

# Lancaster County Has a Woman Milk Tester From Mountville

By Mrs. Charles G. McSparran  
Farm Feature Writer

Joan A. Snyder, 105 Froelich Ave., Mountville, has a very unusual position of employment. She is one of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association testers in Lancaster County.

She tests 18 herds plus 9 owner-sampler herds a month and does the work usually in about 18 days. Her herds are all Holstein herds, a couple of them each have one Guernsey.

She tests at farms anywhere from Rawlinsville to Elizabethtown and the number of cows vary from 40 to 70 head.

Getting out to dairy farms on cold, snowy or icy winter mornings can be a grueling task. Some farmers start their milking about 4:30 a. m. before the roads are open. Joan, like the other testers, must be there to take milk samples and weigh the milk from each cow.

Some farmers have their milk tested and weighed just once a day, one month in the morning and the next month in the evening. However, several farmers still have their milk tested twice a day.

The head tester in each county now trains the testers working under him and it is not necessary to take a short course at Penn State as it was formerly when they had to test the samples themselves.

The method now used for DHIA testing is that the testing is all done at Penn State University. It is more costly, but is supposed to be more accurate.

The tester puts a sample of milk for each cow in a separate little plastic bag and drops a potassium dichromate tablet into



Joan proudly displays some of her ceramic pieces she has made.

each one to keep it from souring.

In the case of owner-sampler, the farmer takes the samples and weighs the milk and the tester just collects them. These tests are strictly for the owner and are not official. He can keep records if he wishes.

The samples are numbered and collected in wire trays and later transferred to mailing cartons.

Some testers send them to Penn State by United Parcel Ser-

vice delivery, but Joan finds it more convenient and less costly for her to mail it by parcel post. By mailing the cartons every two days and sending two cartons together, the postage is less than for shipping one carton.

The report sheets are returned to the farmer to put in his DHIA record book. When the tester returns to the farm the next month, he keeps the calf book and individual cow records up to date.

There are only a very few girl testers in the state. Another one of them is in a nearby county.

How did Joan, a small town girl, become interested in testing milk? Well, she is also interested in horses. Five years ago she bought a registered half-Arabian filly from Walter Ely who was a milk tester in Chester County. He has since retired and moved to Florida, but he kept saying to her that she should become a milk tester. So finally she did and she loves the work.

Her longstanding interest in the farm and horses began when she was a little girl. She helped take care of horses for Harry A. Ressler, Mountville, who has a plumbing business in Lancaster. She also went on fox hunts with his horses.

As a student in high school, she worked part time at Saint Anne's Home, on the Columbia Pike, in order to buy a second-hand Fiat automobile. She also saved her money and bought a horse which she had for a couple years before she bought "Peggy" the horse she now owns. She became interested in farming when she kept this horse at different farms.

Joan does some riding. She bought Peggy when she was one year old and raised and started to train her. Andy Gilbert, Gap, finishing training her. He also gave Joan riding lessons for about six or seven months.

She showed Peggy a few times. She has several ribbons and trophies. She placed third in the Pony Halter Class at Kutztown two years ago. Diane Wiers, Pinch Road, near Mount Gretna, who is in tenth grade in high school, is keeping Peggy this summer and will probably keep her until she graduates from high school. Joan also used to show her girl friend's horse.

Joan belongs to Valley Lea Riding Club. They have trail rides two days in the spring and two days in the fall. They have a camp near Fishing Creek in Drumore Township.

A half-Arabian is a breed which is half Arabian and half grade horse, but is a registered breed. It is less costly than a thoroughbred Arabian horse.

They have an organization known as Half Arabian Association of Pennsylvania, of which Joan is treasurer. They have several activities. They have at least one horse show a year. It is an open horse show. This year it was held at the Lancaster Riding Club and Joan helped at the secretary's stand and also collected the \$3 stall fee and saw that the horses were in the right stall. They had around 65 horses in 26 different classes.

The show was at Carlisle last year. They try to meet at different sections of the state for the benefit of people who exhibit.

In June the association took a tour of New Bolton Center. They also have trail rides.

Joan is the daughter of John A. and Mary Snyder of Mountville. Mr. Snyder is a Pennsylvania Power & Light Company power house operator at Engle-side and his father also worked for PP&L. Mary was born and raised on a farm near Landis Valley and at Millway.

