

Four Lancaster girls neatly tucked district wins away

These 4-H'ers 'seam' to enjoy sewing

BY SALLY BAIR
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A love of sewing and attention to detail are the common threads which bind the Lancaster countians who won the 4-H Capitol Region Fashion Review last week. Each of the three senior winners and the junior winner worked long hours on making the smallest features of their garment perfect - and the patience paid off in the reward of being a top winner for the eight-county area.

Jennie Phillips, Lori Kenepp and Beka Baum will travel to 4-H State Days at Penn State next week and compete for the opportunity to travel to 4-H Congress in Chicago. Stephanie Schaich, the junior division winner from the County does not compete further but will be eligible next year.

Sixteen-year-old Jennie Phillips, 222 Spruce Street, New Holland, is a two-time winner, and she exemplifies the attitude of the seamstresses as they select and complete their garments for 4-H. Jennie admits with a laugh that her ultimate goal is to go to Chicago and says to keep herself going she makes huge signs such as, "This could be your way to Penn State." She adds, "When I'm sewing I don't turn on the television. I get some nice music and keep sewing."

In her sixth year with the Garden Spot 4-H Club, Jennie selected a skirt and blazer of 95 percent polyester and five percent nylon and a 100 percent polyester dobbie weave blouse for her Create with Fabrics project. She describes it as a "business suit, nice and clean cut." It is her work on the blouse that sets apart a winner from an average sewer. The blouse fabric has dots woven into the material and to ensure identical cuffs, Jennie counted the minute dots until she had 17 one way and 50 around the cuff. Each cuff is perfect and folded exactly along a row of dots.

Surprisingly, the outfit was not Jennie's first choice for her 4-H project. She wanted to work with a new fabric and decided on a velveteen jacket and wool skirt. However, she never found just the right wool for the skirt, so she changed her mind and upon entering a fabric store she spotted her winning combination of fabrics.

When selecting her garment she says, "I tried to keep in mind what the judges might like."

Jennie's sewing on her 4-H project came mostly in the evenings because she holds down a fulltime job as lifeguard at the New Holland community pool. She also found time to attend 4-H Leadership Congress at Penn State, take a CPR course and an advanced first aid class this summer. She said, "I did most of the sewing during the night and I spent a few nights sewing all night. When I'm sewing at night I get really picky and I want it just right." For moral support, her mother slept on the sofa by the sewing machine so Jennie could wake her and ask advice as needed.

President of the New Holland Club.

Jennie is also a teen leader in the skirt project.

Sewing is a joy for Jennie. When asked the advantages of home sewing, she replied without hesitating, "Seventeen dots one way and 50 the other." Then she added, "You don't have threads sticking out all over and seams don't pull out. Your clothes fit better and you don't have to spend hours trying on clothes and still come home without anything. I also save a lot of money."

To choose her wardrobe, Jennie says, "I get magazines and I go to good stores and look and decide what I'd like to have. I like having new clothes." She says she now has many basic patterns which she uses without altering.

At Garden Spot High School where she'll be a junior in September, Jennie is a member of the rifle team and works with Junior Achievement, something she calls the "high point of the year." She does statistics for basketball and baseball and sings in the chorus. This year she says she plans to concentrate on her studies with an eye on college.

Jennie starts planning her next year's 4-H project in the fall and winter, saying she likes to make a garment for fall and fabric is readily available in stores. "I like complication in my outfits. I like something that looks like I put a lot into it. The work always pays off." She also reflects, "You don't remember the bad times after you've made the outfit. Now it doesn't seem so bad."

Jennie is quick to credit the leaders of her 4-H Club for part of her success. Her mother is one of the many talented leaders of this club which seems to have an edge on winning. Jennie explains, "We have excellent leaders and have talented girls coming up. You have to have a knack for it."

Fifteen-year-old Lori Kenepp, New Holland R3, quickly agrees with Jennie's assessment of her 4-H club leaders. Also a six-year veteran of the Garden Spot Club, Lori says, "I call on my leaders if I have questions as I sew." "They are really particular," Lori's mother says with respect.

Lori was also particular, and needed a lot of patience as she worked. She chose a Vogue pattern which features lace collar and tucks, and after sewing half of the 56 tucks on the front bodice, discovered that the pattern did not match at the shoulders. After consultation with her leaders and some minute measuring, the answer was to redo the bodice, leaving out some of the required tucks. The dress came out beautifully, but Lori has written a letter to the company.

"I did the whole dress in one week," Lori says. "I lived at the sewing machine." She also works parttime at the Good and Plenty Restaurant.

She will be traveling to Penn State next week, and says, "Jennie's been telling me

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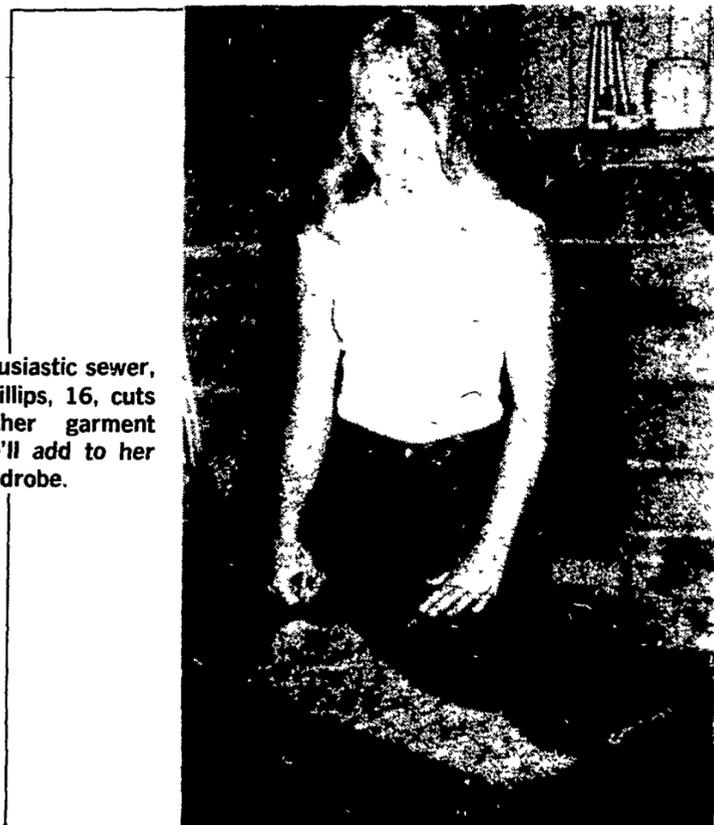
Beka Baum, 15, works on a new garment. Her last featured 160 pin tucks at the neckline and waist, and took long hours of work and untold patience.



Ideas for projects come from everywhere. Here Stephanie studies some pattern books to choose just the right garment to have a winning combination.



Hand sewing is a large part of these professional-looking 4-H projects. Lori works in the family room of her home, as she checks out the hem on her dress.



An enthusiastic sewer, Jennie Phillips, 16, cuts out another garment which she'll add to her school wardrobe.