



OPINION

Good Neighbor Relations

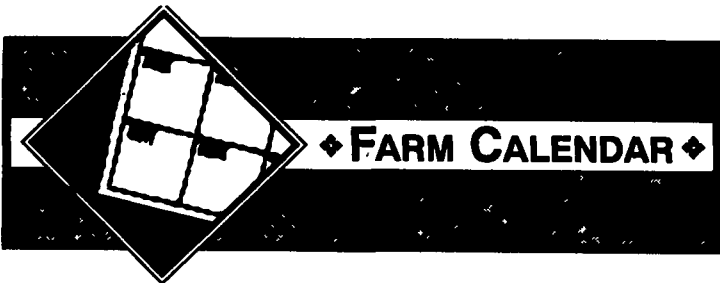
One of the job descriptions of every farmer must be local public relations specialist. Of course, many farmers have not thought about the fact that they must know how to be friendly with their urban neighbors just as much as they must know when to plow, plant, and milk cows.

But it's true. Getting to know your neighbors is the most important and simplest action you can take to help minimize conflicts. When you know your neighbors, it is easier to talk to them when problems arise. It is also easier to keep blame, misunderstandings, hard feelings, or intense community conflict from occurring.

If you know your farm neighbors on a personal basis, and they know you in return, it is more likely that when they have a concern about your farm operation (such as noise or odor), they will call you directly to work it out instead of reporting you to the township or a government agency. It also means that when you have a complaint about a neighbor, such as trespassing or littering, he will be more open to discussing it with you.

Information about finding the common ground with neighbors can be found in a little booklet published by Penn State College of Ag Sciences Cooperative Extension. Entitled: Good Neighbor Relations, Advice and Tips from Farmers, the publication is available at your local extension office.

It is worth reading, and following the advice your fellow farmers give about they they handle the art of public relations around their farms.



FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, February 1

Lawrence County Sheep and Wool Growers meeting, Liberty Grange, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday, February 2

Lawrence County Sheep and Wool Growers meeting, Liberty Grange, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Monday, February 3

Beef Educational Evening, Midway Diner in northwestern Berks.

Farm Records Made Easy Workshop Session 1, York County extension office, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Capitol Turf/Ornamental School, Holiday Inn, Grantville.

Annual Shade Tree Symposium, Host Conference Center, Lancaster, thru Feb. 4.

Tuesday, February 4

Regional Vegetable Growers Meeting (Snyder, Union, Montour, Northumberland, Columbia counties), St. Andrews United Methodist Church, Milton, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

37th Pa. Young Farmers Association Winter Convention, Eisenhower Inn and Convention Center, Gettysburg.

Farm Structures and Building Materials School, Star Grange, Moorestown, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Lancaster County Cattle Feeder's Day, Farm and Home Center, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Central Jersey Field Crop Meeting, Monmouth County Extension Office, 9 a.m.-noon.

Wednesday, February 5

Delaware/Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference and Trade Show, Sheraton Inn, Dover, Del., thru Feb. 8.

Dairying Today, Wallersville Fire Hall, Walkersville, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

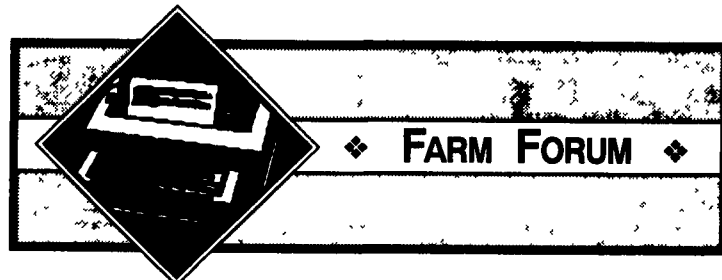
Blue Ball National Bank Farm Seminar, Blue Ball Fire Co. Auditorium.

Grazing School, Upper Dauphin High School, Elizabethville, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., also Feb. 14 and 21.

Pa. Young Farmers' Convention, Eisenhower Inn, Gettysburg, Noon.

Western Pa. Potato Meeting, Ta Ta's Restaurant (formerly Bonanza), Lyndora, 11:30 a.m.

(Turn to Page A23)



FARM FORUM

Editor:

My most recent figures indicate there are 350 lawyers examining a way to dismantle the American tobacco industry through wrongful death lawsuits, etc. "Buttman" followed Robert Dole through his presidential campaign as the media chimed its rhetoric calling for prohibition. After all, there are tons of third world marijuana leaves waiting for an "expanded market." Is the American tobacco industry to be regulated out of the world market? We shall see.

Obviously Philip Morris, maker of Marlboro cigarettes has become one such target of the dismantling process. During the unrelenting media attacks, Philip Morris' shareholders demanded that its food division be spun-off as prosecution of the American tobacco industry looked to be a certainty followed by hefty payouts in settling lawsuits. Interestingly, Philip Morris opted not to separate its food sector from its tobacco interests. RJ Reynolds, similarly diversified, chose to set up individual

corporations.

Philip Morris owns Kraft. Kraft was one of the two players in the pricing of cheese that dealt us the \$4/cwt. blow. The other is Beatrice Foods owned by Conagra.

The National Cheese Exchange is unregulated by the US Government. Exploitation was a Wall Street tool waiting to happen. Although suspected for years, the pricing-fixing sledgehammer finally dropped. It should have fallen loud enough and long enough this time to discredit even the staunchest landgrant college economist.

