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# Oley Valley Community Fair is celebrating its 75th anniversary 12

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

# Oley Valley Community Fair is 75 years strong

# DEARBERKS COUNTRY READ-

ERS» Can vou believe it, we are about to celebrate our 75th annual Oley Valley Community Fair.

All of us have heard many people say, "Time flies when you are having fun." That phrase seems to fit perfectly when it comes to the Oley Valley Community Fair.

I hope I can speak for all of you when I say that the Oley Fair is certainly lots of fun.

I often sit back and think what it must have been like for a special group of volunteers who were responsible for starting this fair. What were the first meetings like? Why did they make certain successful Oley Fair. decisions that still stick with the fair today?

is, did they ever think that the Oley Fair would blossom of the fair. into what it has today?

saying that our fair would not be what it is without the out to help.

Whether you are involved ning and preparation or you ringing that will officially fun and festivities that will are there to work in one of open the fair. our many food stands, or you support the fair in other brates our 75th fair, iron- Fair! ways, thank you for all you



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

Oley Valley Community Fair President Kevin Bieber at the fair's grand opening ceremony last year.

of you to our opening cer-Then my biggest question emonies that will begin at nity. Congratulations to our noon Thursday, the first day

This year we will have as well. Of course it goes without some very special presenta-

all year long with the plan- a ribbon cutting and bell fair and partake of all the

As the Oley Fair celeically our close partner in the Oley Fire Company is You are all the key to a celebrating 125 years of ex-

istence this year. Two great I would like to invite all organizations working together for a great commupartner, the Olev Fire Company, on their anniversary

So whether you have tions as well as three indi- never attended the Oley viduals that will talk about Fair, or you are a regular atdedicated hard work of the what the fair was like as tendee coming for all that many volunteers that come they were growing up and favorite fair food, I invite how they have seen it grow. you to the Oley Fairgrounds We will also celebrate to come celebrate the 75th be taking place.

I will see you at the Oley

Sincerely, Kevin D. Bieber *President* 

# **MERCHANDISE**



# Commemorating a milestone

Items, including 75th anniversary Pennsylvania German-inspired redware plate, to be available

### By Susan Shelly

Reading Eagle correspondent

plates, hand-painted slates, prints, clothing anniversary of the Oley Valley Community Fair.

The fair, which features exhibits, contests, music, food, rides and other attractions, opens Thursday and runs through Saturday at the Oley Fairgrounds, 26 Jefferson St.

Fairgoers will be able but there is a parking fee demic. to purchase redware of \$5 per car at the fairgrounds.

and other merchandise treasurer and a member committee, said the comto choose and commission merchandise to be fair's membership booth. man said.

The fair would have celebrated its 75th an-

It will be open each niversary last year, but day from 9 a.m. until 10 the event was canceled p.m. Admission is free, in 2020 due to the pan-

"It gave us an extra year to get everything in Dena Kauffman, fair place," Kauffman said.

A special item is a 75th commemorating the 75th of the 75th anniversary anniversary Pennsylvania German-inspired redmittee has been working ware plate, handmade by for more than two years staff at Robesonia Redware

> "They're beautiful sold. All items will be plates and bound to be available for sale at the collectors' items," Kauff-

Also featured are color MILESTONE » PAGE 4

# READING EAGLE



# **BERKS COUNTRY**

# **ABOUT US**

The 12-point barn star featured in the Berks Country nameplate is the work of local artist Eric A. Claypoole. You can see more of his artwork and contact him at clay-POOLEHEXSIGNS.COM

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

READING EAGLE

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# Milestone

### FROM PAGE 2

and black-and-white collage prints by local artist Michelle Renninger. Color prints include a collage of pictures depicting the Oley Fair, including fruits and vegetables, food and rides.

Renninger also handto Kauffmann.

'She painted a couple hundred of them, and they're really nice," Kauffman said. "She's been vear."

are a plush cow wearing an Oley Fair T-shirt, polo shirts and long- and well received and helped short-sleeve T-shirts, all get people excited about featuring the fair's new the anniversary, Kaufflogo. Magnets depicting man said. the new logo also will be available.

Black-and-white prints sen from one of many said. feature a collection of submitted as part of a

They're about 5-by-7- features cows, wheat, the event her entire life. inches large, according corn and a barn with a its crest, is a literal repre- hay and grains division,' sentation of the farming she said. culture of the Oley Valley.

working on these items ing, tractors, cows, corn president, and her daughfor quite a while. I think and a whole lot more," the plates, prints and the Haring, a professional 18, are still involved. slates will make really nice graphic designer, wrote Plates will be sold for cepts, and I love the Oley of our lives."

\$45 and slates for \$20. Fair. I submitted sev-Prices for other items had eral ideas that I thought not yet been determined. might work and I was Included in other items thrilled that the committee liked one of mine."

The logo contest was

"The fair is always popular, but I feel like this The new logo was cho-year is really special," she

Kauffman, whose greatscenes from previous fairs. contest earlier this year. grandfather, Warren Le-The winner, Tamara vengood, was one of the painted slates featur- Haring of Lobachsville, founders of the Oley Fair, ing fair-related scenes. said the image, which has been involved with

> "I grew up on a farm, hex sign and a rooster at so I used to enter in the

Her father, Daniel Le-"Oley is all about farm-vengood, is a former fair ters, who are now 22 and

"That's just the way it gifts for the holidays this in an email. "I love com- is in our family," she said.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

ing up with logo con- "The fair is always a part Dena Kauffman displays some of the many commemorative items for sale at the 75th anniversary of the Oley Valley Community Fair.

