EPA, Environmental Intervenors Withdraw Appeal of Alt Case

The EPA’s decision not to appeal a key federal ruling in favor of West Virginia farmer Lois Alt highlights the cynicism that drives the agency’s water agenda, says the American Farm Bureau.

The U.S. Court for the Northern District of West Virginia earlier ruled against EPA and in favor of farmer Lois Alt in October 2013. The court rejected EPA’s contention that the Clean Water Act regulates ordinary stormwater runoff from the farmyard (non-production areas) at large livestock or poultry farms.

AFBF General Counsel Ellen Steen said: “By dropping its appeal, EPA presumably hopes to avoid a loss in the appellate court. EPA appears to be saying it will continue to enforce its position against other farmers, even though it’s not willing to defend that position in court.”

Added AFBF President Bob Stallman, “For most of us, standing firm doesn’t mean walking away just because you are afraid you won’t like the outcome. EPA might call that smart and strategic, but I call it cynical and cowardly. Lois Alt should be proud of her environmental stewardship and her courage in standing up to EPA. She won an important court victory that will benefit many others, and we are proud to have supported her efforts.”

Comment Period on Waters of U.S. Issue Extended Again

The Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have extended the comment period on the proposed Waters of the U.S. rule to Nov. 14.

In an email sent to reporters about the extension, EPA indicated its Scientific Advisory Board is wrapping up a report on the connectivity of small bodies of water such as streams and wetlands. Moving the deadline to Nov. 14 will give the public more time to comment on the results of the report once it is released, according to the agency.

Weigh in and tell the EPA you oppose the rule today at http://ditchtherule.fb.org/#filter=.action, or call the WVFB office at 800-398-4630 x. 306 and we’ll send you an information packet.

Articles for NewsBytes must be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Time-sensitive announcements must be submitted no less than 8 weeks prior to the date of the event. Electronic submissions, including photos, are preferred. Send to joanh@wvfarm.org.
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On the cover

Indian Corn
Becky Walton
We are approaching another very important election. Many races here in West Virginia will be close, and our full participation could be what makes the difference in many of them. When you look at historical voter information, you find that West Virginia has fairly low voter participation in non-presidential general elections. A review of the numbers in past elections is very alarming: 2010 – 37%; 2006 – 33%; 2002 – 32%; 1998 – 29%. This means, in a two-person race, just 16.5% of voting-age people have decided the outcome of these elections. If there are more than two candidates, then the percentages are even lower.

When you think about the small percentage of people determining the outcome of our elections, it is shameful. However, it does make our Farm Bureau involvement even more important. We can be the deciding factor in who wins many of these races, as long as we continue to take part. So please, make sure your family members, friends and neighbors who share our philosophy get out and vote.

We are fortunate to have so many candidates on the state and federal level who do share our values and beliefs, and they deserve our full support. Do we really want to make a difference in the direction our state and our country is headed? Then we need to help get these folks elected. I hope you will seriously consider candidates that have been endorsed by the WV Farm PAC. The Farm PAC is the political action arm of the West Virginia Farm Bureau. The board of directors is the same for both entities. Space doesn’t permit me to expand on each state race, but I would like to briefly talk about the federal ones.

On the congressional level, we have true friends running for all four positions.

"A review of the numbers in past elections is very alarming...just 16.5% +1 of voting-age people have decided the outcome of these elections."

U.S. Senate: Shelley Moore Capito has worked with Farm Bureau tirelessly over the past 14 years as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Prior to that, she served two terms in the West Virginia House of Delegates. She has received the Friend of Farm Bureau award a number of times. She has truly earned our support. She will make a tremendous senator and we look forward to continuing our close relationship with her.

U.S. House of Representatives, First district: David McKinley has proven himself as a conservative and has stood by these principles during his four years in Congress, and seven terms before that in the West Virginia House of Delegates. We are fortunate to have a person with his knowledge and business experience representing West Virginia.

