Living Gift Fair Raises \$12,000

LITITZ (Lancaster Co.) — Five heifers, seven pigs, nine sheep, five goats, and six yaks, were among unusual holiday gifts purchased at the fifth annual Heifer Project International Living Gift Fair November 28 at the Lititz Church of the Brethren.

Fairgoers purchased more than \$11,000 worth of live animals, with total proceeds from the fair exceeding \$12,500. Volunteers from nearly 20 Lancaster-area churches, representing several denominations, planned and staffed the event, according to Fair Coordinator Dan Fitzkee.

Hundreds of shoppers opted out of the materialism of the season. choosing to purchase live animals in honor of friends and relatives instead of more traditional gear and gadgets.

Heifer Project International will send the animals to families in need around the world, while shoppers received HPI gift cards and information to give to friends and relatives in whose names the animals were purchased.

In addition to the larger beasts, shoppers purchased hundreds of smaller critters—guinea pigs, rabbits, ducks, chicks, fish, and honeybees-along with arts and crafts and baked goods. A petting zoo, a clown, and balloons made the fair an event for all ages.

Heifer Project International is a

47-year-old, non-profit development agency that alleviates world hunger and poverty by giving poor families in more than 35 countries "living gifts" of animals and the animals.

In addition, HPI gifts keep on giving. All recipients of HPI animals are required to pass on the first female offspring of their gift

training required to care for the animal to another family in need. "Passing on the gift" empowers those who receive animals as they reach out to serve their neighbors in need.

Those who missed the fair, but would like to give "living gifts" this Christmas can contact Heifer Project International directly at 1-800-422-0474.

American Agri-Women Unite To Inform Policymakers

MT. VERNON, III. — American Agri-Women from throughout the country have united to inform newly elected officials and the new Administration about agriculture. At their recent Annual Convention, AAW members coordinated plans for informing new Members of Congress and the Clinton Administration about key issues affecting U.S. agriculture.

Attending the Convention from Pennsylvania was Carol Ann Gregg, Grove City; and Gail and Sarah McPherson, New Park, representing Penn's Agri-Women.

According to AAW President Trenna Grabowski, "We have an important opportunity at this time to communicate with newly elected leaders about the food and agriculture industry. American Agri-Women, the nation's largest organization of farm, ranch and agribusiness women, with a membership over 50,000 strong. We will be meeting with new policymakers to inform them about the problems and concerns of our industry. We will provide them with names of women throughout the country who have the expertise to serve as sources of information on agricultural policy and also to serve in advisory and policy positions in the new administration."

AAW policy goals adopted by the Convention include maintenance of the current estate tax exemption; deductibility of the health insurance premiums for self-employed and other persons who do not currently have that deduction; and expansion of the program providing fresh, nutritious unprepared food from farmers' markets to persons who are nutritionally at risk. "American Agri-Women was instrumental in obtaining the current estate tax exemption of \$600,000, which is vital to the passage of farms and ranches from one generation to the

next. We are concerned about proposals to lower the exemption to levels which would again require families to sell their farms to pay the estate tax," President Grabowski said.

AAW is also seeking amendments to the Endangered Species Act which will require the use of sound science in defining a species; require the development of an economic analysis of the costs of the recovery of a species; and protect private property rights. President Grabowski said, "Consideration of the impact a recovery plan will have on private property owners and the economy will ensure we have the resources necessary to adequately protect truly endangered species of plants and animals."

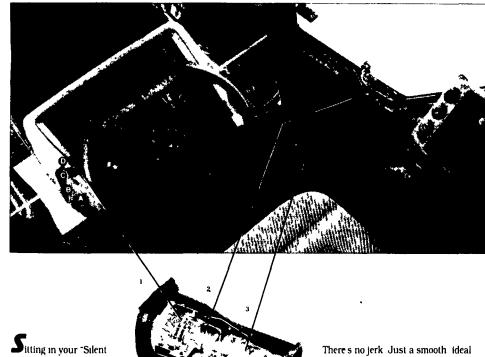
At this Convention, AAW welcomed its 48th affiliate organization, Maine Agri-Women. AAW's affiliates include state agriwomen organizations and national and state commodity organizations. National officers elected to

two-year terms are Donna Ulseth, Minnesota, Vice President/ Education and Alice Dettwyler, Oregon, Secretary. Continuing officers are Trenna Grabowski, Illinois, President; Ardath DeWall. Illinois, President-Elect; Chris Wilson, Kansas, Vice President/Communications; Cynthia Adkins, Oklahoma, Treasurer; and Sandy Greiner, Iowa, Past President.

For more information about AAW, contact Trenna Grabowski, 2006 Broadway, Box 726, Mt. Vernon, Illinois, 62864, (618) 242-8970.

The tree, used as a symbol of life, is a tradition older than Christianity and not exclusive to any one religion. It's a part of our holiday customs that engages not only our senses of sight, touch and smell, but also our sense of tradition, hope and good will.

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