

## Typical farmers?



John and Sandra Yocum pose with the evaporation meter in their weather station. The meter simply allows measurement of how far the level has fallen.

John Yocum appears to be a typical farmer. He and his wife Sandra live, with a dog and their two daughters, in a typical farmhouse near Mount Joy. John plants, harvests, and sells crops.

But John Yocum isn't a typical farmer. For one thing, he maintains his own weather station. For another, his cornfield is cut into blocks by wide paths. His tobacco plants have paper bags over them, and he keeps so many records that he needs a computer to keep track of them.

John Yocum farms all right, but the point is not to raise crops. John is a salaried, non-teaching professor of the Pennsylvania State University, and all his sowing and reaping is done for one purpose—research.

As he drives along the rectangular plots of corn at the Southeastern Field Research Laboratory, John explains to a reporter, "This one is part of a genetics experiment... this is an insect control plot... and this block checks disease resistance. We start the disease in the middle and see how far it spreads." John's 5000 corn plots, 70 varieties of tobacco, 20 strains of grapes, soybeans, flowers, potatoes, and other plants, exist to help farmers and increase the food supply, by deciding scientifically the value

of chemicals, methods, and genetic strains. (The harvested crops are sold as a sort of fringe benefit, except those treated with experimental chemicals.)

Many of the experiments carried out at the Field Research Laboratory (one of five in the state) are designed by John himself. Others are planned by other professors at the Penn State campus in State College, and carried out by John. Either way, it's a lot of work. In addition to all the tasks required to run any 88-acre farm, harvests must be carefully weighed and measured, the data recorded, and extensive files kept. When an experiment is complete, and the statistical analysis done, papers must be written for publication in journals, or reports prepared for agricultural agents. John spends his winters catching up on deskwork. (He also lectures 20 to 40 times per year to local clubs.)

Besides John, there are two full-time technicians and two part-time techs (one is Jeff Zimmerman of Mount Joy RD), and Sandra, who acts as a secretary at times.

John, raised on a small farm near Bloomsbury, never expected to end up in a research position when he was an agronomy student at Penn State. But six months before he graduat-

ed in 1961, he was offered the job of running the station, along with the title of "instructor," and took it. He married Sandra three months later, and since then has acquired a Master's degree in agronomy and become an "assistant professor."

"I guess they gave me the job because I was one of the only two people in my class who came from a farm background," he says. Under questioning, John admits that he also had very good grades.

John's work requires a knowledge of many fields: botany, chemistry, entomology, plant physiology, statistics, and, of course, farming. "Industry pays more," he says, "but I don't know if I'd like it or not. My work here is extremely varied—I might be breeding corn, chopping tobacco, and running a statistical analysis all in one day."

John finds that the public (with the exception of farmers) tends to be confused about just what his station does. "Many people call us for gardening advice," he told us, "but sometimes we get stranger inquiries. One man wanted to know if we were interested in buying human cadavers. I suppose he saw the 'research' in the name of the place and gave us a try."



### AN ENCOUNTER ON THE STREETS OF MARIETTA:

Three citizens: "Hey! Take our picture."

Photographer: "Have you done anything newsworthy?"

Citizen: "Are you from the Susquehanna?"

Another citizen: "Look at these muscles. My muscles are good news for the girls around here."

Photographer: "Well..."

A citizen: "Here's a story for you. I work for CETA and somebody's been stealing our gardening tools. Tell whoever's doing it that he better knock it off or I'll knock him off."

Another citizen: "Yeah, put that in the paper. That's big news. Now will you take our picture?"

## Fun day planned at Catholic church

Attention, all children and young at heart in the area! Plan to enjoy a fun-filled day, Saturday, August 13th, from 3:00

p.m. till dark at the Assumption BVM Church yard, New Haven Street, Mount Joy. A variety of games (Battleship, penny pitch, toss games, etc.) and

activities have been arranged. For summer fun, come to the church yard, be a winner, and have a great time.

## Free PP&L home survey can save you energy

If you're interested in learning how to cut down on the amount of money you spend for household energy, a new free home survey program now being conducted by Pennsylvania Power & Light Company may be able to show you the ways to save.

Herb Nash, of PP&L says, "Our energy consultants are checking things like the amount of insulation in attics, caulking around doors and windows, weatherstripping, heating systems, hot water heaters and several other important

items."

When the survey is completed, the PP&L consultant will make specific recommendations on how to make the home more energy efficient and will give an estimate of how much energy can be saved if the recommendations are followed.

The free survey is available to all homeowners served by PP&L regardless of the type of heating system in the home.

Nash said, "Customers who are interested in having a home survey can

call the nearest PP&L service center to make arrangements. Or they can complete and return a coupon attached to advertisements which the company is currently running in newspapers throughout our service area." (The *Susquehanna Times* of August 3, 1977, published this coupon.)

While surveys are set up by private appointment, homeowners are nevertheless encouraged to ask for positive PP&L identification when the energy consultant visits their home.

## Jaycees raise money for MS

Lancaster Countians will have a chance to get involved in a Help Raising Fund for muscular dystrophy when the Lancaster County Jaycees hold a fair in the mall at Park City Shopping Center, Lancaster on Friday and Saturday, August 12 and 13.

According to county organization chairman, Terry Wallace almost all of the county's twenty-six local Jaycees' chapters will be taking part by having carnival-like stands set up in the mall. Local Jaycees will also take part in a program called "Rent a Jaycee". Patrons shopping in the mall will be able to rent a Jaycee for a certain period of time to carry packages, watch children and help with shopping.

A jail house will be set up with Mayor of the various Jaycee communities in jail with a set amount of bail. Terry

Wallace stated that the entire profit from the muscular dystrophy fair raised by the county Jaycees will be given to the Jerry Lewis telethon held annually over the Labor Day weekend.

The muscular dystrophy support project was endorsed by the United States

Jaycees as its number one priority this year. Chairman Wallace went on to say that by bringing all the chapters in the county into one fund raising event, more funds could be raised for this important cause. He concluded by saying as Jerry Lewis says, "they are all his kids".

## Make the Art scene!

Like to make a scene? If you have an artistic bent, you can make the scene at the 9th annual Lancaster Sidewalk Art Exhibit and Sale, on September 17th.

On display will be paintings, sculptures, and prints, but no crafts or photos. Artists must be at least 16 years of age to enter.

Last year over 100 artists from the area took part. If you'd like to exhibit this year, write to Downtown Art Exhibit and Sale, Lancaster Assoc. of Commerce and Industry, 30 W. Orange St., P.O. box 1558, Lancaster 17604. Your registration form must be in by Sept. 1st.

Raindate is September 24th.