

State Farm Show Complex Undergoing \$1.2 Million Floor Fix

(Continued from Page A1)

Farm Show complex was designed to install a permanent, non-skid epoxy floor finish in the 145,000-square-foot exhibition hall so that animals and people have less risk of falling and being injured than on the slick tile.

Schenck said he has examined a sample of what the finished floor is to become and said it is "rubbery," and is expected to provide a durable, cushioning floor surface.

The project was not undertaken to remove asbestos. Asbestos in tiling is common and poses no health hazard, unless the tile is drilled or disturbed in such a manner that it would be crushed and tile-dust containing asbestos released into the air.

According to Schenck, the contractor removing the tile flooring apparently has been following proper procedures in the removal and handling of the asbestos-containing tiles. Schenck said workers have been wearing special suits and air-breathing masks and have the work area contained in plastic.

It is not certain that asbestos was actually in the air of the offices. All that is certain is that officials received a report of a high asbestos reading from the contractor doing the job.

"So, as a precaution, we sent everybody (Farm Show office employees) home (on Tuesday)," Schenck said.

General testing is to continue by the Department of General Services, Schenck said.

Although Wednesday's air testing readings would have allowed

for the staff to return to their offices, Schenck said it was decided to keep them out for at least two more days.

"(The reading was) high Tuesday and low Wednesday. Still, it was decided to keep people out of the building for two more working days," he said, adding that the staff had been reporting to the ag building and was given temporary assignments for the remainder of the week.

Schenck said Thursday that several considerations were being mulled by officials.

"Under consideration is moving the offices for the remainder of the project period, hoping to have the old floor tile removed by the end of August," he said. "We have to shut down the project after August because of some shows coming in, like the All-American."

Schenck explained that doing repairs and improvements to the complex has to be scheduled during lulls in scheduled activities at the complex.

"They have to work on the project when the building is vacant," he said, noting that "There's another 18-day work window later in the fall, we were hoping at that time to install the epoxy non-skid surface. It's not clear yet if there is enough time."

"We're hopeful, at this point, that this won't affect any shows," Schenck said. "We would really like to get the floor done."

The high-ceilinged, one-story Main Exhibit Hall is part of the "interior" of the massive Farm Show Complex, which consists of the Large Arena, Small Arena,

North Building, Northwest building, Northeast Building, East Building and West Building, and the Lobby Building, which is where the staff offices are located.

The entrance to the Main Exhibit Hall is through the narrow two-story Lobby building that stretches along the southern face of the building complex, facing McClay Street.

Farm Show officials separate the Lobby Building into the Main Lobby, with its two levels and the

East and West lobbies.

The ground-level of the Lobby Building is the central foyer to the Main Exhibit Hall, with a coat check room, and telephones. In the foyer, there is an elevator to the second floor offices.

The rest of the first floor of the Lobby building — the "wings" from the foyer, or the East and West lobbies — is a series of rooms with large display cases.

In many schools and older public buildings during the past

decade, a number of asbestos removal projects have been done, with federal support. During those projects, usually the air within the plastic containment is drawn through a filter, and workers pass through a type of chamber that serves to prevent the escape of workplace air into the surrounding building.

A similar setup is being used with the tile removal at the Farm Show Complex.

Old-Time Plowboys Club

(Continued from Page A32)

"The Plowboys demonstrate antique farming to educate the younger generation. Old-time farming ways are being forgotten, and we're giving free demonstrations so that people can watch and learn."

Some of the oldest pieces owned by members are a 1919 International Mogul Tractor and an International F20 Tractor from the early 1930s that was originally shown at a World's Fair.

These pieces were acquired by local members who traded or donated them. "Both of these pieces were hard to find because they are still in working order and they are extremely rare," Mackiewicz says.

The Old-Time Plowboys demonstrate or display their pieces for good causes. Every year they display at Becky's Drive-In, New Berlinsville, for the Dream Come True Foundation to aid terminally ill children. They also

appear at other local events.

"We've participated in Halloween parades for fire companies. This year we'll be at the Kutztown Fair and the Allentown Fair, and we just got done displaying at Longswamp Community Day," she says. "We also have two shows a year at the Kutztown University farm. One is in spring, and one is in fall where we are physically using the equipment on the farm and cultivating."

The Plowboys are enthusiastic about this year's Heemet Fescht, and they will be involved in many activities. For youngsters, there will be an old-fashioned pedal tractor that kids can use and actually pedal. There also will be old-time children's relay games including a peanut toss, a 3-legged wheelbarrow race, and a sack race. An antique tractor pull for adults is also planned. The Plowboys will have a tractor parade featuring more than 50 tractors

and demonstrations including cultivating, shingle milling, corn grinding, and threshing.

Between scheduled events, spectators at Heemet Fescht are invited to view the Plowboys' equipment and ask them questions. For more information about Heemet Fescht, call (610) 683-1330 or 4113.

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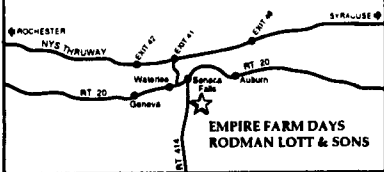
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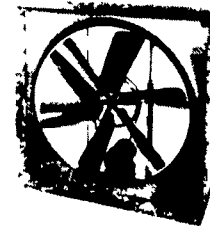
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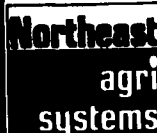
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