



Farm Bureau events have opened my eyes

By Molly Curran
First Runner-Up Maryland Farm Bureau Queen

It seems only a short time ago that I was crowned Montgomery County Farm Queen but since then it has been quite an experience that I feel very fortunate to have.

After the county contest, I had only a week to prepare for the state event. However, nothing could have prepared me for the wonderful experience and great people I have met. It was quite a honor and a surprise to be chosen First Runner-Up to the Maryland Farm Bureau Queen and I have been busy with Farm Bureau functions ever since.

My first Farm Bureau event after the state contest was the Maryland Young Farmers Retreat. It was very interesting to listen to the discussions, especially the debate pertaining to how women have made a difference in American agriculture. The retreat was held in Allegany County and we were able to tour some of the farm country as well as a boat factory and a power plant. The banquet held Saturday night was very enjoyable as we participated in the auction as well as listened to a humorous farmer turned comedian, "The Willow Springs Wild Man." On Sunday morning we enjoyed a presentation given on equipment safety that proved to be very informative and very interesting. The retreat was closed with a meeting of the Young Farmers, and the Farm Queens all said good-bye knowing we would see each other again shortly.

My next task was my county's Farm Bureau banquet. It was the first time I ever had an opportunity to sit at a head table and I was more nervous about that than the speech I gave about my Farm Bureau experiences. The dinner went very well and I wished I could have stayed for the presentations - but being at a Farm Bureau banquet was not a good enough excuse for not having done my homework.

The first week in December I made the journey to Ocean City to attend the Maryland Farm Bureau Convention. It was here that I learned so much about the issues concerning farmers today. I heard some wonderful speakers and participated as a Young Farmer delegate during voting. The Farm Bureau Women were fortunate to have a wonderful speaker, Muriel O'Tuel. I could have listened to her all morning. She told stories about her life and shared many words of wisdom. Another high point was the "hoe-down" held on Monday night. Again, the "Willow Springs Wild Man" from the Young Farmers Retreat was there to entertain us. He kept us laughing the whole evening. Tuesday evenings banquet highlighted county recognitions and scholarship recipients. This very enjoyable evening was closed with an auction of items donated by each county. Overall, the convention was very informative and enjoyable. It was great to meet up with all the Farm Queens and we all had a wonderful time together.

I was fortunate to be invited to a delicious dinner provided by George and Carolyn Lechilder for all the members of the Board for the Montgomery County Farm Bureau. During these cold winter months, my responsibilities have slowed, but I am eager to continue working with Montgomery County and Maryland Farm Bureau. I can't wait to begin our county's "Close Encounters With Agriculture" program and take my livestock to elementary schools to teach students and teachers about farm animals.

I would like to thank George and Carolyn Lechlinder, Connie Whipp, our Farm Bureau Women's Chair, as well as the Montgomery County Farm Bureau for their continued support. I am very excited to continue my reign as Montgomery County Farm Queen and Maryland's First Runner-Up Farm Queen and am honored to be a part of such a great organization.

United - we can all make a difference

Strength comes in unity, numbers

By Susan G. Summers
Spotlight Editor

A sense of pride and unity has swept across our nation - and indeed through the agricultural community. We know all about pulling together during difficult times because farmers have done it for years. When a barn burnt down, fellow farmers came to rebuild - when sickness or death hit a family, their farming partners show up to do the work - and when regulations burden our industry, Farm Bureau members pull together to fight for what's right.

That same sense of unity exists in our drive for new members. We must work together, work with our neighbors and business partners to grow our organization. Strength comes in unity - strength comes in numbers.

Membership Honor Roll 2002 is Maryland Farm Bureau's member-signing incentive program for each and every member. The purpose of the program is to encourage all members to spread the word about Farm Bureau and sign new members.

Everyone should be able to sell at least one new member on the Ad-vantages and Ag-vantages of membership! Find one new member today - make a difference in your organization.

Members can also sign up on Maryland Farm Bureau's website. Just go to www.mdfarmbureau.com and print off the application!

The honor roll membership-signing program is a contest for volunteers only that ends May 1, 2002. You can step up membership and receive the following honors:

Early Bird Award - volunteers signing two new members by Feb. 15, 2002

Producer Club Award - five new members signed

Ambassador Club Award - 10 new members signed

Top Five Award - top five volunteers signing most new 2002 members (must be 15 or more to qualify)

Awards will be presented at each level of accomplishment. The more the members, the better the prize! But the best reward is a stronger, more vital organization that is filled with members that believe in the future of agriculture in Maryland.

Honor Roll members are listed below - and your name can join the list for the next Spotlight issue. So let's unite in this solid, basic cause - make a difference.

Early Bird Award

Evelyn Hardman, Allegany County
Tommy Hance, Calvert County
Sharon Fritz, Carroll County
Michael Wilcom, Frederick County
Mehrl Mayne, Frederick County
Harriett Holloway, Harford County

Laura Joseph, Baltimore County
Joan Cesarini, Caroline County
Ilene Milburn, Cecil County
Chuck Fry, Frederick County
Clark Kolb, Garrett County

Producer Club Award

Ilene Milburn, Cecil County

Harriett Holloway, Harford County

Maryland Farm Bureau Membership Honor Roll

(as of January 11, 2002)

County	YTD Members Paid	Needed for Goal	County	YTD Members Paid	Needed for Goal
Allegany	87	42	Kent	200	82
Anne Arundel	889	233	Montgomery	654	427
Baltimore	1,089	748	Prince George's	308	242
Calvert	339	134	Queen Anne's	309	52
Caroline	369	65	St. Mary's	404	163
Carroll	874	211	Somerset	221	108
Cecil	359	142	Talbot	320	54
Charles	302	48	Washington	257	82
Dorchester	212	43	Wicomico	373	63
Frederick	878	322	Worcester	353	84
Garrett	125	50			
Harford	710	379	Maryland Total		9,993
Howard	361	204	AFBF Goal		14,537