

Kids Korner

Seven-Year-Old Draws T-Shirt Design

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Lancaster Farming Staff
RAWLINSVILLE (Lancaster Co.) — When 7-year-old Elizabeth Zimmerman-Clayton drew a picture of a farm, she had no idea that her picture would appear on hundreds of T-shirts.

"I was at the picnic and they told us to draw a farm scene," Elizabeth said. "I sat two minutes and thought about it and then drew it."

The picnic was the annual one held by Lancaster Farmland Trust in September 1995. Judges selected Elizabeth's drawing from several finalists, many who were older than Elizabeth.

"I never won anything before," Elizabeth said.

Elizabeth's drawing is a brightly four-colored farm scene of a barn, cow, fields, silo, and tractor.

"But they cut off the front wheel of the tractor," Elizabeth said of her picture that was reproduced on the shirts.

The shirts are being sold to raise money to preserve farmland in Lancaster County.

Elizabeth, herself, lives on a farm that is preserved by Lancaster Farmland Trust. That means that the land on the farm must be used

for farming and cannot be used to build houses, factories, or stores. If they want to, Elizabeth's family may sell the farm, but the person who buys it must use it for farming.

Elizabeth's parents, Nancy Zimmerman and Clifford Clayton, own the 28-acre farm in New Providence Township. The farm was purchased by Nancy's parents in 1941. Nancy loves the open fields and wooded areas on the farm. She was alarmed to see so many other beautiful farms like hers turned into housing developments. She believes that the growth of agriculture should be encouraged in the county because the farm heritage has enriched the lives of all people who live in the county.

Elizabeth's mother said that she wants to see farmland preserved

because, "I hope my children have a county to live in like I did when I was little."

Elizabeth said that the barn she drew looks like the one on their property. The green and brown fields look like those outside her window in the springtime.

"The silo is like Naomi's — she's my Amish neighbor," Elizabeth said.

Evidently Elizabeth inherited some of her father's artistic talent. He taught art for a number of years before beginning his own antique restoration business in the farm's barn. Neighbors farm the land.

No one can accuse her dad for helping Elizabeth with her winning picture because he didn't even know she drew the picture until

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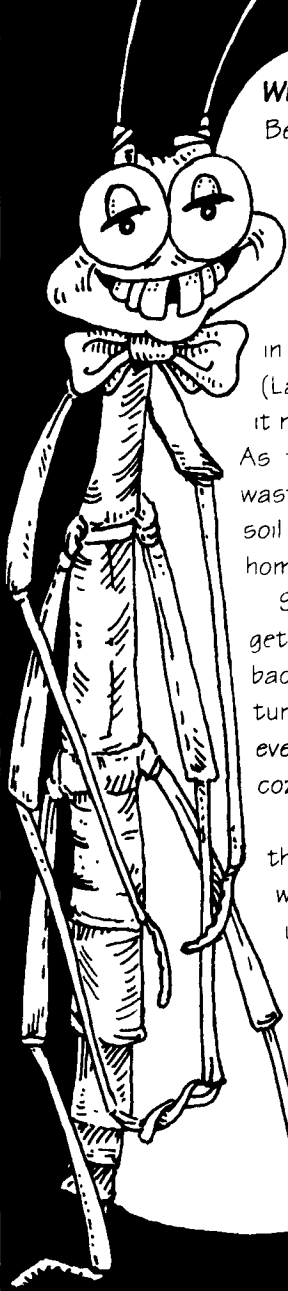
Elizabeth and her mother enjoy reading books together. Elizabeth also shares her mother's love for preserving farmland. Now, through the sale of the T-shirts like the one Elizabeth is wearing, more money is being raised to help farmers preserve their farms.



Elizabeth cuddles one of her three cats.

Smart Stuff

WITH TWIG WALKINGSTICK



Why does a compost pile steam in the winter?

Because the bacteria are heating things up!
In case you've never seen a compost pile before, it's a big pile of grass clippings, leaves, kitchen scraps, dirt — just about anything from your garden or yard you'd throw away

Bacteria and other tiny microorganisms that live in dirt feast on all the free food piled around them (Lawn clippings are bacteria's idea of a good meal — it might sound yukky to you, but they seem to like it.) As the bacteria chow down, they change the yard wastes into rich nutrients you can add to your garden's soil next spring. Adding compost to soil is like making a home improvement for plants!

So why the winter steam? Compost piles naturally get hot. Watervapor and heat are both released by the bacteria doing their thing. The moisture in the pile turns to ice in the winter — from the outside in. So even though it's cold out, most bacteria stay nice and cozy inside.

Of course, the colder it gets and the longer it's cold, the more likely a pile will eventually freeze the whole way through. Then the compost pile has to wait until spring to get active again, just like you!

Scientifically yours,
Twig



Paul, Elizabeth's 10-year-old brother, is an accomplished pianist.