

"YODER WINS CHYRSLER CAR IN *REPUBLICAN* CIRCULATION CAMPAIGN"

Keith S. Yoder

The above headline appeared in the May 16, 1929 Meyersdale Republican. The subheadline reads: "First Prize in Spirited Contest Captured by a Hustling Farmer of Garrett County, Maryland". Simon M. Yoder was my grandfather who died January 13, 1940, more than six years before I was born. Growing up his youngest grandchild, I had heard the story about our Grandpa Yoder winning a new car as an award for his efforts selling subscriptions to the Meyersdale Republican. But only recently did I become aware of all the dramatic details about how the circulation contest was conducted and the two follow-up stories that unfolded after the car was presented.

The Circulation Campaign: The newspaper made obvious efforts to attract and hold the interest of the readers throughout the campaign. On March 14, 1929, it kicked off its campaign with a tantalizing, but somewhat vague announcement: "THE REPUBLICAN MAKING PLANS FOR STAGING A GREAT TREASURE HUNT; Friends and Readers of this newspaper to share in Marvelous Awards—Announcement of This Remarkable Event will be Made in These Columns Next Week". The "Treasure Chest" was to be open to all over 15 years of age, but the only hint about the nature of what was to come was "Treasure lies in the bounds of this paper's circulation field, and when all plans are completed, many will be the surprises and pleasures unfolded to our readers".

The campaign was fully outlined on three pages of the March 21 edition, including a double-page spread. "INCLUDED IN PRIZE LIST ARE THREE POPULAR MAKES OF PLEASURE CARS, 1929 MODELS. REPUBLICAN'S POPULAR CIRCULATION CAMPAIGN UNLATCHES DOOR OF GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO ALL. Join the Treasure Chest Club Immediately and Get Lined Up for Beginning of Treasure Trove Next Monday". The announcement promised "one of the most attractive and popular events of its kind ever to be launched by a newspaper of Somerset County".

The four prizes were described in detail. First prize was a 4-door Chrysler 65 sedan (65 HP, 65 mph), valued at \$1290. Second prize was a 4-door Chevrolet Six valued at \$717. Third

prize was a 2-door New Ford Roadster with a delivery price of \$534. The fourth and last prize to be awarded was an Orthophonic Victrola Radiola (a combined record player and a radio) that retailed for \$325. All active club members not receiving one of these prizes were to be given 20% commission on all of their subscription sales (EVERYBODY WINS!).

The full announcement came with details of "HOW TO WIN THE TREASURES". There were bonus coupons to clip and fill out to get early credits. Rules and regulations were spelled out about registering (for 5000 start-up credits) and picking up a receipt book. Club members were considered to be agents of the newspaper and were encouraged to work anywhere, collecting back subscriptions and renewals as well as new subscriptions and advertising cards. There was a provision for any non-club member to come to the newspaper office and subscribe and designate the credit to go to a club member of their choice. Club members were to submit all of their subscriptions and cash each Wednesday and Saturday each week of the 7-week campaign. Any club members dropping out of the campaign were not allowed to share their credits with another club member and their credits would be cancelled.

Credits were "stacked" to encourage strong early participation and to seek longer subscriptions and out-of-town subscriptions. Triple credits were awarded for the period from March 25-April 27; double credits for April 29-May 4, and single credits for May 6-11. More credit was offered to subscriptions mailed to outside of Meyersdale rather than those within Meyersdale. Subscriptions from one to five years were accepted, but the longer subscriptions were awarded 30,000 points for an out-of-town five-year subscription received during the early period compared to only 2,000 points for an equivalent one-year subscription. There were opportunities for bonuses at points in the campaign.

And they're off. So the campaign began the week of March 21. Each week the newspaper commented on the contest and gave the club standings on the front page. The March 28 edition listed 26 entrants, each with 5,000 credits under the headline: "BIG CIRCULATION CAMPAIGN WINS PUBLIC APPROVAL AND THE GREAT RACE IS NOW ON".

By April 4 the club list had expanded to 32 and the headline was "FIRST GUNS FIRED IN BIG BATTLE OF CREDITS BRINGS FIRST CLIMAX IN THE RACE". S. M. Yoder led the list with 141,000 credits and four of the final top five finishers were already in the top five.

