



OPINION

Sudden Sniffing Death

More Serious Than You Think

This plea applies to everyone. And the agricultural community is not exempt.

We're talking about the recently well publicized examples of inhalant abuse by young people ages 9 to 17. Products such as model airplane glue, nail polish remover, cleaning fluids, hair spray, gasoline, the propellant in aerosol whipped cream, spray paint, fabric protector, air freshener, air conditioner fluid (freon), cooking spray, and correction fluid are used. The potential for farm youth to be caught up in this popular way to "get high," is even more evident than for city kids with inexpensive household products found in any mother's kitchen cupboards.

Farm kids have easy access to gasoline by removing the cap from pick-up-trucks or tractors. In addition, milk-house and barn cleaning chemicals are of industrial strength and thus more potent than even regular household products. These products are sniffed, snorted, bagged fumes inhaled from a plastic bag or "huffed" (inhalant-soaked rag, sock or roll of toilet paper in the mouth) to achieve a high. Inhalants are also sniffed directly from the container.

According to national surveys, inhaling dangerous products is becoming one of the most widespread "drug" problems in the country. It is more popular than marijuana with young people. For as little as \$1.50 (lunch money) youth can buy a can of air freshener. More than a million young people used inhalants to get high just last year. By the time a student reaches the 8th grade, one in five will have used inhalants.

All young people experiment, but inhalant abuse can cause serious injury or death with **EVEN ONE USAGE**. Most parents are in the dark regarding the popularity and dangers of inhalant use. Even fewer know the deadly effects the poisons in these products have on the brain and body when inhaled or "huffed." It's like playing Russian Roulette. The user can die the first, 10th, or 100th time a product is misused as an inhalant. The wrong choice of aerosol can starve the body of oxygen, which can lead to unconsciousness and death, commonly referred to as sudden sniffing death (SSD).

Margaret, mother of Keith Wagner who died in a car accident because of inhalant abuse, wants all parents to be aware of this danger to our young people.

We do too.

If you are a parent, take a few minutes to investigate whether your children may be experimenting with dangerous (though perfectly legal) chemicals. If you are someone with siblings or other young people that you care about, please talk to them. If you are a farm or rural young person who is experimenting with inhalants in the hay mow, corn crib, or out behind the barn, please don't do it again. Talk to an adult you trust, and make yourself accountable. Have someone regularly ask you if you have faithfully abstained from huffing or inhaling chemicals. This is more serious than you think.



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Develop A Business Plan

According to Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension Dairy Agent, as you develop a management plan and budget, use realistic and conservative figures. Make sure your management plan cash flows, even in adverse time when purchased feed costs or interest rates go up or when commodity prices or crop yields drop.

If your plan does not cash flow, do not fool yourself by simply changing the numbers to make them look good on paper. You will need to search for more profitable alternatives. When the numbers cash flow well enough to meet your needs, put the plan into action and make it work in real life.

If you used realistic numbers and have a good plan that cash flows on paper, if you keep your efforts focused and pursue your plan with determination, staying on course and meeting timetables and if you make the figures work as planned, you will succeed.

To Manage Cows As An Asset

As you think about managing your herd, keep some of these basic thoughts in mind. Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension Dairy Agent, reminds us your dairy herd is a big investment. Cows are living, working assets. They are your primary source of income. So protect your investment while protecting your income base.

Manage your cows so they may do the job you expect them and reward you with a decent profit. Young stock are your cows of tomorrow. Tomorrow's cows will never be any better than the young stock you raise or purchase.

Manage your heifers and your cows to protect their lungs, intestinal linings, feet and legs and udders so you do not seriously or permanently impair their future performance and your profits.

To Produce Low Cost Milk

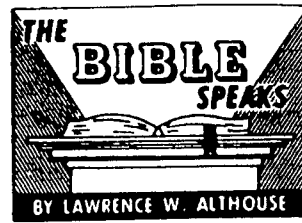
Produce the maximum amount of the cheapest increment of milk possible, states Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension Dairy Agent. There are some overhead costs associated with dairying.

Every stall in your barn has a cost, whether filled or not. We refer to these as the DIRT 5 (depreciation, interest, repairs, taxes and insurance). There also are some basic cow costs. Once you place the cow in a stall, you incur another group of costs that are fixed no matter how much milk the cow produces. Some of these costs are labor, herd replacements, breeding, testing, veterinary, dairy supplies and feed for cow's maintenance and pregnancy.

It will take a certain amount of milk to cover these basic cow costs. The amount required will vary from farm to farm and from year to year, depending on milk production costs and milk prices. Then you have the cost of feeding the cow to produce the amount of milk to break even.

Once we pass the break even level we enter into the least cost, maximum profit zone. The next 10, 20, 30 or more pounds of milk is the cheapest milk you will ever produce. About the only cost associated with this incremental increase is the extra feed to produce the extra milk. One pound of feed dry matter has the capability of producing about two to two and half pounds of milk. Many times you do not have to feed expensive feed to get this milk, just more of what the cow is already receiving, assuming the ration is properly balanced.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Champions are made by dreaming more than others think is practical."