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022 READING EAGLE

# **CHURCH VOLUNTEERS**

# 'A heart to serve'

Members scoop ice cream, sell food to help community

# By Mike Urban

murban@readingeagle.com

As this year's Oley Vallev Community Fair approaches, volunteers from New Life Bible Fellowship Church — as well as 20 other teers from the church will local churches — are ready to pitch in.

New Life, which is located in Oley Township, took over running the ice-cream stand last year, and also helps with selling hamburgers, hot dogs, soda, food tickets and other items at the event, which runs Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the Oley serve," MacArthur said. Fire Company Fairgrounds.

to help in any way possible, to help the community. said Executive Pastor Jim MacArthur, and when the fair association asked it to operate the ice cream stand, they were quick to agree.

Helping others is a key part of the church's faith, vear. said MacArthur and Jordan Mease, who directs the cones, and everybody loves church's children's ministry.

In total, about 100 volunwork at the fair, and close to 40 will man the ice cream stand over the course of three days.

volunteers to the fair for decades, with the number of helpers seeming to increase each year, MacArthur said.

Mease said the volunteers

The fair association is thankful for the assistance. said Kevin D. Bieber, fair association president, who spoke about how popular the ice cream stand is each

"The kids love snow the novelty items," he said.

The event, now in its 75th vear, has been an all-volunteer operation since the beginning, and would not be able to be held without the local churches doing so The church has provided much work, he said.

do it without them." he said.

While New Life's main reason for volunteering "We have a heart to is to help, volunteers find that while selling ice cream sandwiches and fudge bars The church had offered see it as a great opportunity they also have a great time



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

New Life Bible Fellowship Church acquired the operation of the popular ice cream stand at the Oley Valley Community Fair in 2021. At left is Jordan Mease, director of children's ministries, and at right is Jim MacArthur, executive pastor, with volunteers form the church behind the serving table.

"We absolutely could not bonding, with children as young as elementary school age working next to senior citizens, MacArthur and Mease said.

> "When we're together everyone is laughing and telling stories," Mease said.

"It really helps us con- various event contests. nect as a church community," MacArthur said.

Proceeds from concession sales go to the fair association, which uses them to help distribute prize money for winners in the

The fair, which is held at 26 Jefferson St., Oley, runs Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Admission is free and parking is \$5.







HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

Michelle Renninger has won prizes at the Oley Valley Community Fair for her collage art.

ART

# Self-taught artist named official fair artist

Michelle Renninger's original works commemorate landmark year

By Michelle Lynch

mlynch@readingeagle.com

Michelle Renninger was pleasantly surprised when she was named official artist of the 75th Oley Valley Community Fair.

The event on the Oley Fire Company Fairgrounds, would have celebrated its 75th anniversary last year, but was canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Renninger, 61, of Oley fair. Township created several

original works to commemorate the fair's landmark year. These include two large paintings, depicting early scenes of the fair in black and white and a collage of more recent scenes in color.

"She just did a beautiful job," said Kevin D. Bieber, fair association president.

The original paintings will be auctioned on Saturday, the last night of the fair.

**RENNINGER** » PAGE 7



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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022 READING EAGLE 7

# Renninger

### FROM PAGE 6

Prints of the two works and slates, hand-painted by Renninger with fair-related scenes, also will be sold at the fair's membership booth and will benefit future fairs.

Renninger also made some special souvenirs for the fair's winners, Bieber said, but since they are a surprise, he refused to say

"It's kind of exciting," Renninger said, "because I am a nobody. I give all my glory to God."

Though Renninger taught art in a private school for six years and has been drawing since she was old enough to hold a crayon, she did not regard herself as a professional.

"Art has always been a part of my life," she said, "even my kindergarten teacher gave me good marks in art. She said I was gifted."

After graduating from Boyertown High School, Renninger spent a year studying art at Montgomery County Community College before deciding academia was not for her.

"I was not a schoolgirl," she said. "But I am like a sponge when it comes to art."

Last year, her fair entry a whimsically painted milk can — won best of show in the arts and crafts division.

But the journey to her top win and selection as official fair artist had a few bumps along the way.

Though Renninger attended the fair for years, the mostly self-taught artist didn't enter her work until 2018.

That year, two of her judging. paintings placed.

The wins gave her a boost a thing," she said. in confidence, and she set

those big ribbons," she re- Bieber's attention. members saving.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

Michelle Renninger with one of many ribbons she's won for her collage art.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

Renninger's whimsical collages of the Oley Valley Community Fair will be on display at the fair.

painted on an old cabinet house," he said. door, was a labor of love. After hours with a brush offered to buy it. She agreed in her hand, Renninger remembers thinking, "Well, this is the best thing I ever Bieber envisioned it. did."

She dropped it off in the he said. exhibit hall and said a silent prayer, putting the matter in God's hands.

Still, she couldn't help feeling disappointed when celebration committee the doors opened after the

The colorful fair scene her sights on a higher prize. may have failed to impress "Next year, I want one of the judges, but it caught

Her 2019 entry, a folksy thought, 'I'd really like to her as the official painter of interpretation of the fair have that hanging in my the Oley Fair," he said.

He called Renninger and to the sale, and the painting now hangs exactly where

One thing led to another,

"And long story, short, we just made a connection then as friends," he said.

So when the fair's 75th wanted some custom commemorative items that "The painting didn't win could be sold at the fair's membership booth, Bieber knew just the right artist for the job.

