



FLOWER LADY -- Mary Lagos of 453 N. Plain Road, Cass City, won "a lot" of blue ribbons for her flower arrangements in the open class at the Tuscola County Fair. Closest to her hand are three of her winners, on display with entries from various competitors. Her blue ribbon winning Bells of Ireland plant is at left.

U.S. needs to emulate farmers, Earl Butz says

America needs to emulate the farmer in working hard if it wants to remain a strong nation was the message former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz presented to area Republicans Friday night.

The holder of the nation's top farm job from December, 1971, to October, 1976, spoke at a fund-raising ox and corn roast Friday evening for Norman Hughes, Republican candidate for the eighth Congressional district seat now held by Democrat Bob Traxler.

The event, attended by a couple hundred persons, culminated a day-long schedule of activities attended by Butz in behalf of Hughes that started in the Saginaw area. The Indiana resident, 71,

mentioned more than once that the hands he had shaken that evening of the mostly farm audience were "calloused hands with tractor grease in those cracks."

Farm men and women, he commented, are those who think there is nothing wrong with an honest day's labor for a honest day's dollar.

The problem is, "We're always trying to get more by working less, which is making us a second rate nation."

Last year, of the western industrialized nations, he said the United States ranked at the bottom in non-agricultural productivity.

He cited the American auto industry vs. the Japanese as one example of the problem. Referring to the 21 paid holidays he said auto

workers are paid under their latest contract and that cars supposedly produced on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are better made because some regular workers don't show up on Mondays or Fridays, he commented, "The Japanese are working and we're sitting on our fannies."

Farmers aren't afraid to accept new technology and to work hard. "You haven't learned to take Mondays off," he said to his farm audience.

Butz, former dean of the school of agriculture at Purdue University, saved many of his numerous barbs for government.

"We are Republicans because we believe in a philosophy of government. We believe you know better how to spend your money out here than they do in Washington."

He had criticism for bureaucrats -- "They're gaining on us." -- and excess government regulation. "We could do with a little less regulation. We've been doing pretty good for 200 years (without it)."

The best regulation, he claimed, is competition, citing as an example a John Deere dealer in the audience, who faces competition from dealers for competing makes.

"I don't think government should be in the commodity business," Butz argued. The U.S. owns 4 million tons of wheat, which he claimed it will put out in the market in order to keep prices down.

The obvious solution from his standpoint was a Republican president. Ronald Reagan is going to make a great president," -- and a Republican Congressman -- "I want somebody who will understand the importance of agriculture out here."

Other than on the telephone, Butz had met Hughes for the first time that day.

The former agriculture secretary closed with a

quote from Wendell Willkie, the 1940 Republican presidential candidate, that "Only the strong can be free and only the productive can be strong."

Master of ceremonies for the program was Jack Laurie of Dodge Road, Cass City, who serves on Hughes' agriculture advisory committee. Rev. Myra Sparks of the Gagetown and Owendale United Methodist churches gave the invocation.

Among those in the audience were Michigan Department of Agriculture Director Dean Pridgeon and Dr. Gordon Guyer, director of the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service.



EARL BUTZ

U.S. milk production totaled 123.6 billion pounds in 1979. That's up two percent from 1978 and the highest national total since 1965, according to USDA.

PAWS claws thin air: abandoned dogs still used for research

By James Iseler

Whatever happened to PAWS?

The organization -- Protective Animal Welfare Society of Tuscola County -- is presently "in abeyance," according to its founder and president Sue Maxwell of Caro.

She says support for the group has fallen off. Others, formerly involved with PAWS, said they pulled out after they saw the group becoming "vindictive" and geared toward one issue. The group was founded 1 1/2 years ago with the intent of providing protection for dogs and information for their owners, according to the group's former vice-president Jerome Lewis.

But when the group set out to force the county to stop dealing with animal dealer

Fred Hodgins, at the expense of the other projects, some members felt it was time to resign.

"I felt the group was becoming vindictive towards the dealer," Lewis explained.

Along with Lewis, PAWS' animal abuse investigator Brendan Boyle, also left the group.

Boyle said he withdrew because he did not agree with Mrs. Maxwell's methods of dealing with people in the group's effort to halt the county's dealings with Hodgins.

