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Manheim FFA Reviews Spring Program

MANHEIM, Pa. — The spring of 2007 has been another busy season for the Manheim Central Agriculture Education program. The enthusiastic participation of teachers, students, parents and community members in all of our activities is very much appreciated. Here are a few of the highlights:

Two opportunities to donate blood were made available to staff, students and the Manheim community at Manheim Central High School (MCHS) this spring. The Honors Ag Science class students planned and organized this event as part of their leadership unit in coordination with the Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank. More than 100 donations total were made at both of the blood drive.

The Landis Valley Heirloom Plant and Herb Sale was held in May and the FFA participated in this event for the fifth consecutive year. In early March, the Honors

and Introductory Agriculture Science classes plant approximately 40 different varieties of heirloom tomato seeds. They studied proper horticulture practices for plants as they watered and cared for the plants until they were ready to be transplanted. Thanks to equipment, improvements to the greenhouse through McFEE Business Tax Credit grants the tomato and geranium plants were the best crop raised to date. The FFA students then set up their stand at Landis Valley and, for two days, proceeded to sell hundreds of plants to people who traveled great distances solely for the purpose of purchasing the tomatoes.

In late May, all fourth graders in the Manheim Central School District had the opportunity to participate in the 5th Annual Wetlands and Watershed Day sponsored by the MC Agriculture Program and McFEE. The day was developed to provide hands-on learning ex-

periences in an outdoor setting along Chiques Creek. Wetlands Day is an entire day devoted to teaching children the importance of wetland ecology, wildlife and plants, nutrient cycle and the role each student plays in keeping our watersheds clean. This year the weather was perfect and the children enjoyed all of the stations and especially Sammy the Skunk brought by wildlife enthusiast, Jack Hubley.

Many thanks to the Conservation District, Manheim Central Envirothon team, Jack Hubley and the Ag-Ed Environmental Stewardship class for lending their expertise.

2007 FFA Graduates Receive Scholarships

Three graduating young ladies have received multiple agriculture scholarships to further their agriculture education in the fall of 2007.

Carolyn Kensinger, Beth Pe-



The Honors Ag Science Class sells tomato plants at the Landis Valley Plant Sale. From left, Larissa Kulp, Melinda Fry, Jared Ginder, Derek Hanna, Shane Raffensperger, Seth Kirby and Travis Doster.

ters and Hillary Snaveley have all received four year scholarships from the Farm and Home Center Foundation. All three FFA members also each received a Manheim Central FFA scholarship.

Individually, through the National FFA Organization Scholarship Program, each girl received the following:

Carolyn Kensinger, who will attend Delaware Valley College majoring in Animal Science and Agriculture Education, received a \$1,000 Ford Truck/Built Ford Tough Scholarship

More **SPRING PROGRAM**, page A43

W.B. Saul High School Wins Environmental Community Service Award

PHILADELPHIA — Environmental issues are a major concern of students and teachers throughout the Delaware Valley, and to mark Earth Day, Wawa, NBC 10 and the environmental law firm of Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox, LLP, (MGKF), have announced the winners of the Second Annual Environmental Community Service Award. This competition asked area schools to nominate environmental community service programs that have been developed in their classrooms.



W.B. Saul earned the Environmental Community Service Award. Pictured from left are, top row: Jessica Naugle, AgroEcology teacher at W.B. Saul High School; Robb Fox, partner, Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox, LLP; Joshua Brownlie, Roxborough; Fred Wood, Facilities and Energy Manager of Wawa; bottom row: Bob Ertel, photographer, NBC10; Dionna Governor, Germantown; Terry Ruggles, anchor/reporter, NBC10; Ruth Battle, Germantown; Christine Tilles from Penn State Cooperative Extension Horticulture Department; Nicole Bennett, Northeast Philadelphia.

In April, it was announced that W.B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences and the Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander University of Pennsylvania Partnership School were the winners. Each school will receive \$5,000 to enhance environmental studies in their schools. Explaining the motivation for creating this award, Robb Fox, partner of MGKF, said, "Environmental issues have never been more important globally and throughout the Delaware Valley. Our future depends on how our next generation of students confronts these environmental issues."

