

Farming Helps Dairyman Become Better Minister

(Continued from Page B12)

The name Loyetta has stayed because Jay wants to honor his parents who live nearby.

His brother, Lee Shaffer, and Richard Ferguson are Jay's partners. They raise 400 acres of corn, 150 of alfalfa, 120 of oats, 100 of clover or timothy, and barley. Six silos are filled, young stock raised and farm equipment sold.

Eyvonne is the bookkeeper. In the basement, a big room handles two offices, one for the farm, the other, the church. Each of the two desks has a separate computer station and comfortable desk chair for moving about. Jay works at both areas and utilizes his nearby resource library.

The key is organization, he says. That's how they approach a bustling life successfully without coming undone.

"Eyvonne is a good organizer," says Jay, praising his spouse. "I'm an idea person and she's a detail person."

Without her dependable support and their marital unity, getting his higher degree would have been much harder for Jay. But because his "great family," worked shoulder to shoulder they conquered as a unit. The kids pitched in too, including Alisa who will be a junior at Penn State, and Adam, now a senior at Somerset Area High School.

"The kids were old enough to understand why everybody was sacrificing for Dad," Eyvonne

said, glad that Jay is home easing the worries she faced while he was in school.

"Things didn't get fixed and we had no social life to speak of," she says.

The business partners pulled a heavier load, too.

Jay would rise in the wee hours and head east to spend two or three days in Lancaster. Regardless of the season or the weather, the routine was pretty much the same.

"The other students were fascinated to have a farmer on campus."

The circumstance resulted in a collection of entertaining stories.

More serious, however, was the inner-city ministry experience which Jay used to bring about an awareness that ministry programs in rural areas were also needed.

With others from the school, he toured Costa Rica and Guatemala, Central America, in January 1994. Snow was falling as the students flew out of Philadelphia, just two hours before the blizzard caused officials there to shut down the airport.

So with the man of the house setting off for his cross-cultural experience, the family was a bundle of nerves, sitting helplessly at home and watching the awful storm.

While visiting the city of San Jose, Jay ended up getting mugged and lost several hundred dollars. But he rolled with his losses and learned a good lesson.

Perhaps that's why he prefers the jungle to the city. The beauty of the jungle won him over, unlike the poverty of the people that he saw so much of.

"People in this country do not realize the poverty in those countries," he says.

Jay was commissioned as a licensed minister on October 23, 1988. He had studied four years to be a supply minister. It was basically a home training course, that began in 1984, he said. As a licensed minister, however, he couldn't perform the sacraments of the church.

Then on September 1, 1990 he was assigned to the Unity United Church of Christ in Shanksville. Soon the Search and Ministry Committee convinced him to take a class.

Jay thought if he took something pretty difficult at first, he would soon know if he should shoot for his M.A. in Divinity. So he took Greek.

"I took a semester of Greek and survived," he said.

After that he decided to tackle his degree. His grades were high and so was his interest. But ex-

perts advised that it had to be one or the other — farming or school, but not both at once. Now that Jay has successfully completed school and continues to farm, he's still Unity UCC's part-time pastor, preaching on Sunday mornings, making crisis visits, preparing the bulletin on Monday, and working with the 19-member Care Committee.

He's been an interim pastor for the St. Paul's UCC in Stoystown; St. Paul's UCC, Somerset; St. John's UCC, Salisbury, and Trinity UCC, New Germany, Garrett

County, Maryland.

Jay and Eyvonne were co-chairpersons of Somerset County Day at the Farm, held on July 2 at the Latuch Brothers Dairy near Rockwood. They were pleased when the event drew more than 2,000 and was one of the largest in the event's 12-year history.

The hayrides this year were so popular with visitors that some five tractors and wagons were still running long past closing time, they said.

The event was sponsored by the Somerset County Farm Bureau.

Sugar Is Not Poison

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — Learn why sugar is not the forbidden substance for diabetics that it was previously believed to be.

A workshop on Sugar is Not a Poison will be taught at the Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, on September 7, at 1:00-2:30 p.m. and repeated at 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Cost is \$1. Susan Browning, registered dietitian will share new

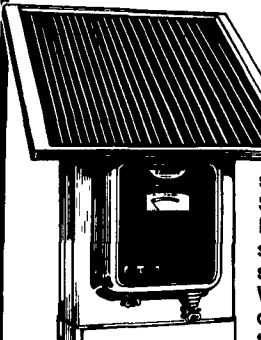
information to help diabetics understand how sugar, sugar substitutes and foods that naturally contain sugar can be used in a diabetic diet that meet the dietary guidelines. An overview of the exchange system will also be given as well as new recipes.

Please send reservation to Berks County Coop. Extension, P.O. Box 520, Leesport, PA 19533-0520.

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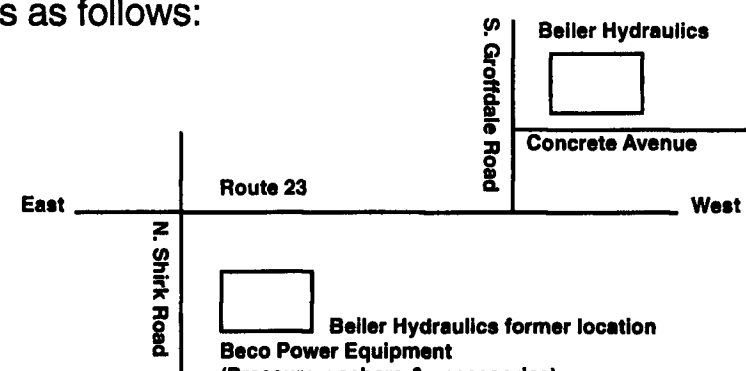
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