U.S. House of Representatives, Second district: Alex Mooney will be another true conservative voice for us in Washington. He is a proven elected leader who has been recognized many times for his efforts on behalf of taxpayers. He shares our views on the many issues facing this state and country.

U.S. House of Representatives, Third district: Evan Jenkins has been a friend of West Virginia Farm Bureau for many years, serving as a state senator since 2002, and serving three terms prior to that in the West Virginia House of Delegates. We have had an extremely good relationship with him during those years and he has proven himself to be an effective leader and advocate for legislation important to West Virginia’s future.

If we hope to change the course our country is presently on, and create a stable future for our families and businesses, we need representatives who will defend the principles that Capito, McKinley, Mooney and Jenkins believe in and will practice in D.C. Let’s do everything we can to support them and the other endorsed candidates to ensure their victories on November 4th.
Aboveground Storage Tank Act and Late Summer Fun . . . and they are not one in the same! Much discussion and concern continue to be generated over the unintended consequences of the Aboveground Storage Tank (AST) Act. On September 9 DEP’s interpretive rule (related to tank certification and spill prevention response plan requirements) was filed with the Secretary of State’s Office. The four-page rule provides a three-level approach to inspection – Level 1 AST/high risk, Level 2 AST/lesser risk and Level 3 AST/low risk. The levels are based on potential for harm to public health or the environment due to contents, size or location. Any AST located within a zone of critical concern, wellhead protection area or groundwater intake area under the influence of surface water will be considered Level 1, as will any AST with a capacity of 50,000 gallons or more (regardless of location or contents). Certified inspection will be required for Level 1 ASTs. Inspection will be required on Level 2 and 3 ASTs, but it may be done by certified inspectors or the owner or operator of the AST or their designee. For additional details regarding initial inspection, certification and spill prevention requirements go to the DEP website – www.dep.wv.gov (Scroll down and click on Implementation of the Aboveground Storage Tank Act.). The rule was on comment for 30 days with a public hearing held on October 9.

Farm Bureau and other concerned parties were invited by DEP Secretary Huffman to a stakeholders’ work session on October 1 to discuss/offer suggestions on the initial “rough” draft of the 79-page emergency rule for the Aboveground Storage Tank Program. The emergency rule is available on DEP’s website. Per a September 18 DEP news release, any members of the public desiring to offer suggestions on ways to improve the rule can email those comments, by October 24, to WVDEPTankrules@wv.gov or mail to WV DEP – Public Information Office, AST Emergency Rule Comments, 601 57th Street SE, Charleston WV 25304. Stay tuned for updates on the interpretive and legislative rules that will provide the regulatory framework for the Aboveground Storage Tank Program. There are certainly many unanswered questions and potential unintended consequences that loom on the horizon – fee schedules, farm data becoming public information with bioterrorist implications, etc. The WV Department of Agriculture is actively involved in providing assistance to the farm community relative to AST questions. The lead contact is Bob Tabb (btabb@wvda.us or 304-229-5828).

As summer was winding down my wife and I participated in a number of activities filled with the richest of blessings – Homecomings and Reunions, Farm Bureau Annual Meetings and Meet the Candidate Events, chasing classic rock music at Fairs and Festivals, etc. Each event provided opportunities for learning, sharing, renewing acquaintances and meeting new friends . . . and of course, great food! These types of events don’t garner front page news, but they offer a snapshot of what is right with our nation. Obviously none of these activities would be possible without the freedoms we enjoy in America, freedoms too many take for granted. President Abraham Lincoln once noted, “America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.” President Ronald Reagan reminded us that “Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.” We obviously owe a great debt to the Founding Fathers who crafted our Constitution, as well as those brave men and women who have served and continue to serve in our Armed Forces to protect freedom in America and around the world. With the General Election approaching each of us can have an impact on protecting freedom by exercising our right (and responsibility) to vote. That vote should be for men and women of integrity who will uphold our Constitution to ensure that America remains “one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” KEEP SMILING FRIENDS, God bless you and your loved ones, and God bless America.
Susan Wilkins, YF&R Chair

While summer is definitely my favorite time of year, I always enjoy harvest time and my job as “official silage wagon hauler” on our farm. I let my family down this year though. And while I am a little sad about missing corn chopping for the first time since 2003, I am just a teensy tiny bit excited as to the reason why.

