

Presidents Plan for Farm Bureau Growth

More than 50 county Farm Bureau presidents attended the 1980 Presidents' Conference held February 14 and 15 at the Mt. Pleasant Holiday Inn.

The highlight of the conference was an address by Robert Delano, newly elected president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. The conference included several workshops which concentrated on ways that farmers and county Farm Bureaus can be more efficient and effective in the future.

President Delano told the county presidents that while the American Farm Bureau supported the grain embargo because it was a matter of national security, the organization is still worried about the possible long-term effects of political disruption of foreign trade.

"The use of markets as weapons in support of national defense could harden into a national policy shift toward government-controlled trading," he said. "Most important, embargoes divert attention from the fact that military aggression cannot be adequately answered through economic means."

Delano noted that there are prospects for finding new export markets, especially in China and Mexico. "Right now our best hope for new markets lies with those countries who have sought to trade with us

using intermediate and short-term credits extended through the export budget of the Commodity Credit Corporation," he said.

While it is important to keep the government out of the marketplace as much as possible, Delano noted, the government does have a role in helping to increase farm income. One important way to do that, he said, is to help control inflation by cutting government spending. "We need your help in supporting a constitutional amendment to restrict federal spending to a percentage of the gross national product," he told the county presidents. "We also need an amendment requiring the federal government to operate on a balanced budget each year."

In addition, Delano said, the government can assure that farmers have bargaining power in the marketplace. "Family farmers could suffer severe economic setbacks through new limitations placed on our cooperative efforts because of attacks on the Capper-Volstead Act," he noted.

He said farmers also need to support the Agricultural Bargaining Act of 1979, which is still under consideration by Congress. "It is hoped that hearings on the bill can be scheduled for late March or early in April of this year," he said.

One of the workshops attended by the county presidents was "New Technology for Better Communications," which outlined possible new computerized telephone services, demonstrated how a county can produce their own cable television program and showed how portable conference call telephone equipment can make meetings more interesting and useful.

Another workshop was a brainstorming session on the county Farm Bureau information network. Larry Ewing, director of the MFB Information and Public Relations Division, and his staff, worked with groups of county presidents to surface ideas and suggestions for better communication between the county Farm Bureau, its members and the general public.

John VanderMolen and Don Currey of the MFB Field Operations Division, conducted a session on the effective operation of a county Farm Bureau organization.

Chuck Burkett, director of the MFB Field Operations Division, gave a report on membership and the MFB division directors, affiliate company managers and other corporate officers answered general questions from the county presidents.



Robert Delano, grain farmer from Virginia who was elected president of the American Farm Bureau Federation in January, talked "off the cuff and straight from the shoulder" to Michigan's county presidents about the vital role of strong county Farm Bureaus to the organization and their role as administrators. Delano was scheduled to meet with President Carter the morning following his appearance at the presidents' conference.

Goal Counties Get Special Recognition



Gary Lathwell (left), president of the Benzie County Farm Bureau, was one of the county presidents who was honored for reaching membership goal prior to March 15. He is shown receiving his gift and congratulatory handshake from Michigan Farm Bureau Administrative Director Robert E. Braden. Successful membership drive "secrets" shared by county presidents was one of the highlights of the conference.



Joe Malburg, president of the Macomb County Farm Bureau, was one of the 50 county presidents who participated in the two-day conference. Better communications between the county Farm Bureau, its members, the state Farm Bureau, and the general public, and effective operation of a county organization were main topics on the agenda.

From the Desk of the President

It's YOUR Land They're Talking About



As a farmer, how would you react to a situation where your local governing board or your non-farm neighbors could vote to place your land in a program — whether or not you wanted to be in that program? If you're like most farmers I know, such an idea is an affront to your basic belief in freedom of choice.

Such a situation could occur, right here in Michigan, unless the farmers of this state become aware of, and speak out against, proposals that are currently being touted under the banner of "preserving agricultural land." Those proposals, H.B. 5323 and 5324, involving Agricultural Districts, need to be carefully scrutinized by farmers in terms of how they would affect them economically and especially what they would cost in terms of their traditional decision-making rights.

We have a good program now to preserve agricultural land—P.A. 116. It's a relatively new law, passed in 1974, and many farmers, as yet, don't fully understand it. Those who do have enrolled their land, over a million acres, in the program. And it's working. Those farmers who have enrolled their land in P.A. 116 are receiving substantial property tax relief, a real key to being able to stay in the business of farming.

Proponents of the Ag District plan are saying that P.A. 116 is not working in the urban fringe areas, what they call the "threatened" areas. Yet, in New York, where Ag Districting has been in effect since 1971, only 30 percent of the total land enrolled is in the urban fringes, while in Michigan, 40 percent of the land enrolled in P.A. 116 is in the urban counties. This is in spite of the fact that New York had a massive educational and promotional campaign and in Michigan, there has been no appropriations for that purpose.

I have several concerns about the Ag District plan to share with you:

(1) **It takes away the farmer's freedom of decision;** he can be forced in or be kept out of the program by local government or local voter decision. Whereas P.A. 116 is voluntary ALL THE WAY, Ag Districts start out voluntary and then may become mandatory. A farmer or group of farmers may voluntarily decide to form a district of at least 600 acres (the minimum) and make application to the local governing body, usually the township board. That township board can—and, in fact, is encouraged to—expand that district to 2,000 acres. Those landowners that make up the difference between 600 and 2,000 acres—whether they want to be in or not—may be forced in by vote of the township board—or by a vote of citizens in that locality.

Those farmers who may not want to be a part of an ag district lose their freedom of choice.

(2) **It violates the principle of ability to pay,** resulting in major incentives for full-time NON-farmer landowners and no economic incentive for full-time and part-time farmers.

Provisions under the Ag Districting plans call for a new formula for providing property tax relief and that relief goes to the full-time non-farmer landowner—the corporation executive who rents his land or the hobby farmer with a few acres and a couple horses. Under the new formula, 14 percent of net farm income is the threshold level in terms of how much of the property tax will be rebated. It ignores the household income that includes both farm and off-the-farm income. The non-farmer landowner's property tax relief will be based on his net farm income, and if that net farm income is very low, he will get most or maybe all of his property tax back. His off-the-farm income is completely sheltered.

The full-time and part-time farmers benefit more under P.A. 116 and the current 7 percent formula of household income. The DNR did a survey in 1978 of farmers enrolled in P.A. 116 and found that the average household income was about \$18,000, half of which was net farm income and the other half off-the-farm income. The property taxes on the average 275 acre farm were slightly over \$3100 and their rebate was almost \$1900. So P.A. 116 is providing significant tax relief to full- and part-time farmers—and it's based on ability to pay.

(3) **It does not necessarily preserve agricultural land.** An inherent weakness, I believe, in the Ag District bills, is that a district can

be formed at any time and, by the same process, could be dissolved at any time. P.A. 116 guarantees farmland will be preserved for a minimum of 10 years (with the average enrollee signing for 20 years). There is also nothing to prevent land in an ag district from being developed, while under P.A. 116 developmental rights are transferred and the land cannot be used for anything other than agriculture.

(4) **It would create another unnecessary bureaucracy.** In order to determine if the farmland owners in an ag district would receive any benefits, they must annually meet the test of minimum net farm income requirements. The bill provides for a State Agricultural Income Committee to be formed, comprised of the director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture, the dean of Michigan State University's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and the secretary of the State Tax Commission. It would be the task of this bureaucracy, staffed by MDA, to determine minimum net farm income, by county. With Michigan's diversified agriculture, and our state's variable weather and market conditions, it would take a huge bureaucracy to handle that task!

If there's anything we don't need, it's yet another bureaucracy, especially one to administer a program that, in some ways, duplicates what we already have and, in other ways, weakens what we have.

The program we have now to preserve agricultural land, P.A. 116, has many benefits for farmers who decide, of their own free will, to enroll. Briefly, it provides us with property tax relief (the average farmer enrolled in P.A. 116 will get back, for 1979 taxes, about \$2400), protection against sewer, water and other special assessments, inheritance tax relief, and some protection against state agencies taking land for such things as highway purposes unless both the DNR and the farmer agree.

Unless farmers understand, defend and use what they have available, they may lose it. I strongly urge you to carefully study the benefits and provisions of our current farmland preservation act and the implications of the ag district proposals. Write to your state legislators and the House Agriculture Committee about your concerns. Attend hearings that are being scheduled on Ag Districting—listen, ask questions, testify. **Because—remember—they're talking about YOUR land, and your right to decide what will be done with that land.**

Elton R. Smith

There Goes the Silver Streak Again!!

(Dedicated to a special fan in Ogemaw County, who indicated that recent DONNA Columns reflected a loss of sense of humor—the one sure sign of old age.)

My grandmother took her first jet plane ride when she was

90. My mom was beebopping across the prairie in her jeep, rounding up the sheep, when she was 70. So, undoubtedly, heredity is part of the reason I haven't spent too much time worrying about the approach of old age (whatever that is).

Blessed with good health and a strong constitution, the usual messages from Father Time—like aching, stiff joints, irregularity and receding hairlines—haven't been delivered yet. Oh, there have been the inevitable badges of experience, character lines (commonly referred to as wrinkles by the insensitives), and a slight change in the hue of my dishwater blonde tresses. But, all in all, I've been pretty satisfied with whatever age I've been.

I did recognize, however, that there must be a cut-off date for being young (whatever that is), such as becoming a grandmother. But I soon learned that grandmothers can't be old, not when they have to play Dukes of Hazard (Yahoo! Just one of the good

old boys!) and pull a 35-pound bundle of joy down the street on a sled while he shouts, "Faster, Nanny faster!" I once overheard a neighbor say to her husband: "There goes the Silver Streak again."

On the other hand, there have been some recent signs that could be interpreted as reminders that perhaps, this time around, I'd better not participate in the upcoming miniskirt rage that's been predicted by the fashion experts.

For example, I know I'm getting old when . . .

- I giggle when I get a zit.
- I have to pluck my eyebrows with my glasses on (you men will never know what a real challenge is).
- I'd rather watch the old movies on Channel 50 than the new ones on HBO.



• The one-a-day vitamins on the market today contain only enough potency for a very short day.

• I try to put disposable diapers on my new grandson, cussing the stupid manufacturers for putting the adhesive tape on the wrong side.

• My all-time favorite, slinky, knit dress crawls instead of slinks.

(Continued on page 11)

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Republican Task Force Appointed to Study Effects of Grain Embargo

A newly-appointed Republican grain study task force, made up of six farmer-legislators, will "brainstorm" with the state's farmers and agri-business leaders in the months ahead to find solutions to problems created by the U.S. embargo on grain shipments to the Soviet Union.

Chaired by Rep. Nick Smith of Addison, the task force also includes Reps. Bela Kennedy, Bangor; Quincy Hoffman, Aplegate; Alan Cropsey, DeWitt; Everitt (Abe) Lincoln, Albion; and Carl Gnodtke, Sawyer.

Smith said the panel's list of priorities include finding solutions for storing and moving grain in the wake of the embargo, increasing the Legislature's awareness of agricultural needs in the state, and studying the development of ethanol in Michigan.

"The task force members agreed that the first priority should be to discuss problems related to available storage and shipment of grain," Rep. Smith explained. "Since the whole process of shipping grain to the Soviet Union has been backed up, there are potential storage problems. We will also discuss ways to promote the marketing of this grain that will help to assure price stability."

Smith said that the task force will also collect information for on-the-farm and cooperative ethanol distilleries in Michigan. "Since we are looking for ways to use this grain, it seems appropriate to look at ways that may solve some of our energy problems at the same time," he said. "We will look into the feasibility of converting a certain amount of our grain into fuel."

