New Jersey News

Phillips Farms New Farm Market in Milford

Win Cowgill
Professor Emeritus Rutgers University, Win Enterprises International, LLC

Phillips Farms new roadside market is open for business! Located at 564 Milford Warren Glen Road (County Road 519) in Milford (Hunterdon County). The market will be a retail center for all of their tree fruits, small fruits, vegetables, and flowers, as well as PYO for strawberries and a new table grape planting.

Marc and Holly Phillips invested two years of planning into the new facility. When asked why Marc replied, "We outgrew our small retail stand and needed to expand our local retail presence close to our home farm."

The next generation of Phillips, Megan and Jason, will be joining the farm operation full time next year. Megan has been instrumental in maturity testing the apple production over the last two seasons to guide PYO and commercial harvest. All photo credits: Win Cowgill.

Dr. John Gerwig passed April 24, 2020 Longest Serving Cooperative Extension Director in the US

It is with great sadness that I announce the passing of Dr. John L. Gerwig. John passed peacefully at his home in Whispering Pines, NC on April 24 with his loving wife of 23 years, Anne Gerwig, at his side.

John was born in Chapel, West Virginia to the late Jay C. Gerwig and Pearl Perkins Gerwig. He earned a B.S. Degree in Agronomy and a M.S. in Soils from West Virginia University. He received his Ph.D. in Agronomy from Rutgers University, New Jersey. He grew up on a livestock farm in West Virginia and while studying for his master's degree taught vocational agriculture and managed a dairy farm in Uniontown, PA. From 1952 to 1956 he was on the teaching and research faculty at Rutgers University while studying for his doctorate degree. In 1956, he was appointed Extension Specialist in Agronomy for Rutgers Cooperative Extension. In 1962, he was appointed Dean and Director of Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a position he held until his retirement in 1992. At the time of his retirement, he was the longest serving Director of Extension in the Country. He received numerous achievement awards during his lifetime, one of which was the Rutgers University Award which is the highest award given by Rutgers University and given to a very limited number of recipients.

John touched the lives of thousands of people during his long and meritorious career of 40 years at Rutgers University. He was a great friend of the agricultural community and was revered as a champion of his faculty, many of whom he hired during his more than three-decade tenure as the Director of Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

In the late 70's and 80's, Dr. Gerwig hired a whole slew of us extension agents to name a few R. Barbour, E. Barbour, Samulis, Obal, Cowgill, Schutski, J. Repair, D. Lee, Rabin, Pavlis, Flimin, Johnson, VanVranken, Tweed, Costaris, Liptak, Franco, Chamberlin, Frecon, Kluchinski, and probably a few others.

His kindness, caring demeanor, and fantastic sense of humor and wit will be sorely missed.

John's obituary may be viewed at www.bolesfuneralhome.com. Memorial Contributions may be made to The John and Anne Gerwig Director's Endowment for Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Rutgers University Foundation, 7 College Ave, Winants Hall, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 or to First Health Hospice at 150 Applecross Rd. Pinehurst, NC 28374.

Coles Roberts of Vincentown Passed August 12, 2020 at 94

Samuel Coles Roberts passed away peacefully on Wednesday, August 12, 2020. He was 94 years of age. Born in Mt. Laurel, NJ, he is the son of the late Emmor and Marion (Coles) Roberts and the husband of the late Virginia (Perry) Roberts. He has resided in Medford Leas since 2010, moving there from Southampton, NJ, where he resided since 1936. Known best for Jersey Jerry Apples, Coles was a fruit grower who owned and operated Roberts Orchards in Southampton. He was also a longtime member and officer of Jersey Fruit Cooperative, the B.C. Farm Fair Board. Coles served as a curator for the NJ Museum of Agriculture in New Brunswick and was past president of Flying Farmers of NJ.

Coles was well known for his Public Presentations, and his film "From Blossom to Bite." In his retirement, he used to travel around to county fairs and other events with his antique apple peeling machines and discuss "the art of apple carving and peeling."

He loved history and genealogy, but his greatest passion was people. He is the beloved father of Sidney Lee Roberts, husband of Carol of Southampton, NJ, loving grandfather of Kathryn Swogger (Thomas) of Vincentown, NJ, Deborah Bonhomme (Jesse) of Southampton, NJ, Brian Roberts (Jamie) of Williamstown, NJ, Jennifer Roberts, and Philip Roberts (Melinda) all of Southampton, NJ, great grandfather of 9, and beloved friend of Virgina Tazza. In lieu of other expressions of sympathy, the family requests memorial donations to the Medford-Vincentown Rotary Foundation, P.O. Box 365, Medford, NJ 08055. Include "The Coles Roberts Humanitarian Scholarship" on the memo line. (www.BradleyStow.com)

Editor's Note from Win Cowgill: I knew Coles Roberts a bit, and he was a wonderful man. We often talked at the NJ Agricultural convention. My Grandfather Cowgill worked for Coles grandfather managing one of their orchards. I was told that orchard was located where Exit 4 is now on the NJ turnpike. I never met my Grandpop Cowgill, he died very young (in his 40's) but learned some about my grandpop from Mr. Roberts. My Grandmom Cowgill lived in Vincentown all her adult life. She often took us to Coles Jersey Jerry Apples self-serve roadside market in Vincentown. I believe it was one of the first self-serve markets in NJ.

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