

# 'Farmer D' Pays Tribute To All Agriculturalists

CAROLYN N. MOYER  
Bradford Co. Correspondent  
TROY (Bradford County) —  
With a compassionate look on his face, the aging farmer peers out across the landscape, quietly watching as the seasons slowly turn from summer to fall to winter to spring. This is his land and all is calm under his watch.

The annual ritual of watching the seasons turn with anticipation is echoed in farmer's faces across the nation. For this farmer, however, guarding the countryside is a never-ending task. He will stand tall, singing out a tribute to all farmers no matter where they live for as long as he is able. It was for this purpose that "Farmer D" was born.

Towering over the land, "Farmer D" stands 14-feet tall and was carved from an 80-foot tall white pine tree. Nelson and Sylvia Waffle, who commissioned the work, thought that carving a farmer would be a fitting tribute to an agricultural community.

"Someone should honor the farmers," said Nelson about his reasons for choosing this design.

When the couple saw that the tree in their front yard was beginning to die, they contacted Dennis Beach of Wapwallopen,

who created the statue in May 1991.

Beach carved the entire statue using chain saws. The whole farmer is one piece with the exception of the fork, which was carved from a separate piece and craftily positioned inside "Farmer D's" curved hand.

"He does the detail as he carves," noted Nelson.

And, this larger-than-life icon is complete with fingernails, buckles on his bib overalls and straps on his boots.

For the first few years after the carving was complete, the Waffles were instructed to treat the wood with linseed oil and mineral spirits. After the wood was partially preserved, they were able to apply a coat of white oil based paint and, this past summer, decided to add some more detail to the statue. The base, which sports 168 rings, was preserved with one gallon of black wood sealant. With careful management, "Farmer D" will stand at watch for 25 to 30 years.

"Every year we try to add something," commented Sylvia. "We're giving him a gray beard and gray hair and a faded red shirt and denim blue overalls."

They also have been collecting pieces of vintage farm equipment

to scatter around him and plan to do more landscaping work as time permits.

Although Nelson worked on a farm when he was 19 years old, he is not a farmer by profession. He moved to the Troy area in 1987 from LaPeer, Michigan. He met his wife, Sylvia, in nearby Mansfield while he was playing in a band called the "Country Drifters." But he has always felt a connection to the land.

"This was a 500-acre farm at one time," explained Nelson.

So, "Farmer D" faithfully watches over the rolling farmland of Northeastern Pennsylvania, greeting visitors who travel between Troy and Mansfield, ready to start each new day, no matter what the season. And, Nelson and Sylvia have greeted hundreds of visitors who can't help but stop to see the tribute to all farmers. Their guest book includes people from all over the United States and several countries. Even Prince Charles' cousin couldn't resist the urge to stop in to talk with Farmer D's creators.

"Everyone falls in love with it," said Sylvia. And it is clear that Nelson and Sylvia wouldn't trade their beloved farmer for anything.



Standing 14-foot tall, "Farmer D" watches the seasons turn as he looks out over the rolling hills of Northeastern Pennsylvania. "Someone should pay tribute to the farmers," said Nelson Waffle about his and Sylvia's decision to turn a dying white pine tree into a highly detailed statue of a farmer.

## Mennonite Farming History In Europe And Pennsylvania



The Dec. 1 lecture will focus on hay and grain harvest by Swiss pioneers.

HINKLETOWN (Lancaster Co.) — The Swiss Pioneer Preservation Association plans a meeting on the history of Swiss Mennonites, who moved into French Alsace and the Pfalz in Germany where they innovated a new kind of sustainable agriculture before the migration to Pennsylvania.

They pioneered the use of legumes and crop rotations to boost soil fertility.

The illustrated lecture by Mennonite historians Ivan Glick and Allan Keyser will explain how it all happened in Europe where Dutch Mennonites provided clover seed to the Swiss Mennonites

as they moved into France and Germany. Later, they came to Pennsylvania, where they and the Quakers brought their unique farming methods.

The Dec. 1 lecture will focus on hay and grain harvest with special emphasis on the tools Lancaster County Mennonites used — including Joe Shirk's grain cradle. Machine development during most of 300 years up to Ed Nolt's New Holland baler invention, as well as Ike Smoker's bale thrower that beat John Deere's patents, will be detailed. A hands-on antique farm tool display is planned.