"The fair committee officially, or unofficially, I guess "I looked at it and maybe we should say, hired

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HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

The soups at the Oley Valley Community Fair are produced by members of the Berks County Pomona Grange. From left are committee chairman Henry Seidel of Spring Township, a member of the Virginville Grange; Michael Adams of Hamburg, a member of the Hamburg and Kutztown granges; and Fern Kulp of Kutztown, a member of the Ontelaunee Grange.



FOOD

# Grange members ready to serve up soup

Volunteers will run the stand for the second straight year

By Keith Dmochowski kdmochowski@readingeagle.

Fresh-made soup has long warmed the bellies of fairgoers in Oley, and this year, volunteers with the Berks County Pomona Grange will again work the fair's iconic soup stand, dishing out bowls of steamy goodness at the 75th annual Oley Valley Community Fair.

Grange volunteer Henry Seidel said he staffed the stand for the first time last year, following the departure of longtime soup slinger Norm Ülrich, who had served the fair's famous chicken corn noodle and veggie beef with his family since 2010.

"His kids had all graduated or were in college, so they wanted to step away from running the stand," Seidel said of Ulrich.

The grange first became involved in the fair in 2019, grilling hot dogs, burgers and barbecue after fair organizers asked the organization for volunteers, Seidel said.

the soup stand in 2020.

The fair was cancelled in 2020 due to the pan-busy gearing up for round demic, but grangers came two, Seidel said. the following year, ready to stew, stir and serve.

under a blazing sun.

age six to eight boiling pots grounds.



Berks Pomona Grange volunteer Fern Kulp prepares soup at the Oley Fair's stand in 2021.

of soup at one time," Seidel said with a laugh, "but it was a nice year for us to get comfortable doing it."

The soup stand this year will again feature the fair's Fair runners then asked two staple broths — chunky the grange to fully staff chicken corn noodle and savory vegetable beef.

Seasoned grangers are

Demand for soup will Seidel said last year's ul-dent, Seidel said, but tra-hot September allowed the grange now has the grange workers to ease manpower and experi- does french fries, another into the job and overcome ence to ladle countless initial nerves, since soup cups throughout the fair's is usually less sought after three-day run Thursday through Saturday at the "I've never had to man- Oley Fire Company Fair-

He said a highlight of the grange's involvement last year was introducing the Oley Fair to grange members who've never been.

"As a kid, I actually showed animals at the Oley Fair," Seidel said. "I always felt it was a true community fair ... it's kind of a small fair, but there's a ton of people who come out."

Seidel said food never likely be weather depen- fails to be a highlight at the fair.

> "There's one stand that stand does milkshakes, I think the high school kids usually do apple cider," Seidel said. "It's all for the local community. I just think it's neat."

# **CULTURE**

# Annual Oley Fair is steeped in tradition

It's time for the annual agricultural-based Oley Fair, which is without



Dave Kline Mountain Folklore

Americana tradition that dates back into the far annals of time and the farm family

lifestyle.

Attending the fair, you'll get to step back in time and literally witness the fruit of people's hard work. stewardship and devotion to crops, livestock and all that goes with them.

In my own gardening universe, I'm on my third generation of grow-

ing, harvesting, processing, sharing and consuming a type of heirloom tomato called Pink Jazz. They're gorgeous in their own way, but each one is a bit different. Some of them have two or more central lobes; some are just big and round. They all display their namesake pink hue striated with shades of red, green, yellow and pink, but when you cut into them they are bright red, juicy and their taste yields a perfect blend of sweet

The specimen I photographed for today's column is typically the sort of item you'll see at the Oley Fair in have a long life at the Oley the produce competition. This one weighs exactly 2 pounds, and from the angle fries are the fair's most fa-

and acidic.

I used in the photograph it resembles a heart. I'll use it to get seed for next year's fourth generation of Pink Jazz Tomatoes, and don't worry; the flesh will all get used in tomato and cheese sandwiches, maybe with a bit of bacon on toast. Thus, the beat goes on.

Tomatoes and almost every other kind of homegrown and homemade product will be on display at the Oley Fair, and it's really fun to walk around and see what other people grew. Some of the immense pumpkins appear to be from a fairytale book.

I'm afraid potatoes don't Fair. Delicious, homemade, country-fresh french



One of Dave Kline's third-generation heirloom Pink Jazz tomatoes.

mous processed food offering. Thousands of pounds of them will be cooked and served during the fair.

The Oley Fair Association does an excellent job

of defining what the fair means to them in a message on their website that goes as follows: "The Oley Valley Community Fair is an annual fair where vol-

unteers, friendly competitions, exhibitors entering local produce and more gather to show the best of the Oley Valley PA community. Oley Fair is known for its famous french fries and other fresh fair foods and Dutch cooking. Vendors are welcome, and we are fortunate to have sponsors featuring fair events and prizes every year. Entertainment is held rain or shine at the Oley Fire Company Fairgrounds at 26 Jefferson St.

"Come down and see our live music, animal shows. tractor pulls, our mid-day car show and other great activities for the kids like our carnival rides and more. We look forward to

MOUNTAIN FOLKLORE » PAGE 10



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# Mountain Folklore

FROM PAGE 9

seeing you in September! Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments in regard to the fair on our website, https://oleyfair.org. It is only with your help that we can improve! Our mailing address is P.O. Box 55, Oley, PA 19547. Call the fair office with any questions at 610-987-3469."

A visitor to the Oley Fair will be living in the present but stepping back in time to the earliest days of colonial settlement in the New World. I think it's good to know the heritage and pedigree of the land you're walking on while at the fair. One of Berks County's most historic and folkloric regions, the Oley Valley was once the home of Delaware Lenni Lenape Native

Americans, and they gave Oley its name long before European settlers arrived.

