From Your Commissioner

Agriculture in the Classroom at the Remick Country Doctor Museum and Farm

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to attend an Ag in the Classroom event in Tamworth, at the Remick Museum. Ag in the Classroom is a great program whose goal is to increase the agricultural literacy of students, from kindergarten through high school. That goal is accomplished by applying agricultural examples, to teach concepts in science, social studies, math, language arts and nutrition. That would be an impressive mission, even if we had a teacher in every school. The fact that in NH we have one part-time person for the whole state is mind boggling. That one part-time person, is Debbie Cox and she is doing an impressive job. Thank you Debbie!

I chose to go the Remick Museum to participate in the program, because I love farm museums and I had never been there before. I can’t recall the exact count, but I believe that there were over 150 students, from about a half dozen schools there. This was the first time that Ag in the Classroom had been to the museum. The property is expansive and both Debbie and the staff agreed that they could easily host 100 more students.

The museum is actually a working farm. There is a bit of everything on the farm, including a small dairy herd. Sadly, at this time, most of the milk is going down the drain, but they are working on a plan to be able to put all the milk to good use. The fact that Dr. Edwin Remick had established the first pasteurization plant in the North Country back in the 1930’s, makes the fact that most of the milk is dumped now, due to the lack of pasteurization, more than a little ironic.

Apparently, the one animal they don’t have on the farm is a horse. To fill that void my old (as in I have known him a long-time) friend County Commissioner David Babson, brought a horse to the event, to use as part of the education program. I think I have been running into Dave more often now than when we served in the legislature together.

The farm incorporates a bit of the old with some of the new. So, while they have a small ice-house and the ice is harvested the old fashioned way, they also just purchased a new round bailer, to provide hay to the beef cattle. They also produce maple syrup, herbs and vegetables. The livestock includes chickens, pigs, goats and sheep. I probably have left out something, but I think you get the picture. The museum staff had set-up various educational stations around the farm, for small groups of students to stop at and learn about what was going on and how is was done.

The property itself had been in the Remick family, for six generations spanning over 200 years. The last two generations of Remick men, were country doctors serving the Tamworth area for 99 years. As you might imagine, there is a lot of history stored in the two houses and the many outbuildings that comprise the farm. I was fortunate enough, to get a private tour and a real glimpse
into the how the Remick family lived. Dr. Edwin Remick, wisely invested his money and had a vision to preserve his farm. Prior to his death in 1993, he created the foundation which manages the property.

I am sure that the students enjoyed their visit as much as I did. I would encourage you to take a trip to Tamworth for a visit. You can even purchase products produced there, including fresh meats. The Remick Country Doctor Museum and Farm is a NH treasure that we are lucky to have.

Shawn N. Jasper – Commissioner