In May, I was notified that I was one of four recipients in the United States to receive a McCloy Fellowship to study agriculture in Germany for three weeks in October. So while my family finishes up chopping corn this side of the Atlantic, I will be experiencing harvest time in Germany. You can follow our adventures through our group blog at: http://2014mccloyfellowsinagriculture.wordpress.com/.

I am extremely excited to represent our state and our nation as a McCloy Fellow and can’t wait to share my stories and photos with everyone when I return. I will be back right in time for our state Annual Meeting in Flatwoods and I am excited to be an official part of the agenda this year as a presenter at the Info Fair on Friday afternoon. As part of the requirements for the fellowship I have to submit a detailed report and also highlight how I plan to implement and share the knowledge I have gained. My presentations at the Annual Meeting are one way I plan to share my experience and I hope you will join me!

In addition, the Young Farmers & Ranchers will carry out our Discussion Meet competition, announce any winners of our achievement contests, and of course, hold the annual live and silent auctions. And don’t forget our Harvest for All food drive. Please bring a canned good or two to share with a family less fortunate during this special time leading up to Thanksgiving and Christmas.

We are excited for another great Annual Meeting and the start of another year as members of the West Virginia Farm Bureau.
Reported by J. Page

Chicago: Board-certified physician Dr. S. Cherukuri has done it once again with his newest invention of a medical grade ALL DIGITAL affordable hearing aid.

This new digital hearing aid is packed with all the features of $3,000 competitors at a mere fraction of the cost. Now, most people with hearing loss are able to enjoy crystal clear, natural sound—in a crowd, on the phone, in the wind—without suffering through “whistling” and annoying background noise.

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New Digital Hearing Aid Outperforms Expensive Competitors
This sleek, lightweight, fully programmed hearing aid is the outgrowth of the digital revolution that is changing our world. While demand for “all things digital” caused most prices to plunge (consider DVD players and computers, which originally sold for thousands of dollars and today can be purchased at a fraction of that price), the cost of a digital medical hearing aid remained out of reach.

Dr. Cherukuri knew that many of his patients would benefit but couldn’t afford the expense of these new digital hearing aids. Generally they are not covered by Medicare and most private health insurance.

The doctor evaluated all the high priced digital hearing aids on the market, broke them down to their base components, and then created his own affordable version—called the MDHearingAid® AIR for its virtually invisible, lightweight appearance.

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— Dennis

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— Dr. Chang

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— Ned Rubin

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West Virginia has Much to Learn From Its Farmers

Patrick Morrissey, West Virginia Attorney General
Take a drive down any country road in West Virginia and you will see it: A farmer working in the fields, tending to his or her animals and making a living off the land. In a state that seems to be best known for its mountains, mining, and manufacturing, farming often gets overlooked as the industry that literally puts food on our tables.

Farming is essential in West Virginia, and it powers our economy. Think about these statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture: In 2012, West Virginia was home to more than 21,000 farms. Of those, 93 percent were family-owned. Additionally, 94 percent of farms were smaller than 500 acres, with the average size being approximately 168 acres.

But farming is not for the weak of heart or those hoping to get rich. In 2012, 94 percent of farms in West Virginia had less than $50,000 in sales. Farming is about family, history, and the unmatched sense of self that comes from planting a seed and being able to harvest it or watching a calf, lamb, kid or chick grow. You know this, and so do I.

But West Virginia farmers are facing a challenge these days. According to the USDA, the average age of a West Virginia farm operator is nearly 60, and only 42 percent of farm operators have farming as their primary occupation. The rest work some other job to make ends meet.