They called it "Olink," which means kettle, a reference to the shape of the valley. It's a gorgeous valley that's nestled into a surrounding natural barrier of rolling hills and mountains. This valley was an important meeting place for Native Americans and one tree, the Sacred Oak, located on private land about one mile from Main Street, was a focal point of important tribal gatherings centered on creating pacts, treaties and settling disputes. Now more than 500 years old, the Chinkapin Oak stands as a living testimonial to the Great Spirit from whom it derives life and gives inspiration.

The first settlers arrived in the Oley Valley in the dawning years of the 1700s. They heard the name Olink from native residents, and over time the name morphed into Oley. They

found prosperous Lenni Lenape villages and cultivated fields of corn. As a folk belief, it is thought that when tensions began to mount between white settlers and Native Americans, a day came when a settler farmer was supposedly killed by the "Indians," and the entire town banded together to protect themselves from further attacks.

Volunteer sentries took up positions with their hunting muskets that evening and used small firing ports in the walls of one of their village's largest buildings to defend themselves against an invasion they believed to be imminent. Nothing happened that fateful evening, but in the morning a man was seen walking down the road toward the fortified building. Not an American Indian, this man was the farmer who had been rumored to have been attacked and murdered the day before. He was alive and well.

When questioned, he knew nothing about the story of his own demise, but he did inform his peers that during the night he saw that all of the Lenni Lenape people had literally disappeared from the Oley Valley. Modern scholars believe that the Native Americans departed to help fight in skirmishes of a war elsewhere, but to this day it remains an unsolved mystery as to where they really went and why. None of them ever returned, so the mystery remains an everlasting tale in the storied history of the Oley Valley. After their departure, some of the native dwellings remained standing and undisturbed until the last of them collapsed in 1856.

Later on the Oley timeline, Mordecai Lincoln, the great-grandfather of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of United States, lived in the Oley region, and his homestead can still be seen and visited in what is now Exeter Township.

Another early resident family was the Boone family, who brought Daniel Boone, a world-famous pioneer of the American frontier, into the world in Oley in 1734.

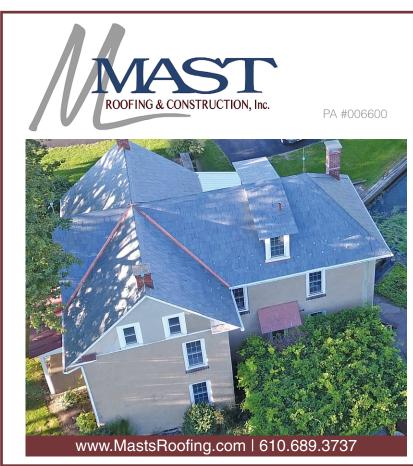
Oley took on a key role in the early days of the American Revolutionary War when farm families sent vast quantities of food and supplies, along with cannonballs forged in the Oley Furnace, to Gen. George Washington, which helped to support and nourish troops during the freezing cold winter of their encampment at Valley Forge near Philadelphia.

Other luminary Oley Valley personages include Susanna Cox, born 1785, hanged for infanticide on June 10, 1809, age 23 or 24. Hers is a grim tale worthy of looking into if you don't already know it. She was the last woman hanged for murder in Pennsylvania. She was buried in a former field that is now an area at about 13th and Marion streets in Reading.

Many veterans of the Revolutionary War rest within country and family cemeteries in the Oley Valley.

Mountain Mary, or Anna Maria Jungen or Jung, who lived from 1744 to 1819, a much beloved healer of Lenni Lenape and white settlers, and perhaps the proprietor of one of our nation's earliest roadside produce stands, is buried on the ridge where she sat most evening at day's end to worship. Her story is worth looking into as well if you enjoy folkloric, pioneer history.

Dave Kline is an award-winning writer, photographer, show host and producer, singer-songwriter, travel guide and community advocate. Reach him at davesmountainfolklore@gmail.com.





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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022 READING EAGLE

## STUDENT PARTICIPATION

# High school students play big part at fair

They help set up and break down the fair and run the cider stand and farmer for a day tent

### By David Mekeel

dmekeel@readingeagle.com

Lilly Hetrick is Oley through and through.

The 17-year-old has lived in the township for her entire life. Most of her family has too, with many operating farms.

The generational tie her family has to Oley, and agriculture, means the Oley Valley Community Fair as always been a big deal for Lilly. As far back as she can remember she's been excitedly heading to the fairgrounds each September.

She remembers fondly visiting the FFA tent to play games. She also recalls with love hopping on the rides, taking part in the pedalshe once won a first place prize, but can't remember for certain) and digging into the assortment of fair foods.

But mostly, when she fair, Lilly's mind turns toward the animals.

"Petting the cows and the sheep, it was just what I liked," she said.

And now, as a teenager, she gets to help other kids have the same kinds of experiences. That's because students from Olev Valley High School have played a big part in putting on the fair ever since its inception 75 years ago.

D. Bieber, fair association younger generation learnpresident. "To envision the fair without the kids, I don't think I could ever do that.

the kids, I don't think we tive, he got his own start could do it."

It is tradition for seniors age. from the high school to help with the setup of the fair and for juniors to help with taking it down, Bieber said. Seniors also man a He said learned the ins cake and cider stand that and outs of what it takes raises money for their class.

running exhibits and judging contests, and members that as an adult. of the high school's FFA program operate the farmer for to serve the community a day tent.

"My students and FFA volunteering and participating at the Olev Fair ev-School's FFA adviser Jeremy has. Devsher said, adding that a great working relationship with the fair association and Mr. Kevin Bieber.

