

**All Gardens
Great & Small**
by
York Co.
Horticultural Agent
Tom Becker



KIDS AND MOWERS
Can mowing your lawn be hazardous to your children's health? Several recent lawn mower accidents involving children under the age of 5, occurred in York County. They resulted in loss of limbs, fingers, toes or injured the eyes.

The whirling metal blade below the mower deck contributes to 70 percent of all lawn mower accidents. A person can come in contact with the blade by slipping under the mower deck, or reaching into the discharge chute before the blade stops. Lawn mower blades typically turn at 3600 revolutions per minute, or 60 revolutions per second. Since most blades have two ends and rotate at 200 mph, an object in line with the blade for only one second may be struck as many as 120 times. The intensity of the damage from a blade rotating under these conditions is equivalent to a 1.2 pound missile traveling at 232 miles per hour. Bones coming in contact with the mower are typically crushed and the wound filled with dirt and grass, making it difficult for a surgeon to repair.

Lawn mowers often hurl objects (stones, sticks, etc.) from under the mower deck especially

when the lawn is high. Debris launched from the discharge chute could puncture the skin or eyes resulting in serious injury.

Recent design changes to lawn mowers have reduced but not eliminated the danger. Improved guards have helped as well as the 'deadman brake' which stops the blade in three seconds or less after the operator lets go of the push handle or gets off the seat of a riding mower. Some operators see these safety devices as a nuisance, and by-pass the device using a wire or tape. Never remove the safety device on a lawn mower.

To reduce the hazards associated with mowing the lawn, review the proper use and operation of the mower. Clear the area under the deck of sticks, stones and other debris. Keep children out of the area you plan to mow, children under 5 years old and pets are the most accident victims. Wear sturdy footwear such as work shoes or steel work boots (never wear sandals, sneakers or bare feet). Wear close fitting slack and shirts to avoid entanglement under the mower. Make sure all guards, deflectors, and safety devices are in place and in working order. Check the fuel level

before starting. Do not add fuel when the engine is hot.

While mowing your lawn, wear eye protection, pay careful attention to children playing in the area, move slowly over rough terrain, direct the discharge chute away from cars, buildings, and people, look ahead of the mowing path for large debris, and look before backing up.

In addition do not operate a mower on a grade steeper than 15 degrees (2.5 ft. rise per 10 ft. run), operating riding mowers up and down slopes, operate walk behind mowers across slopes, never attempt to adjust cutting height while the mower is running, never operate on wet grass, and never pull a mower up grade while running (you might slip under the mower.)

If a discharge chute becomes clogged, shut off the engine and wait for the blade to stop completely before unclogging the chute. When servicing the mower deck or blade, be certain that the mower is turned off, and the spark plug wire is disconnected to prevent accidental starting.

Farm Safety Camp

For children, ages 8-13 who live on or visit farms, Extension is sponsoring a farm safety camp on Friday, July 10 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the York County 4-H Center. Topics include lawn mower safety, bicycle safety, first aid, corn picker and PTO entanglement prevention, tractor rollover prevention and more. Send a \$3.00 registration to the Penn State Cooperative Extension, 112 Pleasant Acres Road, York, PA 17042.

Information for this article was supplied by Dan F. McFarland, Extension Agent - Agricultural Engineering, Penn State Cooperative Extension. Any questions regarding the

Chester To Hold Dairy Princess Pageant

OXFORD (Chester Co.) — This year's coronation of the new Chester County Dairy Princess will be held on June 6, in conjunction with the Cochranville Strawberry Festival. Excitement is at an all time high as 10 girls will be presented at the coronation ceremony. Two girls will be competing for the title of Chester County Dairy Princess, Michelle Windle and Cynthia Grossman. Michelle is the daughter of Donald and Nancy Windle of Coatesville. They farm 250 acres, and milk 100 Holsteins. Shelly will be entering the 11th grade at Octorara High School, where she plays field hockey and is a member of the marching band and the concert band. She is also president of her 4-H club, and active in her church youth group. Cynthia resides in Parkesburg, and is the daughter of Thomas Grossman and Deborah Simmons. She will be a senior this year, also attending Octorara High School. Cindy is a member of the Sadsburyville Volunteer Fire Company, vice president of the Student Council, and Co-Captain of the Varsity Tennis Team. Her family's dairy, Quakerwood Farm, is home to 30 milking Holsteins.

Also being presented at the ceremony will be the new Chester County Dairy Ambassadors; Julie Sollenberger, daughter of David & Holly Sollenberger of Spring City, and Erica Lloyd, daughter of Ronald and Cindy Lloyd of Pottstown. In addition, a strong

team of enthusiastic dairy maids will be introduced. They include Elizabeth Brown, daughter of Kenneth and Katharine Brown of Glenmoore; Angela Barlow, daughter of Tim and Phyllis Barlow of Cochranville; Rebecca Nolan, daughter of Rob and Sharon Nolan of Cochranville; Laura King, daughter of Marvin and Carol King, also of Cochranville; Meredith Bailey, daughter of Barnard and Jane Bailey of West Chester; and Erica Laffey, daughter of George and Robin Laffey of Cochranville.

Together, the new princess and her talented court, will be promoting the dairy industry throughout Chester County, and the state of Pennsylvania. The reigning princess, Melissa Wertz, will crown her successor.

Festivities will begin promptly at noon on June 6. Steve Dietrich, Chester County extension agent, will emcee this luncheon event! A milk punch reception will follow the coronation. All are welcome to attend and meet the new Chester County Dairy Royalty!

Tioga Pageant

WHITNEYVILLE (Tioga Co.) — The Tioga County Dairy Princess Pageant will be held at Whitneyville Fair Youth Building on June 15 at 7 p.m. Cost for dinner is \$7.

Contestants with a dairy background are needed. Dairy princesses need to be between the ages of 16 to 24 years and dairy maids between 13 to 16 years.

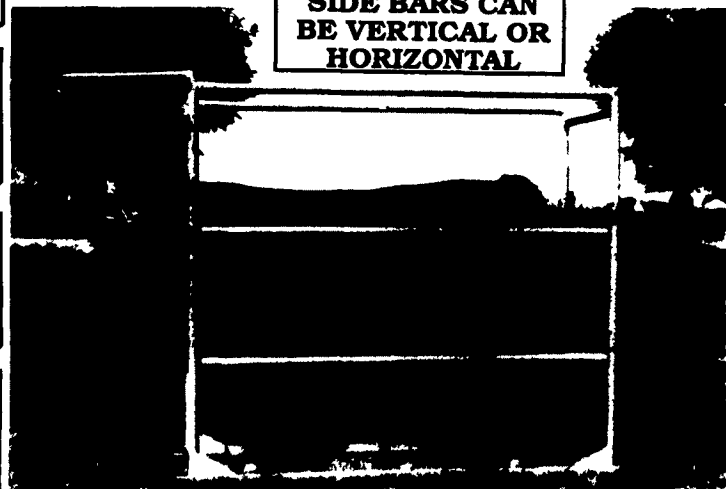
For questions or reservations, call Carol Baker at (717) 549-2599.

above article can be addressed to Tom Becker, Penn State Cooperative Extension at (717) 840-7408.

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