

Ostrich, Emu Seminar

MATAMORAS (Dauphin Co.)
 — The Northeast Ratite Association (NERA) will be holding its Spring Seminar titled, *Emu-Ostrich-Rhea: Profits and Products for Today and Tomorrow* on April 22 and 23 at the Best Western Inn at Hunts Landing in Matamoras. The U.S. has been sporadically ranching these flightless birds since the late 1800s but in the last 10 years enterprising Americans have joined the fever in large numbers and the public's general knowledge of ratites is growing. Today the ratite industry is growing rapidly attracting passive and active investors alike as well as providing a diversified agriculture for the U.S. Ratite products are slowly trickling down into mainstream America. For instance, the ratites' red meat looks and tastes like beef but with lower fat and cholesterol than turkey. The premium leather products are durable and exotic and are in much demand throughout Europe and the U.S. Emu oil, although not new to the Australians, is the re-

volutionary new product in the U.S. that is being researched for use in cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. Keynote speaker will be John A. Crawford, managing editor of the *Ostrich News Magazine* and managing director of the Ratite Research Foundation. Other speakers will include Alan Strickland, noted pharmacist, Michael Reeves, general manager of *Outback Secrets*, Vern Brackett of *Creole Bird Ranch*, and Kenneth Copans, C.P.A. On-site pre-registration will begin April 22 at 6:30 p.m. followed by a social gathering and cash bar at 7:30 p.m. for registered attendees. Ostrich, Emu and Rhea meat will be served. Registration will open at 7:30 a.m. on April 23. The seminar runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with lunch being served from 12 - 1. Lunch is included. If you pre-register off-site there is a substantial savings. For registration information please call

(914) 986-6925. Pre-registration seminar fees are \$50 for members and \$60 for non-members. Vendor tables will be open at 8 a.m. on April 23. There will be a silent auction available during the seminar. Please call (914) 482-5083 to reserve a vendor table or donate an item to the silent auction. Vendor tables are \$25 plus a donation to the silent auction of an item with a value of \$25 or more. The Best Western Inn has blocked a number of rooms for seminar participants. Please reserve your rooms early as there are few other accommodations in the area. Mention that you are with the seminar and you will get a discount room rate. Call (717) 491-2400 to make your reservations. For more information about the Northeast Ratite Association and/or the Spring Seminar, contact Ann and Bill Cissel, 182 Elbow Lane, Elkton, MD 21921. (610) 255-5191 Pennsylvania, (410) 398-2432 Maryland.

Beauty For Ashes

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involve volunteers to supply meals and serve them to the hundreds of people during the clean up and rebuilding phase. While the actual fire is terrifying enough, it's the uprooting from a normal day-to-day living that is most exhausting. A neighbor offered a rent-free house to them during the rebuilding. They used a snowmobile to travel across the treacherous snow and ice-covered fields to care for the dairy herd on their farm. Many friends, churches, and the community brought furniture, housewares, and donated money toward rebuilding. "It was a hodge podge of things. When you're without anything, you aren't picky. You're just glad for every piece donated." Lucille continually remarked on the helpfulness of neighbors and friends during the clean up and rebuilding. She and her husband were amazed by the outpouring of help. "I was better dressed after the fire than I ever was in my life," Lucille said. She owes that to a friend who

wears the same size clothing. This friend gave — not loaned — her best clothing to Lucille. "She didn't give me partially worn out clothing but her newly-purchased wardrobe," Lucille said. Spring and summer brought a host of outdoor work in addition to the rebuilding and farm work. A family came and hoed their garden, pulled weeds, roto-tilled the soil. "It was such a boost to have someone do the outside work," Lucille said. "We are blessed to be part of a wonderful, unselfish community. It was a devastating experience and loss. I can't pretend that it wasn't stressful financially and physically, but the support of the community, of churches, of individuals, was such an encouragement. We could not have rebuilt without the help of so many people. We are tremendously blessed and can never repay the community for all they've done." Eight months after the fire, the Stoltzfuses held an open house for all people who helped in a multitude of ways.

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