Throughout the following weeks there was some shuffling of positions. On April 11 the club list had dropped to 23 and A.F. Garlitz led with 318,500, but the top five contenders all had 296,000 credits or more. The April 11 headline was "MANY FAST WORKES IN CIRCULATION DRIVE CONCENTRATING THEIR EFFORTS ON OWNERSHIP OF THE CHRYSLER SEDAN".

The April 18 headline read: "CLUB MEMBERS IN GALLANT RACE TO GAIN PER-MANENT FOOTHOLD ERE BIG CREDITS END APRIL 27. Garlitz continued to lead with 598,000, but the top four were separated only by 9,700 credits. The club had now dwindled to 17.

By April 25 Garlitz, with 879,000 credits, still led Yoder by 3,200 credits. The top five had more than 841,000. A newcomer to the top five list was R. Earl Dickey, who had moved up to fourth place from as low as 8th place on April 10. The club membership was now down to 15. The April 25 headline reflected the uncertainty of the outcome of this contest: "WHO WILL

LEAD IN FAST DRIVE FOR WINNING CREDITS AT CLOSE THIS WEEK'S IPORTANT PERIOD".

By May 2 as the drive was coming into the final turn, R. Earl Dickey with his strong late push had now moved into the lead with 1,484,300 credits and led Yoder by 3,100 credits. Garlitz had slipped to third. Rounding out the top five were Eli D. Tice and Mrs. David M. Baker. The headline for May 2: "SEVEN VITAL DAYS REMAIN IN WHICH CLUB MEMEBERS HAVE THE CHANCE TO MAKE VICTORY CERTAIN".

May 9 found Yoder, with 2,436,100 credits, once again leading Dickey, Garlitz, Baker and Tice. The top five all had more than 2,408,000 credits. This set the stage for the final tally from a sealed ballot box May 11: "Remaining Two Days Offer Last Opportunity to Score Winning Top Prize Credits and Club Members Fully Prepared to Meet the Decisive Struggle".

Yoder Wins Chrysler Car in Republican Circulation Campaign

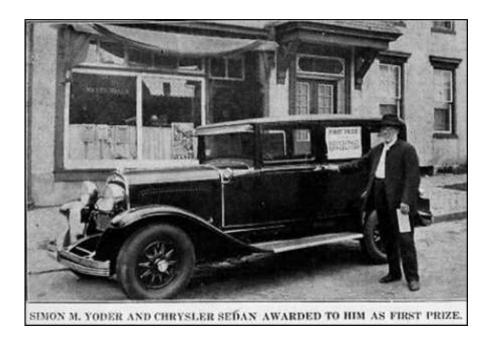
The May 16 Meyersdale Republican reported that long before the results were announced, a large crowd had gathered around the Second National Bank, where the judges were making their final count. In retrospect, it seems that the final results were not as close as the weekly club standings might have predicted. The paper reported that "Mr. Yoder enrolled in the campaign on the opening day and went about his work in a businesslike way, planning his work carefully, and carefully working out his plan. He aimed from the start to secure subscriptions on a basis which provided most votes and to organize his work so as to see the greatest possible number of people each day. His efforts bore much fruit. He not only secured many new subscriptions for the Republican, as well as many renewals of old ones, in Somerset County, Pa., and Garrett County, Md., but also quite a number in more than in half the states of the Union. He finished with the magnificent score of 17,216,700 votes and received the \$1,290 Chrysler sedan as his reward, pretty good pay for his seven weeks' work! Mr. Yoder is a hustling farmer and member of the progressive branch of the Amish Mennonite Church." He had been in first or second place in the club standings each week.

R. Earl Dickey, a Berlin, Brothersvalley Township farmer, held onto the runner-up spot, and was awarded the 4-Door Chevrolet Six Sedan for his effort. It was noted that Mr. Dickey was somewhat handicapped because he didn't get off to such a flying start that Yoder did, a head-start which Mr. Dickey could not quite overcome. Dickey's final score was 12,613,400.

A. Francis Garlitz, also a farmer from the Salisbury area was the third-place finisher with 8,923,800 credits, and he drove away in his "spiffy" Ford Roadster. Garlitz had been previously a popular employee of the P&M Street Railway, and the old patrons of the now defunct railway enthusiastically supported him and were happy to see his success in the campaign.