Billions of dollars were raised through unethical trading of cheese in Green Bay. Tobacco litigation cases will be settled with our "milk money." Philip Morris is already in the milk processing business in Communist China. The Wall Street Journal heralds Communist China as the next superpower. Wall Street should know. They are the financial mak-

(Turn to Page A31)



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Plan For Retirement

This week I attended a roundtable discussion of issues facing county farmers.

One of the top issues identified was planning for the succession of the farm business to the next generation. One of the big barriers identified was the lack of retirement planning by the farm owner.

Many farmers look at the farm as their retirement program. This philosophy often makes it difficult for the next generation to buy the farm and assume a debt level that is manageable.

The sooner you start a planned retirement savings program the better you will be. The effect of compound interest over a long period of time leads to a sizable non-farm assets for retirement. This means the farmer will require less income from the sale of farm assets to financial support the retirement years.

One rule of thumb to use for retirement planning is one third of income should come from social security, one third from retirement savings, and one third from the sale of farm assets. This means every year you need to be placing a percentage of farm profits into a retirement savings program. This will help in making farm transfers

easier to the next generation while meeting your personal and retirement goals.

To Vaccinate For Rabies

Recently we had a case of a rabid dog biting a farmer, his son, and two milk cows.

Rabies can be fatal to humans if untreated. Treatment involves five shots over a 30-day period.

This serves as a reminder that all dogs and household cats more than three months old are required by state law to be immunized against rabies.

This was the first Pennsylvania case of a rabid dog in 1997. In 1996, three dogs were found to be carrying rabies while there were two cases in dogs in 1995.

Rabies cases are much more common among wild animals. In Pennsylvania, raccoons and skunks are the most frequent carriers. In 1996, officials confirmed 382 cases of rabies in the state,

down from 418 in 1995.

To Be Safe

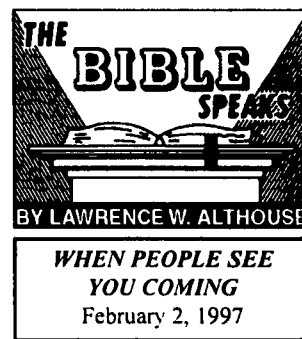
Agriculture has consistently been ranked as one of the most hazardous industries in the United States. The fatality rate for agriculture in 1994 was 26 per 100,000 workers — six and one-half times the all-industry average of four deaths per 100,000 workers.

According to a 1980-1989 study, the five leading causes of death in agricultural production were machinery, motor vehicles, electrocution, environmental hazards, and falling objects.

In 1994, tractor overturns accounted for more of the on-the-farm, tractor-related fatalities than any other single factor, according to the National Farm Medicine Center.

Let's be careful and do everything we can to prevent accidents.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Do more than hear. Listen."



WHEN PEOPLE SEE YOU COMING

February 2, 1997

Background Scripture:
Acts 4:32-37; 9:23-31; 11:19-30
Devotional Reading:
Acts 15:1-11

I wish I could remember who it was who first posed this question to me: "When people see you coming, are they glad?"

Perhaps I remember so well the question, if not the questioner, because it shook me up then and still has that power today. People may smile and be pleasant enough when I approach them, but inside how do they really feel about me? Do they regard me as a "wet blanket," "pain in the neck," or some other part of the anatomy?

Without being paranoid, I think it is healthy for us to sometimes ask ourselves how others perceive us. We tend to think of them in terms of how they make us feel, but is well also that we ask ourselves how we effect their lives. Do most people feel better for our presence, or worse? Do we tend to give them a lift or a lump?

ALWAYS POSITIVE

Barnabas, a leader in the New Testament church, was a man whose presence was always a positive influence. Although his given name was Joseph, he so favorably impressed the other apostles in Jerusalem that they gave him the surname of Barnabas, meaning "Son of encouragement." When people saw him coming, they felt encouraged by his presence. He was a good man to have around.

My Bible dictionary says of him that "he probably acquired the name Barnabas because of his ability as a preacher." I respectfully disagree. Although he may have been a persuasive preacher, what I read of Barnabas in Acts persuades me that he was a man respected and revered more for his deeds than his words. He not only spoke the words of the Good News, he embodied them.

For example, the writer of Acts tell us that Barnabas "sold a field which belonged to him, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet." The purpose,

Acts has already told us, was so that the proceeds could be distributed "to each as any had need." Because Barnabas and the rest were willing to share everything they had within the fellowship of Christians, the writer could say: "There was not a needy person among them ..." (4:34-37). (Is that something we can say?)

THE ENCOURAGER

When next we meet him in Acts, we see him once again living up to his reputation as the "Son of Encouragement." When the newly-converted Paul — whom the Jerusalem disciples knew only as Saul the persecutor — came to Jerusalem, the Christians there understandably "were afraid of him." It was Barnabas who, having witnessed Paul's preaching, stuck out his neck and persuaded them to receive him — thus assuring the Christian movement the services of the greatest of all missionary apostles. Acts tells us, "So the church throughout all Judea and Samaria had peace and was built up ..." but it probably wouldn't have happened without the positive influence of Barnabas.

Later, when the church at Jerusalem learned the wonderful developments in Antioch, they sent Barnabas to look into the situation. "When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose" (11:23). But, although Barnabas "Was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith," he knew that Antioch needed the services of Paul. And he went to Tarsus to get Paul and bring him back to Antioch where together they labored for a year. Barnabas didn't feel a need to be the only star in Antioch's crown. It is interesting that it was here that "the disciples were for, the first time called Christians" (11:26).

No wonder that Barnabas was regarded as the "Son of Encouragement" and was so widely respected throughout the church. When people saw him coming, they were encouraged.

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