"The purpose of the tent thinks about the joys of the is for FFA members to inform the public about the and the impact that agriculture has on their lives."

> In return for their work, awards and scholarships to

Bieber said that having students involved with the fair is a key to keeping it going, and to making sure it teering feels like work, but lasts for years to come.

"They're the future of "We really kind of rely the fair, plain and simon the kids," said Kevin ple," he said. "Without the at the fair." ing and taking things over approaches each year she it wouldn't last."

And to get it done without talking about. An Olev nawith the fair at a very young

At first it was as a visitor, but with parents who were involved with the fair it quickly grew into more. to make the fair successful. Students also take part in and cherishes being around to have a hand in doing just

"It's just a passion I have through the fair," he said.

Bieber said he hopes the members look forward to kids who are helping with this year's fair develop a similar, lifelong passion for erv year." Oley Valley High the fair. At least one already

Lilly said she has been pull competition (she thinks he's lost count of how many working at the fair since her years the FFA has been run-freshman year. She works ning the exhibit. "We have at a dairy farm, and as a freshman was able to show a dairy cow and calf.

> She has also been involved with the setup and teardown of the fair. And this year, along with showimportance of agriculture ing another cow, she will spend two days at the cake and cider stand and two days at the FFA tent teachthe fair provides a host of ing kids about animals and where their food comes

And, she said, she'll have a great time doing it all.

You would think volunit goes really fast," she said. "I just find it fun to see the little kids have a good time

Lilly said that as the fair and her classmates start to Bieber knows what he's feel a certain kind of elec-



Lilly Hetrick is among the Oley Valley High School students who help out at the Oley Valley Community Fair. Hetrick, a senior, has working at the fair since her freshman year.

tricity in the air.

everybody is getting ready for it. People don't feel like the Oley community. they have to volunteer, they want to do it."

"There's so much anticifair. She appreciates that is pation," she said. "When it has an agricultural focus, hits September, I feel like she said, and also that it's such an ingrained part of

Lilly said there are lots said. "It's like a big family. ple's hearts."

of reasons she loves the Everywhere you go at the fair you're bound to know somebody, to know everybody.

"The fair means a lot to us. When we couldn't have "It's a tradition, it brings the fair during COVID, I a lot of people together," she think it broke a lot of peo-



# **OLEY VALLEY COMMUNITY FAIR**

# CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

# Theme this year is 'Yankee Doodle Went to Oley, Just to See the Fair!'

By Susan Shelly

 $Reading\ Eagle\ correspondent$ 

While noting the significance of the 75th anniversary of the Oley Valley Community Fair, Kevin D. Bieber, president of the fair to those who founded the longstanding event.

"Those who started this fair laid a strong foundation for us," Bieber said. "They put this event into place, and it's flourished ever since."

Saturday at the Oley Fire Company Fairgrounds. It happen." will open at 9 a.m. each Parking is available at the fairgrounds for \$5 per car. There is no admission fee for the fair.

Featuring exhibits, contests, music, food, entertainment, carnival rides and ice cream. and more, the fair has a Doodle Went to Olev. Just to See the Fair!"

The theme is featured on the cover of the fair book, designed by local artist Lynn Lorah.

founders, Bieber credited the hundreds of volunteers who work tirelessly to make the fair successful every year.

The only way we're celebrating 75 years is because of our volunteers," Bieber said.

ing for the fair months before it opens and are present practically around the terward, many volunteers Oley Fair," Bieber said. are needed to help with cleanup and getting the ebrated its 75th anniver- one of mine."

fairgrounds back into shape for other events held there throughout the year.

"It's a monumental task, but everyone pitches in and the work gets done," Bieber

Dena Kauffman, fair association, hearkened back treasurer, whose greatgrandfather, Warren Levengood, was one of the founders, said volunteers know their jobs well and help new volunteers understand what needs to be done.

"That's what makes it such a smooth-running The fair starts Thurs- event," Kauffman said. "Evday and runs through eryone has their own little piece and makes that piece

Members of 21 churches day and run until 10 p.m. and other community groups organize and run food stands, featuring the fair's famous french fries, hamburgers, milk shakes, soups, fruit bowls, hoagies, baked goods, funnel cakes

"We do all our own food theme this year of "Yankee right here," Bieber said. dors except for our local groups. Everybody pitches in to make this a great experience."

A special opening cer-In addition to the fair's emony, including the ribbon cutting for this year's fair, will be held at noon mara Haring of Lobachson Thursday in front of the ville. Haring submitted the Oley Valley Fair Centre.

Wayne Weidner, Eleanor Shaner and Vern and said she was excited Schwanger, longtime Olev residents, will talk about the progression of the fair Volunteers start prepar- over the years. Also, a bell will ring in memory of volunteers who have died.

clock during the event. Af- nisce about 75 years of the ideas that I thought might



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

"There are no food ven- From left, Kevin D. Bieber and Dena Kauffman of the 75th Oley Valley Community Fair with Lisa Schaeffer and Beth Kline representing the 125th anniversary of the Oley Fire Company.

sary last year, but the event pandemic concerns.

The fair has a new logo this year, designed by Tadesign as part of a logo contest held earlier this year her design was named as the winner.

"I love coming up with logo concepts, and I love a professional graphic de-"It's a ceremony to remi-signer. "I submitted several work, and I was thrilled The fair would have cel- that the committee liked

was canceled in 2020 due to other items featuring the improved. new logo will be available membership booth.

event is a car and antique Bieber said. "We're always on the Oley Valley High fairgoers." School parking lot. Twelve trophies will be awarded for cars and two for tractors.

ized as needed. Equipment facturing, the PA Lottery needs to be cared for and and Weis Markets.

