

Farm Women Maintain Purpose In New Millennium

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff
CAMP HILL (Dauphin Co.) —

The 81st annual convention of the Society of Farm Women of Pennsylvania marked a new century and a new format, but many things remained the same for the organization, founded in 1914.

Its 2,459 members continue to give time and money to help the unfortunate, to live by their motto "For Happiness," and to believe that by "brightening the corners where they are" enriches their own lives.

This was the first convention in which members departed from holding morning and afternoon sessions at the State Forum followed by an evening banquet in a hotel. On Monday, the business

session, banquet, and entertainment were conducted at the Radisson Penn Harris, Camp Hill, to better accommodate members. The banquet was served at the noon meal instead of a separate evening event.

The organization was founded in 1914 by Mrs. Frank Black of Somerset County to encourage farm women to preserve the spirit of patriotism and sacrifice, to foster love for farm and rural life, and to uphold the dignity of farming.

Members continue to uphold the same principles as evidenced by opening each session with scriptures, prayer, and salute to the flag. They meet monthly in one of the individual societies scattered throughout the commonwealth.

This year alone, the state organi-



Conducting a memorial service for the 64 members who passed away in 1999, from left, are Pat Diechart, Lorraine Rittenhouse, Edith Lehman, Karen Sellers, and Catherine Schott.



After nine years in state leadership, Lois Hughes, left, pins the president's pin on Catherine Schott.



After addressing the Farm Women Convention, Secretary of Agriculture Samuel Hayes Jr. receives a Pennsylvania commodity basket from Becky Swallow, vice president.

zation awarded scholarships totaling \$9,000 to college students pursuing agriculture and home economics-related degrees. They donated \$4,000 to Habitat for Humanity. On the county level, thousands of more dollars were contributed to meet community needs.

These figures are commendable for any organization, but what makes it even more impressive is that most of the membership is retirement age. In fact, many of the members are in their eighties and nineties and live in retirement homes. Members who are able help with fundraising efforts by operating food booth sales at fairs, auctions, and other events, through cookbook sales, and a variety of novel ways.



Carole Hostettler talks about the outreach of Lebanon County Christian Ministries.



Naomi Bupp, left, hands an \$8,000 check for cookbook sales to Carolyn Neal, treasurer for Farm Women.

At the convention attended by 244, new officers were installed. After nine years in leadership, Lois Hughes handed over leadership responsibility to her successor, Catherine Schott.

According to the by-laws, the president fills a three-year term after serving three-year terms as second vice president, and first vice-president before being installed as president.

The newly-installed president is from Lebanon County, and has been active in the organization for 43 years. Catherine has served in all county offices in the county except secretary. On the state level, Catherine has served terms as director and as the first and the second vice president.

The peppy member of Lebanon

County's Society 16 promises to solve complaints voiced about the convention.

Moving up from second vice president to first vice president is Becky Swallow from Somerset County.

Installed as second vice president was Mary Fizz of Berks County; Carolyn Neal of York County, treasurer; and Sharon Engle of Franklin County, secretary.

New directors installed included Fay Stare, Cumberland County; Florence Diehl, Adams County; Emma Spencer, Huntingdon County; and Joanne Zane, Cambria County.

Naomi Bupp presented an \$8,000 check accumulated from

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Heading the state Farm Women Society, from left, are Catherine Schott, president; Becky Swallow, first vice president; Mary Fizz, second vice president; Carolyn Neal, treasurer; and Sharon Engle, secretary.



State directors, from left, are Fay Stare, Florence Diehl, Emma Spencer, and Joanne Zane.