That’s why celebrating our agricultural heritage and successes are so important. This summer, I had the opportunity to attend many of the great fairs and festivals this state has to offer, including fairs in Cabell, Hampshire, Jefferson, and Putnam counties, as well as the State Fair of West Virginia. At each fair, I was inspired by the hard work on display, the pride people showed in their endeavors and the sense of comradery that filled the air.

It was also very encouraging to see our State’s youth involved with Future Farmers of America, 4-H clubs, and local farm bureaus. The youth of our state are the future of farming in West Virginia, and with farmers getting older every year and more dependent on outside income in order to keep the family farm going, instilling in them the pride of hard work is essential.

Our office will do what we can to protect current and future farmers, and ensure that burdensome regulations from Washington, D.C. do not make their jobs harder. As your Attorney General, I want to hear about regulations you encounter that make it harder to raise livestock, work the fields, or tend to your orchards. As mentioned in a previous column, our office is very concerned about the EPA’s proposed rule that will clarify what streams and wetlands will fall under Clean Water Act protection. The rules are currently open for comment, and I encourage each of you to educate yourselves about the proposed rule and what it could mean to your property.

In order for our nation and state to be strong, we must be able to take care of ourselves. And a big part of that revolves around being able to feed ourselves and our neighbors. Without farms, there would be no food. And without you, and the hard work you do, West Virginia would suffer.

As we enter the harvest season, please know our office has directed much of our time and resources toward protecting and fighting for West Virginia. Even though our jobs may seem so different, our goals go hand in hand: We all want to provide for and protect the great state that we call home.

Patrick Morrisey is the Attorney General of West Virginia.
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Although it is a process that goes on every day, administering an estate is not something that most of us have experience doing. The first step is to locate the will of the person who has died. The assets it will control through this legal distribution process are known as probate assets. The will should include the name(s) of those persons or institutions that will have the authority to handle the probate administration. Such an individual or entity is the executor (or executrix).

A trust document may also be available and will govern the how those assets will be distributed. If no valid will or trust can be found, West Virginia intestacy laws will control how the probate estate property will be distributed. The person or institution handling the estate administration when there is no valid will is an administrator (or administratrix).

With or without a will, some assets will be controlled solely by contractual arrangements, such as life insurance, retirement accounts, jointly held property and assets owned by a trust. If a trust is part of the estate plan, the person or entity which will handle the trust is the trustee. Often the beneficiary of insurance and retirement funds is the estate. In that case, the proceeds will be probate assets and will be governed by the will’s terms. If a person or nonprofit organization is the beneficiary, the proceeds will not be included in the probate assets.

Generically, executors and administrators are referred to as personal representatives. If a will is available, it must be taken to the courthouse in the county where the decedent was a resident. At that point, the probate process, which gives legal effect to the will’s provisions, will begin. Even if no will is found, the person who will qualify to become the personal representative must go to the courthouse to start the process.

An oath of office is required by state law. A surety bond may also need to be purchased by the personal representative, using funds from the estate, to protect the estate’s creditors and heirs, unless this requirement has been waived by the terms of the will.

Among the first tasks is the requirement to complete the West Virginia estate appraisement form within the following 90 days. All of the assets owned by the person on the date of death will be included in the estate. The estate’s assets will be divided into two categories: probate (controlled by the will) and non-probate (not controlled by the will) assets. A “date of death” value must be placed on all assets for official purposes.

A federal estate tax return will be required for a person who dies during 2014 when the gross assets of the estate are $5,340,000 or more (spouses have a combined $10,680,000 federal estate tax exemption during 2014 if both die during that year). An alternative valuation date of six months after the date of death may be used for the federal return.

In the next column we’ll review other responsibilities imposed on a personal representative so that your familiarity with them can allow you to make a beneficial choice for your own estate.

That’s good planning.
**Sapa Extrusions Inc., Yankton, SD (World’s Leading Aluminum Extruder)** has several production positions available for qualified individuals. Those with Manufacturing Experience will be given first opportunity and must be capable of working a 4 days on 4 days off (12) hours a day shift schedule with overtime, must be able to lift up to 50# on a regular basis. Must be reliable and willing to work your way to the top. These positions are full time and include both night and day shift openings.