Joan took a commercial course and graduated from Hempfield High School in 1964. She has a license to be a beautician, having had 10 months of training at Emile's Hairdressing Academy in Lancaster after graduating from high school. She then worked at Hamilton Watch Co.

4½ years. She was on watch work one year and on military work 3½ years. She did piece work on a punch press. She said this paid better than being a beautician unless you had your own shop. She has been a milk tester over a year and says, "I like it a lot better than working at Hamilton Watch."

Joan does beautiful work in ceramics. She buys the greenware and finishes the pieces. In fact she and her cousin Dawn Sourbough of Lancaster had a stand known as "Joan and Dawn Ceramic Gifts" at Meadowbrook Farmers Market at Leacock. They could not keep up with the demand, so sold their stand two months ago to John Beller who sells candles and artificial flowers.

Joan has a daughter, Louvonne Kay, better known as Kay, who is 16 months old.

The Snyders are members of St. Paul's United Methodist Church Mountville.

Joan and her mother have helped with the Lancaster Cleft Palate Clinic peach festival for several years by soliciting cakes for it and taking them to the festival. It is held in August on grounds between Pleasure Road and Clearview Avenue in Lancaster.

Joan bowled regularly on a team at Lancaster Leisure Lanes the past two winters and received a trophy.

She has another animal friend, a six year old purebred German shepherd police dog, "Loki," of which she is very fond.

Even though she is the outdoor type, Joan loves to bake cakes and cookies and do other cooking and household chores. Here's some favorite recipes:

#### BLUEBERRY BUCKLE

¾ cup sugar  
¼ cup margarine or butter  
1 egg  
½ cup milk  
2 cups flour  
½ teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 box frozen or 1 pint box fresh blueberries

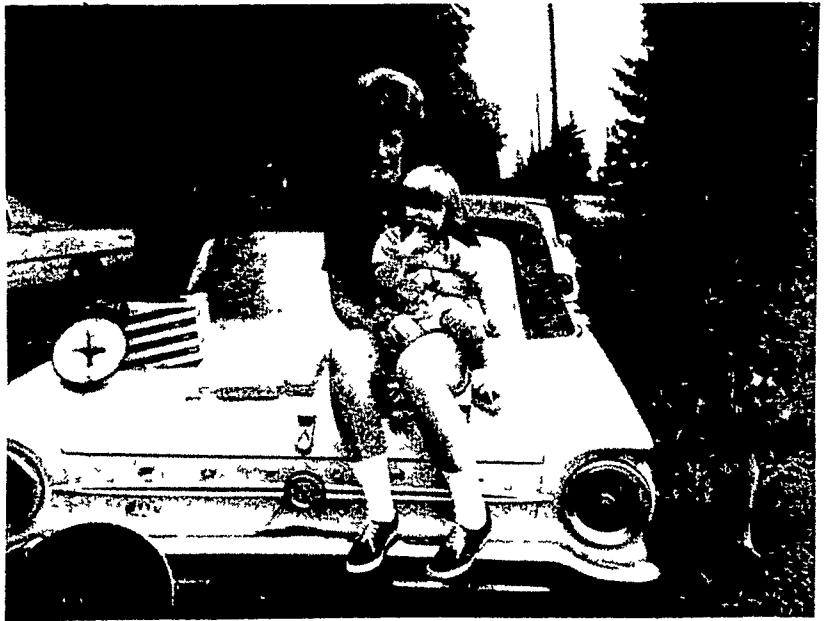
Cream sugar and shortening. Add egg and milk alternately with flour, salt and baking powder. Add blueberries. Put batter in pan, cover with crumbs mixture, made with:

¼ cup butter  
½ cup sugar  
½ cup flour  
½ teaspoon cinnamon  
Bake in 9"x13" pan at 375 degrees about 30 minutes.

#### KARTOFFEL KLOSSE

(Potato Dumplings)  
2 pound or 6 raw potatoes.  
4 slices white bread  
1 teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon pepper  
1 onion grated  
1 teaspoon minced parsley

(Continued on Page 18)



Joan Snyder and daughter Kay pose on the deck of her car as she loads her milk testing equipment to go to a dairy farm. She advertises milk with two stickers on the deck "Stay Trim With Milk" and "Test Don't Guess DHIA". Loki, her police dog, sees her off.

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