



Holstein Annual Meeting Salutes Nichol, Promotes Raney

JOYCE BUPP
York Co. Correspondent
READING (Berks Co.) — The Pennsylvania Holstein Association (PHA) wrapped up its annual business meeting with a salute to its retiring executive director, declaring February 21 "Bill Nichol Day."

Nichol's honor was announced in a resolution unanimously adopted by the delegate and members attending the annual state Holstein meeting and convention,

held February 20 - 22 at the Sheraton Inn.

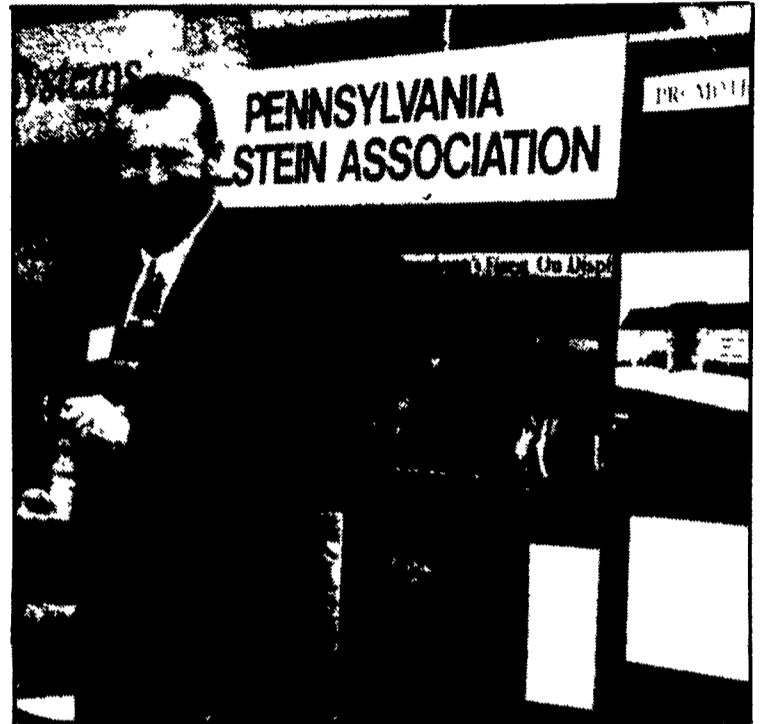
Nichol, who headed the administrative business of PHA for nearly 38 years, officially retired on February 28. Ken Raney, longtime membership and public relations director for PHA who had been serving as the interim director since July, has been hired by the board as the new executive director, effective March 1.

In his annual report to the membership, PHA president Jay Houser, Spring Mills, recognized Nichol's contribution to the association during in his leadership tenure of nearly four decades.

"Bill's greatest accomplishment has been the purchase of the 125-acre farm at Middletown," Houser said. The Middletown farm is a nationally-recognized animal export facility, with close proximity to the Harrisburg International Airport, and has handled not only the exporting of thousands of head of cattle of many breeds, but other species of animals as well.

Houser opened his president's address by paying tribute to the Pennsylvania Holstein youth program accomplishments, noting the success of national-winning dairy bowl teams and nationally-honored junior members. Pennsylvania teams have won national dairy bowl titles five times since 1983.

The PHA youth scholarship fund has been granted tax-exempt status. Houser reported that over



Ken Raney has been hired as the new executive secretary of the Pennsylvania Holstein Association effective today. The photo was taken at the association's booth at the farm show earlier this year.

Land O'Lakes OKs Merger

VERNON ACHENBACH JR.
Lancaster Farming Staff
MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The members of Land O'Lakes Cooperative have recently approved a plan to merge with the Atlantic Dairy Cooperative, according to a news release made this week by Land O'Lakes Inc., in Minneapolis, Minn.