Sapa offers a very competitive compensation package (starting wage for entry level positions is $12/hour with $1.00 shift differential, paid weekly) performance based merit increases every 3 months/benefits package (where else can you get Medical, Vision and Dental Insurance and pay only $14.41 a week for single coverage and $42.81 a week for family coverage). Sapa also offers quarterly profit sharing (how would you like to get an extra paycheck every four months just because you helped the company make a profit), company paid life insurance, short and long term disability and ten paid holidays, a 401 K plan with Company participation and a Company sponsored retirement plan which you become fully vested after three years of service. If you are a hardworking, dedicated person who wants to work only sixteen days a month then come join us.

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West Virginia Farm Bureau News 13
Mum’s the Word!

Tabitha Bennett
Jeff Sickler has only been running his own farm in Moatsville, West Virginia, for a few short years, but he has a lot going on.

At Sickler’s farm, you can find everything from gardens and greenhouses to chickens, pigs, honeybees, sheep, Goldendoodle pups, and some of the first high tunnels in West Virginia.

The Sicklers, who are devout Christians, start every day with morning devotion. “I ask how we can use this farm for ministry,” Sickler says. Before making the move to farming, Sickler was part of a Christian organization that organized short-term mission trips for adults. Sickler was contributing to the cause by providing work opportunities for mission teams when he received a call about a high tunnel. At the time, Sickler did not know what a high tunnel was, but when he obtained one, he saw his business really begin to grow. The high tunnels, which are essentially unheated greenhouses, help extend the growing season, improving profitability and productivity.

One of Sickler’s largest crops is mums. Sickler and his family have grown mums for five years. Initially, they began with 1,000 mums, which quickly sold out. After purchasing the high tunnels, Sickler’s mum business really took off. Now, they can hang thousands of flower baskets year-round. Just this February, they planted 40,000 mums and by Mother’s Day they sold out.

Another profitable acquisition for the Sicklers was a pot filling machine which not only saves on labor, but hastens the process of planting the mums. The machine spreads the soil evenly, and can pot 240 plants in just ten to fifteen minutes. “We are in the growing pains stage right now, because anything we are making, we are investing,” says Sickler.

Mums are not Sickler’s only project, though. Sickler has several kinds of livestock, honeybees to pollinate his flowers and fruits, and his own compost facility. He also grows various vegetables and berries, which he sells at farmers markets in Barbour and Monongalia counties.

Farmers markets have become an important and eye-opening experience for Sickler. “You would think at farmers markets, there would be competition,” says Sickler, “but that’s not the case.” Instead, he says all of the farmers help each other. They share ideas, products, and business. “When some of the other farmers run out of tomatoes, and they know I have some left, they send customers over to my stand, and I do it for them too,” said Sickler.

So if you are looking for beautiful mums, fresh produce, or just a good conversation and you find yourself in Barbour County or at the Morgantown Farmers Market, look up Jeff Sickler.
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What’s your biggest asset? Your home? Your car? Many Americans don’t realize they have failed to protect their biggest asset: their income.

When you do the math, the money you will earn before retirement is probably more significant to your family’s financial well-being than the value of your home or car. What if your family’s income is unexpectedly disrupted due to a death in the family?

According to a survey by Nationwide, Americans are $1.2 million short on average when it comes to protecting their income with life insurance.

More affordable than you may think

The good news is that life insurance is cheaper than most consumers think. The cost for a healthy 35-year-old to purchase a $1.5 million 20-year term life policy may be less than $65 per month. That’s enough to erase or at least greatly reduce the average income replacement gap, and it’s less than many people pay to insure major assets like their home or car.

Talk to an insurance agent or financial advisor about what you can do to reduce your income replacement gap. Nationwide offers a free life insurance calculator to help consumers figure out how much coverage they need: nationwide.com/life.

