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Brookside Dairy Fire Brings Out Benevolent Spirit

RANDY WELLS
Indiana Co. Correspondent
HOMER CITY (Indiana Co.) — Just before 1 a.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 4, a passerby pounded on Bill and Shirley George's door to deliver some of the worst news a dairy farmer can receive — he told them the George's barn was on fire.

"It's really something to get dressed by the light of the barn

burning," Bill George commented later.

The telephone was dead, so Shirley decided to drive to a neighbor to call the fire department. The electric garage door opened about two feet — then jammed.

Shirley told her husband to stand back, then drove the family's Buick through the door to get help.

Despite the day's frantic begin-

ning, when dawn arrived Bill and Shirley and their sons Kevin and Keith realized they were fortunate in many respects.

First of all, it was not the barn that had been on fire, but the block-wall milk plant attached to the barn at the George's Brookside Dairy near Homer City in Indiana County. Volunteer firemen stopped the flames as they spread through the rafters toward the barn.

No one had been injured, and the dairy's 306 Holstein cows escaped unharmed.

During the long day that followed, the Georges also discovered how many good friends and neighbors they have.

The fire had started in an electrical panel in the milk plant, and although the 20 automatic milking machines and ancillary equipment in the milking parlor were spared, the flames destroyed the air com-

pressors and vacuum pumps needed to run the milkers. And the dairy's 5,000-gallon bulk tank was damaged beyond use. Bill later estimated damage at \$600,000.

By the time the fire was extinguished 12 hours had already passed since the Holsteins had last been milked — and the dairy was a long way from having replacement equipment operating to get

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Milking Shorthorns Win Awards For Brother-Sister Team

LINDA WILLIAMS
Bedford Co. Correspondent

NEW ENTERPRISE (Bedford Co.) — With shining brown hair and a milk-and-sugar complexion, Christine Young would be a good candidate for "What's My Line?" Her femininity does not keep her from being a farmer, handling a 60-head herd of Milking Shorthorns, all show cattle, with very little help.

"My brother Jimmy and I own the herd," said Christine, who can't remember a time when she wasn't helping with cows. Jimmy is an ag student at Penn State while Christine chose to get her education firsthand.

Jimmy is the president of the Junior National Association of Progressive Breeders and has won the distinguished Junior Achievement Award.

They call their venture "Horizon Farms." Jimmy and Christine rent the barn and buy their feed. "I've watched too many small farmers struggle with fixing machinery and raising crops," Christine said. "I didn't want to do that."

Taking reserve supreme champion at the Bedford County Fair, supreme bred and owned at the Montgomery County Fair, and first place in the top dairy herd in the Eastern National Milking Shorthorn Show during the All American Dairy Show in Harrisburg this fall have been just a few of the awards this young brother and sister have in their collection. They also had an intermediate champion at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis.

"We're proud of what we've done and hope to do even better," Chris said with a smile. "We're playing with the big boys now!"

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Chris Young and Keith Fisher show Horizon Royal Shelly EX, that was reserve All American and is completing a record of 18,500m 3.9f 3.2p.

Weather Extremes, Mergers, New Directions Highlight '96

LANCASTER FARMING Staff

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — It was the year of the 17-year locust, of the first two-term Democratic president since Harry Truman, of widespread use of Round up Ready soybeans, of continued visits from representatives from Mexico seeking trade, and of continued uncertainty as to where all of the changes are directing the country and farming.

There were a lot of personnel changes during the year also. Even though President Clinton was re-elected, his administration is changing dramatically.

In state government agencies, there are new faces too, with retirements and replacements.

Compiling a list of achievements for the agricultural community for 1996 would not, of course, include events considered important to all.

Nevertheless, there were some significant changes in practices, weather, prices and policy during the year that can be expected to set the stage for how people get along in the coming year.

Nutrient management regula-

tions are on the verge of being finalized.

The independent agency that oversees the state's conservation districts, the State Conservation

Commission (SCC), has final say and regulatory authority, but its Nutrient Management Advisory Board has recently issued a final

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All-Md. Holstein Winners

The photographs of the beautiful All-Md. Holstein winners are featured this week. To introduce this famous group we have Lylehaven Jet Denise, who shares both All-Md. 100,000 lb. milk and Jr. All-Md. Aged Cow honors for Kelli Ann Savage, Knoxville, Maryland. For the other winners and their owners see Pages A28-30.

Happy New Year

Farm Show: Next Event For Farmers

Now that we are into the new year, the time has come to think about the Pennsylvania Farm Show again. Because of the way the days appear on the calendar, the opening of the state's major showcase of agriculture is a little later this year, starting on Friday, January 10. Actually, the show doesn't open to the public until Saturday, the 11th.

Next week is *Lancaster Farming's* annual Farm Show Issue with many on-farm interviews, coverage of the new happenings, show highlights, and advertising messages from the commercial exhibitors who invite you to visit them during the show. But we actually start our coverage this week with several stories about farmers involved at the show. Dairymen are sponsoring a benevolent "Scooper Bowl" ice cream event to benefit cancer patients (Page B5) and the Charles Family gets ready to go to the show (Page B10).

In addition, to help you prepare to visit the Farm Show, we have four full pages of building layouts, marked exhibitor spaces and judging and meeting schedules in both text and graphic forms on Pages C5-8.

To accommodate our early publication day to meet the opening of the Farm Show, we have early deadlines for advertising and news stories for the January 10 issue. They are as follows:

January 10th Issue

Classified Section C Ads — 5 p.m., Tuesday, 1/7.
All Other Classifieds — 9 a.m. Wednesday, 1/8.
General News — Noon, Tuesday, 1/7.