Clothing, magnets and the grounds kept up and

"I think the founders for purchase at the fair's would be very proud of how far the fair has come since A popular fair-related they founded in it 1947." tractor show, set for Satur- looking ahead to anticipate day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the needs of future fairs and St.

Blue ribbon sponsors of the fair include Truist Bank, the Reading Eagle Bieber, who has been fair and Expressway Bulk. Red the Oley Fair," said Haring, president since 2003, said ribbon sponsors are Mast members of the fair com- Roofing, Wentzel Fabricamittee work year-round to tion and Little's John Deer, make sure buildings are and yellow ribbon sponmaintained and modern- sors are East Penn Manu-

# **IF YOU GO**

What: The Olev Valley Community Fair

Where: Oley Fire Company Fairgrounds, 26 Jefferson

When: Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. until 10 p.m.

Highlights: Exhibits, contests, food, entertainment,

Cost: No entrance fee; a \$5 per car parking fee at the fairgrounds

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# Fair memories



COURTESY OF OLEY VALLEY COMMUNITY FAIR

Dr. Italo de Francesco, president of Kutztown State Teachers College, with Dorothy Wolford, Alice Smith and Mrs. Gansel at the Oley Valley Community Fair in 1952.



COURTESY OF STEVEN FISHER

Edna Rhoads Dautrich displays pumpkins at the 1957 Oley Valley Community Fair.



COURTESY OF OLEY VALLEY COMMUNITY FAIR

The tractor driving champion of 1957.





WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022 READING EAGLE

# Fair memories



COMMUNITY FAIR

Gov. George Leader attends the Oley Valley Community Fair in 1958.



At the 1958 Oley Valley Community Fair, Lucille Petersheim and Larry Reifsnyder are ready for the dairy judging



Seniors of the Oley High School class of 1958 are kept busy at the senior class cake and cider stands.



Harold Snyder is ready to show his beef cattle and dairy



COURTESY OF OLEY VALLEY
COMMUNITY FAIR

At the 1972 Oley Valley Community Fair, Phoebe Hopkins carries in one of her prize-winning sheep.



The Oley Elementary School first-grade class of Mrs. Rhoades examine a corn picker at the Pikeville Equipment display on Sept. 18, 1986.





# Fair memories



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

**Above:** Line dancing has become a popular activity for FFA members during the Friday night of the Oley Valley Community Fair.

**Top right:** Heffner Printing of Ruscombmanor Township has been printing the food tickets for the Oley Valley Community Fair for almost all of the fair's 75 years. Owner Murray Hoffman starts to wrap the thousands of tickets to be delivered to the 2022 fair. The year was challenging due to shortages of printing materials.

Mums • Asters

Flowering Cabbage

Flowering Kale

Perennials • Gifts

At right: Opening night festivities at the 2021 Oley Valley Community Fair.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGL

Dee Kantner wins the 2021 Oley Valley Community Fair Celebrity Dairy Showmanship contest.



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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

# Fair memories



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

Marie Haas and her granddaughter Leah Haas are co-chairs of the department for special contests at the 2022 Oley Valley Community Fair.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

Oley Valley Feed won the best indoor commercial exhibit for the second straight year in 2021.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGL

Needlecraft department co-chairs Stacey Cleaveland and Katelyn Bieber at the 2022 Oley Valley Community Fair.



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# Fair memories





Fairgoers enjoy the fine weather during the 2021 Oley Valley Community Fair.

Above: Abigail Fretz won the junior division Best of Show in the 2021 photography contest at the Oley Valley Community Fair.

At right: Apples are on display at the 2021 Oley Valley Community Fair.



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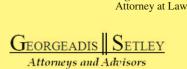
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# Fair memories

20



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAG

The winners of the pumpkin weigh-in display their awards at the 2021 Oley Valley Community Fair.

At right: Volunteers display the popular photography contest at the 2021 Oley Valley Community Fair.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE

At right: Heffner Printing won the best outdoor commercial exhibit for the second consecutive year at the 2021Oley Valley Community Fair. Pictured is Murray Hoffman, owner.



HAROLD HOCH - SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE





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# Calendar

### **SEPT. 17:**

• Fall Fest, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 5 Brooke Manor, Birdsboro, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., rain or shine. Food, a barrel train ride, moon bounce, face painting, bingo and games. Music by Dave Kline and his band and Threefold Blessing. Silent auction for theme baskets, antiques and other selections, ticket raffle style auction of child-friendly items and a raffle for a Christmas quilt. Tickets for chicken dinners and apple dumplings as well as raffle tickets for the Christmas quilt can be purchased through the church office at 610-582-8167.

### **SEPT. 18:**

• Friends of Mifflin Community Library Kauffman's Chicken BBQ sale, Walgreen's parking lot, 2203 Lancaster Ave., Cumru Township, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. For more information, call 610-777-3911

### **SEPT. 24:**

• Southern Gospel Concert featuring Brian Free and Assurance, Bridge of Hope Church, 309 W. Franklin St., Womelsdorf, 6 p.m.; \$15 adults, children 4-12, \$10. Love offering will be received. Call 484-651-0108. Annual fall flea market and basket raffle, Calvary United Church of Christ, 1231 Route 100, Washington Township. Outdoor vendor space is available. Visit www.calvaryuccbarto.com.