The task force members will

travel to different areas of Michigan to "brainstorm" with farmers and agri-business leaders affected by the present world grain situation, Smith said.

"Hopefully, the state's farming community, together with this group of farmer-legislators, will be able to come up with effective solutions and programs to ease the burden heaped on the farm community by the embargo," he concluded.



Rep. Nick Smith greets constituents at the South Region Legislative Seminar in Lansing. He was one of many legislators who participated in the 1980 series of Farm Bureau sponsored legislative seminars. The annual project provides members with the opportunity to be updated on legislative issues, discuss concerns with their state representatives and senators, and visit the Michigan Legislature in session.

State Farmers in Nationwide Survey

U.S. farmers spent over \$114 billion in 1978 to produce crops, livestock and poultry, topping the previous year's \$100 billion level. Higher prices for fuels, labor and a sharp hike in farm machinery prices were major contributors to the increased production costs in 1978.

The information on expenditures reflects current buying trends for goods and services by U.S. farmers. Estimates of production expenses are used to compute net farm income, which measures the change in the economic position of the farmer and is vital in determining agricultural programs and policies.

During February and March, enumerators from the Michigan Agricultural Reporting Service will interview a cross section of Michigan farm operators as part of the nationwide program to determine 1979 production costs. All responses to the survey will remain confidential and only regional and national summaries will be published.

Through farmer cooperation, data will be available to evaluate the current agricultural situation and plan future goals.

FmHA Loans Available in Van Buren, Washtenaw Counties

Farmers in Van Buren and Washtenaw counties may apply for emergency loans through the Farmers Home Administration to cover losses caused by adverse weather. Paul S. Miller, acting state director, announced that loan applications may be received in the FmHA county offices for Van Buren County, due to excessive rainfall June 1-14, 1979 and dry hot temperatures July 1-31, 1979. In Washtenaw County, applications may be received due to a freeze on June 25, 1979.

FmHA Emergency Loans are available to help farmers re-

establish farming operations and pay operating expenses. Loans based on actual losses are repayable in their entirety with five percent interest if incurred after October 1, 1978. Additional loans are available at higher rates for restoration of farm production. All loan applicants must be unable to get sufficient credit from commercial sources.

Applications for Emergency Loan assistance are filed in the FmHA county office. Applications for physical losses are authorized until November 3, 1980 and until February 2, 1981 for production losses.

Mexico Agrees to Buy 112,000 Tons of Michigan Beans

An agreement between Michigan's dry edible bean industry and the Mexican government for the purchase of 112,000 metric tons of colored bean varieties was announced on February 14 in Saginaw.

In making the announcement, Jerry Elenbaum, Owendale bean grower who serves as chairman of the Michigan Bean Commission, said, "An export market of this magnitude could be the answer to many years of effort put forth

by both the commission and the Michigan Bean Shippers Association. This agreement represents not only a tremendous opportunity for the growers and shippers in our state, but also a step forward in the spirit of cooperation between the various segments of our business."

Elenbaum said members of the state's bean industry "look forward to what we hope becomes a recurring market with our neighbors to the south."

Senate Passes Resolutions to Protect Michigan Ag

Two agriculture-related resolutions calling for the protection of farming interests in Michigan and the rest of the country were approved recently by the state Senate.

Both resolutions, already passed in the House, were introduced by State Rep. Nick Smith (R-Addison).

One resolution urges Congress and President Carter to take steps to protect the interests of the American farmer in the wake of the recent grain embargo against the Soviet Union; the other requests the state Department of Agriculture to conduct an annual check on foreign investment in Michigan's agricultural land.

"Because Michigan is a heavily industrial state, agricultural interests are oftentimes placed near the bottom of legislative priority lists," Smith said. "The passage of these resolutions puts the Legislature on record as a body concerned about recent foreign developments which affect farmers in Michigan and around the nation."

Smith, a member of the House Agriculture Committee, said the resolution that will be sent to Washington "is an attempt to let Congress and the Carter administration know that farmers are concerned about their futures and that they expect the federal government to do something to lessen the burden on them."

The resolution also requests "immediate action" by Con-

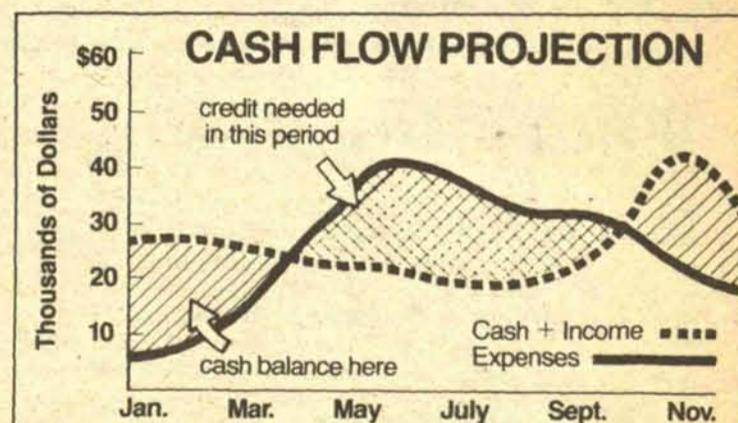
gress and the President to extend the current storage loan programs to a greater number of farmers and to stabilize the market price for grain.

Passage of the other resolution calls for the state Agriculture Department "to begin keeping tabs on foreign investment in Michigan," Smith said.

He pointed out that less than one-tenth of one percent of Michigan's farmland is owned by foreign investors, but noted that an increasing number of rapidly deflating American dollars in the pockets of foreigners has encouraged an increase in the purchase of Michigan farmland in recent years.

"If we are going to continue to have a deficit balance of trade, people with extra U.S. dollars will be looking for places in America to spend those dollars," Smith said. "By periodically evaluating the situation regarding our farmland, we can eliminate many potential problems in the future."

The resolution calls on the state Department of Agriculture to annually review the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monitoring reports of agricultural land purchases by foreign investors in Michigan and to analyze its effect on the state's rural and non-rural communities. The department would then report its findings to the Legislature and the governor.



Cash Flow: the pulse of your farm



Every farm has its pulse — its regular tide of income and expenses, easily seen on a cash-flow chart.

When you know your farm's cash flow, you know when to expect a cash surplus. Or, when to take out a loan — or, just as important, how much to borrow, so you won't have money loafing around.

Knowing your cash flow can help you be a better financial manager. It helps you take advantage of discounts. See us, and we'll help you start your cash-flow planning today.

Production Credit Associations of Michigan

Busy Seminar Schedule Planned for March

Alcohol Fuels Seminar

An Alcohol Fuels Seminar will be held March 10 at the Wilson Township Hall in Alpena County at 7:30 p.m.

The informational meeting is

being sponsored by the Alpena County Cooperative Extension Service and the Alpena County Farm Bureau. There will be a \$1.50 registration fee for those attending.

Spring Commodity Conference

The annual Michigan Farm Bureau Spring Commodity Conference will be held March 12-13 in Lansing at the Harley Hotel (formerly known as Hospitality Inn).

General session will include national speakers on international trade and the impact of the Russian grain embargo; transportation of farm commodities; outlook for the 1981 farm bill and others. A three-member gasohol panel will discuss state, federal and industry actions relating to gasohol use and production and then answer questions from the audience.

Individual commodity advisory committees include beef, dairy, feedgrains and oil crops, dry bean, swine, poultry, sugar and fruit and vegetables. They will meet in separate sessions and discuss legislative and regulatory issues of concern to them.

Members of the MFB Commodity Advisory Committees are appointed by President Elton Smith and will be attending the conference. They will advise the Michigan Farm Bureau Board of Directors on matters of concern to producers of specific agricultural commodities.

MRCPC Legal Rights Seminar

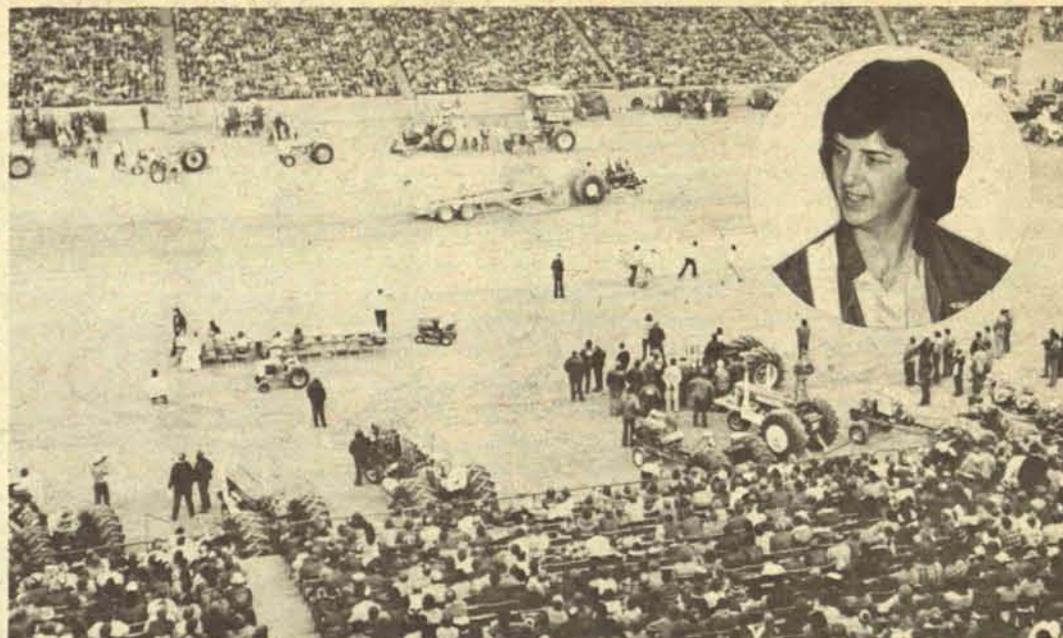
The Michigan Rural Crime Prevention Council is conducting a one day training session on "Legal Rights and Responsibilities." The session will be held on March 25 at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. A district judge, prosecuting attorney, Michigan State Police officer, Depart-

ment of Natural Resources enforcement officer and a county sheriff will be participating in the seminar.

For more information, contact Ron Nelson, chairman of the Rural Crime Prevention Council, at Michigan Farm Bureau, 517-323-7000, extension 559.

Silverdome Tractor Pull

"Golddigger" Driver Looking for a Win



Canadian farmwife, Mary Verhayen, driving "The Golddigger," will compete before an expected crowd of 10,000 fans at the Pontiac Silverdome's Tractor Pull on March 8-9.

Among the competitors at the world's largest tractor pull, scheduled for March 8-9 at Pontiac Silverdome, will be a determined, slender, dark-haired Canadian farm wife. Canada's only female tractor puller, Mary Verhayen will be driving "The Golddigger," a hot-rod with a Rolls-Royce airplane motor, and hoping to better her last year's 4th place finish.

Mary and her husband, Frank, are hog farmers from Kerwood, Canada. They and their children, ages 14, 12 and 9, are what Mary calls "totally involved" in the sport of tractor pulling, traveling every weekend from the end of June to the first of September to wherever the action might be.

"It makes for a busy summer," says Mary. "We get home from one trip, try to do a little farming in between, then pack to go to another pull."

The family's interest in tractor pulling began when Frank was just a spectator. Mary had never been to a pull until Frank built a hot-rod for competition in 1974; then she went along "just to see what a tractor pull was."

