

Farm-City Day Program In 11th Year

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ROARING BRANCH (Tioga Co.) — "You can't separate agriculture and Pennsylvania," said Pennsylvania Sen. Roger Madigan (R-23rd) at opening ceremonies for the 11th annual Farm-City Day. "They just go together."

Event chairperson Sherri Butters presented Madigan with a hand-carved antique hay fork for his years of dedication to the event.

"He has followed us all over Tioga County," said Butters. "He has never missed a Tioga County Farm-City Day. The idea behind the hay fork was for his dedication to 'pitching' agriculture. He has done a wonderful job for Tioga County agriculture."

With the Senatorial redistricting, Madigan will no longer serve Tioga County, but will continue to serve Bradford County.

Changes have also been made to the annual Farm-City Day celebration. This year the Tioga

importance of agriculture was the point of hosting the 2002 event, which drew a crowd of about 1200 people to Four Wynds Farm, located in the southeast corner of Tioga County.

Owned by Elwyn and Charlene Fitch, Four Wynds Farm is a fourth generation Century farm. They milk 85 Holsteins and 10 Jerseys and produce corn, oats, alfalfa, and mixed hay on their 259 owned and 300 rented acres.

To illustrate the importance of this event, Madigan stressed the economic impact that agriculture has in the state.

"Pennsylvania agriculture brings in four billion dollars each year, not including the money brought in from those involved in processing.

"Pennsylvania ranks in the top 10 in the nation in the production of many products. But agriculture is more than statistics. Agriculture is about people and farm families like the Fitches and their hard work and dedication. That's something most people don't see

also welcome to step inside the milking barn, see the baby calves in the calf barn, and watch a milking demonstration. They could also participate in ice cream eating contests, identify Christmas tree varieties, and watch a butter making demonstration.

The "Woodmobile" also made its first appearance in Tioga County. Sponsored by the hardwood industry, the trailer introduced visitors to the many varieties of Pennsylvania hardwood.

Other exhibits representing the migrant workers, dairy promotion, and cooperative extension, among others, were also popular spots for visitors.

Wagon tours took visitors from the farm down the road to a neighboring farm and offered a chance to learn the history of Four Wynds Farm. A few lucky wagon riders even had the opportunity to watch a calf being born in the pasture.

For children, a maze constructed of round bales was a hit as was a petting zoo and pedal tractor-pulling contest.

Winners in the children's tractor pulling contest were boys, age 4, Dalton Heatley; age 5, Nick Marple; age 6, Kurtis Eby; age 7, Ben Minnich; age 8, Keith Burkholder; age 9, Graham Gedman; age 10, Mark Winder; age 11, Chris Winch; and age 12, Tyler Campbell. Girls, age 4, Noel Henninger; age 5, Miranda Dunham; age 6, Patricia Minnich; age 7, Kristin Jannotti; age 8, Abby Cappello; age 9, Christina Musshafen; age 10, Heidi Musshafen; age 11, Stephanie DeWalt; and age 12, Kelly Allen.

Kids could also stop by a trailer sponsored by Laurel Health and receive a free jump rope through the Tioga County Fit For Life Program.

"All in all, everybody was real pleased with the day. It was a perfect day. One fellow came all the way from Rochester area. He made a special trip to the area," said Butters.

Also in attendance were Sen. Joseph Scarnati (R-25th), Rep. Matt Baker (R-68th), Tioga County Commissioners Erick Coolidge and Walt Barnes, Bradford County Commissioner Tina



Farm-City Day chairperson Sherri Butters, left, presented Sen. Roger Madigan an antique carved hayfork for all of his years of "pitching agriculture."



The Fitch family hosted this year's event at their 259-acre dairy farm. Shown, from left, Lisa, James, and Corbin Driscoll, Charlene Fitch, Brett Taylor, Elwyn Fitch, Laura Taylor, and Bryan Fitch.

County committee teamed up with a committee from Bradford County, merging the event. Host farms will alternate between Tioga and Bradford counties, with next year's event taking place in Bradford County at Y-Run Farm, owned by the Kline Family.

Allowing people to realize the

when they pick up a dozen eggs. That's why Farm-City Day is so special," Madigan said.

And the day was special for people as they had the opportunity to see a high-tensile fence being constructed, cows' hooves being trimmed, sheep being sheared, wool being spun, and horses being shod. People were

Pickett, and dairy royalty from Bradford and Tioga Counties.

Department of Agriculture Representatives from Region 2, Dean Ely, and Region 3, Russ Gunton, also took in the festivities, as well as Farm-City committee members from Lycoming County, Pa. and Tompkins County, N.Y.

Butters noted that the Tioga County Farm-City Day has been nationally recognized but she stresses that the day would never come together without countless volunteers.

"You can have all the good ideas that you want, but if you don't have a good team behind you to implement those ideas,

you're going to fail.

"I truly believe that farm city day is so successful due to the numerous volunteers that make it happen," Butters said.

More information about starting your own Farm-City Day program can be found at www.farmcity.org, a National Farm-City Website that includes tips on how to begin a program such as this.

Butters is proud to say that many of the pictures on the site are from past events in Tioga County, and she was asked to write a prolog for the booklet.

"We have a responsibility to educate the nonfarm public," said Butters.

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