



A pump, in center, transports the material 250 feet into a 750,000-gallon circular concrete manure storage structure. From left, Kevin, Ken, and Jeff Myers.



The Clean Water Award, according to Ken Myers, wasn't awarded to the family for "one thing we did," he said, but "several things we had done over the years." Here, Ken cleans the battery terminals on his 60-horsepower tractor.

Like A House

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But the maintenance is never over. Myers said where he used to graze cattle next to a stream, the area has been closed off, and he is thinking about putting up stream-bank fencing to protect the water quality.

One way in which water quality was improved at Myra-Brek Farm was through the installation of a liquid catch basin at the bottom of the feedlot. In years past, during a heavy rain, runoff would cascade off the manure pile in the feedlot and run down into a creek.

Myers said the creek feeds into Campbell's Run, a favorite trout stream, which goes into one of the tributaries of the Conococheague River. That river feeds into the Potomac River, emptying into the Chesapeake Bay.

Now, the catch basin is used to collect the liquid manure. A pump transports the material 250 feet into a 750,000-gallon circular concrete manure storage structure, measuring about 12 feet deep. The pump and structure were installed in the fall of 1992.

To retain any runoff, Myers constructed a retention area at the bottom of the barnyard in the spring of 1993. The area has a concrete bottom and earthen sides, which is cleaned out on a regular basis.

Myers raises 115 registered and grade Holstein cows (85 replacement stock) at the farm, which sits just east of Mt. Parnell in the North Mountains. Myers farms with his wife, Martha, and sons Jeff, 31, and Kevin, 26 and families. He has a son, Brian, 20, who is an occupational therapist and a daughter, Debbie, 28, a schoolteacher in Oregon.

Ken said he grows about 30 acres of barley, 25 acres of wheat, 140 acres of alfalfa, and about 100 acres of corn, with the balance in mixed hay.

Myers said he intends to do more work and maintenance on an underground pipe system that had been giving him some trouble in the past.

Like the catch basin, it is a task that he admitted was "not something I really wanted to do," but was necessary because of the important conservation practices already in place on the farm.

And whether it is houses or farmland, "the more stuff you have, the more upkeep there is," he said.

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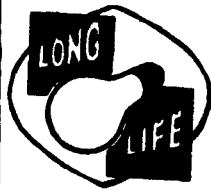
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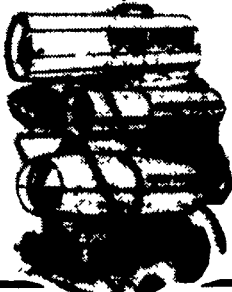
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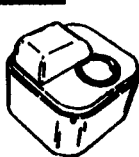
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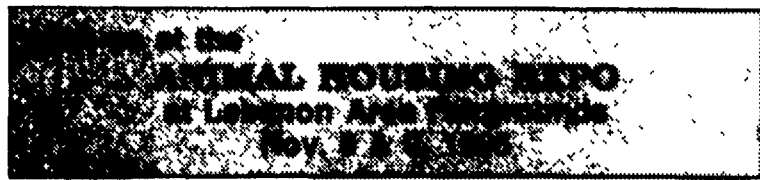
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