1Nationwide Financial’s Life Insurance/Income Replacement Study was conducted online by Harris Interactive, March 15 to March 21, 2013. The respondents were comprised of 1,163 adults ages 24-66 who are currently married and/or have dependents, and have household incomes of $24,000 or more.

2Approximate costs are for a 20-year term life policy from Nationwide in best underwriting class. Costs may vary by distribution channel, age, risk class, etc. Costs are subject to change. Coverage limits may vary.

Life insurance is issued by Nationwide Life Insurance Company or Nationwide Life and Annuity Insurance Company, Columbus, Ohio. Nationwide, Nationwide Financial, the Nationwide framemark, Nationwide YourLife and On Your Side are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company.

Consumers should work with a financial advisor or insurance agent to identify the life insurance solution that is right for their specific needs. As your personal situations change (i.e., marriage, birth of a child or job promotion), so will your life insurance needs. Care should be taken to ensure this product is suitable for your long-term life insurance needs. You should weigh any associated costs before making a purchase. Life insurance has fees and charges associated with it that include costs of insurance that vary with such characteristics of the insured as gender, health, and age. All guarantees are subject to the claims paying ability of the issuing company.

Editor’s note: After 33 years with Nationwide, West Virginia Farm Bureau’s Sponsor Relations Sales Manager, Steve Uhlman, will retire. WVFB wishes him the best as he embarks on this new phase of his life.
USDA Farm Service Agency Announces Key Dates for New 2014 Farm Bill Safety Net Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is announcing key dates for farm owners and producers to keep in mind regarding the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). The new programs, designed to help producers better manage risk, usher in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

“FSA wants to keep producers well informed on all steps in the process,” said Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Val Dolcini. “We will continue our outreach efforts and maintain resources online to help them understand the new programs before they come in to make decisions for their operations.”

Dates associated with ARC and PLC that farm owners and producers need to know:

- Sept. 29, 2014 to Feb. 27, 2015: Land owners may visit their local Farm Service Agency office to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.
- Nov. 17, 2014 to March 31, 2015: Producers make a one-time election of either ARC or PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.
- Mid-April 2015 through summer 2015: Producers sign contracts for 2014 and 2015 crop years.
- October 2015: Payments for 2014 crop year, if needed.

USDA leaders will visit with producers across the country to share information and answer questions on the ARC and PLC programs.

USDA helped create online tools to assist in the decision process, allowing farm owners and producers to enter information about their operation and see projections that show what ARC and/or PLC will mean for them under possible future scenarios. The new tools are now available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc. Farm owners and producers can access the online resources from the convenience of their home computer or mobile device at any time. USDA provided $3 million to the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) at the University of Missouri and the Agricultural and Food Policy Center (AFPC) at Texas A&M (co-leads for the National Association of Agricultural and Food Policy), along with the University of Illinois (lead for the National Coalition for Producer Education) to develop these online tools.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

For more information, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.
Lewis County - Helen Hardman was named as one of the 2014 Women in Agriculture by the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. Hardman recently retired from WVFB as Coordinator of the Mobile Ag Ed Science Lab, a position she held for nearly 7 years.

The ‘Women in Ag’ program was started in 2010 as a way to honor West Virginia women who contribute to agriculture, forestry and specialty crop industries. Previous honorees have been involved in a wide array of fields including: beef, dairy, education, specialty crop production and forestry, among others.

Greenbrier County - Each year, GCFB awards a $1000 scholarship to a deserving high school senior. To be eligible, the student is required to pursue an education in an agriculture-related field. This year’s recipient was Dyllan Lewis from Renick. Lewis plans to major in Ag Business.

In July, GCFB prepared a float for the annual Alderson 4th of July parade. Mary Clay, GCFB’s secretary, said, “This is a great opportunity to get our message out to people from many areas.” The float, themed “Up Up and Away - Farming is Here to Stay,” and decorated in patriotic colors of red, white and blue, featured signs explaining a variety of challenges that all farmers face, in the hopes of making parade-goers think about the importance of their food supply.