### OCT. 1:

- Friends of Mifflin Community Library Washington, D.C., bus trip. Depart from the library, 6 Philadelphia Ave., Shillington, at 8 a.m. and return approximately 9 p.m. \$70 per person. Register at the library. For trip inquiries, email friendsofmcl@yahoo.com. Deadline to register is Aug. 31.
- Berks County Bike Club's annual Shoe-Fly Classic, Oley Fairgrounds, 26 Jefferson St., Oley, includes three choices of rides with 20-, 40- and 60-mile routes along with a gravel option, all in support of the Greater Reading Mental Health Alliance. Go to http://www.berksbicycle.com for more details and to register.
- Drive-thru sausage sandwich sale, St. Peter's United Church of Christ, 122 W. Franklin St., Topton, 10 a.m. until sold out. Cost: \$6. Enter at Broad Alley and exit at Franklin St.
- Schwarzwald United Church of Christ Fall Festival, 75 Church Lane Road, Exeter Town-

ship, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Food, including apple dumplings, apple cakes, pumpkin pies, cherry crumb pies, pepper cabbage, apple sauce. Preorders preferred. There also will be music and kids games. Kids activities begin at 10 a.m., cost is \$5 per child, which includes all activities. For more information, call 610-779-0850.

### OCT. 3:

• Italian hoagie sale, Pioneer Grange, 46 E. Keller St., Topton. Deadline to order is Sept 25. Cost: \$5. Pickup 3-5 p.m. at the Grange hall. Orders: Tammy at 610-463-7213

### OCT. 7 AND 8:

■ Harvest Fest 2022, St. Mary Roman Catholic Church, 94 Walnut Road, Tilden Township, 4-9 p.m. Oct 7 and noon-9 p.m. Oct. 8. Oct. 7 music: Flamin' Dick & the Hotrods (6-9 p.m.) Oct. 8 music: the Golden Tones Polka Band (1-4 p.m.); polka Mass 4:30 p.m.; the New Individuals Band (6-9 p.m.) Homemade ethnic food, games for all ages, rock wall and bungee jump, hay rides, first responders, bingo, theme baskets, raffles, corn maze. Free admission, plenty of parking, no coolers. For more information call 610-562-7657, visit http://www. stmaryhamburg.org or Facebook.

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### FOOD

# Sugar and savory spices liven up berries



MILK STREET VIA AP

This image released by Milk Street shows a recipe for Citrus and Spice Strawberry Compote.

By Christopher Kimball Christopher Kimball's Milk Street

It's time to stop thinking about the difference between sweet and savory spices. Many cooks around the world don't make such a distinction.

We kept that in mind while searching for an easy way to enliven a simple berry compote. In this recipe from our book "COOKish," which limits recipes to just six ingredients without sacrificing flavor, we tried black pepper and chili powder, a blend that can include not only spicy BERRIES » PAGE 22

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# **Berries**

FROM PAGE 21

cayenne but also cumin, garlic and onion powder. The combination of sweet strawberries and savory spices was a hit, the perfect topping for vanilla ice cream or yogurt.

A single teaspoon sufficed for a pound of sweet strawberries, half of which we cooked with a relatively small amount of sugar and lime zest. We lightly mashed the cooked berries and poured them over fresh ones, which softened with the compote's heat.

Substituting garam masala was just as good with the citrus zest and berries, though with a different flavor profile.

# Citrus and Spice **Strawberry Compote**

Start to finish: 20 minutes Servings: 4 to 6

# **INGREDIENTS:**

1 pound strawberries. hulled and quartered 2 tablespoons white sugar, divided

Grated zest of 1 lime OR 1 lemon OR 1/2 medium orange

1 teaspoon chili powder OR garam masala 1/4 teaspoon coarsely

ground black pepper Pinch of kosher salt

### DIRECTIONS:

In a medium bowl, toss two-thirds of the berries with 1tablespoon of sugar and the zest; set aside. In a small saucepan, toast the chili powder, stirring, until fragrant: add the remaining berries, the remaining 1tablespoon sugar, the pepper, salt and ¼ cup water. Simmer, stirring, for 5 minutes, then mash the berries to break them down. Cook, stirring, until jammy. Immediately pour over the berries in the bowl and stir. Let stand for 10 minutes.

# **GARDENING**

# This caladium creates Burning Heart for your garden

By Norman Winter

Tribune News Service

usual and beautiful in your and these flaming red leaves landscape you stare hypnot- were coming out of the ically at it every day. Go furground. Surely the happy ther and say, 100 days.

That is precisely how I simply can't be that color.

Using Heart to Heart carrect sun it is a hot, hot viladiums to create the un- brant red, but let the light expected in the landscape. shift to filtered and you will Son James used Heart to swear it is now a rusty red Heart Burning Heart in a that still mesmerizes you. project and I was shocked I not only had never heard of will tell you it is an upright this variety, but even more grower with leaves that will so, that he didn't share reach 12 inches. This mornsome with Dad.

was able to locate his own, 16 inches long and almost 10 however, and although the inches wide. summer hot misery index was off the chart, Burn- velope pusher, combined ing Heart created some echis with Shadowland Coast static plant bliss that pulled to Coast hostas, which are me through the heat. I shot a dazzling chartreuse, and a picture one night about the gray, sword-like leaves 8:30 and sent it off to Dr. of Catch a Wave Mangave, I Allen Owings, professor used mine in containers, and emeritus with the LSU Ag- the combinations turned out Center and now horticultur- simply incredible. ist at Clegg's Nursery.

about this caladium, and Grasses Queen Tut papywas it in Louisiana? He said, rus grass. I'll admit I really we've have had it for a couple of years, and it is shazam, ing. shazam, shazam! So, then I inquired of the company, was this caladium found on play together." an expedition to the rainforest in Borneo? Kind of like the ages, Goldilocks Creep-Indiana Jones.

diums are from Central and large burning heart leaves South America. Next, Heart of the caladium and charto Heart Burning Heart treuse leaf chains of creepwas developed the old-fash- ing Jenny created a textural ion horticulture science way. feast for the eyes. Pollen from the male parent was given to the female par- Heart caladiums stayed ef-

this process? Can you imagine one day a horticulturist Imagine a plant so un- was looking at the field plot, dance commenced.