Mrs. David Baker, the fourth-place finisher with 6,166,700 credit votes, raced with those who finished ahead of her, but also "raced with the stork" which affected her schedule in the last days of the campaign. She was assisted in the contest by her husband, and she delivered a fine baby daughter at her parents' home in Somerset Sunday morning, a few hours after the results were announced, and only later did she receive the news that she had won the Orthophonic Victrola-Radiola. Mrs. Baker had never been higher than third in the club standings, but she had never been below fifth, so she ran a well-balanced campaign into the last week.

Eli D. Tice, a farmer of Elk Lick Township, unfortunately finished fifth, just outside of the prize-winning limits, but did receive a nice cash award in the form of commission on all the subscriptions he secured. Tice rolled up a score of 5,246,200 votes, but not enough to win one of the big prizes. The *Meyersdale Republican*, May 30, 1929, page 1



Here is Simon Yoder's letter:

An Announcement of Appreciation, S. M. Yoder

"In reviewing *The Republican's* circulation campaign which recently closed, and in appreciation of the Grand Prize which I was able to win, and the congratulations and good wishes of the people, I feel under obligation to make a public announcement.

First I want to thank the publisher of the *Meyersdale Republican* for offering the valuable prizes, and especially do I want to thank him for the beautiful Chrysler Sedan which was awarded me. I want to thank the entire *Republican* Staff for the courtesy shown me during the campaign.

Second, I wish to thank Mr. Moore's, the campaign manager, for the fair and square and impartial way in which he conducted the campaign.

Third, I want to thank all that have so loyally and liberally supported me with their subscriptions, and for the good wishes accorded me.

Fourth, I wish to thank all the contestants I had the pleasure of meeting and for the friendly rivalry. Wishing all the best of success, and with kindest regards to all. I beg to remain

Yours truly, S. M. Yoder"

This completes the basic details of the title story of "Yoder Wins Chrysler Car in *Republican* Circulation Campaign" -- the background announcement of the 7-week campaign, weekly reporting of club standings, final tally of credits, awarding of prizes and expressions of gratitude. Although the campaign actually ran during the 7-week period from March 21 to May 11, there were 11 issues of the weekly newspaper that contained information or publicity related to the contest.

It would be interesting to know what effect the campaign actually had on the newspaper's subscription numbers. Numbers of copies printed were shown at the top of each week's issue, and this varied from 3500 to 4000 during the period from March to November. Likely more copies were printed in anticipation of newsstand purchases as compared to those needed to meet regular subscriptions. It looks like base numbers may have increased from 3500 to 3625. The weeks with 4000 copies were for the first week and the final two weeks of the campaign. The relatively small increase in numbers would not have justified the value of the prizes; instead the campaign club members probably blanketed the newspaper's usual annual subscriptions and pushed for more 5-year subscriptions to more distant locations to offset the cost of the prizes and sales commissions for those who didn't win other prizes.

From my perspective: As Simon Yoder's grandson, it would have been interesting to know just how he went about setting up his plan and carrying it out. I can imagine he was a very busy man getting his plan underway the first week of the campaign, after he found out what it was about, the rules, and the credits schedule. Surely he benefited from sales to extended family across the country to boost his out-of-town sales (to more than half the states in the Union!), and perhaps he had relatives in many of those areas helping to canvas such locations. Although his address was Salisbury PA, he actually lived in Maryland, two miles north of Grantsville. Did he go house to house for sales to strangers in Grantsville and elsewhere? I can imagine he sought out his business contacts for subscriptions or advertising. (From time to time he advertised in the *Republican* himself and perhaps some advertising credits were his own). I have to wonder how many hours he spent in these activities each week for seven weeks. I'm guessing he had some good support by the boys at home helping with the farm chores. (Sons Homer, Ivan and Mark were 16, 14 and 12 years old, respectively; in 1929 I believe our father, Alva, was in Norfolk, VA working in the Ford plant building Model A Fords).

Although I never knew my Grandpa Yoder, I am not too surprised that he participated in this circulation campaign. In his letter of appreciation, he mentioned "friendly rivalry" and he was known to have participated in other sorts of contests: he had shipped his prize-winning Mammoth Bronze Turkeys by rail to poultry shows in 1913 and 1914 at Hagerstown and Baltimore and as far as Madison Square Garden, New York where he won a silver pitcher. His production of high-quality maple syrup earned him a full page feature article with pictures in *The Sunday Sun*, Baltimore (Feb, 26, 1939, page 88), but that was ten years later. It was an interesting combination of words that the paper used in pointing out that Simon M. Yoder was a "hustling farmer and member of the progressive branch of the Amish Mennonite Church". (To his credit, he was the only participant whose religious affiliation was identified). He had owned at least two vehicles previously, a Ford Model-T, purchased soon after they became available, and a Chevrolet purchased in 1925¹.