In her words, "I was hooked from day one." Two years ago, she drove for the first time in one class and Frank in another. Last year, her husband decided to leave the driving to Mary and serve as her mechanic.

Mary reports that her male competitors don't treat her any differently simply because she is a woman. "I'm not special; I'm just accepted as one of them," she says. As Joe Birney, another competitor in the Silverdome tractor pull, explains: "I always feel bad when I get beat, whether it's by a man or a woman. I'd rather win."

According to Birney, owner of an elevator in Mason, Ingham County, and driver of a super-stock, the original investment to participate in tractor pulling is higher than most other hobbies. For example, he explained, "you take a pair of \$2,000 tires and the first thing you do is take a butcher knife

and a blade to them and delete the back edges for more bite on the track."

Mary agrees that this takes a bit of getting used to. "When you look at that expensive tire and watch them cutting, all you see are dollars lying on the ground that we've paid for and we're just cutting it off!"

But, unlike snowmobiling or skiing, the Verhayens and Birney are quick to point out, in tractor pulling there's the opportunity to make enough money to pay for their expenses.

At the Silverdome, which the Verhayens and Birney call the best tractor pulling facilities in the U.S. and Canada, there will be an opportunity to win \$1100.

There will be an estimated 100,000 tractor pull fans at the Silverdome on March 8 and 9 to see which of the nearly 100 competitors will finish in the

money.

The show begins on Saturday at 1 p.m. when the 7,000 lb. hot rods and the 9,000 lb. super stocks enter competition. The top winners of this event will compete with 12,000 lb. super stocks and 9,000 lb. hot rods at 8 p.m. Saturday. The finalists from Saturday's competition will enter the pull on Sunday at 2 p.m. A special "Celebrity Tractor Pull" to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association will be an added attraction during the Saturday evening event.

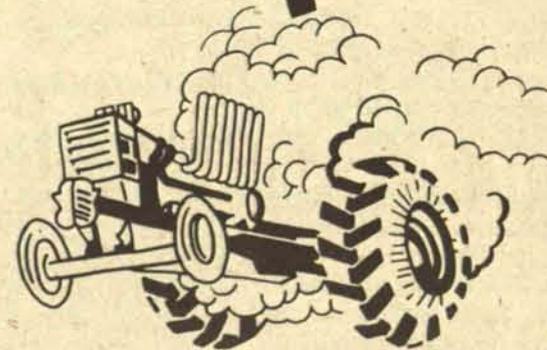
General admission is \$6 for Saturday afternoon, \$8 for Saturday evening and \$8 for Sunday afternoon. All tickets for children 12 and under are priced at \$1. Tickets are available at the Silverdome box office, or they can be charged to VISA or Master Charge by calling the Tractor Pull office, 313-352-0155.

What's Happening?

March 3	MASA Labor Meeting	Tietz's Restaurant Imlay City, 1:00 p.m.
March 3	MASA Labor Meeting	Tuscola Co. Farm Bureau Office, Caro, 8:00 p.m.
March 5-7	Young Farmer Leader's Conference	Valley Plaza Ramada Inn, Midland
March 8-9	5th Annual Tractor Pull	Pontiac Silverdome
March 11	MASA Annual Meeting and Farm Labor Conference	Pick Motor Inn Grand Rapids
March 12-13	MFB Spring Commodity Conference	Harley Hotel Lansing
March 12	Upper Peninsula, North, Northwest, Northeast Regional Legislative Seminars	Plaza Hotel Lansing
March 13	West Central, West Regional Legislative Seminars	YWCA, Lansing
March 17-21	Farmers' Week	MSU, East Lansing
March 24-27	Washington Legislative Seminar	Washington, D.C.

At Pontiac Silverdome

FIFTH ANNUAL TRACTOR PULL



SATURDAY 1:00 p.m. Event - \$6.00
8:00 p.m. Event - \$8.00

SUNDAY 2:00 p.m. Event - \$8.00

Children 12 and Under - \$1.00
Tickets at All J.L. Hudsons and Silverdome

**MARCH 8 AND MARCH 9
THREE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SHOWS**

Farm Days Promote Understanding Getting Ready for the Local Board of Review



One of the favorite stops among youngsters visiting the Fashion Square Mall Display in Saginaw, February 15-18, were the small animals, especially this one with the baby lambs.

FB Women Seeking Scholarship Applicants

"Keep in touch with your children — send money," is the humorous message of a poster available in many college bookstores. Although most families have adopted a "grin and bear it" attitude about the high cost of a college education, both parents and students are continually on the lookout for financial resources which will help defray the cost of books and tuition.

If you have an enrolled MSU agriculture student in your Farm Bureau family, here's news that will make you smile and could help ease your family's finances in 1980.

The Michigan Farm Bureau Women have announced the 12th year of scholarship competition for the Marge Karker Farm Bureau Scholarship. Competition for the annual scholarship award is open to students enrolled in the college of agriculture or related studies at Michigan State University, who are members of a Farm Bureau family or who have their own Farm Bureau membership.

To be eligible for the tuition grant, which may be as much as \$500, the student must

have completed three terms of study (or one year in agricultural technology) in any of the following areas of education: food science, food marketing, food packaging, leadership training in agriculture, agricultural journalism, horticulture, agricultural technology, veterinary medicine, vocational agricultural education, human ecology, or human medicine, including pre-medical, nursing and medical technology.

Financial need and scholastic standing will also be considered in evaluating applications for the Marge Karker Farm Bureau Scholarships.

Scholarship applications are available now from county Farm Bureau offices or the Women's Department, Michigan Farm Bureau, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, Michigan 48909. Application deadline is April 1, 1980.

The Marge Karker Farm Bureau Scholarship fund was established at Michigan State University in 1968 by the Michigan Farm Bureau Women in honor of the first Women's Program manager, Marge Karker.

You don't need a Philadelphia lawyer to make an appeal of your current year property assessment before the local board of review. The average property owner can gather necessary property valuation comparisons and present his or her own inquiry at the annual board of review meeting in March.

You may have been alerted to a change in your property assessment by official notice from the assessor's office or may suspect that your assessment is not equitable in comparison to similar properties in your area. The assessing unit of your local governing body is required to notify all property taxpayers of any change in assessment at least ten days prior to the first scheduled meeting of the board of review. In addition, the assessment rolls which are filed with the township supervisor or the county equalization director's office, are public record and you may request copies of your own assessment field card or that of another property in your area. Through review and comparison of the properties, you may determine that you have cause to appeal the assessment that has been prepared by the local assessor.

Use the prior notice period to gather information and to seek an explanation of your assessment from the assessor's office. Good preparation and an understanding of the factors used in valuation of your property can save time for you and your board of review in the appeal process. Frequently, questions about the assessment can be explained satisfactorily by the assessor, eliminating the need for an appeal.

Herbert Norton, director of Township Services, Michigan Townships Association, and a former assessor, points out that "assessing is not an exact science."

"There will be differences of opinion," says Norton. "But although the assessor may have more knowledge about land values and assessment factors, he should stay open-minded and be willing to explain his assessments to the landowner. Good public relations can do much to prevent appeals to the board of review."

The assessor, however, cannot legally change the assessment on your property once his report has been completed and forwarded to the board of review. Changes in assessment, says Norton, can be made only by the board of review at the March hearings.

Legal dates set for 1980 board of review hearings are March 4, 10 and 11. However,



as noted in the February FARM NEWS article, "Don't Lose Dollars Through Faulty Assessments," dates may vary slightly and it is wise to verify actual meeting dates and times with the assessor's office or township supervisor.

What can property owners expect at a board of review hearing? The proceedings and appearances of taxpayers at the board of review meeting are recorded; therefore, the landowner will be asked to complete a brief form that requests specific information about the property or properties in question, the nature of the appeal, estimates of fair market value of the property and comparison data for other similar properties in the area (usually three property comparisons are adequate). This form and the information it records are entered into the minutes of the board of review hearing.

According to Norton, landowners are given the opportunity to appear before the board of review to question their assessment and it is not necessary that they document the reasons for their disagreement with the assessment. "If you believe your assessment is wrong, even if you don't really know why, you have the right to appear before the board of review." In fact, states Norton, if a landowner fails to make a protest at the board of review hearing he has failed to fulfill the first, legal step in the appeals process and forfeits his right to further appeal.

"Even if you haven't gathered all the comparison data for an appeal of your assessment, you should make an appearance at the board of review meeting to be sure that you have fulfilled this important legal obligation," emphasizes Norton.

Norton points out that many taxpayers misunderstand the authority of the board of review. "Board of review members cannot lower your tax bill," says Norton. "Their function is to review the assessment of your property's valuation and determine if it is fair and equitable in comparison to other similar properties."

A checklist, prepared by the Michigan State University Institute for Community Development and Services, may be useful in determining whether you may receive a reduction in your assessment.

You may receive a reduction in your assessment if:

- your property, purchased recently through a realtor on the open market (not a forced sale or one involving relatives), cost significantly less than your assessed market value.

- a property in your area, similar to yours in size, style and age, recently sold on the open market for significantly less than your assessed value.

- a property in your area clearly more valuable than yours is assessed the same. Check carefully with assessor to be sure it does not have a defect of which you are unaware.

- you can present documents from a certified appraiser stating that a recent appraisal values your property lower than the assessor's appraisal.

- your property is currently on the market with a realtor at a price lower than the assessment or has consistently received written offers below the assessment.

- your house is significantly larger or of higher quality than the other houses in the neighborhood so that you are "overbuilt" for the area.

- your house has suffered severe structural damage so that you can request an inspection for reduction in relation to the damage. (Note here that the assessment is made on the condition, value, etc., of the property as of tax day, December 31. Changes in the property after tax day cannot be considered in the current year assessment.)

- you are located adjacent to a highway or very busy street and you feel this reduces the salability of your property.

- you are located adjacent to a place of business or near a source of noxious odor or loud noise which you feel reduces the salability of your property.

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CAPITOL REPORT

By
Robert E. Smith

Worker's Compensation

In the February issue of Michigan Farm News, an article outlined the proposals that Governor Milliken made to the Workers Compensation Task Force in the latter part of December. Since that time, Senator Plawecki, chairman of the Senate Labor Committee, has outlined a set of proposals. The major points of that plan include:

- An increase in the maximum weekly benefits to 100% of the average weekly wage. This would go to \$298 compared to the current limit of \$200.
- Elimination of the minimum benefit levels. This is the same as the governor's proposals. It is important to agriculture because minimum payments are one major reason for high agricultural workers comp premiums.
- Permit persons that are injured for at least two years to have an annual 6% increase in benefits and the estimated \$6 million cost to be paid from the general fund.
- Coordination of benefits which would allow some reduction of the workers compensation payments when retirement, pension and social security benefits exceed the employee's weekly wage.
- Minimum benefits would be established for specific loss injuries and death.

- Elimination of the 500 week limit for death benefits.
- Provision for increasing benefits for employees who are getting benefits that are less than half of the weekly wage.
- A revision of calculating the wage loss.
- Elimination of the reduction in benefits for persons over 65 when the benefits are coordinated.

The governor's reaction to the Democratic package has been that in its present form, it would be unacceptable because it fails to address the major concerns of business while it does address the major concerns of labor. It is estimated that this is only a partial package that would address only about 35% of the issues that should be a part of any workers compensation reform. It is expected that this will, as in past years, be a very controversial area with the governor's proposals probably being in one bill, Senator Plawecki's proposals being in a second bill, and the two bills will have to be negotiated to determine whether meaningful workers comp reform legislation can be passed this year.

Farm Bureau delegates passed a lengthy discussion on workers compensation reform and will work to include those recommendations in any legislation.

