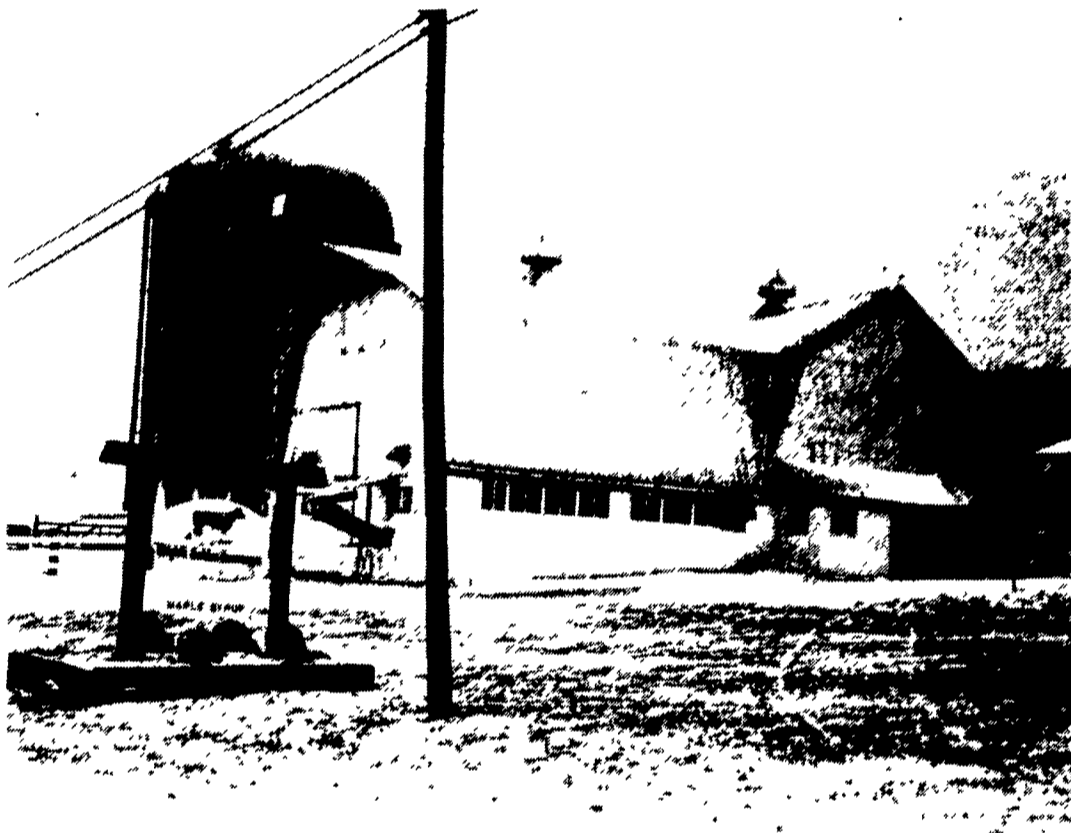
Their excitement in seeing the project through to its completion is immediately understandable to anyone standing on the Wrights' front porch. The picturesque scenery offered beyond the span of valley to the hill on the other side includes the church in question. To them, taking part in changing the looks of this quaint country church must be akin to raising one of their offspring, watching it grow into an adult.

Their other interests lie, of course, with their children. Lyle and Laureen are the parents of two girls, Michelle, a recent graduate of Mansfield University, and Sharla, a sophomore at Clarion University, and a son, Darrin, a junior in high school.

Lyle explained, "The kids have all played Little League and we followed them through softball, volleyball, football, basketball..."

Laureen added, "It was more

(Turn to Page A25)



Way View Farm welcome sign extends a friendly greeting to all who visit.

## Dairy Farmers Force Historic Referendum

BARABOU, WI. — Organizers of the Dump the National Dairy Board Campaign tallied 15,000 signatures on petitions from 45 states calling on the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to hold a referendum on the continuation of the national check-off. This is 500 above the 14,500 needed to legally force a referendum vote (10% of all U.S. milk producers), with more signatures still coming in. On Dec. 10 farmers from seven states will carry the petitions to Washington, D.C., for a meeting with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials. After verifying the signatures a referendum will be called, probably in early Spring.

The 15,000 petitions conclude a year-long effort begun in Wisconsin and spread nationwide through a coalition of independent producers and grassroots farm organizations.



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