A NEW BEGINNING,
March 21, 1999

Background Scripture:

John 3:1-21

Devotional Reading:

I Corinthians 15:7-22

In the 17th century, when Oliver Cromwell and the Puritans violently wrestled Britain from Charles I, they tried Archbishop Laud for treason. Of all the major crimes of which he was accused, he was able to prove his innocence. But the Puritans said he should be put to death anyway, because his many minor crimes put together equaled the major crime of treason. "This is the first time in my life," said the outraged Laud, that I ever heard men declare that 200 black cats make one black horse."

From the pronouncements of some Christians, one might easily get the impression that the gospel is essentially about judgment and punishment. Like the Puritans of old, some Christians are more likely to be defined by what they condemn than what they embrace. To be sure, judgment is part of the gospel, but it is *God's judgment* of us, not our judgment of each other.

The New Testament is unequivocally clear — from Jesus' warning to "Judge not, that you be not judged," (Mt. 7:1) to Paul's searing question: "Why do you pass judgment on your brother?" (Romans 14:10), to John's statement of the gospel in miniature: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (Jn. 3:17).

HE CAME BY NIGHT

John is demonstrating the superiority of the gospel over the religious legal ruler of the Jews. Nicodemus was a distinguished member of the old order come to meet and discuss with Jesus the pioneer of the new order. Though he came secretly by night, Nicodemus appears to be both sincere and respectful.

As he so often does in John's gospel, Jesus responds to a ques-

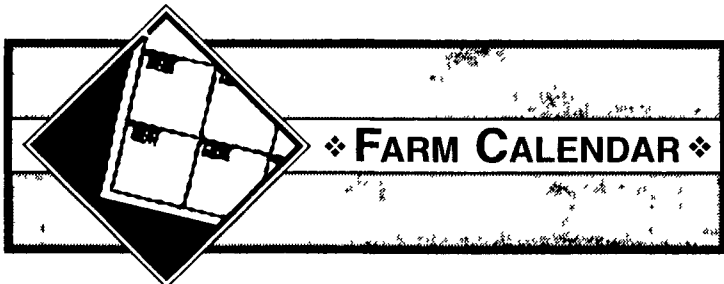
tion in an unexpected way, cutting to the heart of the matter. "Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (3:3). It seems that Nicodemus did not understand that Jesus is speaking about spiritual rebirth, not physical. So Jesus points to two levels of existence: the sphere of flesh and the other of the spirit. When he calls for us to be reborn he is speaking of spiritual rebirth, a rebirth that only God can give us.

TRANSFORMED WITHIN

For Nicodemus this is so different from Pharasaism, where a man earns salvation by his adherence to the law. But the gospel is dependent, not upon works of the law but the grace of God. It results, not in the control of a person's outward acts, but a transformation from within. As Joseph Alleine puts it, "Conversion is no repairing of the old building; but takes all down and erects a new structure."

The Pharasaic legal system sought to control behavior through rules. The gospel, on the other, was one of transformation. Jesus likened the Spirit through which transformation is effected to the wind. This was a play on words since in both Greek and Hebrew the term for "wind" and "spirit" were the same words. Rather than being subject to human will, the Spirit is spontaneous and unpredictable. "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with everyone born of the Spirit" (3:8). A new beginning is always possible.

So, what happened to Nicodemus? Did he become converted? John doesn't tell us and none of the other three Evangelists even mention him. But, later in John 7 he defends Jesus from unjust accusations and in 19:39 he joins with Joseph of Arimathea in providing Jesus with a decent burial. Both of these actions required considerable courage. I believe he made a new beginning.



❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

Saturday, March 20

Penn State Master Gardeners of Lancaster County Gardener Symposium, Hotel Brunswick, Lancaster, 8:45 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
1999 Christmas Tree Growers Meeting, Human Service Building, Chambersburg, 9:30 a.m.-noon.

Dairy Lea Regional Tour Meeting, Howard Johnson Hotel, Norwich, N.Y., 1 p.m.

Sunday, March 21 Spring Begins

Monday, March 22

Dairy Farmers of America Annual Meeting, Westin Crown Center, Kansas City, Mo., thru March 23.

Introduction to Windows on Com-

puter, York Extension Office, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., and March 29, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Using Milk Forward Contracts, Carroll County Md. Extension, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, March 23

Ice Cream Short Course, U. of Md., thru March 26.

Act 6 Nutrient Management Certification/Plan Writing Seminar, Bradford/Susquehanna/Wyoming, Lacyville Fire Company, fert. 3/23, cert. 3/30, exam 4/6.

Altoona Tree, Shrub, and Turf Conference, Hampton Inn, Altoona, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Internet Workshop for Dairy Producers, Penn State York Campus Bookstore, Room 108, 10

a.m.-3 p.m.

Horse Pasture Workshop, Columbia County extension office, Bloomsburg, 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Foot Health Meeting For Dairy, Yoder's Restaurant, New Holland, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Pa. DHIA Workshop With George Cudoc, Adams County extension, 10 a.m.-noon.

Mercer County Sheep and Wool Growers Association meeting, Mercer extension office, Mercer, 6:30 p.m.

Advanced Beef Nutrition School, Arena Restaurant, Bedford, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 24

Passing On the Farm Workshop, Westmoreland extension office, Greensburg.

Hands-On Workshop of Computer Spreadsheets, York extension office, York, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., also March 25.

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