Policy Book Presented to State Ag Commission



Members of the Michigan Agriculture Commission were presented copies of the 1980 MFB Policy Book at their February meeting. Pointing to one of the many policies regarding agriculture are Ron Nelson and Bob Smith of the Public Affairs Division, while Rebecca Thompkins, chairman of the commission, MDA Director Dean Pridgeon and Commission Vice Chairman David Diehl look on.

MFB Policies Reviewed with Governor



Governor's Budget Recommendations

Copies of the 1980 MFB Policy Book were presented to Governor William Milliken. Discussing some of their policies with the governor is MFB President Elton Smith. The discussion followed the official presentation of the Policy Books to the governor.

Shortly after Governor Milliken gave his State of the State address with more than 350 recommendations (see February Farm News), he presented his annual budget recommendations to the Legislature. The realities of Michigan's economic decline suddenly become very apparent. It is estimated that appropriations must be cut by \$100 million and at least \$182 million must be taken from the Budget Stabilization Fund, sometimes known as the "rainy day" fund. Michigan's constitution requires a balanced budget. The Headlee Tax Limitation Constitutional Amendment passed, by the voters in 1978, is beginning to have its effect.

The governor's program in general would eliminate over 1,651 state jobs and would eliminate or reduce more than 87 programs. Most citizens would applaud such reductions as leading to more responsible government, however, each program that is eliminated effects someone, including agriculture. The total budget for Michigan as recommended would be over \$10.7 billion. About 1/2 of this figure (\$4.9 billion) is the general fund budget and is the portion of the total budget that is under control of the Legislature. The other half of the budget is comprised of many earmarked funds which automatically go to various purposes including local government, school aid, roads, etc.

The budget recommendation cuts \$187 million from the general fund and over \$407 million from total state programs. Such stringent budget proposals will mean lay-offs of many people and restrictions on many programs including some of the agricultural programs that farmers depend on. The governor said that he

chose to cut programs rather than request raising taxes or using budget gimmicks to balance the 1980-81 ledger. He pointed out that the voters by passing the Headlee Amendment have given the message to state leaders that they must manage present resources without "adding to the general tax burden."

Due to inflation and other pressures, general fund spending would be actually about 5% over 1979-80 spending, which is the smallest increase that has ever been recommended.

The governor's budget expects that the personal income tax revenue will grow by about 11% in the coming year and income taxes do provide about 43% of the entire revenues. Other taxes will probably go up about 8%. The Single Business Tax is expected to increase about 6% and the revenue source that has been passed by the Legislature this year increasing the gas and oil severance tax should yield about \$83 million. The lottery set a new record for the seventh consecutive year and will contribute an estimated \$177 million in 1980-81. It is hoped that the automobile industry will recover from its present high unemployment rate and that production will increase before the '81 year.

In the area of human services, which is mental health and social welfare programs, mental health will receive an overall increase and the recommendation requires that the increase will be in community placement programs in an effort to take patients out of institutions and put them back into the community, which should be less costly. Social services will add over 900 employees which will be used to further reduce misspent funds. There has been some

gain in ferreting out fraud in the welfare system.

In the area of agriculture, the governor's budget recommends \$21.6 million for the Department of Agriculture, which is up over \$1 million from this year. However, it means the curtailment of new programs and the reduction of some of the existing programs. For example, this year the Grain Dealers Act has been amended to give the department more authority over the auditing of elevators and other grain dealers' books to help protect farmers from the elevator going into bankruptcy and causing large losses. The budget as it presently does not contain any funding to permit the department to carry out the law. Gasohol research will be cut about \$115,000. The gypsy moth program, which is extremely important to northern Michigan forests, will be cut \$107,000. Another \$147,500 cut will be in the inspection program. However, it appears that the state will continue to administer meat inspection if the federal government provides its proper share of the cost. One million dollars will be cut from county fair premiums and \$40,000 will be cut from support for the Upper Peninsula's state fair. In the area of agricultural research and extension it is expected that here too that there will be a very tight budget, in spite of the fact that these two services at MSU have not been keeping up with inflation over the last several years, in spite of increased state appropriations.

In the area of the State Police, there will be 187 positions eliminated because state freeway patrols will be cut in suburban areas and also outstate. This is important to rural areas because the State

(Continued on page 11)

Conservation Program Review

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking comments from the public on seven proposals the department has made for possible changes in the nation's soil and water conservation program.

January 28 was the beginning of a 60 day review period on the proposals and the findings of a two-year study and appraisal of the nation's soil and water resources that USDA conducted. The conservation strategies that USDA has proposed are based on the findings of the appraisal.

Special meetings are being held by USDA to acquaint the public with the appraisal and program proposals and to receive comments. Two meetings will be held in Michigan; one in Lansing on March 15 and one in Marquette on March 27.

In its resource appraisal, USDA found the nation's cropland and forestland has

been decreasing at a rate of 2 1/2 million acres a year. Those acres are being converted to housing and industrial developments, highways and other nonagricultural uses. The appraisal also showed that 2 billion tons of topsoil eroded from the nation's farmland each year, and that nearly half the sediment in the nation's waters is soil that eroded from cropland.

Included in USDA proposals for changes in the conservation program is a possibility of federal and state laws that would require farmers to control erosion. Also included is a suggestion that farmers might be required to protect their land from excessive erosion before receiving crop insurance, price support, low interest loans and other assistance from USDA farm programs.

Another USDA alternative strategy is that farmers would

be offered stronger incentives to practice soil conservation. Such incentives would include tax reduction, cash bonuses and low interest loans. Written comments can be sent to the RCA Response Analysis Center, USDA, Box 888, Athens, Georgia 30603, before March 28.

The resource appraisal, the proposals for changing conservation programs and the provisions for public comment are all results of a 1977 law, the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act.

A slide-tape presentation, outlining the proposals, is available for use by groups. Farm Bureau Community Group leaders and other Farm Bureau county committees are urged to contact their nearest SCS office to schedule the presentation and pick up other information on the proposals for their members.

AFBF Launches Marketing Survey

An intensive marketing strategy study aimed at improving net farm income in the marketplace for the nation's agricultural producers has been launched by the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Booz, Allen & Hamilton, a Chicago management consulting firm, has been retained

by the AFBF board of directors to conduct the study, John Datt, AFBF secretary-administrator, announced here today.

The initial phase of the Booz, Allen & Hamilton proposal will take seven to nine weeks to complete and involves three major steps — assessment of

current and future factors impacting market dynamics; determining state Farm Bureau and farmer/rancher needs — both current and emerging; and identifying major marketing strategy options for AFBF.

The consulting firm will report to the AFBF board for a decision on whether or not to continue with Phase II of the study. The study is being undertaken at the specific request of the voting delegates of the federation.

End result of Phase I of the study will include assessment of potential market mechanisms and leverage points for improving farmer/rancher returns; assessment of major domestic and international factors and their potential impact on farmers and ranchers, farmer organizations and AFBF; and appraisal of AFBF's plans, marketing programs, performance and capabilities.

Hearings Scheduled on Agricultural Districting

The subcommittee for the House Agriculture Committee will be holding Public Hearings on the Agricultural District bills H.B. 5323 and H.B. 5324 on the following dates and places.

Monday, March 3, 2:00 p.m. Spaulding Township Hall
Moore and Cole Roads
Saginaw, Michigan

Monday, March 10, 2:00 p.m. County Commission
Chambers
County Building
Lapeer, Michigan

Drivers License Endorsement Bill

Signed Into Law by Governor

The first bill to be signed into law this year by Governor Milliken, P.A. 1 of 1980, was a Farm Bureau promoted and supported bill to exempt most farmers from the law passed a year ago that drivers must have a special endorsement on their license if they drive vehicles over 24,000 pounds gross weight or haul trailers with a gross weight of over 10,000 pounds. This has created a very serious problem for farmers hauling trailers with fertilizers, sprays, feeds, seeds, or

other farm commodities that very often can gross more than 10,000 pounds. The required license endorsement cost has an additional \$7.00 fee and the driver must pass a road test. The endorsement was also limited to those eighteen years of age or older.

The bill signed by the governor exempts any farmer who drives a "passenger vehicle or truck with a farm registration plate and a gross vehicle weight of no more than 24,000 pounds, which is towing a

trailer or semi-trailer which is used exclusively in agricultural operations for the transportation of grain, feed, seed, fertilizer, or spray to and from the place of storage or supply and the farm." It is expected that this new language in the law will exempt most farmers from having to have an endorsement. Those who are using their trucks for a commercial purpose may need the endorsement the same as any other driver of a truck in the same classification.



Farm Bureau on the NATIONAL SCENE

Foreign Disclosure Act: Proposed changes in regulations governing the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act, which would alter the reporting requirement for foreign investors, have been announced by Ray Fitzgerald, administrator of the USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).

Fitzgerald said one change would raise from five to twenty percent the aggregate foreign interest in a company that would constitute "significant interest or substantial control," and make clear that when regulations refer to a "combination," they mean only a group of individuals or governments who are acting in concert.

The other change would generally exempt all agricultural, forestry and timber land not exceeding 10 acres in the aggregate from reporting requirements. However, if products grown on these under-10 acre tracts yield annual gross sales of more than \$1,000, the land must be reported to ASCS, Fitzgerald said.

Fitzgerald said the public is invited to comment on the proposals. The deadline for submitting written comments is March 25. Comments should be addressed to the administrator, USDA-ASCS, Room 218-W, P.O. Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Agricultural Land Protection Act Defeated: In early February, the House rejected H.R. 2551, the Agricultural Land Protection Act, by a vote of 177 to 210.

Farm Bureau policy was in strong opposition to this bill, stating: "We oppose any federal land use planning . . . We oppose federal assistance to states for land use planning."

The bill would have provided \$60.5 million for land use planning. Currently, 48 states already have land use plans, including PA 116 in Michigan. The bill also would have authorized a study of agricultural land losses. The USDA and Council on Environmental Quality have been jointly conducting such a study for the past year.

In a letter to all members of the House, Farm Bureau said, "This bill would not protect farmland from federal actions. It is quite simply an effort to use federal dollars to supplement efforts that have already been carried out successfully at the state and local levels in 90 percent of the states."

FB Calls for Lifting Import Duty on Railcars: Farm Bureau said there is much to be gained and little to be lost by temporarily lifting the 18 percent import duty on railcars making it possible for Mexican and Canadian manufacturers to provide the U.S. with railcars during the present shortage. The Farm Bureau statement was made part of the record during hearings on February 5 before the Subcommittee on International Trade of the Senate Committee on Finance with regard to S. 1004 and H.R. 3046, Suspension of Import Duty on Rail Freight Cars.

Farmers' Suit Alleges Federal Agencies' Funds Financed UFW Activities: Several farm groups, individual farmers and farm workers have filed suit in Washington, D.C. against three federal agencies to put an end to what they charged was the unwarranted use of federal funds to finance labor organizing and related activities of the United Farm Workers Union.

The suit alleges that the Department of Labor, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Community Services Administration went far beyond statutory authority and acted in violation of their own regulations in awarding grants of nearly \$2 million to the UFW. The suit also charges political favoritism in the grants intended to shore up UFW's financial structure and to assist it in organizing farmworkers.

AFBF President Robert Delano said it was "high time for someone to stand up and speak out for the taxpayer who is being asked to foot the bill for these strange and extravagant grants to Cesar Chavez."