The Rest of the Story

But this story does not end with Simon Yoder's receipt of the Chrysler. There are two

more episodes in this saga. For 11 weeks the readership had seen various headlines related to the circulation campaign and the Grand Prize Chrysler, and had seen S. M. Yoder's name in the club standings and announced as the final winner of the Chrysler. Imagine their surprise when only two weeks later (June 13, page 1) a headline read: S. M. YODER'S CHRYSLER WRECKED; Mr. and Mrs. Yoder Both Are Injured—Accident Caused by Drunken Joy-Riders from Uniontown".

The story went like this: Simon Yoder and his wife Catharine and her sister Annie and her husband Harvey S. Yoder (Simon's cousin) were just starting out on their first trip in Simon's splendid new car. Simon had the car thoroughly checked at a Grantsville garage and determined that everything was in perfect working order before they started out at 2 AM the previous Monday morning. They were headed to the Annual Conference of the Conservative branch of the Amish Mennonite Church near Goshen, Indiana. The men were in the front seat and their wives were riding in the back. By about 3:30 AM they had made their way to a straight section of road near Chalk Hill, about 8 miles east of Uniontown, PA.

The headlights of another car rapidly approached from the west. When first sighted, the other car was in its proper lane, but as it approached it began to veer toward the other side of the road at an oblique angle. "Fearing a collision unless the other car suddenly changed its course, Mr. Yoder steered his own car as far to the right as he could, and was partly off the pavement when the recklessly driven car sideswiped the Chrysler, and knocked it over on its right side at the side of the road". Catherine suffered a fractured collar bone when Annie fell on top of her. Simon, who had stuck to the steering wheel when the car went over, received a broken rib. Annie suffered shock and some bruises; Harvey escaped injury. (Simon and Catharine did not realize that they had broken bones until Dr. Glass examined and X-rayed them the following morning).

The offending vehicle, a Ford touring car, was driven by a Frederick W. Lape, 18 or 20 years old. "Lape was visibly intoxicated. With him in the Ford were two companions who were in a drunken stupor. The car was foul with liquor fumes and vomit. All evidence showed that the occupants were out on a drunken 'joy' ride." Lape and his companions were not hurt, but due to substantial damage and their condition, they could not leave the scene of the crash. Lape first tried to blame his accident on fog, but there was no fog, then on improper focus of Yoder's headlights, which had just been inspected at the Grantsville garage. Neither of these excuses was accepted and he was fined \$25 and costs on a reckless driving charge (*The Morning Herald*, Uniontown, page 4, June 13, 1929)

Several other cars began to arrive and their occupants offered assistance. Among those was a car driven by Floyd Miller of Grantsville, with Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Yoder and Mr. and Mrs. Evan Miller, who were also enroute to the conference in Indiana. They proceeded on and stopped at Uniontown to alert police to go to the accident scene. Highway Patrolman McKee soon arrived on a motorcycle and directed Lape and his companions to go with the wreck truck to Uniontown. The officer asked S. M. Yoder to appear with any witnesses he cared to bring with him to the Alderman's office Wednesday morning. Harvey, Annie and Catharine returned to Grantsville by bus; Simon stayed with his wrecked vehicle until a tow truck came from Grantsville to tow it back. Fortunately, *The Republican* had the Chrysler insured before turning it over to S. M. Yoder, so the damage caused by the accident was fully covered.

(As a side note, this wasn't the first time that Simon and Harvey Yoder and their wives had traveled together to the Conference and the trip encountered an unexpected outcome. On June

4, 1914, when they had been leaving for Conference in New York where they were going to sing together as a quartet, and as they were leaving the area, they heard an unusual sound. After they arrived in New York, they found out that the unusual noise they had heard was a tornado which had destroyed Yoder School in their neighborhood¹).

GETTING ENJOYMENT OUT OF HIS NEW CAR

The final episode in this continuing saga was a follow-up article by *The Republican* (Oct. 10, 1929, page 6). This was in response to Simon's letter that reported a successful trip to Norfolk, Virginia after the Chrysler had been rebuilt, at the request of the insurance company, in Cumberland, MD. The article recounted the very bad luck that had occurred on the previous trip.