So now I have given the feel about Heart to Heart real story, red leaves with Burning Heart caladium, pink or orange flecks or and the reason is this: It freckles. The glowing color changes throughout the day, In May I wrote about depending on the sun. In di-

Catalogs and trial sites ing I took the tape out and The old Garden Guy measured several that were

Son James, ever the en-

The first partnership I asked him if he knew created was with Graceful didn't know what I was do-

> I love both and essentially said, "Let's see how well you

Then I used the spiller of ing Jenny. The star-like tufts The first answer is, cala- of the Queen Tut grass, the

Last year, my Heart to ent, and seeds were planted. fective in the landscape un-

Good lord, how long was til November, and I simply let them perish with winter freezes and rains. Burning Heart may coax me into digging and saving, just to make sure I have some for next year. But I have months to enjoy until I have to make that decision.

The Garden Guy went through at least a decade of not growing caladiums. If you find yourself in such a state, just know the Heart 28 colors. If Burning Heart are 27 other choices to select from, whether you want speaker and author bulbs or plants.

Norman Winter. horticulturist, garden



COURTESY OF NORMAN WINTER

to Heart series now boasts Heart to Heart Burning Heart caladiums create a dazzling complementary color scheme with the chartreuse foliage doesn't fit your palette, there of Shadowland Coast to Coast hostas.

> of "Tough-as-Nails Flowers for the South" and "Captivating Combinations: Color

and Style in the Garden." Follow him on Facebook @NormanWinter*TheGardenGuy* 







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# The Oley Valley Community Fair > September 15, 16, 17 - 2022 🔰 Oley Fire Company Fairgrounds 📚

9:00am-10:00pm daily - -Free admission Visit oleyfair.org for complete event schedule \$5 parking Donation - 610.987.3469

Join us Wednesday, September 14 at 6:30PM at the Main Stage for the Pumpkin Weigh-Off

# MAIN STAGE ENTERTAINMENT



Thursday, September 15: 6:30pm and 8:30pm Twitty and Lynn (A salute to Conway and Loretta featuring Tre Twitty and Tayla Lynn)



September 16: 7:00pm and 9:00pm **Dion Pride** (Son of Charley Pride) & The Cramer **Brothers Band** 



Saturday, September 17: 7:00pm and 9:00pm The Main **Street Cruisers** 

- 8:00AM Swine Judging
- 9:00AM Dairy Judging
- 10:00AM 11:30AM Performance by Oley Valley High School Music Department
- 11:00AM 1:30 PM Dr. Squeezebox
- 12:00PM Opening Bell Ringing Ceremony
- 12:00PM Beef Judging
- 1:00 PM 10:00PM Carnival Rides (\$25 wristband valid 1PM-5PM)
- 1:30PM-2:30PM Glenn Miller
- 3:00 PM-6:00 PM WEEU live broadcast
- 4:30PM Children's Pedal Tractor Contest (for children up to 10 years old)
- 6:15PM Presentation of Commercial Exhibit
- 6:30PM & 8:30PM -Twitty and Lynn (A Salute to Conway and Loretta featuring Tre Twitty and Tayla Lynn)

- 9:00AM Sheep Judging, LambTrimming & Blocking Contest, Dairy Management Contest, **Goat Judging**
- 10:00AM -Tractor Pulling Contest
- 10:30 11:15AM Marian & Friends Ventriloguist
- 11:00AM 10:00PM Carnival Rides (\$25 wristband valid 11AM-3PM)
- 1:00PM Oley Valley High School Marching Band
- 2:00PM Youth Pedal Tractor Pulling Contest (for ages 11 - 16 years old)
- 2:00PM-4:00PM Tiggar Strolling Magic Show
- 4:00PM-7:00PM PA State Fair Queen
- 4:30PM Big Wheel Contest (for ages 3 -8 years old)
- 6:30PM Celebrity Dairy Showmanship Contest
- 7:30PM 10:00PM FFA Line Dancing with
- 7:00PM & 9:00PM Dion Pride (Son of Charley Pride) & The Cramer Brothers Band

- 10:00AM-12:00PM WIOV's Casey Allyn
- 10:00AM-11:00AM Oley Valley Alumni and Community Band
- 10:00AM Garden Tractor / ATV Pull
- 10:00AM Adult Pedal Tractor Pulling Contest (ages 17 & older)
- 10:00AM-2:00PM Mid-day Car Show and Antique Tractor Show
- 11:00AM 10:00PM Carnival Rides
- 12:00PM-2:00PM The Ringgold Band
- 12:00PM Youth Bale Throwing Contest (for youth up to 16 years old)
- 2:00PM Adult Bale Throwing Contest (for ages 17 & older)
- 2:00PM-5:00PM Happy Dutchman German Strolling Band
- 4:00PM Donut Eating Contest (for all ages)
- 5:30PM-6:30PM Exeter Community Band
- 6:30PM Presentation of Department Trophies
- 7:00PM & 9:00PM The Main Street Cruisers
- 9:30PM Auction in Agriculture building

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