Keyser is a specialist on Pennsylvania Dutch food research, antique looms, and fabrics, as well as old buildings. He and Glick share an interest in the history of farming. They study the development of gristmills, covered bridges, barns, and old houses. Their barn research shows how barn designs change as farming practices change.

Starting time for the Dec. 1 meeting is at 7 p.m. The Christian Aid Ministries Warehouse is located at 2412 Division Highway, five miles east of Ephrata, on the north side of Route 322.

Admission is free. A free-will offering will be taken to benefit the Swiss Pioneer Preservation Association as they work to preserve the local landmarks.

For more information, contact Raymond Zimmerman at (717) 354-4301 or (717) 354-7139.

## Outstanding 4-H Equestrians Honored

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Lebanon County 4-H members enrolled in the horse project were honored for their outstanding accomplishments during the county recognition banquet held Nov. 3 at the Schaefferstown Fire Hall.

The 4-H horse program provides youth, between the ages of 8-19, with the opportunity to acquire horsemanship skills, learn horse care and management, and explore interests in the horse industry. Ownership of a horse, while desirable, is not required to participate in the 4-H program.

Dr. Nan Hanshaw Roberts, a veterinarian with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, presented a program on West Nile Virus focusing on how the disease affects horses. Members of the Lebanon County 4-H horse judging team made a presentation on the basics of horse judging.

Receiving awards for their achievements in the county grooming and showmanship contest were Kristi Klein, Lebanon; Bethany Parker, Annville; Natasha Holler, Lebanon; and

Jennifer Campbell, Annville. Brandt's Mill & Saddlery, Lebanon sponsored the grooming and showmanship awards. Additional awards were presented to winners of county, district and state performance and production classes. H & H Tack Shop, Chapman Ford and First Union Bank sponsored the awards.

Outstanding project record book trophies were presented to Bethany Parker, Annville; Jennifer Campbell, Annville; and Melissa Hershey, Cleona. Members are required to keep detailed records of their feed costs, maintain a monthly stable record, and write a story of their project experiences. Members receiving gold ribbon awards for scoring 98 points and above on their record books included: Katie Eisenhauer, Lebanon; Sarah Levengood, Newmans-town; Lindsey Sattazahn, Annville; Ashley Zimmerman, Palmyra; Cody Gosch, Fredericksburg; and Jennifer Landis, Newmans-town.

Members of the county 4-H horse judging team which placed sixth in state competition were Kim George, Annville; Jennifer Landis, Newmans-town; Beth Parker, Annville and Lindsey Sattazahn, Annville.

Adult volunteers recognized for their leadership of the 4-H horse program included Amy Jo Gosch, Renee Levengood, Kristin Schellhamer, MicheVoydik, Tammy Beard, Alice Jones, Donald Parker, Kathy Phillips, Dave Sattazahn, John Tshudy, Eileen Yorty, Amy Zellers, Wilann Miller, and Barbara Stoyer.

## Arc's Holiday Bed And Breakfast Tour Is Dec. 10

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — The Arc of Lancaster County will host the sixth annual Holiday Bed and Breakfast Tour on Sunday, Dec. 10, from 1-6 p.m. Proceeds from the event will help to provide support services for children and adults with mental retardation and their families.

Guests will have the opportunity to tour some of the most beautiful inns in Lancaster County. Participating inns in-

clude the following: The E.J. Bowman House, Neffsville; Blue Ball Bed and Breakfast, Blue Ball; Sheep Hill Bed and Breakfast, East Earl; The Candlelight Inn, Ronks; and Mill Creek Homestead Bed and Breakfast, Bird-in-Hand.

Eby's Pequea Farm Bed and Breakfast in Gordonville, though not being toured, is participating through a donation of a one-night stay as a door prize. Four other inns have also donated a

stay at their inn as a door prize for some lucky tour participants.

Tickets for this spectacular event are \$10 in advance or \$12 if purchased at an inn the day of the event.

The ticket not only gains access to these superb inns, but also enables the guest to possibly win an overnight stay at one of the inns participating in the event. Tickets will be available after Nov. 1 at Park City Boscov's, Stauffers of Kissel Hill stores,

Herr's Market in Marietta and the following locations of The Bank of Lancaster County: New Holland, Leola, Christiana, Strasburg, Greenfield, Millersville and Ephrata. Tickets can also be purchased at The Arc office or by mailing a check made out to The Arc along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to: The Arc, 630 Janet Avenue, Lancaster, PA 17601.

For more information call The Arc at (717) 394-5251.