This is what Simon wrote:

"I thought possible you would be interested to know that the Chrysler seems to have fully recovered from the shock that it received from those loathsome drunkards. On Friday morning, Oct. 4th, we left Grantsville at 4:45. The Chrysler just snift and pawed for the road; the hills did not seem to have any tiring effect on it, and I had to hold back on the reins. At a number of places I had to run very slowly on account of repairs or reconstruction of the road. We also made a number of stops from 15 to 30 minutes and at Culpepper, Va., we succeeded in getting in the street parade of some shows. All of this caused us several hours delay, but we arrived at Norfolk about 7:30 in the evening without any tire or engine trouble, well satisfied with our day's work."

Reference:

¹ Yoder, Wayne A. 1978. Simon M. and Catherine J. Miller Yoder. The Casselman Chronicle 18:41-44.

Acknowledgement and a comment about newspaper sources: What a resource we have at the newspapers.com web site! The material related to all of my newspaper references was accessed through this site, at the urging of Mark H. Yoder who had uncovered the interesting "rest of the story". It was our grandfathers who were riding in the front seats when the Chrysler tipped over. Simon and Harvey were first cousins which makes us third cousins on the Yoder side, but they married the Miller sisters who were riding in the back and that makes us second cousins through the Millers.



Pictured to the left: Simon M. Yoder (YR2611922) and his wife Catherine (Miller) (ML232665)Yoder, grandparents of Keith S. Yoder (YR261192254), author of this story. Simon was the recipient of the new Chrysler automobile for selling the most subscriptions to the Meyersdale Republican Newspaper.

Pictured to the right: Annie (Miller) (ML232666)Yoder and her husband, Harvey S. Yoder (YR2611194). Harvey's father, Solomon Yoder and Simon's father, Moses Yoder, were brothers. Catherine and Annie were sisters, daughters of Joel J. and Savilla (Folk) Miller. The couples involved in the accident on their way to Church Conference.





Photo courtesy Winchester Star

Keith is the son of Alva and Ruth (Eash) Yoder. He earned his biology degree from Goshen College in 1968. He received his Doctorate and Master's of Science in plant pathology from Michigan State University. Keith retired Jan 1, 2019 after 42 years at the Winchester Fruit Laboratory, Winches-



ter, VA. Keith was a Virginia Tech Fruit Tree Pathologist. He was born and raised in Grantsville, MD. Keith is married to Esta (Moreland)Yoder, daughter of Carl C. and Virginia K. (Dayton) Moreland. Esta is a fifth generation descendent of David Y. Yoder. Keith is a fourth generation descendent of David Y. Yoder (YR26119). Both Keith and Esta serve on The House of Yoder Board of Directors.

Legal Files Donated to House of Yoder Library in Grantsville, MD

By John H. Yoder

Many will remember the case of Wisconsin v Yoder that came before the US Supreme Court in 1971–72. The suit was brought by the state of Wisconsin against Amish parents Jonas Yoder, Wallace Miller and Adin Yutzy, all of Greene County, Wisconsin, for refusing to send their children to school beyond the eighth grade. The men had previously been charged in county court by the school district, where they had been convicted of violating the county's compulsory attendance law and were fined the sum of five dollars each. With support and encouragement from outside groups concerned about protecting First Amendment rights of religious groups, the Amish appealed the decision to the Wisconsin Supreme Court where a decision was rendered in their favor, upholding the First Amendment rights of the Amish to withhold their children from school on the basis of religious conviction. The State of Wisconsin appealed this decision to the US Supreme Court. Arguments in the case were heard in December, 1971 and a decision rendered by the US Supreme Court in mid-May 1972. The decision of the US Supreme Court upheld the earlier decision of the Wisconsin State Supreme Court, holding that the parents' rights to the free exercise of religion under the First Amendment outweighed the interest of the state in compelling school attendance beyond the eighth grade.

William Bently Ball represented the Amish before the US Supreme Court in that case and his arguments have been recognized for the central role they played in that case ultimately being decided in favor of the Amish. A lifelong advocate for religious freedom and an active member of the Catholic Church, Ball was known, besides his role in Wisconsin v Yoder, for successfully defending principles of religious freedom in several cases before the US Supreme Court as well as in numerous appearances before State Supreme Courts and State Appellate Courts. The late Mr. Ball's daughter, Virginia "Ginny", presented her father's "Wisconsin" papers to the historical and genealogical library at the House of Yoder, in Grantsville, MD in June. Jim Yoder, a member of a library committee commented: "The House of Yoder is honored to receive William Ball's papers and his book *Mere Creatures of the State*. Religious freedom was one of William Ball's passions and these materials are a valuable addition to our library."