Plaintiffs include the American Farm Bureau Federation, California Farm Bureau Federation, Kern County (Calif.) Farm Bureau and ten individual farmers and farmworkers. A significant legal precedent could be established if the suit is successful—the restriction of the federal government's use of federal tax funds to support union organization and to require scrutiny and accountability by government officials in the disbursement of the taxpayers' money.

Plan Ahead for Farm Safety

"I meant to . . ."
"I should have . . ."

These words give little comfort when faced with the sometimes tragic results of a farm accident. We recognize that not every accident or injury can be prevented, but by being alert to good safety practices, farm families and farm employees can make their farm a safer place to work and live.

In another couple of months, we will be right in the middle of spring work and very busy. Now, while we still have winter, we can take time to check some safety features around the home and farm.

In Clinton County, getting ready for a safer planting season began with an information meeting at the annual Men's Night program. The county Farm Bureau Women's Committee, which sponsors the event, invited Dr. George

Brown, Agricultural Engineering Department, Michigan State University, to speak on farm safety and what can be done to prevent accidents or injury around the farm.

Safe practices also protect our farm investments and often at a surprisingly low cost. According to Dr. Brown, after spending \$20,000 - \$40,000 for a new tractor, an additional \$15 - \$20 for a fire extinguisher is an inexpensive form of insurance against a fire loss when working out in the back 80. Every tractor, combine and truck on your farm should be equipped with a fire extinguisher, said Dr. Brown.

Another low-cost fire safety investment for your family is a smoke alarm. Equipping your home with a smoke alarm, usually at a cost of about \$20, gives your family early warning of fire and can save precious

minutes in escaping injury or even death. Planned fire escape routes can also prevent panic and save lives. Does every member of your family know at least two escape routes from the home? Have you designated a meeting place where family members can gather once they have safely escaped the fire danger?

Like fire extinguishers and smoke alarms, Dr. Brown urges families to have a first aid kit on hand for home, car and farm machinery. Purchase these emergency items when you don't need them, he said, in the hope that you never will.

Readily available emergency equipment and attention to maintaining a safe environment on the farm and in the home are important steps in preventing accidents and injury, but perhaps the most important safety measure is through promoting safety attitudes and practices.

Children, in particular, should grow up with a keen awareness of good farm safety practices and understand the potential hazards of playing around equipment and machinery that is in operation. Statistics show that the majority of farm accidents involve children age 15 and under. By teaching our children early and providing good supervision of their work and play, we can reduce these statistics dramatically.

In the home, parents should double check storage areas where medicines, poisons and

cleaning compounds are stored. Be sure that potentially dangerous chemicals and medicines are well out of reach of children. It would be advisable to keep them locked in a special storage cabinet or box.

A clearly marked, easily accessible listing of emergency phone numbers including your area poison control center, fire, police and ambulance service, can save time and lives in an emergency situation. Lists should be maintained for both the home and farm shop. If you don't have such a list, make one right now!

Is your farm easily identified? Are your roads clearly marked? Can you give clear and accurate directions to your farm or fields that will bring emergency help quickly and directly?

Careful attention should be given to marking your mailbox or house with family / farm name and house numerals. Numerals and letters should be at least 2" high to be clearly visible for emergency vehicles.

Urge your county road commission to maintain road signs that are clear and easily read. You can help by reporting vandalized, damaged or missing

road signs.

If you give directions such as "Turn left at the corner with Bing's Bar; proceed til you come to the big oak; turn right, then go past the old swimming hole and turn down the lane between the soybean and wheat field," you may be in trouble. Bing's Bar has been sold and is now Sam's Saloon. The big oak has been cut for firewood. The swimming hole is frozen and covered with snow; and how can the driver tell where the soybean stubble is beneath four inches of snow. Good directions are vital.

One of the best ways to promote safety is to take care of yourself. Eat properly and get enough rest and you will feel better and more alert. When working for long periods of time, even a short break can help to restore your alertness and improve your performance so you can complete the job safely.

The key to farm safety is to be alert to dangers and what could happen and be prepared to take fast action if it should happen.

Until next month, keep safe and start now to think safety all day, every day, because accidents don't take vacations.

Between You and Me

By Judy Kissane

1980 Michigan Farm Bureau Outstanding Young Farm Woman



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MASA Membership Benefits Include:

Labor Information Newsletter Service providing timely, indepth explanations of rule changes and legislative analysis, maintained for easy reference in your own Labor Information Notebook.

Legal Services Program provides you access to the services of Michigan's leading agricultural law firm for expert legal advice and/or representation regarding agricultural issues.

Farmers Legal Defense Fund is your opportunity to participate in and seek financial assistance from a statewide defense fund created and maintained by MASA members.

MASA MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN TO ALL FARM BUREAU MEMBERS. For more information about MASA programs and services, contact your county Farm Bureau secretary or the Michigan Agricultural Services Association, P.O. Box 30960, Lansing, Michigan 48909, phone 517-323-7000 extension 553.

Members Donate \$1000 Through "Acres for Charity" Project

Michigan Farm Bureau members have donated \$1,000 to the Detroit Police Athletic League (PAL) in the conclusion of the "Acres for Charity" project conducted in cooperation with WJR radio in Detroit.

The check was presented to WJR air personality J.P. McCarthy on January 22 by Michigan Farm Bureau president Elton R. Smith. The presentation was broadcast live over the WJR "Focus" program.

A dozen Michigan Farm Bureau members who grow wheat, dry beans, apples and hogs participated in the "Acres for Charity" project. The farmers agreed to donate the gross proceeds from a portion of their crop and, in return, J. P. McCarthy put the growers "on the air" throughout the 1979 growing season and talked to them about the rewards and challenges of the farming business.

At harvest time, McCarthy symbolically sold the commodities, based on the current



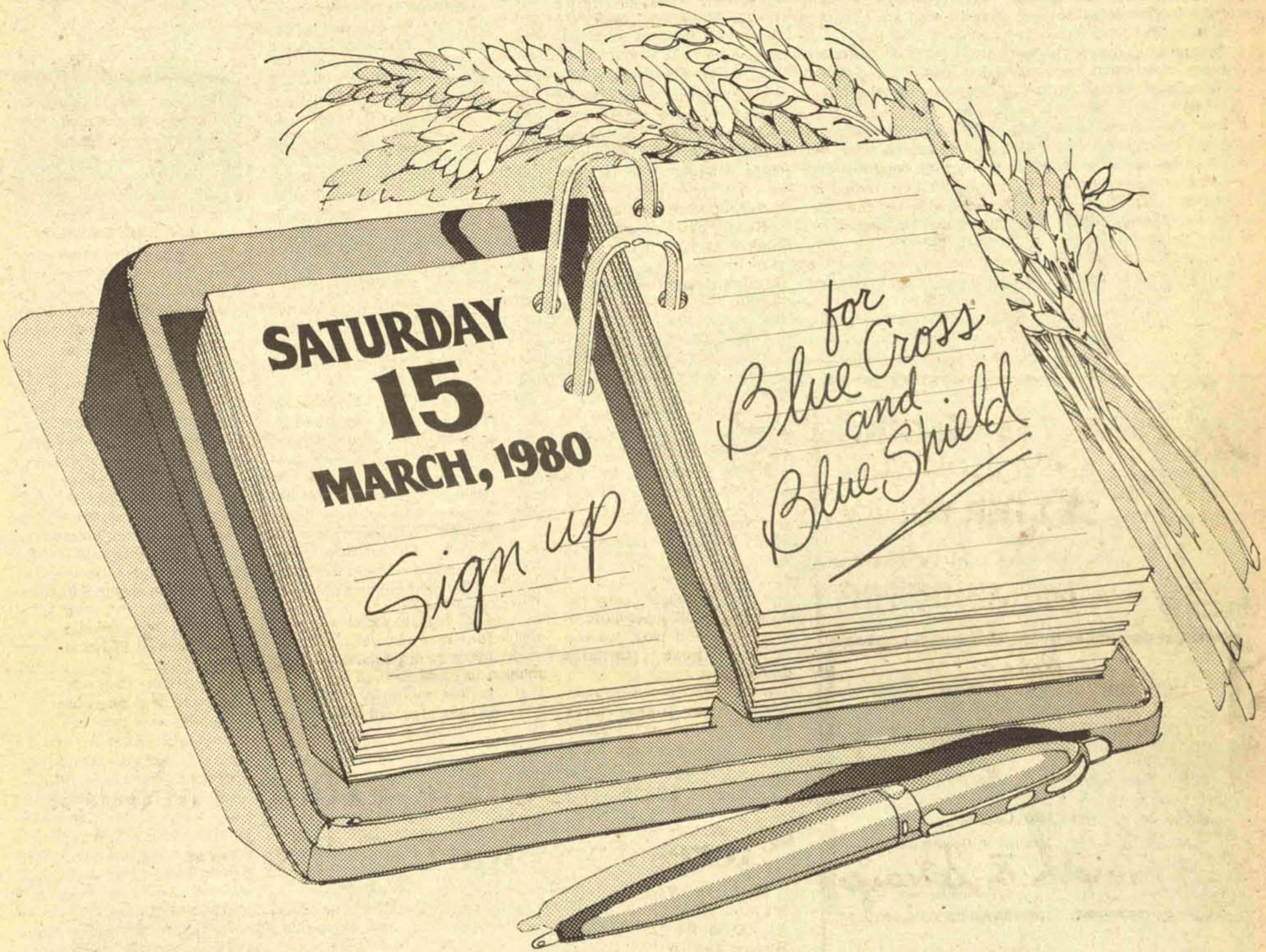
WJR's J.P. McCarthy accepts the "Acres for Charity" check from MFB President Elton Smith as MFB Information and Public Relations Director Larry Ewing looks on.

price, and the farmers and their county Farm Bureau organizations donated the selling price to PAL, which is a frequent beneficiary of WJR fund-raising efforts.

Participating in the project were Sandra and Don Hill of Montrose, Rob Peabody of Fenton, Jim Erwin of Novi, Mike Pridgeon of Montgomery, George Swartzendruber of Bay

Port and the Huron County Farm Bureau, Werner Clasen of Richmond and the Macomb County Farm Bureau, Chuck Paas of Belleville and the Wayne County Farm Bureau, Clare Harrington of Akron, John Tanton of Deckerville, John Knoerr of Sandusky, Nelson Leach of Richmond and Dave Jacobs of New Lothrop.

Michigan Farm Bureau Members... write yourself an important note today!

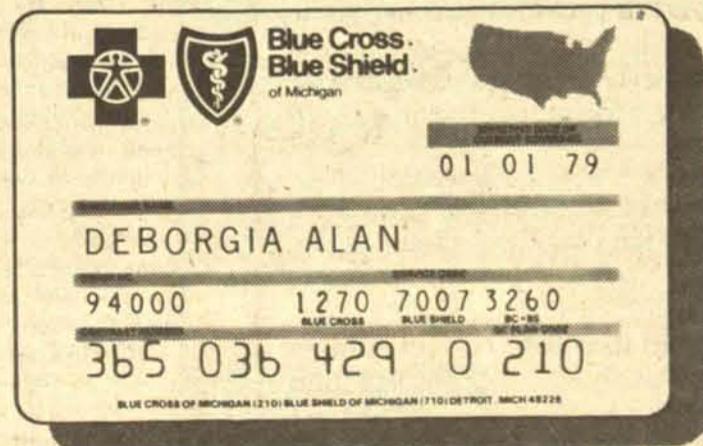


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Now new lower rates for Farm Bureau families who want the best health care coverage available—Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan.

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- Choose your own doctor from thousands of participating physicians.
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Don't wait for tomorrow...enroll **NOW** for the new lower rates. See your Farm Bureau secretary today. Enrollment period runs through Saturday, March 15, 1980.



