

Progress Makers

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ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.)

— Seeking information, entertainment, fun and food, thousands swarmed the grounds at Penn State's Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center during Ag Progress Days.

They were not disappointed.

"I'm thoroughly enjoying this," said Nancy Witmer of Manheim.

She was one of the visitors who wanted to know more about the West Nile disease spread by mosquitoes. She found a workshop on insect borne diseases intriguing.

Some farmers attend to see and hear about the latest machinery and crop advances. Children climb over the tractors, collect stickers, balloons, and other freebies, admire the animals in the petting zoo and wildlife workshops, and participate in many of the games and activities held in the Family Room.

For many families, Ag Progress Days is an annual trek. Stanley and Julie King, Belleville dairy farmers, said they come every year. So do Michael and Melody Fogal.

Aaron and Virginia Zimmerman said that it was the first time they attended the event since they were married. Aaron wanted to talk with all the seed people, but they found so many other events interesting to themselves and their children, Heather, 5, Monica, 3, and Conrad, 2.

Of course with so many activities and exhibits, it takes hundreds of people to work at the booths and workshops. But the exhibitors seem to enjoy it as much as the visitors.

While Dale Schnupp, Lebanon, stayed with the booth, his

Below, extended family members such as these hold a mini-family reunion at Ag Progress. From left are Bradford Countians Dalton and Lisa Weber with children, Christi, 10, and Travis, 6; Grandma Velma Schnupp, whose husband Dale is a standholder from Lebanon, and grandchildren Kyle Burkholder, Rome, and Kelvin Dffenbach, Wolmesdorf.

wife Velma accompanied her grandchildren and daughter Lisa and husband Dalton Weber around the grounds.

The three-day event, which ran Tuesday through Thursday, offered workshops on health, food, gardening, landscaping, inventions, and innovations show people how to integrate new findings into their everyday lifestyles. Informational tours on woodlot management, nutrient management, and stream-bank conservation gave visitors a chance to view the research being carried out throughout the year.

The family center is packed with fun activities for children and adults to learn how to eat for better health.

Not all classes were taught by adults. Second-grader Tara Fisher helped her mom Susan teach a Kids in the Kitchen workshop. The audience could participate in "shaking themselves silly" to make ice cream in the bag and yogurt pudding.

"Children can learn early in life that cooking is fun. It teaches them lifeskills and helps them with math and science," Susan said.

Numerous games and activities provided educational knowledge with lots of laughs. Prizes were given to those who found the right answers by



Above, ready to play ball are Eric, 7, Kendric, 5, and Corey, 2, children of Mike and Janie Musser, Denver hog and chicken farmers, with a cousin, Randall.



searching for clues in a treasure hunt held in the Family Room.

Farm safety is always a concern for farm families. Many accidents can be avoided by taking the proper precautions. The Women's Auxillary of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau set up a miniature farm display. Those who found the 17 hazards received a prize depending on their ages. Some of the prizes were sunglasses, earplugs, and coloring books. Their names were also entered in a drawing for a smoke detector.

Connie Teel, safety chairman, said that 40 percent of reported farm injuries happen to women.

Women, she said, do a lot of the barn work, making them

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Above, milk promoters for Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Program Services, from left, include Pennsylvania Alternate Amanda Gilkinson; Junia Isiminger, PDPPS coordinator; Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Lori Connelly; Roberta McConnell, western coordinator; and State Alternate Rebecca Kilgore.



After "shaking herself silly" Tara Fisher slurps some of the ice cream she made in a bag. At left, Samantha, 5, and Nicholas, 3, find their own entertainment. They are the children of Michael and Melody Fogal, Mt. Union.