"The way she did things tended to make people not want to go along with her," Boyle said.

BUT THE DEMISE OF her group has not tempered Mrs. Maxwell's fervor towards having Tuscola county stop doing business

with the animal dealer.

Hodgins comes from Howell once a week to pick up all dogs and carcasses from the Tuscola County Animal Shelter. He disposes of those that are sick or dead and sells the healthy ones to research hospitals.

Mrs. Maxwell maintains the dogs in those hospitals are mistreated and "tortured," and that the experiments performed on them are not always necessary.

The county pays Hodgins \$50 per week for his services. Last year there was talk of Hodgins' paying the county \$1 per cat and \$1.50 per dog but the county didn't take him up on his offer.

IF SUCH A DEAL WERE struck, Hodgins would pick up only the healthy dogs and the county would have to destroy and dispose of the rest on its own.

And that would be a lot of dogs.

Tuscola Animal Control Officer Jeff Quinn reported that in 1979 5,189 dogs passed through the shelter. Of that number only 490 were returned or found new homes. The rest went to Hodgins, who contends he only gets about 15 "good dogs" a week. That leaves approximately 4,000 dogs the county would have had to take care of.

For the county to do that would cost an extra \$15,000-\$20,000 a year, according to Board of Commissioners Chairman Paul Nagy. He said he is convinced the dogs are treated humanely and the present system is the cheapest route for the county to follow, cheaper than using the decompression chamber incinerator that was built into the year-old shelter on M-81 west of Caro. The cost of staff and fuel needed to destroy dogs in the manner would be too exorbitant, he said.

"If we knew then what we know now, we probably would not have put in that incinerator," Nagy stated. The facility has never been used, according to Quinn. **IN SAGINAW COUNTY,** where dogs are killed by injection then either destroyed by incinerator or picked up by the Wayne Soap Co., the cost breakdown is more expensive. The injections cost a total of \$4,000-\$5,000 annually. Gas bills for the incinerator, which burns shelter refuse along with animals, run \$3,000 per year. Wayne Soap Co. charges \$250 a month to pick up the carcasses that are not decomposed. These figures are for a county that handles nearly three times as many animals per year. **ONE OF MRS. MAXWELL'S** main gripes is she is unable to determine where dogs from this county are shipped after Hodgins picks them up. She blames the county board for that. Last year, when the furor over Hodgins' service was going on, the board told Mrs. Maxwell she would have to present evidence the dogs were being mistreated if the commissioners were to do anything. That information is not readily available. Hodgins sells some of the dogs to hospitals in Michigan. He also goes out of state. Often that means shipping them to the East where many states have laws against using pound animals for research. One of the places the dogs go is Bio-Medical Research Inc., an animal dealership in Freidensburg, Pa. From there they are sold to hospitals but Mrs. Maxwell has been unable to trace which ones. Subsequently she cannot determine how the dogs are treated. "As a taxpayer I have the right to say 'I want to know where those animals are going,'" she said. But Nagy disagrees. He claims once the dogs leave Michigan it is no longer the board's business what happens to them. Hodgins deals with 14 Michigan counties and arrangements in each vary.

He would not specify which counties he works in or the deals they have. When a group such as PAWS finds out he is working there they pounce on him right away, he said.

Saginaw and Bay counties have eliminated Hodgins' service with the county.

The point of the PAWS-Hodgins controversy seems to revolve around two questions: 1) Are dogs being mistreated in the hospitals and 2) individual feelings on the use of dogs for experimental purposes.

UNLESS EVERY HOSPITAL in the country is checked continuously, the first question appears to be deadlocked. Mrs. Maxwell contends dogs are "tor-

tured", just as fervently as Nagy claims they are "treated humanely."

Nagy has the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which regulates Hodgins and his colleagues, on his side while Mrs. Maxwell has the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals backing her up.

The second question is also a matter of preference.

While Mrs. Maxwell voices her feelings that animals, like humans, have souls and feelings, Nagy claims medical techniques should be tested before being used on humans.

"I'm 100 percent behind it. I don't care who argues with me, I'm 100 percent behind the use of animals," he said.

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