

Berks Honors

(Continued from Page A35)

The tornado, which damaged a few other farms on its path through Berks County, up through Hamburg where it eventually died out in the Blue Mountains, had flattened the Hoffman's field of corn. It also ripped the ground right off Karen's potato patch.

"I didn't have to dig up my potatoes that year!" she said.

Amazingly, no one suffered the slightest scratch.

Unfortunately, the house was so damaged that all the couple could do was bury it and build a rancher on the site with the insurance money.

Besides the terror of the black, stormy night, Karen mostly remembers the kindness of her neighbors.

"People came out of the woodwork to help us," she said. "People we didn't even know came to help us. We couldn't say thank you

enough."

She also feels for those people around the country whose lives have been ripped apart by tornadoes and hurricanes.

"When I hear about hurricanes hitting anywhere, I just cry," she said. "I know what those people are going through."

Also honored at the banquet were two outstanding FFA members, Jesse Rabert, 17, Kempton R.D. 2, a former vice president of the Kutztown chapter, and Tammy J. Gelsinger, 19, Wernersville, former president of the Conrad Weiser chapter.

Rabert, 17, has had the top quality supervised agricultural experience project for the last two years in the area of wildlife management, noted his FFA teacher at Kutztown High School, Dan Lynch. His projects placed third in the state in 1992 and first in the state this year.

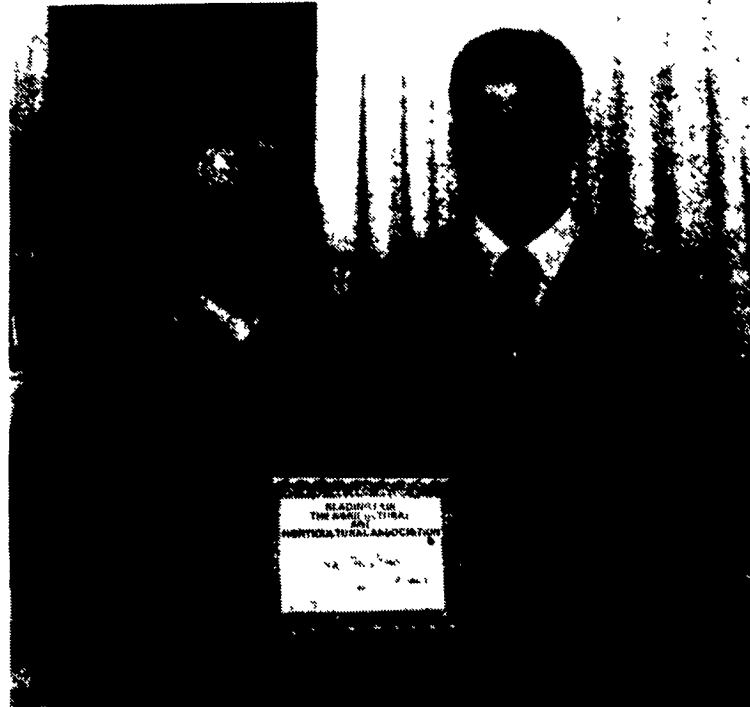
Gelsinger, 19, who graduated from Conrad Weiser Area High School last May, is one of the hardest working students in the program, noted her teacher, Steve Miller.

Two 4-H members also were honored. Lisa Geschwindt, 18, a sophomore at Lebanon Valley College, was honored for her 11 years of outstanding effort, mainly in clothing and textile projects. A winner of numerous county, regional, and state awards for her fashions, Geschwindt has been president of her club and a teen leader for six years.

She and Christine Hunter, 18, a freshman at Delaware Valley Col-



Outstanding 4-H members recognized by the Reading Fair Association are, from left, Christine Hunter, 18, of Fleetwood, and Lisa Geschwindt, 18, of Shoemakersville.



Outstanding FFA members are, from left, Tammy Gelsinger, 19, of Wernersville, and Jesse Rabert, 17, of Kempton R.D. 2.

lege, Doylestown, who also was honored, will attend the National 4-H Congress in Chicago in December.

Hunter has been a 4-H member for 11 years, taking projects in sheep, swine, horse, foods, clothing, dogs, and vegetable gardening.

"Four-H has enabled me to help me while helping others," Hunter said about her 4-H career.

Meridian Bank sponsored the awards of \$100 bonds for the youth awards and a \$600 gift certificate for the farm family.

State Sen. Michael A. O'Pake presented fair agriculture director A. Wayne Readinger with a check

from the state for \$3,000 to help balance the fair's budget.

"Sponsors and donations like this are crucial to the fair," said David Souders, fair first vice president. He noted that the Reading Fair is one of the few left in the state that does not charge admission or parking.

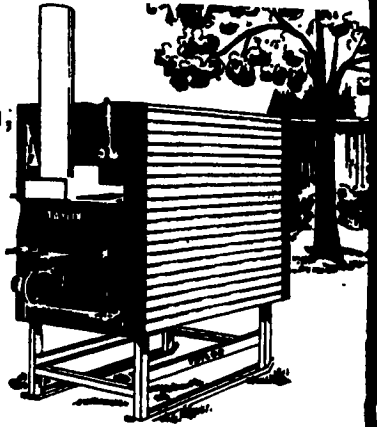
The fair kicks off Monday, Sept. 20 at the Fairgrounds Square Mall, Muhlenberg Township, with a parade along the midway headed by the Hoffman family. It will run through Saturday, Sept. 25 with exhibits and judging including livestock, baked goods, vegetables, crafts, needlework, quilts and field crops.

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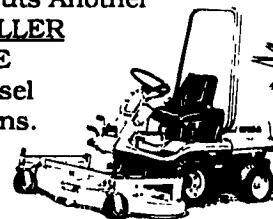


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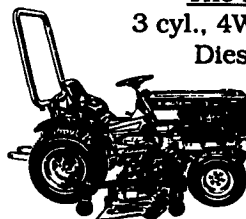
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