

Grange Celebrates

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From the left, William Steel, master of the Pa. State Grange, John Corkum, Betsy Huber and Robert Zimmerman hold framed copies of the original charter petitions of the remaining four original subordinates that formed the Pa. State Grange.



From the left, Tom Gajewski presents to William Steel, master of the Pa. State Grange, a resolution of the U.S. House of Representatives congratulating the Grange on its 125th anniversary.

addressed the delegate body at the annual session on Monday.

Hayes said that PDA is drafting an action plan and looks forward to continuing its working relationship with the Grange.

"As we close the door on this century, we must open the door to the 21st century in a robust way,

and we must have as much enthusiasm for the next century as we do in planning for the end of this one."

He also said the PDA is working toward increasing exports and said he planned to visit Asia, Argentina and Mexico to promote the state's agricultural commodities.

The 500 delegates approved new Grange policy during their session.

According to Grange Legislative Director Brenda Shambaugh,

"These issues are of greatest concern to our membership and the Pennsylvania State Grange will see that these policies are addressed as the state and federal level."

The policies included one that would require all municipalities and authorities to receive approval from the Agricultural Land Condemnation Board prior to using eminent domain proceedings when dealing with farm land.

Also approved was a policy about the state's Clean & Green program, which provides beneficial tax treatment on farmland, based on agricultural use rather than development use.

The Grange would have the law include the entire acreage of the farm in the program, instead of separating the farmland from the homestead and buildings, as is currently the case.

It also passed policy to include recreational animals under the provisions of the state's nutrient management act. As it is, the law only limits the amount of production agriculture animals per acre allowed on a farm before a mandatory nutrient management plan is required.

It had been acknowledged by industry and agricultural representatives when regulations were first being drafted that there were situations in which recreational animals, such as boarded pleasure horses, were being held and maintained on farms at densities that exceeded the threshold for needing a nutrient management plan.

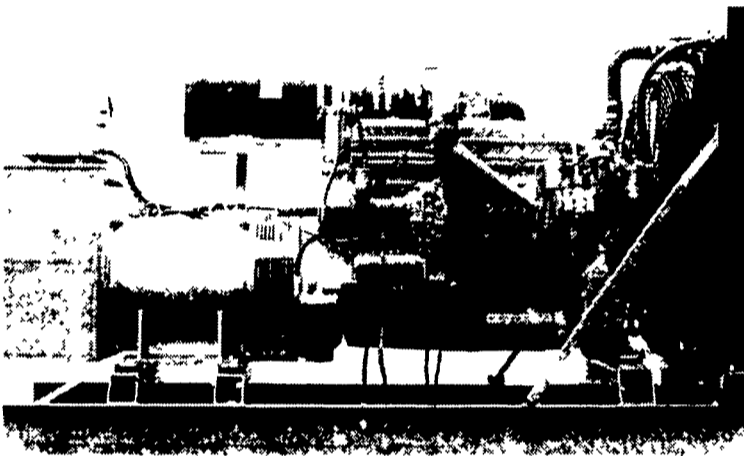
It also approved related policy to request the state Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Protection to coordinate and create a pilot project that would use animal waste as a fuel for energy production.

The Grange delegates also approved policy that calls for the Environmental Protection Agency to study the impact of tighter air quality standards it has proposed to see if those standards are justified, before forcing them on agriculture.

The Grange also approved policy that would direct local real estate tax assessment office to wait until a subdivision plan is finalized and the plan filed with the county recorder of deeds before reassessing the land for tax purposes.

In other business, only one leadership position required an election at this year's convention. John Master of Harrisville was selected to serve a 4-year-term on the Pa. State Grange Executive Committee. Master, a member of the Scrubgrass Grange in Venango County, serves as chairman of the legislative committee of the Venango Pomona Grange.

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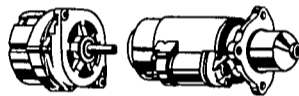
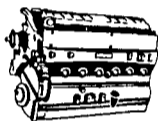
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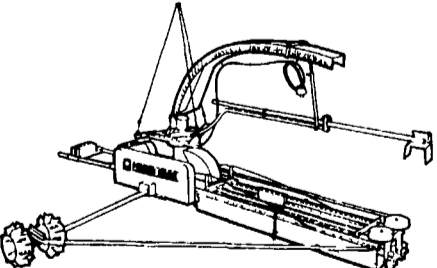
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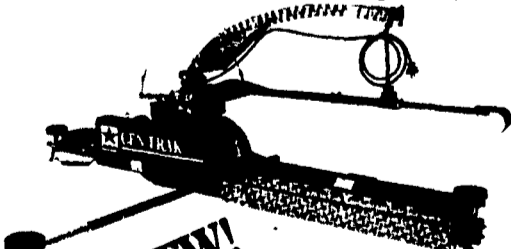


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