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PARKSBURG (Chester Co.) — The Stoltzfus children, like many farm children around Pennsylvania, enjoy a busy lifestyle on their family farm in Chester County.

David Lee, 9, Sadie Ruth, 8; Anna Mary, 6, Leon, 4, and Esther, 2, are joined by newest sibling Chris, four months old. They are the children of Amos and Barbie Stoltzfus.

Fourth-grader David is up at 5:30 for breakfast and to gather eggs when the hens are laying. As 8 a.m. draws near, he harnesses the family pony for the 20-minute trip to school, if the weather permits. The pony waits in the school's meadow until school is over at 3:00.

When he gets home from school, he works alongside his father to help feed the steers or gather eggs in. Besides the pony, he lets the family's work horses into the barn, where they anxiously await the grain that David feeds them. Although it may not be one of his favorite jobs, he also cleans up after the horses, sweeping straw from the barn's alleyways into the horse's stalls.

After chores are done, he enjoys reading or putting puzzles together in the wintertime.

Anna Mary, first grade, and Sadie Ruth, third grade, also wake up at 5:30 and may help their mother pack lunches — usually a sandwich, a fruit drink, and chips and help with the

breakfast dishes before they head off to school. The girls are especially enjoying learning sign language besides the traditional subjects taught at school.

When they get home at 3:30, after quickly changing their clothes and washing their lunch boxes out, they may help their mother make dinner or set the table. Chicken and chipped beef are some of their favorite meals.

After school they also enjoy playing school, jumping rope, or reading. The girls learn about the Alps as they read through the famous "Heidi" books by Johanna Spyri, or about the early pioneer days of the West as they read the "Little House on the Prairie" series by Laura Ingalls Wilder.

Besides reading, they can get creative as they use stamps, colored inkpads, and heavy paper to make Christmas greeting cards.

They also like to babysit their youngest, four-month-old brother Chris.

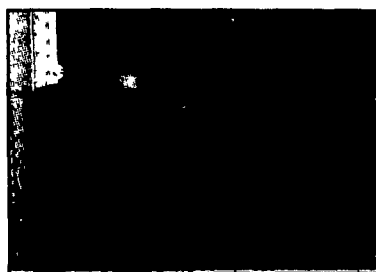
The children also enjoy working with their grandfather in his chicken house. After a short hiatus, the 12,000 chickens have begun laying eggs again, which means that the Stoltzfus family is again spending more time in the chicken house.

Besides traditional farm animals, the Stoltzfus children also have a pair of English Mastiff dogs — who recently presented the Stoltzfus family with cream-colored, dark-eyed puppies — to play with on the farm.



From left Anna Mary, 6; Emma Lynn, 8; and Sadie Ruth, 8, work together to get the dishes done.

Their cousin, Emma Lynn Stoltzfus, 8, in third grade, may come over to enjoy afternoon ac-



When the hens are laying, David often helps gather eggs.

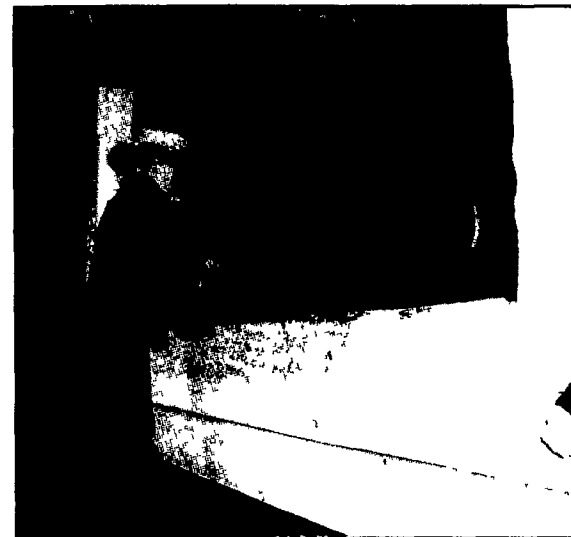
tivities with the sisters. Emma, who lives on the dairy farm across the street, also helps at home during milking time. She can put the milkers together or wash udders after milking.

The summer offers different activities for the Stoltzfus family. Although there is work to do in the garden such as weeding, help-

ing silk the corn, or hulling the peas, they also ride the pony around the farm or play softball when their cousins come over.

Although he may help in the hay field or pick up stones from the fields, David also finds time off to fish in the farm pond and may bring back catfish for the frying pan. He also is learning a

little carpentry work around the farm.



After the horses are in, David gives them the grain that they are anxious for.



Leon, 4, helps older brother David feed the horses.



One of David's jobs is to let these paint horses in and out of the barn each day.



Two driving horses, one pony, and 10 work horses are part of the farm.