

State Grange Day Event

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pete in a global market, that making standards more difficult to attain is unrealistic and counter-productive.

They predicted that should the standards become a reality that businesses will shut down or leave the country faster than before.

According to the document, "New standards for particles and ozone would leave at least 36 Pennsylvania counties — more than half the state — out of compliance, compared with 33 counties in violation of current standards.

"Moreover, many of the remaining areas could be in violation once more data is available."

A list of counties and a map of the state showing the out-of-compliance areas was included with the literature.

Generally, the map of the out-of-compliance areas were all low-elevation areas with relatively high populations of people, and an area west of the Allegheny Mountain ridge that is adjacent to Ohio, and that is assumed to be affected by air pollution carried in by continental winds.

Both men said that the implications for Pennsylvania are severe,

especially given that agriculture is the state's largest industry.

Barr said that people sitting in Washington creating these proposed standards are not considering their impact on the quality of life, or health as it really applies.

He said that without a job, without health care, with the constant worry that is associated with a poor economy, and given that the air is cleaner than before, it doesn't make sense to increase those standards when the state hasn't had an adequate realistic opportunity to achieve those standards.

"We're not talking about sacrificing people's health so someone can get a job," Barr said.

"We're talking about striking a balance between employment for our people and ensuring a health environment," he said, indicating that EPA bureaucrats have not considered people in coming up with the proposed standards, and that some of those people don't share the sense of risk that the majority of Americans have.

It was to infer from Barr that he holds that some people in power in the EPA and in certain lobbying groups are out of touch and make it more difficult for the general population to understand the per-

spective of issues and how they might be affected.

"People don't have a good idea of risk," he said. "But some people want no risk at all."

He said, for example, that while media will publicize occasional dangers associated with eating fresh fruits and vegetables that might have pesticide residues, the media does not provide perspective.

And of course, those special interest groups spearheading efforts to publicize occasional and otherwise insignificant public health events in order to gain attention and perhaps money, would be in a conflict with their self-interest if they were to provide the public with a proper perspective of the issue.

For example, he said, "There's a greater chance of walking out of your house and getting hit with a piece of falling airplane than dying from eating a piece of fruit with pesticide residue."

During the legislative banquet, George Wolff, a long-time Harrisburg lobbyist, supporter of agriculture and Grange, and president of George Wolff Associates Inc., served as master of ceremonies.

Bill Steel, State Grange master, introduced some of the presenters and made special presentations to recognize outstanding service.

Charlie Wismer, president of the Pa. State Grange Service Corporation, and a past state master, was honored for his 10 years of efforts to institute and operate the member-service non-profit corporation.

He was presented with a bag of seed corn, in tribute of the valuable service to members the corporation provides.

Sandy Westover, manager of the Pa. State Grange Credit Union and Service Corp., was honored in recognition of the Credit Union's 15-year history of sound loans. She was presented with a toy automobile with the Grange insignia and logo.

The auto also represented the fact that only one loan defaulted in 15 years and that was a truck loan that Westover repossessed herself.

A certificate of appreciation from the Pa. State Grange was presented to state Secretary of Agriculture Charles Brosius in recognition of his service and dedication to rural Pennsylvania and agriculture during his tenure as secretary, and also in recognition of his steadfast support of the organization as an active member.

Brosius received two standing ovations from the audience, as he has received recently at some

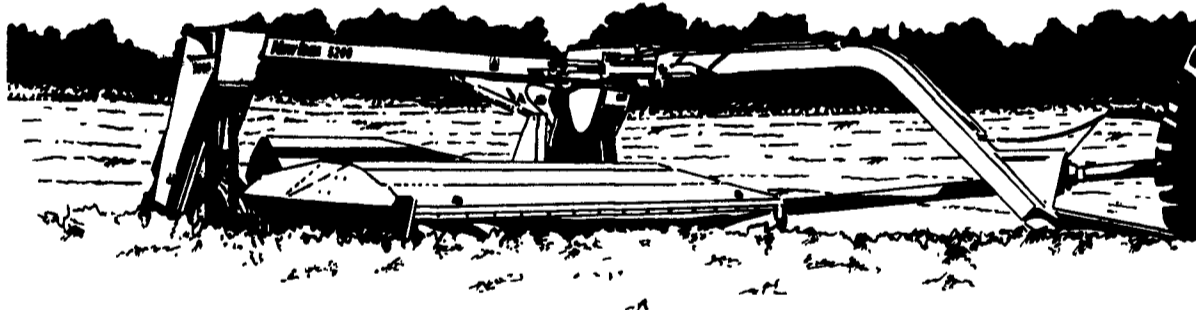
meeting of other state agricultural organizations, in support of him and in rejection of Gov. Tom Ridge's administration team requesting Brosius's resignation.

As an aside, evidence of Brosius' support in the agricultural community and beyond is evident in the fact that on Tuesday the House of Representatives approved an amendment to a piece of proposed legislation to create an agricultural law center (a proposed joint effort between Penn State University and Dickinson Law School) that would name the center after Secretary Brosius.

Brosius read a proclamation from Gov. Ridge declaring observation of Grange Week (April 20-26) and Grange Day (April 28) and then outlined some of the achievements for agriculture that have been accomplished in the two years that Ridge has been governor and Brosius secretary of agriculture.

Brosius credited the state's legislators for working in a nonpartisan manner to deal with a number of issues — such as Dog Law reform, ensuring funding for agricultural support programs and research — that had been needed for years, but had almost been untouchable because of potential political backlash.

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Others who presented proclamations declaring Grange Day included sponsor Rep. Sheila Miller R-Berks, who presented a framed copy of the House proclamation to Steel; and Sen. Dan Delp, chairman of the Senate Ag and Rural Affairs Committee, also sponsor of the Senate version.

The guest speaker for the banquet was a motivational speaker, Pat Leimbach, from Ohio.

In other business, Brenda Shambaugh, legislative director for the State Grange, outlined a number of issues that are current legislative priorities for the organization.

Local tax reform, insurance for the self-employed, the Freedom to Farm Act, private property rights, ensuring the 1997 state budget (which is primarily Gov. Ridge's proposal and which has already been praised by legislators) contains adequate funding for agriculture and related agencies, a bottle bill, and capital gains tax relief are among the issues of most priority, according to Shambaugh.

