

Surgeon Cautions Farmers To Practice Safety



Dr. William Ives talks about farm safety and the need for farmers to always be on their guard.

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EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) —
 The season of busy field work is in progress. Farmers have a lot more on their minds than thinking of safety and health care.

"When we are tired and busy, we lose our guard with kids and are prone to do things we wouldn't do otherwise if we weren't in a rush," said Dr. William Ives, an Ephrata surgeon.

He reminds parents that constant vigilance is necessary when working around children.

Ives has treated children who drank cleaning agents in the milk house because it looked like a cup of milk. Severe esophagus burns result from drinking cleaning agents and can leave permanent damage and even cause death.

"You must think of it (cleaning agent) as a loaded gun," Ives said. "It hurts only if it is improperly

handled."

Ives also warns against potential tractor and lawn mower injuries.

"When mowing the lawn, a child should not be in the lawn," Ives said of the danger of flying objects escaping from beneath the lawnmower.

Ives knows first-hand how dangerous tractors can be.

"I almost killed myself on a tractor," he said of his efforts to use a tractor to pull out a truck that was stuck. The tractor did raise up but fortunately for Ives went back into position instead of flipping.

Ives cautions farmers to always use a tractor with roll bars.

"My goal is to improve safety for plain sects in order to save lives," said Ives.

Ives grew up on a dairy farm in Connecticut, but became fascinated with the Amish when he came to the county in search of antiques. During his years of pursuing medical studies, Ives returned to the area frequently.

When he was younger, Ives intentions were not on becoming a doctor until he began volunteer ambulance work while in high school. He went on to Boston College, where he graduated magna cum laude. With no financial resources to pursue a medical degree, Ives enlisted in the armed forces where he received seven years of medical training in exchange for his services.

After a two-year residency at the Wilford Hall USAF Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, Ives went on to a civilian residency with Geisinger Medical Center in Danville.

In that area is a large settlement of Amish, and Ives lived with an Amish family and even helped milk cows in the morning.

"The Amish are wonderful people living their religion. I'll never forget a busload of them leaving to help hurricane victims in the South," Ives said.

He also never forgot that many Amish had medical problems that they lived with because it was too expensive to have medical care without insurance.

Ives dream has been to live in an Amish and Mennonite community and offer surgical care at affordable prices for those who don't have insurance because of religious reasons.

According to Ives, many insurance plans often reimburse surgeons at lower than cost fees in order to pocket the money for its organization. Doctors often charge non-insurance patients with higher fees. Ives thinks that's unfair. He thinks non-insured patients should get a price break because there is little paper-work involved.

Ives recently set up his office at 21 N. State St. Ephrata. He has done much of the remodeling and refinishing wooden furniture himself. But the medical equipment is the latest, according to Ives.

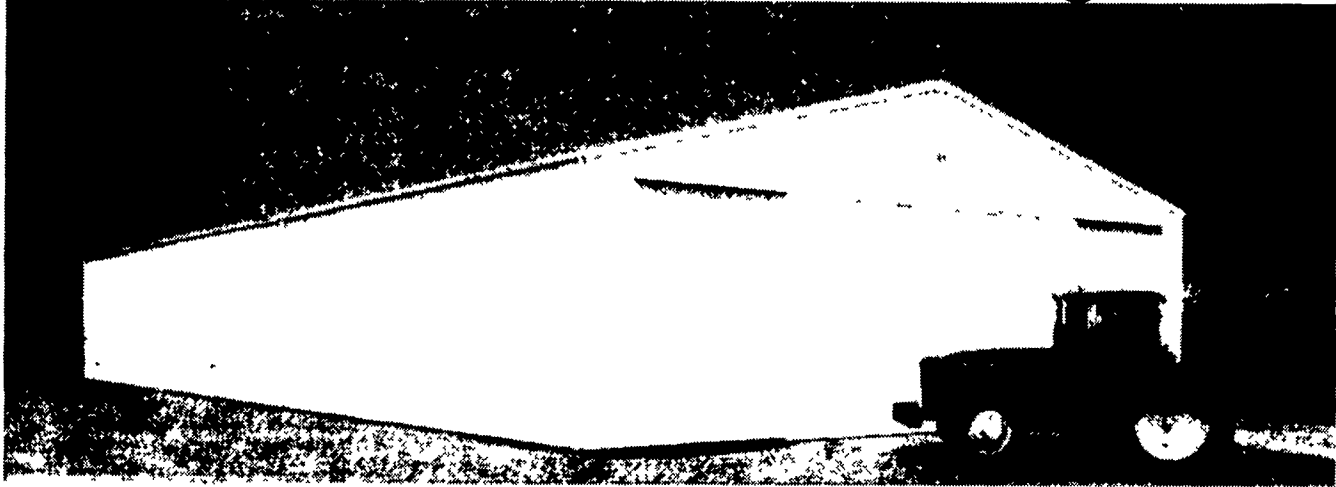
Although he performs general surgery, Ives said, "My specialty is colon and rectal."

Ives is a firm believer in preventable illnesses. He said that colon and rectal are the most common cancers and are almost always preventable if caught early in the precancerous stage. He said that it takes 8 to 10 years for a polyp to turn cancerous.

For this reason he invested in a flexible endoscopy that works like a wide angle lens when inserted in the intestine and used to detect polyps in the colon. According to Ives the procedure is more reliable, painless, and much shorter in duration than the typical sigmoidoscopy ordered by physicians.

"It's worthwhile doing exams because cancer can occur anywhere in the colon rather than in the bottom part of the intestine, the area limited to examination by a sigmoidoscopy.

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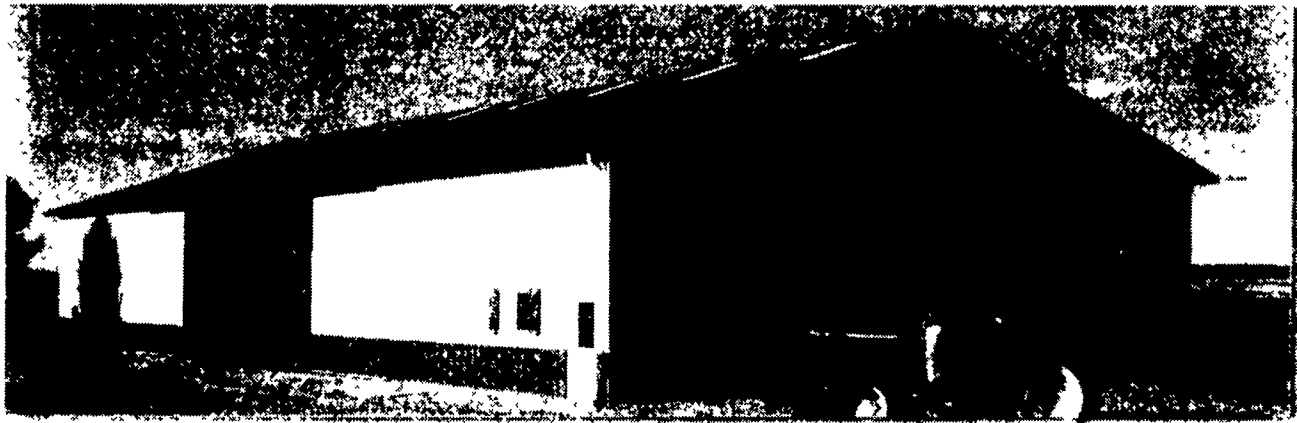


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