Don't get sick without it.

By U.S. Jaycees

Fritz Named Outstanding Young Farmer

John W. Fritz, Kalamazoo County Farm Bureau member, was named one of four Outstanding Young Farmers for 1979-80 by the United States Jaycees. The announcement was made at the 24th annual U.S. Jaycees/John Deere Outstanding Young Farmer Awards Congress held in Fargo, North Dakota in mid-February.

Fritz, 32, began farming by raising registered Chester White hogs at the age of nine as a 4-H member. He now operates a 2,800 acre farm near Fulton with 2,660 hogs

and crops of corn, soybeans and wheat.

Fritz has set goals of increasing the conception rate in his sow herd from 85 to 95 percent and increasing his irrigation yields from 182 to 250 bushels per acre. He has put in nearly three miles of grass waterways and installed a water dike to prevent water erosion.

Fritz is a member of several community and farm organizations, including the Michigan Pork Producers, ASCS and the Michigan Soybean Association. He and his wife, Elaine, have

one child.

The Outstanding Young Farmer Awards Congress is the culmination of a year-long search for the nation's top young farmers, conducted annually by many of the 375,000 Jaycees in almost 9,000 communities across America. Contestants at local, state and national levels are judged on the basis of their progress in agriculture, the extent of their soil and water conservation practices and their contributions to their community, state and nation.

ADA of Michigan to Hold Annual Meeting

The American Dairy Association of Michigan's 38th Annual Members' Meeting will be held during Farmers' Week on the MSU Campus, East Lansing, Michigan, on Monday, March 17, 1980 (Dairy Day). Registration will begin at 10:45 a.m. and the business

meeting will be from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

The business meeting will include reports by the ADAM president, treasurer and executive director. Jeffery Clark, account executive of D'Arcy, MacManus & Masius, will present "Milk's The One" and the research that led to this cam-

paign. Dr. Sylvan Wittwer, director of Agricultural Experiment Station and assistant dean, College of Agricultural and Natural Resources, will be the guest speaker at the Michigan Dairy Awards Luncheon beginning at noon in the Big Ten Room. Dr. Wittwer's topic will be "Food and Resource Challenges for the 1980s."

Luncheon tickets will be complimentary to those registering for the ADAM business meeting.

Supplemental Irrigation Slated for Farmers' Week Workshop

"Supplemental Irrigation: Advantages and Disadvantages" will be the focus of a conference to be held during Farmers' Week 1980 at Michigan State University, East Lansing. Several experts will discuss management schemes and irrigation techniques for field and fruit crops.

Topics to be covered in the morning session include the economic and energy considerations of supplemental irrigation, weather variability,

Kronemeyer Appointed to Ag Commission

John Kronemeyer, dairy farmer from Pickford in the Upper Peninsula and five-time winner of Michigan Farm Bureau's top county president award, has been appointed to the State Agriculture Commission by Governor Milliken. Succeeding Charles E. Donaldson of Stephenson, who did not seek reappointment, Kronemeyer will serve for a term expiring December 31, 1983.

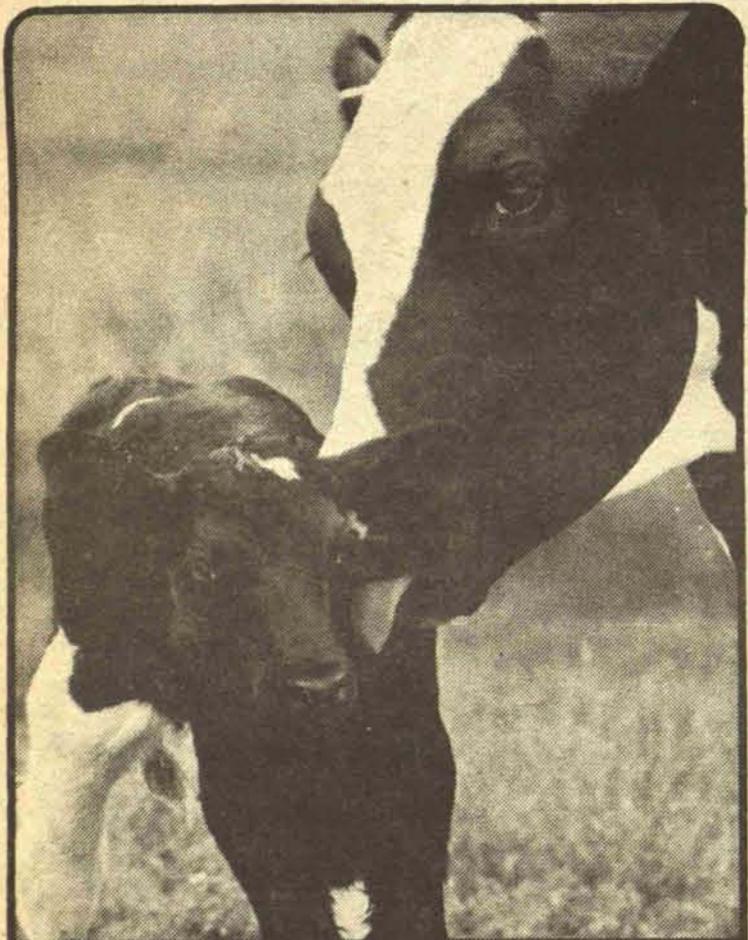
The immediate past president of the Chippewa County Farm Bureau, Kronemeyer operates a dairy farm with a herd of milking cows averaging production of 17,800 pounds of milk and 697 pounds of butter fat. He owns 750 acres and rents an additional 350 acres, raising hay, oats, wheat, corn for silage, and high-moisture ear corn.

Born in Ottawa County near Hudsonville, he was raised on a small farm, and following graduation from a dairy production short course at Michigan State University, started a 40-acre dairy operation on his father's farm. In 1963 he and his wife, Julie, moved to the Upper Peninsula to start their farming operation near Pickford.



JOHN KRONEMEYER

In addition to serving as Chippewa County Farm Bureau president for five years, Kronemeyer also served on the Michigan Farm Bureau Policy Development Committee, the state dairy advisory committee and represented the organization on the American Farm Bureau Federation Dairy Advisory Committee. He also served as a township supervisor, had been chairman of the zoning commission, and was president of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association for six years. He is the U.P. chairman of the advisory committee for the U.P. Experiment Stations.



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1980 MFB "Fabulous Fifteen"

Fifteen county Farm Bureaus have the distinction of being a member of Michigan Farm Bureau's "Fabulous Fifteen." The "Fabulous Fifteen" consists of the first three counties in each of the five membership categories to report 1980 membership goal.

Members of the prestigious 1980 club and their membership category are: in the 1-350 member category — Benzie, Iosco and Kalkaska; in the 351-650 category — Cheboygan, Gladwin and Ogemaw; 651-1200 — Barry, Montcalm and Oceana; 1201-1500 — Allegan, Kent and Lapeer; and in the 1501 and over member category — Genesee, Monroe and Sanilac.

water policy, regulations, legal aspects and water rights.

The afternoon sessions on the field crop irrigation and fruit and vegetable crop irrigation will run concurrently. They will focus on water quality problems, pesticide runoff, irrigation scheduling, fertilizer management and equipment selection. Following each session, a panel of experts will answer questions from the audience.

As part of Natural Resources

Days of Farmers' Week, the conference will be held Tuesday, March 18, beginning at 10 a.m. in 221 Natural Resources Building, Wilson Road. A conference booklet will be distributed to persons desiring additional information on supplemental irrigation.

For further information, contact Lois Wolfson, Institute of Water Research, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824 or phone 517-353-3742.

As of February 18, twenty-four county Farm Bureaus and District IV have reported 1980 membership goal. Goal counties and their membership chairmen are: in the 1-350 member category, Benzie - Clarence Davis; Clare - Daniel Bay and Don Davis; Copper Country - Dan Linna; Iosco - Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Robinson; Kalkaska - Foster McCool; Menominee - Gunter Kusig; Charlevoix - Charles Elzinga.

Counties reporting goal in the 351-650 category are: Cheboygan - Stan Stempky; Gladwin - Mr. and Mrs. Delmar Parker; Muskegon - Wayne Thompson; Newaygo - Bud Beeler; Ogemaw - Rick and Roberta Beck; and Osceola -

Larry Vanderhoef.

Five counties have reported goal in the 651-1200 member category and include: Barry - Shirley Tolles; Montcalm - Lola Weber, Martin Thomsen and Doris Rader; Northwest Michigan - Cloral Beeler; Oceana - Jim Shull and St. Joseph - Walter Timm.

In the 1201-1500 member category - Allegan - Darl Evers; Kent - Katie Goodfellow and Dale Shade; and Lapeer - Duane Wagner.

Three counties have reported goal in the largest member category, 1501 and over, and include: Genesee - William Sill; Monroe - Alvin Gaertner and Sanilac - Ken Fierke.

Fire/Ambulance Service Discussed in Clinton County

Clinton County Local Affairs chairman, Fran Motz, recently hosted a meeting of local officials and county Farm Bureau leaders to discuss the problem of providing fire and ambulance service for highway accident victims.

Funding for these services is currently provided by local residents, but according to Motz, the cost of these services is increasing rapidly creating financial pressures on the local governmental unit.

Meeting participants recognized the need for emergency services for travelers on highways and truck lines, but through their discussions the group seeks to find new funding alternatives and possible methods of collecting user fees to offset the financial burden on the local government budget.

The officials attending the February meeting included fire chiefs, township supervisors, city managers and officials of emergency ambulance services in the area. If the budget

crunch continues to reduce local revenues, they agreed, all units of government will be faced with the task of reevaluating policies related to providing a broad spectrum of public services, including emergency fire and ambulance service.

Donna Column

(Continued from page 2)

•I do my housework to the music of WOOD-FM instead of the local rock station.

•I become so enraptured with "Wally the Walrus" and "Ollie the Otter" that I finish reading them even after grandson has vacated my lap.

•I'm the only one in Farm Bureau Center who remembers snagging her hose on the old wooden desks at the

offices on Cedar Street.

•I look at a revealing picture of Bo Derek and smugly cry: "Look at that! We've got the same structural problem—a big rib cage!"

•I get out the brag book and nobody says anymore: "But you're not old enough to be a grandmother."

Thanks, President Carter; this office is too cold for mini skirts anyway.

Budget

Recommendations

(Continued from page 6)

Police are very effective in rural crime prevention and control.