W.B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences was selected for its Community Phyto-Remediation Project in which students study and remediate a residential lawn along Germantown Avenue that has high levels of lead present in the soil. This project, in conjunction with Penn State University (PSU) Cooperative Extension Horticulture Department, teaches students

how to determine toxicity levels within the soil and use phytoremediation, a process used to decontaminate polluted soil, to decrease traces of lead and return the soil back to acceptable levels. They spent much time on the lawn of one specific neighbor, coming to the rescue of Ruth Battle, who first made PSU aware of the problems.

The AgroEcology class at W.B. Saul, led by teacher Jessica Naugle and extension educator Christine Tilles, has been working on this project over the past two years. "This project empowers students to contribute positively towards sustainable ecological change within their own communities," explained Naugle. "Their efforts create a link between the community, school and the environment. Ecological urban agriculture is alive and well on the streets of Philadelphia."

The AgroEcology class plans to use the \$5,000 grant to continue soil clean up at additional residential locations along Germantown Avenue, as well as educate the community on the dangers surrounding lead soil. These dangers are particularly great for residents who wish to garden in lead soil. By remediating the soil and encouraging residents to plant gardens, students are helping contribute

More **W.B. SAUL**, page A43

Northern Lebanon FFA Closes Year With Fun, Memories

KELLY PATCHES
Northern Lebanon FFA

Our FFA chapter had blast this year. We attended many different contests and conferences, made new friends and learned valuable things we will never forget.

Three of our members, Mike Batz, Lynda Mack and Joni Miller, won the proficiency award at the state level for their different enterprises.

The end of the year is also the time to elect new officers. The 2007-2008 Northern Lebanon FFA officers are as follows: Lauren Williams, president; Ryan Davies, vice-president; Brian Patches, treasurer; Amanda Jenkins, secre-

tary; Kaleb Gassert, sentinel; Megan Geesaman, reporter; David Maulfair, chaplain; and Nichole Schroth, student advisor. Three of the officers also hold county offices: Lauren Williams, vice-president; Ryan Davies, treasurer; and Kaleb Gassert, chaplain.

Twenty-three members traveled to Penn State for the Pennsylvania FFA Summer Convention, and are participated in various contests, including parliamentary procedure, livestock judging, horse judging and agronomy. We also have three delegates and one state officer candidate.

We would like congratulate our seniors and wish them the best of luck in the future.



The members of the Northern Lebanon FFA's Parliamentary Procedure team competed at the state contest this week. Members are, from left, Amber Balsbaugh, Hannah Kiscadden, Caroline Sherk, Amanda Jenkins, Chris Eby and Brian Patches.

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Spring Program

Continued from A22

Beth Peters, who will be attending Sterling College majoring in Sustainable Agriculture, received a \$1,000 NAPA Auto Parts Scholarship.

Hillary Snavelly, who will be attending Delaware Valley College majoring in Horticulture Science, received a \$1,000 Agway Foundation Scholarship.

Additionally, Beth Peters received the 2007 Ann Brown Memorial Scholarship from the Lancaster

County Conservation District and the Elizabethtown Grange #2076 scholarship. Carolyn Kensinger was awarded the Manheim Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Youth award.

Manheim Central Alumni Receives Scholarship
Johanna Rohrer, a 2006 MC graduate, received an Agway Foundation Scholarship from the National FFA Organization Scholarship Program. Johann will be a sophomore at The Penn State University this fall. She is majoring in animal science.

Decision

Continued from A11

the health and well being of our cows and young stock. I believe all farmers would agree that providing a stress-free environment is essential for healthy and productive animals. These animals are our livelihood, and quality products require quality care.

As consumers, we should all be wary of the tactics used by certain animal advocacy groups with hidden agendas. We must recognize the importance of deciphering be-

tween sensationalized propaganda and accepted animal management practices. The goal of these organizations is not simply the humane treatment of farm animals, but the promotion of a vegan lifestyle and the total elimination of eggs, milk, beef and other products from our diet.

