

Restaurant crew her responsibility at Lampeter Fair

By SALLY BAIR
Feature Writer

When the last week of September rolls around Mrs. J. Wade Groff leaves her cucumbers and tomatoes on the vines at her 644 Beaver Valley Pike farm and heads for the Fair Restaurant at the Lampeter Fair. The tradition was begun by Evelyn 14 years ago, but the pace has increased in the last three years since she's been in charge of scheduling kitchen help.

The Fair Restaurant is run by the Board of Directors, of which Evelyn has been a member for 11 years, and community members. They serve lunch and full course dinners each of the three days of the fair. The menus vary each day and the selection includes about 10 items, but each day has a specialty. On Wednesday there is chicken corn soup for lunch, from 11-1:00 p.m., and roast chicken for supper, from 5-7 p.m. On Thursday you can choose chicken pot pie for lunch and roast beef in the evening. And on Friday, it's beef stew for lunch and baked ham for supper.

Mrs. Groff says, "I don't help to season the food, so I can say this - the meals are really good. I chop onions and wash celery, but my main responsibility is to get help lined up."

Lining up the help includes sending letters to nearly 100 people and asking for a response by card or by phone as to when they would like to help in the restaurant. Mrs. Groff estimates that about 25 people

help daily on about four different shifts, beginning at 9 a.m. and ending at 9 p.m. She said she tries to go as soon as she gets her work done in the morning and often doesn't leave until nearly 10 p.m. "It's a rather hectic week for a family."

The community women respond willingly, and Mrs. Groff notes, "We get a few new ones each year. Most really enjoy it. You know it must be fun or in this day and age people wouldn't do it without money. We joke and kid while we work."

For the restaurant workers, chores actually begin on Tuesday before the fair starts when they cook the chicken and make applesauce Mrs. Groff admits with a laugh, "I have to let everything go that week, but I'm hoping my pickles will be about finished. Some years they are not, and then I work early in the morning and late at night. But I'm not someone who just keeps on working - some things don't get done."

This is the 53rd annual fair, and the restaurant is in its 21st year. At first Evelyn recalls, "They served a few judges, a few farmers and cattlemen and the state police who helped with the fair. Now we serve nearly 500 meals each evening and 100 at lunch. It seems to grow gradually each year." Mrs. Groff credited Mrs. Leroy Andrews and Mrs. Isaac Herr with doing a wonderful job for 18 years in

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Mrs. J. Wade Groff must check her records carefully as she makes out the dining room schedule for the fair.



Making egg cheese is a favorite job of Mrs. Groff's. Here's a perfect mold, ready to be eaten.



Playing the piano is something Mrs. Bowers enjoys, but only for herself.



In her back yard, Mrs. Bowers enjoys some of her many varieties of flowers.

Homestead Notes

She has 44 yr. career in canned goods dept. at New Holland Fair

By SALLY BAIR
Feature Writer

For 44 years Mrs. Parke W. Bowers has been found in the canned goods department of the New Holland Farm Show - for 42 of those years she's been running that division as its chairman. That means she's seen a lot of canned goods over the years - and made a lot of friends.

Martha Bowers, Leola, says, "There's tricks in all trades," and she must know them all in the canning division of the Show. There are 77 categories of canned goods, not including jams and jellies, and each year Mrs. Bowers faithfully records the numbers of entries in a notebook. When she started keeping records in 1950 there were 353 entries by 57 people. In 1977 there were 511 entries from 90 people. "The numbers," Mrs. Bowers says, "depends a good bit on the weather. If it's dry there's less."

Along with the number of entries, Mrs. Bowers also records the kind of weather fairgoers enjoyed. Some years there was "summer weather," sometimes it was "dry," and occasionally it was very rainy.

What's the most popular canned item at the show? It's pickles, without a doubt, Mrs. Bowers declared. "A lot of people can pickles who don't can anything else. Some don't bring anything but pickles." She added, "Fruits are a little harder to handle."

In the earlier annals of fair judging, pickles were not opened to be tasted by the judges, but were judged solely by ap-

pearances as are other canned goods. This has been changed, however, and Mrs. Bowers points out, "It's the only way to tell how they taste, but winners are selected according to a judge's taste." She noted further that some pickles which look really nice in the jar don't taste all that great when opened. She said she enjoys tasting some of the pickles: "We're regular pickle faces in my family." But as chairman she said she must remain impartial.

At the New Holland Farm Show most entries in the canned goods division are not from farm people, Mrs. Bowers said "Usually the exhibitors can't wait 'til we're done to see how they've done. People come through after the judging hunting their own jar."

Despite the fact that there are 77 categories, which seemingly would cover every possible canned food, Mrs. Bowers says that each year there is something brought in that must go in a miscellaneous category. One item which no longer appears in the catalogue is canned rabbit. "We used to get a lot of it, but we cut it out," Mrs. Bowers said. "And we cut out picallily - it was never made right."

Mrs. Bowers admits that the Farm Show is hard work, but added, "It helps you get out among people. People have learned to know me, and often come and say, 'well, here we are again.' The job is very short-lived, she points out. "As quick as the last can is judged we can leave. We just make

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