Pictured left: John Yoder, (YR2344321125), Catonsville, MD, representing The House of Yoder, accepting the donated legal documents from Ginny Duncan, daughter of Attorney William Bently Ball, the principal attorney in Wisconsin vs Yoder before the United States Supreme Court- 1971-1972

In Remembrance

"Edgar Roy Yoder, (YR261821111), Grantsville, MD died Saturday, June 15, 2019 at Goodwill Mennonite Home, Grantsville. Born April 22, 1935, in Oakland, MD, he was the son of the late Roy J. and Fannie H. (Yoder) Yoder.

Edgar was a dairy farmer, He was a 30 plus year member of the Northern Garrett County Rescue Squad, worked in the office at Silver Knob Pallet Company for 13 years and operated an egg delivery route in the Washington, DC area. He was a past Chairman and member of the MD State and Garrett County Holstein Associations and a member of the Maple Glen Mennonite Church.

Edgar R. Yoder Surviving is his wife, Ellen Velora (Yoder); two brothers, Delmar (Eva) Yoder, Accident, MD, Donald (Gwneda) Yoder, Angola, IN; one niece and five nephews.

Edgar and Ellen were quick to open their home to friends from cities and surrounding areas."

Edgar worked at the U.S. Agricultural Research Center, in Beltsville, MD to serve his 1– W term. He began selling eggs door to door, with customers being added each week. After 13 years, the route had grown to about 9,000 dozen eggs a week. He sold the egg route to return to the home farm. Edgar and Ellen married November 27, 1958. They bought the farm from Edgar's father in 1976. In 1994, due to health reasons, Edgar and Ellen sold the dairy cows and some of the machinery and rented the farm to tenants.

In 1996, after some plans for the House of Yoder had been made, Edgar was asked to be a Board Member, and was then elected treasure. Edgar held this position until 2013



Edgar and Ellen Yoder

DID YOU KNOW???

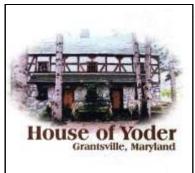
Did you know that The House of Yoder is a non-profit organization dependent upon donations for its support? You can help by....

- 1. Writing a check or giving cash.
- 2. Having a portion of your 401(k) or 403(b) retirement account go directly to The House of Yoder, there by avoiding paying taxes on that amount.
- 3. Including the House of Yoder in your Will or Estate planning.
- 4. Contributions from a charitable Trust Fund.
- 5. Gifts maybe used for operations or designated for the endowment fund.

Thank You for your consideration.



The farm Simon M. Yoder bought from Jacob S. Miller in 1903 for \$3,800.00. Being the same track of land conveyed to Jacob S. Miller by Daniel J. Swartzentruber, January 1898. Present day the farm is occupied by Rufus Yoder and Daniel Brenneman 1675 and 1685 Dorsey Hotel Road, Grantsville, MD. The house on the far left, the barn on the far right, and the small white house in the center were all added at a later time. Simon's son Alva, and his wife Ruth (Eash) Yoder bought and operated the farm and raised their four children: Avon, Bradley, Wayne and Keith.



The House of Yoder Newsletter is published by The House of Yoder, Inc. Grantsville, MD. 21536, located 1/2 mile east of Grantsville, MD., on Route 40 East. at Penn Alps Restaurant and Spruce Forest Artisan Village President: Harvey L. Yoder; Vice President: Doris Ours. Secretary: Mayla H. Yoder, Treasurer: Isolde Yoder Porter. Board Members: Mark H. Yoder. Esta Yoder, Keith Yoder, Lowell Bender, Associate Member: Benny C. Yoder, Editor: Mayla H. Yoder.

The House of Yoder Member ship:

Make check payable to "The House of Yoder" and mail to Mayla H. Yoder 2274 Salco Road Berlin, PA 15530

	1 Year	5 Years	Lifetime
Individual	\$25.00	\$100.00	\$1,000.00
Couple	\$35.00	\$150.00	\$1,500.00

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