As Americans, we are fortunate to live in a land of plenty. Safe and abundant food is expected, even mandated by law. Farmers take their responsibilities very seriously, and are aware that they are the stewards of the land and the animals in their charge.

— Matthew D. Espenshade
Master, Elizabethtown
Grange #2076
(No relation to the defendant)

W.B. Saul

Continued from A22

to the beautification and environmental sustainability of their community. The grant money will be used to purchase necessary supplies such as, protective goggles and gloves, seeds and plants, soil tests, digital cameras used for documentation and educational signs to be placed in front of project sites to educate the community.

The Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander University of Pennsylvania Partnership School (Penn Alexander School) was selected for its impressive efforts to restore the grounds surrounding their school, which is part of Pennsylvania's Eastern Deciduous Forest Habitat. Students and teachers have been working to create an urban arborum on the school's grounds that

would serve the community of West Philadelphia. By choosing plants that are native to this area, students can share knowledge of plants that adapt well to local conditions while attracting native wildlife such as birds and butterflies.

With the theme of "A Connection to Your Community," more than 45 schools throughout the region applied for these \$5,000 awards. Competition was keen for the judges who included representatives from The Franklin Institute, The Academy of Natural Sciences, The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection; The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection; and The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. Representatives from Wawa, NBC 10 and Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox also participated in judging.

There were a total of 11 finalists

considered for the Second Annual Environmental Community Service Award. In addition to W.B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences, finalists in the high school category were: Moorestown High School Community Recycling Project, Moorestown, N.J.; Moorestown High School Medieval Patrician Garden Project, Moorestown, N.J.; Haverford High School, Havertown, Pa. and The Young Women's Leadership School at Rhodes High School, Philadelphia, Pa. In addition to The Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander University of Pennsylvania Partnership School, the middle school finalists were: Springer Middle School, Wilmington, Del.; Grover Washington Jr. Middle School, Philadelphia, Pa.; Woodland Country Day School, Bridgeton, N.J. and Medford Memorial Middle School, Medford, N.J.

Review

Continued from A11

groups can play such a large role in a legal case is no way to maintain objectivity in the law.

As everyday consumers of agricultural products, we should not only be concerned with the tactics of these groups, but we should be concerned with the current format of our Humane Society police officer program. Certainly, the act is a well-intended act that is in place for a reason. However, it is unacceptable that humane police officers with minimal agricultural experience or training should be allowed to file charges without consulting a third party with specialized expertise.

This is certainly not the last attempt we will see by animal rights groups to damage the agricultural heritage of our state. Hopefully, our legislators and leaders in Harrisburg will recognize the need for changes to be made to the Humane Society police officer program so that the act may continue to uphold its intended purpose and not be used to defame responsible animal stewards.

— J.M. Melhorn
Mount Joy, Pa.

Op-Ed

Continued from A11

their slaughter suppliers. Garbage in, garbage out.

A close review of USDA's enforcement actions for the last several years in situations like this reveal a constant pattern of assessing all liability against the victimized downstream plants, while adroitly avoiding tracebacks to the true source of contamination. This intentional insulation of slaughter plants from accountability virtually guarantees recurring production of contaminated meat, and recalls, because the noncompliant source plants are not forced to implement corrective actions.

Richwood Meat Company has now unfortunately experienced two recalls, which is fully understandable because the USDA did not force Richwood's supplier to implement corrective actions subsequent to their first recall.

Is it possible that the two California plants share a common slaughter supplier? Has the USDA considered this, and attempted to connect the dots?

Of the eight E. coli recalls in 2006, only two occurred at slaughter plants, which exposes USDA's misplaced focus during enforcement actions. Although it's only June 7, we've already experienced seven recalls this year, of which only three have been at slaughter plants.

HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) is allegedly "science based". USDA-style "science" strictly targets downstream destination plants, while ignoring the source of the problem. And we thought China has shortcomings!

John W. Munsell is manager, Foundation for Accountability in Regulatory Enforcement, Miles City, Montana.

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