Wetzel County - WCFB held the Short Line Safety Day program on Sept. 23rd. Fourth grade students participated in seven safety & health stations, climbed aboard a fire truck, and then put on bunker gear and air masks while touring an Air Evac medical evacuation helicopter.
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Ten teams enjoyed a balmy day, stunning scenery and a delicious barbecue at the Valley View Golf Course in Moorefield at the annual Friends of Agriculture Golf Tournament on September 18th. The event supports the WVFB Foundation, which provides funding for the Mobile Ag Ed Science Lab, Summer Ag Institute for Educators, and other educational outreach. Above, Summit Community Bank’s team came away with the top score for the day.
There is much to know about the handling of livestock. Enough textbooks, encyclopedias, idiot’s guides, and how-to volumes have been written to fill a library. If you only have time and inclination to read one book, Temple Grandin’s slender paperback *Humane Livestock Handling* is the one.

The book can be divided roughly into two sections. The first half, Parts I and II, covers the psychology of grazing animals, that is, cattle, sheep, horses, bison, goats and llamas, plus gives information on how to handle them. The author explains the sensibilities of animals with specific examples: Animals “watch” things with their ears. They remember smells and tastes and distinguish between different tones of voice. Yelling and whistling can cause a cow’s heartbeat to race faster than the sound of a slamming gate.

Grandin explains that both genetics and learned behavior play a role in the temperament of animals. She says that some cattle breeds are calm and some are
flighty. Going further, she explains that hair whorls on a cow or horse can be used to identify personality traits. (I wonder if it was accurate with small children!) Early experiences also establish memories in animals that determine a fearful or a calm disposition as they get older. The first experiences with new things such as four-wheeler's or even humans should be pleasant in order to prevent stress later.

The author tells how animals should be handled, from herding to slaughter, mostly by building on their instinctive behaviors. Everything you ever wanted to know about quietly herding cattle, from the angle to follow them, to moving a single file into a corral, and rounding up stragglers is meticulously described. Many of these actions are likely instinctive to those who have worked with livestock for years, but the explanation for effective handling behaviors is thought provoking for those with or without experience. Grandin answers the “whys” to most animal treatment questions.

This first half provides the rationale for the second half of the book that explains with detailed plans and drawings how to construct a handling system that causes minimal stress for animals.

Ranch lay-outs, cattle corral systems, bison and sheep corrals, and loading ramp details are thoroughly presented in Parts III and IV, down to the texture of the floors and the gate locking mechanisms. Eighty pages of blueprint-like plans are provided with distinctions between small and large operations.

The author believes that stress at the time of slaughter increases the chance of harm to the animal handlers and decreases the quality of the meat. “Safer handling, better meat.” is an often used catch phrase. Lowering expenses and increasing profit has gained the interest of the meat industry. Her progressive methods are used in the nation’s largest meat processing plants and poultry farms. She wrote the animal handling guidelines used by the American Meat Institute and which are being used by many large meat-buying customers.

Temple Grandin is passionate about humane animal care; this is one of seven books about animals that she has written. She is also an activist in the world of autism. Grandin was diagnosed with autism as a toddler; at that time it equated to brain damage. She did not speak until she was four, but her mother was active in providing opportunities for her. She spent childhood summers on an aunt’s ranch in Arizona and loved cows; she spent hours watching them.

Grandin earned remarkable academic success. A prolific writer, Grandin has also written eight books and numerous articles about autism and the treatment of autistic children. Her life was the subject of a 2010 HBO movie biography. According to it, she built a squeeze box like those used for cattle and took it to college where she crawled in and pulled the wall close to her for comfort; essentially it was a hugging machine.

My husband and I heard Dr. Grandin speak two years ago at the Mother Earth Fair in Seven Springs, Pennsylvania. She was direct, even blunt, when she began to speak. The roar of generators and sawmills for sale from the vendor’s side of the fair nearly drowned out her speech. “C’mon,” she said, “I’m autistic. I can’t speak with those things running. Somebody go tell them to turn them off.” Somebody did and she continued with a fascinating presentation on the how animals build memories.

