

Kids Korner

National History Day Regional Competition Selects Champions

CENTERVILLE (Lancaster Co.) — Approximately 300 sixth to 12th grade students from Lancaster and surrounding counties showed off their history skills and knowledge at National History Day's regional competition on April 6. The Heritage Center Museum coordinated the competition at Centerville Middle School, Lancaster.

"Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History," was the theme for this year's competition, in which students' works were judged by teams of professionals working in history-related fields. The students entered individually or in teams of two to five and chose from one of four categories for their entries: historical paper, exhibit, documentary, or perform-

ance.

In creating their entries, students follow detailed rules and perform all research and preparation themselves, without any adult assistance.

"The young people who participate in History Day devote months to researching and developing their entries," says Kim Fortney, who, as the Heritage Center Museum's director of education, coordinated the regional event. "Much like the Science Fair, the regional competition of National History Day provides a forum at which the students can present their work for objective review."

Award winners in first, second, and third place in each category will advance to the state competition, to be held at Penn State University on May 8-9.

Capping the awards program was a special award for the Best Local History Entry in the junior and senior divisions, sponsored by the Oxford Foundation and V. Ronald Smith, respectively. Students were eligible to receive this award if their entry related to the history of one or more of the three counties in the district: Lancaster, Lebanon, and Berks. Local history topics this year included Thaddeus Stevens, the Underground Railroad and the Fulton Opera House.



Recipient of the local history junior award is Rebecca Stumpt, who receives her award from Kim Fortney, director of education for the Heritage Center Museum.



Gerald Huesken, senior winner of the local history prize, displays his exhibit for judges at the National History Day, Centerville.

Farm Accident Victim Will Speak At Somerset Farm Safety Day

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SOMERSET (Somerset Co.) — This year in Somerset County, farm kids will have an opportunity to participate in Farm Safety Day Kids Camp from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 20, at the Berlin Community Grove.

In 2000, Farm Safety Day was held at Scheffel Equipment in Somerset and focused on farmers. This year the emphasis will be on a child's role in safety on

the family farm. The event was not held last year.

"When you stop and think about safety, many, many times it is an adult involved in a farm accident, but it is more than likely a child will find that adult," reasoned Connie Oshop, field inspector for Schneiders Dairy in Pittsburgh, event sponsor. "Most farm kids are running heavy equipment at a young age so they are definitely at risk."

Somerset Farm Safety Coali-

tion and Penn State Cooperative Extension in Somerset are also program sponsors.

According to Miquel Saviroff, extension agent in Somerset County, each year in the U.S., children experience fatal and nonfatal injuries associated with production agriculture. Primary causes of these injuries include tractors, farm machinery, livestock, building structures and falls, Saviroff said.

Children are also exposed to many of the same environmental hazards as those experienced by adult workers, including pesticides, fuel, noxious gases, airborne irritants, noise, vibration, zoonoses and stress, said Saviroff.

In 2000, 25 percent of farm-related fatalities in Pennsylvania affected children ages 19 or younger, according to Penn State statistics.

National Safety Council statistics show that tractor rollover, truck-related injuries, machinery entanglements, and drowning are the leading causes of death for agricultural workers under age 25.

"Our primary purpose is to avoid accidents and create awareness in children, an attitude of prevention," stressed Saviroff. "It can happen at any moment to anyone. Children must have respect for the equipment, follow safety measures and manuals and abide by the safety rules. Our ultimate goal is to reduce the number of accidents on the family farms and even if one child is saved, then this event was worth it."

The program workshops will include the following topics:

Accidents That Can Happen, first-hand accounts from local

farmers; Bicycle Safety by the Berlin Police Department; Electrical Safety, Rural Electric Association (REA) and Pennsylvania Electric; Farm Chemicals, Melanie Barkley of AgriKing; Grain and ATV Safety, Randee Ankeny, Department of Health; Life Saving Knowledge, Berlin FFA; Machinery Entanglement, Scheffel Equipment; Med-Star (helicopter), Conemaugh Hospital; Personal Protective Equipment, Miquel Saviroff, extension agent; Power Takeoff (PTO) Entanglement, Bill Blough; Skid Steer Loader Safety, Scheffel Equipment; Sun Safety, Colleen Muscho, Department of Health; Tractor Rollover, Jim Harvey, Penn State University; and Smoke House, New Centerville Fire Department.

Parents will be expected to accompany the children to Farm Safety Day. There will be a pizza party and ice cream afterwards.

According to Dr. Dennis Murphy, professor of agricultural engineering in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, 44 people died in accidents on Pennsylvania farms in 1996.

Annually, injuries serious enough to cause lost work time occur on about 10 percent of Pennsylvania farms. About two percent of these injuries leave the victim permanently disabled.

Penn State is running farm safety coalitions in three counties: Somerset, Huntingdon and Juniata counties. Penn State continues to be an educator of farm safety issues, mainly through Dr. Dennis Murphy, who is known on an international basis, and also through strong interest from the state's Department of Agriculture.

Penn State has several farm

safety demonstrations to extension offices and ag high school classrooms. Penn State in collaboration with Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture also runs a FFA and 4-H farm safety quiz bowl competition with the entire group competing at Ag Progress Days and the runoff competition at the Farm Show in January.

"Too many times, we show kids how to use equipment or chemicals and we expect them to understand because it is second nature to us," said Connie Oshop with Schneider's Dairy, "however, it takes only a simple mistake to change everyone's lives on the family farm. That is why this will be an education day for everyone."

For Bill Blough of the Jenners town area, a simple mistake on his family farm in 1967 radically changed his life forever.

"It could have been worse but the power takeoff shaft pulled my arm in up to the shoulder," Blough said. "It was a cold day, Dec. 16, and the shaft was frozen fast to the cover when I put my hand on it."

That simple mistake caused Blough to lose his right hand and he now uses a hook to maneuver.

"It takes only a second," said Blough, who will give his account of his farm accident at the Kids Camp event on April 20. "In the past when I serve as speaker for these events, I have asked kids to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich with one hand. They soon realize it's almost impossible and it makes them think. We hope to make an impact on every child who attends this year's Farm Safety Day and if we cause just one to stop and think before they make a mistake, then it was well worth the time."



Planners for the Farm Safety Day Kids Camp in Somerset County discuss the event scheduled for Saturday, April 20, at Berlin Community Grove. Bill Blough, left, a local farmer and chairman of the Somerset Farm Safety Coalition, explains how a simple mistake cost him his arm in a farm accident. With Blough are Miquel Saviroff, Somerset County extension agent with Penn State University, and Connie Oshop, field inspector with Schneider's Dairy in Pittsburgh.