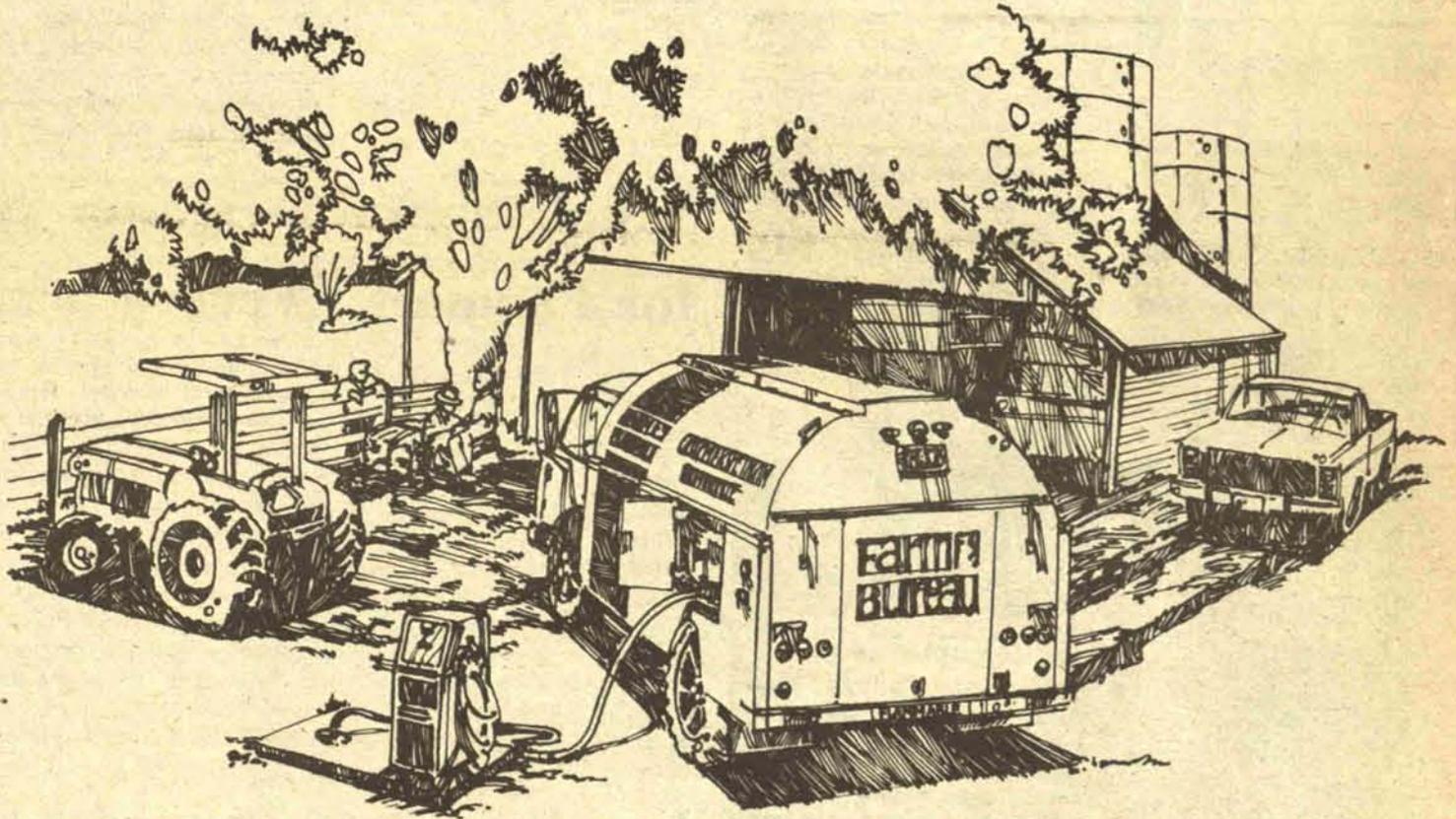
The recommendation calls for an 8% increase in total state aid for K-12 education. When the state aid and the local property tax are added together the per pupil aid will increase about 11%. This will add up to a total well over \$2 billion, which is a total increase of \$65.5 million over the present year. However, the cost of education is rising much more rapidly so this means a lean year for school aid overall. The governor is recommending the school aid formula to be \$385 per pupil plus \$46 for each mill levied for operations. The allocation is determined by subtracting the local revenue per pupil from the equalized mills. For example, a district allocated 30 mills will increase about 9.3% from \$1,615 per pupil to \$1,765 per pupil. The teacher retirement system now takes close to half a billion dollars. In fact, teacher retirement and state retirement systems will represent the largest budget increase this year and they continue to grow as they are a built-in feature of state government.

The Headlee Amendment requires that 41% of all state revenues must go back to local units of government. A new formula will be recommended this year as to how local units of government will qualify for state aid. Such as aid to the cities, municipalities and other counties. State aid to local units of government, such as counties, schools, townships, municipalities, has varied from 41% to near 50% of the state budget which is returned to them in one form or another.

It is interesting to note that of the total Michigan budget of more than \$10.2 billion, more than 25.5% comes from federal grants.

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- Cassopolis—Farmers Petroleum Cooperative
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- Adrian—Lenawee Farm Bureau Oil Co.
- Adrian—Lenawee Tire & Supply
- Saginaw—Saginaw County Farm Bureau Oil Co.
- Ellsworth—Ellsworth Farmers Exchange
- Boyer Falls—Matelski Lumber Co.
- Coopersville—Coopersville Cooperative Elevator Co.
- Eau Claire—Berrien County Farm Bureau Oil Co.
- Coldwater (Batavia)—Branch County Farm Bureau Oil Co.
- Wheeler—Farmers Petroleum Cooperative

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"Farmers of the Week" Honored by FBIG and Mich. Farm Radio Network

The Farmer of the Week Award, sponsored by the Michigan Farm Radio Network and Farm Bureau Insurance Group, recognizes Michigan farmers for their contributions to the agriculture industry and the community. In addition to recognition from the news media, award winners receive a plaque and a leather belt with award buckle from their local FBIG agent.

The Farmer of the Week Award winners for January 1980 were:



BUD HUGHES

Week of Jan. 21—Bud (Norwood) Hughes, 50, a Ceresco area dairy farmer who milks about 60 cows and raises cash crops. He farms about 1400 acres with his brother-in-law and two sons. Hughes serves as a member of the board of review of Fredonia Township; member of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA); member of the Calhoun County Farm Bureau and serves on the county FB Petroleum Board; and he is a past member of the old Pierce School Board, the County Soil Conservation Board, and served on the county board of the DHIA. He and his wife, Evelyn, have four children.



ALAN WONG

Week of Jan. 7—Alan Wong, 26, a dairy farmer from Posen who farms 600 acres and milks 60 cows. He serves on the church council of Leer Lutheran Church; is a member of the agriculture advisory committee of Alpena High School; director on the board of the area Michigan Animal Breeders Cooperative; director at large of the Alpena County Farm Bureau; member of the Alpena County Young Farmers and past chairman of that group; and member of the FFA Alumni Association. Wong and his wife, Sally, have two children.



JOHN YOUNG

Week of Jan. 28—John Young, 27, a Brown City dairyman who farms over 200 acres and has 110 milking cows. Before buying his farm in 1977, he was herdsman for a large dairy operation in Caro. Young serves as state vice president and member of the state board of the Dairy Herd Improvement Assn.; past district president of the DHIA; past member of the Agricultural Labor Commission; current member of the St. Clair County Farm Bureau; past Young Farmers chairman in Tuscola County; was a finalist in the MFB state discussion meet twice; member of St. Nicholas Catholic Church in Capac; member of the Knights of Columbus and former deputy grand knight; and he served as state president of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) in 1970-71. He also earned the State and American Farmer degrees and a state dairy award from the FFA. He and his wife, Cheryl, have five children.



KEN DAVIS

Week of Jan. 14—Ken Davis, 35, a cash crop farmer who farms 450 acres near Ashley in Gratiot County. He is a member of the Ashley Lions Club; past township supervisor of Hamilton Township; current vice president of the Gratiot County Farm Bureau and heads the county FB group purchasing committee. Davis is the former city engineer for the city of Battle Creek and served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Engineering Corps. Davis and his wife, Janet, have two children.

Agricultural Communicators Honored by Michigan Farm Bureau

Three news people have been named "Top Agricultural Communicators of the Year" by the Michigan Farm Bureau for their efforts to promote an understanding of agriculture by the non-farm public and for their service to the farming community. Named for the annual honor by the state's largest farm organization were Scott Killgore, farm editor for WJR radio, Detroit; Jim Brown, former publisher of the *Ingham County News*, Mason; and Harold Sparks, farm director for WLKM, Three Rivers.

Communicators are first honored by county Farm Bureau units at the local level and are then nominated for statewide recognition. Killgore, winning the title for the second consecutive year, was nominated by the Wayne County Farm Bureau and Sparks by the Cass County Farm Bureau.

In announcing the title-winners, Elton R. Smith, president of the Michigan Farm Bureau, said, "As farmers, we recognize that we are less than 4 percent of the population. Living in a society where the majority is more frequently listened to by legislators and political officials, we feel a need to communicate with other segments of society. We believe that non-farmers must be aware of the issues faced by the producers of their food. If this is done, laws, regulations and actions taken by governmental agencies will be far more favorable to the production of food and fiber.

"This is where the public media plays such an important role. These communicators have built bridges of understanding between farmers and nonfarmers," Smith said. "As the state's largest farm organization, we feel the responsibility to recognize news



(Top photo) Scott Killgore, WJR-Detroit farm editor, and (lower photo) Jim Brown, former publisher of the *Ingham County News*, received special mementos from Michigan Farm Bureau President Elton R. Smith during recent presentations in the 1979 Agricultural Communicators' home areas. Leaders of the nominating county Farm Bureaus—Wayne and Ingham—took part in the recognition ceremonies. Recognition of Harold Sparks, WLKM-Three Rivers farm director, nominated by the Cass County Farm Bureau, will take place at a later date.

media who have done an outstanding job in this area and that's what this award is all about."

Other news people honored by the Michigan Farm Bureau since its recognition program was initiated in 1975, are the late Howard Heath (Michigan Farm Radio Network), Robert

Hostetler (Fremont Times-Indicator), Karl Guenther (WKZO, Kalamazoo), Herb Schmidt (WBCM, Bay City), Evelyn Stringham (Jackson Citizen-Patriot), Terry Henne (WSGW, Saginaw), Tom Steric (Kalamazoo Gazette), and Ross Woodstock (WRBJ, St. Johns).

Honey Queen To Be Crowned at Farmers' Week

The 1980 Michigan Honey Queen will be crowned March 21 during Farmers' Week at Michigan State University. Sponsored by the Michigan Beekeepers Association, the 1980 queen will be responsible for promoting the honey and beekeeping industry in Michigan during the coming year.

The contest is open to single women between the ages of 17 and 21. Contestants are required to submit an essay entitled "Honey," together with an application, brief autobiography and two photographs.

The winner of the contest will receive a \$500 scholarship, in addition to a trip to Seattle,

Washington to compete for the National Honey Queen title.

Interested contestants should contact Mike or Vicki Connor, Dadants, Inc., 3603½ N. Main

St., Wayland, Michigan 49348 (phone 616-792-9540), for further information. The deadline for applications is March 12.



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Government Spending

Government spending has risen to the point where its burden is felt throughout the American economy. The three sources of revenue clearly reveal the strain:

For many **taxpayers** the levies are higher than ever before, giving encouragement to tax evasion.

The **capital markets** show signs of utter exhaustion from government demands, causing interest rates to rise. There is moaning among stockholders, whose savings have been devastated in recent years. But in the body politic they are outnumbered and outvoted and, therefore, constitute no threat to the politicians in power.

Inflation, the favorite technique of deficit financing, is accelerating, reducing the real earnings and savings of millions of people. It is potentially more dangerous to the deficit spenders who are resorting to currency and credit expansion in order to finance their favorite programs. But the spenders continue to hide behind the wall of public ignorance that permits them to put the blame for rising prices on anything making the news.

If an individual really shares Jefferson's view—"That government is the best that governs least"—he must make provisions in his own life to take responsibility for essential services that government should not be allowed to monopolize.

For example, no civilized society will deny that art is necessary to inspire and uplift the human mind and spirit. Therefore, if we citizens do not devote ourselves to creativity, the government will tax everyone (force us) to set up an agency to subsidize artists. But forced government programs cannot satisfy the real need for ennobling art. Creativity cannot be forced.

FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

No charitable society will allow the aged to suffer deprivation when they can no longer care for themselves. Therefore, if we do not care for our own parents or the elderly in our greater family units, the government will tax everyone (force us) to set up massive nursing home programs. But forced government programs cannot meet the real needs of the aged. Love cannot be forced; the elderly need the love and respect of their descendants as much as they need food and shelter.

No enlightened society overlooks that counseling is necessary to train youth to accept responsibility. Therefore, if we do not see that our own children are schooled in the principles we have experienced as the basis for worthwhile living, the government will tax everyone (force us) to subsidize mandatory counseling sessions for teenage youth. But forced government programs do not meet the real needs of youth. Will to learn and desire to develop a well-rounded attitude towards life cannot be forced; young people need the guidance of loving parents (long before they are teenagers) to instill this will far more than they need compulsory counseling.

No self-respecting society will deny that all men are of equal worth and deserve equal respect. Therefore, if we do not openly welcome all qualified citizens regardless of race into our civic associations, schools and clubs, the government will tax everyone (force us) to bus students and institute civil rights suit. The government cannot eliminate racial discrimination at all because by taking sides in any racial conflict it is giving the force of law to, and thereby perpetuating, distinctions based on race. Respect cannot be forced.

No merciful society will have abandoned children without some means of support, therefore, if we do not open our homes to parentless children, the government will tax everyone (force us) to create a national system of foster homes. But forced government programs cannot meet the needs of parentless children. Parenting cannot be forced; these children need more than a bed and three meals a day.

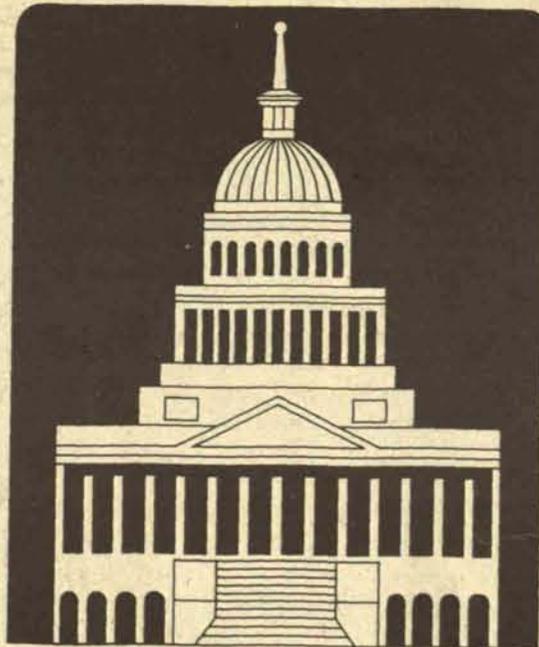
DISCUSSION TOPIC

by **KEN WILES**
Manager, Member Relations

MORAL STANDARDS

No ethical society will refuse to accept that some moral standards are essential to its survival. Therefore, if churches and family do not teach honesty, the government must tax everyone (force us) to set up expensive crime prevention programs or juvenile correction institutions. But forced government programs cannot meet real needs of youth and mature adults alike for moral guidelines. Lasting respect for the property of persons of others cannot be forced; youth and persons alike need motivating clergy and friends to care enough about them to present them with constructive alternatives to destructive behavior.

No humane nation wants to leave others to endure poor health, the specter of a life in pain. Therefore, if we do not eat correctly, exercise regularly, avoid harmful agents (cigarettes, narcotics and the likes) to remain healthy, the government will tax everyone (force us) to create an unwieldy national health program. But forced government programs which treat people in bulk, instead of as individuals, cannot supply universal health. Good health habits cannot be forced; an end to pain cannot be legislated. As long as men are mortal, some will experience disease and misery, government cannot prevent that. Individuals must, however, take primary responsibility for their own health, which includes practicing good health habits.



Individuals within society, and hence societies themselves, have many legitimate needs. Therefore, if we do not make provisions, to meet our own personal needs first, then supply service to others (itself a primary personal need), the government will tax everyone (force us) to try to satisfy those needs. Although its efforts are sincere and do apply a band-aid to deep wounds, government can never completely meet real needs. Lasting solutions are only realized when individuals learn to and acquire strength to meet their own needs. This cannot be forced, only encouraged.

MORAL STRENGTHS

Surely, we feel for the countless victims of government spending who consume more than 1/3 of the national income. We understand their anguish and sense the enduring morality of the cause of self-defense in man's right to the fruits of his labor. But we doubt that their cause embodies the moral strength for overcoming the spending aspirations of contemporary society. It is haunted by self interest and projects self as the central figure in the cause of tax relief, while government spend-

ing continues to draw its political strength from a loud concern for the poor and the underprivileged.

Progressive income taxation in itself is an objective of policy in search of social and economic equality. But it is also an inevitable consequence of a social order that bestows expensive benefits on millions of beneficiaries. After all, government has no source of income and wealth of its own. It depends entirely on its ability to extract the means from its subject. It must find victims in order to satisfy the clamor for social benefits and programs, government functions and services.

TAX CUTS OR SPENDING CUTS?

Some campaigns focus on the potential for increasing government revenue as a result of tax cuts. It may well be true that cuts in certain taxes would spur economic activity and generate increases in revenue despite the tax cuts. But it is unlikely that the relative burden of government would be permitted to shrink.

Would the political forces pushing for economic redistribution and more government be satisfied with a smaller share of the national income? They managed to extract their present share of benefits from a stagnant economy. Is it not likely they would want an even larger amount from an expanding economy?

There is no easy escape from the consequences of an ideology of economic transfer and social conflict. A tax cut as a stimulant administered by government surely does not weaken the position of government. A tax cut that is accompanied by a spending cut does not effectively reduce the burden and size of government. Therefore, explicit limits on government spending are needed to lend substance to a proposal for tax reduction.

THE ROOT OF EVIL

It takes great political courage to confront the root of the evil: the appetite for government services and benefits. Most Americans still believe that government owes them certain favors, such as income security, public housing and urban renewal, free education and medical care, and so forth. Their call for benefits is an implicit demand that financial means be seized from others. They would not be asking for social programs if they were expected to cover the costs in proportion to benefits.

Few Americans seek no government favors, and even fewer openly reject them on moral grounds. It is much more popular to seek and accept the benefits of the redistribution while objecting to the taxation that covers their costs. Most people freely partake in the economic redistribution, but loudly oppose the necessary allocation of costs.

So long as there is general acceptance of taxing, inflating, borrowing and spending what the government does not have upon welfare, subsidies, and regulation, these things will continue. So long as people generally believe that it is right to take from some and give to others, that government should regulate and control businesses, that deficit financing is right and proper, that it is all right to reduce the value of the money in circulation by increasing the amount of it, and the debt does not have to be repaid, just as long as these things will continue.

If we profess a philosophy of limited government, we profess in the same breath a faith in unlimited personal responsibility. Yet everything worth having in life must be earned: health, respect, creativity, friendships, and so forth. Government cannot meet the need because, in most instances, the need is for personal effort or activity or growth. If we do not believe pervasive government, we must believe in pervasive individual, family, church and community responsibility.

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REGISTERED ANGUS - bulls - heifers and cows. Write J-Mar Angus Farm, Mr. & Mrs. Marlin Goebel, Route #2, Box 143, Hillman, Michigan 49746. (3-11-25f)

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FOR SALE: 1,000 gallons of liquid Molasses 50¢ a gallon, Phone 517-777-0332. (1-31-12f)

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SMOKE TREE

\$1.50 ea. 2 for \$2.75
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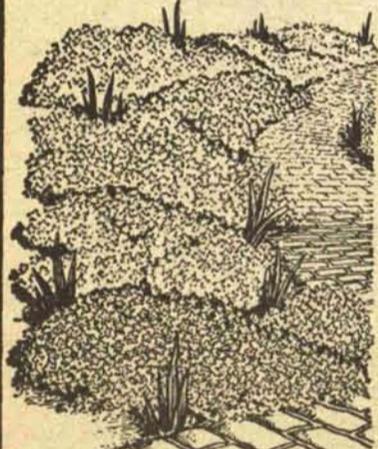
In July when most other trees have quit blooming, the beautiful Pink Mist Smoke Tree (*Cotinus coggygria*) burst forth with a big cluster of fluffy pink panicles resembling big clouds of fluffy smoke — so dense you can't see through them. The tree looks like one large cloud of smoke — like a pink cloud resting on a tree trunk. And then in the Fall the tree is ablaze in a beautiful array of red, scarlet and orange foliage. Grows to 15 feet. Especially lovely when three are planted together. You receive choice, hand selected 1 1/2 to 3 ft. trees.

MASSSES OF COLOR EARLY IN SPRING

CREeping PHLOX

6 for \$1.00

12 for \$1.75
 18 for \$2.50
 36 for \$4.85



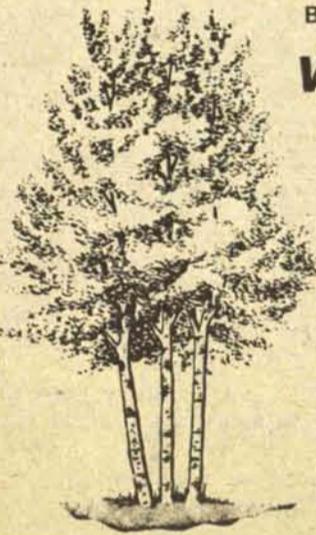
(Reg. 3 for \$1.00) Low sale price on lovely Creeping Phlox (*Phlox subulata*) which will delight you with solid masses of gay color in early Spring when little else is in bloom. A wonderful border or ground cover, Creeping Phlox grows to 4" and thrives in sun or partial shade. Rich color assortment of our choice includes rosy red, steel blue, snow white, and pearl pink. Strong northern grown field divisions.

BEAUTIFUL ALL YEAR LONG!

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CREeping RED SEDUM

4 for \$1.00

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Rock Gardens, borders, edgings, under shady trees, and steep banks will be alive with carefree color when you plant this Creeping Red Sedum (*Sedum spurium*, Dragon's Blood). Place these hardy northern nursery grown plants about one foot apart. The neat 3-4" tall cover spreads rapidly. With bright red, star-like flowers June through September — thick semi-evergreen foliage the rest of the year, even in sub-zero weather!

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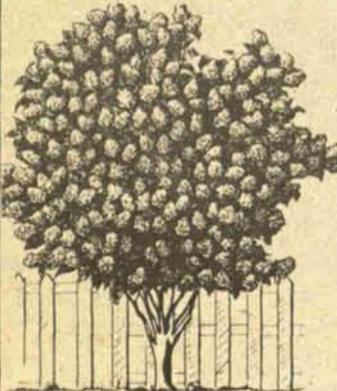


(Reg. 10 for \$1.00) Planting Periwinkle (*Vinca Minor*) now will provide you with YEAR-ROUND BEAUTY in those problem areas in your yard. Shade-loving, wide-spreading Periwinkle thrives under hedges, on slopes, in rock gardens, in poor soil — places where grass won't grow. Dainty lavender-blue flowers in the Spring. Shiny green foliage all winter! This vigorous perennial grows 4-6" tall; one plant spreads to fill two sq. ft. (for quicker, denser effect, plant one foot apart). Nicely rooted plants, for easy transplanting.

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ONLY
 \$1.00 ea.

3 for \$2.50
 6 for \$4.50



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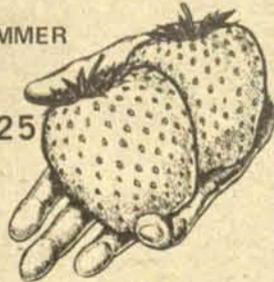
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