Currently, Dr. Grandin is a professor of animal science at Colorado State. She travels extensively to lecture on human autism and the humane treatment of animals.

Opposite page: the author pictured with Temple Grandin.
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Haunted with the thought of a ho-hum Halloween? Never fear — trick-or-treaters will want more than just candy once they see your party table. Throw a fabulous Halloween party fit for little goblins or grown-up monsters with some devilishly good sweets.

Try these easy party ideas from Wilton to make your Halloween spook-tacular:

• Add some “pop” to popcorn: Trick out ordinary popcorn into a sweet-and-salty party pleaser. Drizzle on Candy Melts® candy for festive flavors, and then capture the Halloween spirit by adding fun sprinkle mixes.

• Masquerade cookies: Who says you can’t play with your food? Create edible masks with decorated shaped cookies and attach them to cookie sticks with melted Candy Melts candy. Set up a photo station at your party, so guests can take pictures with their cookie mask creations before eating them.

• Jack-o’-lantern cakes: It wouldn’t be Halloween without carved pumpkins. Make yours edible by baking a delicious pumpkin spice pound cake shaped like a pumpkin. Increase the fun by adding silly icing facial features.

• Midnight potions: Spice up the night with candy corn drinks served in containers guests can devour, making cleanup easy and delicious. Or, toast the night with the Witch’s Brew Mocktail.

For more Halloween ideas and inspiration, visit wilton.com.
Candy Corn Drinks
Servings: 8

1 cup (half of 12-ounce package) Bright White Candy Melts Candy, melted according to package directions
1 cup (half of 12-ounce package) Orange Candy Melts Candy, melted according to package directions
1 package (12 ounces) Yellow Candy Melts Candy, melted according to package directions
Orange flavored fruit drink, orange, peach or mango juice or other favorite drink

Fill disposable decorating bag with melted bright white candy. Divide evenly among cavities of 8-cavity silicone shot glass mold, taking care to not get any candy on sides of mold. Repeat process with orange and yellow candy. Refrigerate until candy is set, about 30 minutes. Carefully remove candy glasses from mold and set aside. Fill with orange drink.

Witch’s Brew Mocktail
Servings: 6

3 cups ginger ale, chilled
1 1/2 cups pineapple juice, chilled
1/3 cup sweetened lime juice, chilled
Green gel food color or green icing color (optional)
Black Colored Sugar
Gummy Eyeball Skewers

In large pitcher, combine ginger ale, pineapple juice, sweetened lime juice and, if using, gel food color.

To prepare glasses, dip rims of martini glasses in water, then in black sugar. Fill with drink mixture; add eyeball skewers.

Masquerade Cookies
Servings: 2 dozen cookies

2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
1 egg
1 1/2 teaspoons Imitation Clear Vanilla Extract
1/2 teaspoon Imitation Almond Extract
Royal icing
Orange, Black, Green, Lemon Yellow, Brown and Violet Icing Colors, as desired
Orange, Yellow, Orange, Lavender and Black Colored Sugars, as desired
Halloween Jimmies, Nonpareils and Icing Decorations, as desired
Candy Melts candy
Cookie sticks

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In large bowl, mix flour, baking powder and salt. In second large bowl, beat butter and sugar with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and extracts. Add flour mixture to butter mixture 1 cup at a time, mixing after each addition. Do not chill dough. Divide dough into 2 balls.

On floured surface, roll each ball into a circle approximately 12 inches in diameter by 1/8 inch thick. Dip eye and glasses cookie cutters in flour before each use. Arrange cookies on ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 8–11 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned. Cool completely on cooling grid. Decorate as desired using tinted royal icing, colored sugars and Halloween icing decorations. Use melted candy to attach sticks to backs of cookies; chill until set.
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