The announcement this week of the merger approval by Land O'Lakes could very well signal the impending approach of yet another milepost by the ADC, which has traveled a lot of ground in the past 20 years, growing from mergers of

regional cooperatives to being on the verge of possibly creating a national production/processing/marketing cooperative with even greater significance in the Middle Atlantic and elsewhere.

The announcement of the possibility of a merger between the two large cooperatives arose during the ADC annual meeting earlier this year, when it was announced that

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Grazers Spread The Word At Conference

EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Managing Editor

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — A summary of the Southeast Pennsylvania Grazing Conference at the Host Resort may have been stated when Jim Landis, a West Virginia dairyman, concluded his talk on "Farming in the 21st Century" with these words:

"Grazing pays now, and the Lord willing, it will continue to be the most efficient way of providing food known to man through the 21st century. You and your child-

ren and your grandchildren will enjoy the blessing of working with living things God gave us—soils, plants, and animals—if you grow grass and let the animals do the walking for you."

Landis believes you will find no more efficient way to convert the energy of the sun into usable human food than by using grass and animals. Because managed intensive grazing reduces input costs, cow stress and operator stress, milk produced from this method of farming offers returns per acre greater than most other

crops.

Unlike many farmers who are considering dumping milk to get government attention, and stating operating costs more than \$17 per hundred, Landis speaks of the "tremendous U.S. milk prices received in 1996. According to Landis, farmers in New Zealand are receiving only half as much for their milk, and in Argentina they are receiving only two-thirds as much.

On Landis' farm in Georgia they received a net average price of \$15.32 per hundred weight for 3.6 milk after hauling and marketing expenses were taken off. In 1995 their average net price was \$12.51. On a cow producing 15,000 pounds of milk that is a \$406 increase for 1996.

"We have a distinct price advantage at the present time and the difference is management," Landis said. "But price is only one thing to look at. I predict the price of milk will trend lower as the government moves away from subsidies. But the sooner the better.

"The public doesn't care if the poor farmer is put out of business. This happened in New Zealand 10 years ago. And now under the unregulated conditions, the consumer has many new dairy products to entice him to buy. It will be in the explosion of new consumer products that will drive the market and increase markets for dairy farmers after the government stops supporting the prices.

"We have been a victim of this tax called a check off where they use our money to advertise generic milk. Can you imagine what would happen if the cola companies had been advertising sweet water with a burp all these years, being taxed

but not allowed to use their name. We have allowed the media to take our money and try to get people to believe and get us to believe that people enjoy drinking chalk water and kidney flush.

"Consumers have a right to have all kinds of milk and milk products to eat, advertised by the company selling their branded product. When this happens, the price to farmers will go down, but as grazers we can do it because the future lies in the kind of efficient production we have."

Landis also says pasture grazing increases herd health because it spreads the cattle out over rotating pastures. In addition, the cows spread their own manure, and the outdoors increases vigor in the animals.

Larson Sayre, beef farmer from Churchville, Maryland, looked at rotational grazing as a labor saving system. He said the cows laugh at us when we do all the work for them, carrying the feed into the barn and then back out to them.

In addition, the savings in planting and harvesting equipment will buy a lot of wire to divide the farm off into paddocks. Sayer had little sayings such as: "Make the livestock work for us, not us work for the livestock."

Speaking of grazing management, he said, "If you fail to plan, plan to fail."

And he said, the words "always" and "never" should not be used because change is the backbone of becoming a rotational grazer.

Other topics covered were soil management, seasonal dairying, and feeding, breeding, and calf-raising.

Survey Examines Computer Use On Farms

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
BERNVILLE (Berks Co.) — Easier recordkeeping. More accurate records. A decrease in paperwork. Understanding information about the farm.

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Learning about computers at a meeting of the Tulpehocken Young Farmers Association. Standing at left is Bill Palmer, Shartlesville. Seated, counterclockwise from far left, Denise Stump, Bernville; Lolly Leshar, Bernville; Paul Zimmerman, Shartlesville; and Tony Talarigo, Bernville.