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Eckel wins PFA's president's post



Lackawanna County's Keith Eckel, right, became the youngest elected president in PFA history on Wednesday when he defeated Franklin County's D. Eugene Gayman for the post. Gayman, left, was reelected vice president.

BY SHEILA MILLER

HERSHEY — In what was probably the most hotly contested election in the recent history of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, voting delegates from across the Commonwealth cast their ballots to elect Lackawanna Countyman Keith Eckel as president of the 23,376-member family farm organization.

The youngest PFA president ever elected, Eckel, at age 34, defeated PFA vice president D. Eugene Gayman of Franklin County who also was actively seeking the highest seat in PFA.

The Hershey Convention Center's delegate session room was packed with PFA members and other interested bystanders as the election process commenced Wednesday. An anticipative electricity seemed to be generated in the spacious room as several onlookers bemoaned the fact that

bets hadn't been wagered on the outcome of the election.

The PFA nominating committee spokesman announced that Eckel, the incumbent president who filled the post after the resignation of Eugene Thompson last August, and Gayman, the vice president, were their choices for the election. When no other nominations were forthcoming from the floor, the election process was in full swing.

Both candidates brought the delegates and others in the room to their feet, applauding, as they delivered their reasons for seeking the office of PFA president.

Gayman, a Franklin County dairyman, cited his commitment to public service with PFA being his first priority. His 20-plus years of service, he said, has helped him in preparing mentally and physically for the responsibilities of the office. "I have had the experience of coming up the PFA ladder — and I didn't miss many steps," he declared.

Eckel, who operates a dairy and

cash crop farm with his father and brother, confessed that seeking the presidency was the "most humbling" experience of his life.

In the final tally, the PFA delegates selected the incumbent president to continue in his role. Eckel will benefit from Gayman's years of experience since the vice president was reelected for another term.

Other PFA nominees for the office of vice president included Northampton County's John Ackerman, Chester County's Arthur Hershey, and Berks County's John Koch.

Eckel has been a member of PFA's State Board of Directors since 1976. In other farm-related service, he helped to found and served as a member on the State Board of the Pennsylvania Council of Cooperative Extension Associations. He has been a director of the State Council of Farm Workers and served on the

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At the District Beef Show and Sale

Dauphin 4-H'er takes championship

BY DEBBIE KOONTZ

LANCASTER — Dauphin County 4-H'ers had cause to celebrate Tuesday at the Southeast District Baby Beef Show and Sale as Judge Bill Holloway of Seven Valleys, York County, named one of their co-members, Dwayne Messick, Grand Champion Steer titleholder.

Dwayne, the son of Alvin and Fern Messick of R4 Elizabethtown sold the 1215-pound Chuanina Angus cross to the Lancaster Stockyards, host of the event, for \$2 per pound — more than a dollar above the average which rested at 72.31 cents per pound.

Although Dwayne says he thought he would do well, he admits to being a little surprised at his accomplishments. He has 21 head of cattle on the 114-acre farm near Hershey he operates with his dad.

According to Dauphin Extension agent, Fred Rudy, this is the first time Dauphin County has gone home with the Grand Champion award.

Leaving the showing with Reserve Champion honors was a Lancaster Countian — Tracey Landis of Quarryville.

Tracey, the daughter of Jim and Linda Landis, sold her 1230-pound Purebred Angus to Wilmer Kreider, known as Willie the Butcher. Through her tears of sadness, which stemmed from having to say goodbye to her steer, Tracey watched as Kreider bid her steer up to \$1.06 per pound.

Tracey purchased the steer from Sam Wylie of Nottingham in April.

Two special awards were donated preceding the sale to this year's top showpeople for Lancaster County, as named at Monday's county show:

—An Angus Chuanina crossbred

calves was donated by the Intelligencer Journal daily newspaper of Lancaster to Deb Greider, top showperson. The Intell annually presents the county's top showmanship winner with a calf who in turn will raise it and show it in next year's competition. The presentation was made by Intell editor William Schultz.

—Chris Little, who placed as reserve champion showman received a \$300 check donated by Lancaster Farming newspaper. The check was presented by

publisher Robert G. Campbell who told the audience of buyers that sometimes there is a fine line between first and second and Chris' efforts should be rewarded.

Receiving Champion Showman award at the round-up was a Chester County native, Sheila Fairbairn of West Chester. Sheila showed a 1105-pound Lamousin crossbred which also captured top honors in the lightweight class. This winner, the daughter of Ernest and Iris Fairbairn, admits to

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Dwayne Messick of R2 Elizabethtown sold his Grand Champion steer, weighing in at 1,215 pounds, to the Lancaster Stockyards at Tuesday's district baby beef show and sale. Holding the blue ribbon is Lancaster Stockyards president William McCoy, left.

Inside This Week's...



Farmers from across the state gather for the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Farmers Association to set policies and present awards...A32.

Sellers and buyers huddle in a tent, oblivious to the weather, to watch the Willsholm Invitational — an all embryo transplant Holstein sale in Somerset County...A26.

Lancaster's Red Rose 4-H'ers and Dauphin's beef club members hold their county round-ups. Find out more on pages...D8 and D2.

Rinehart Farms female draws \$70,000 bid

BY DONNA TOMMELLEO
TANEYTOWN, Md. — A Romandale Reflection Marquis daughter sold for \$70,000 on Tuesday at the Rinehart Farms Holstein sale.

Rinehart Dawfinette, a Very Good 89 2-year-old out of in-

Dairy

Zimmerman's Holsteins, A24; Bollinger's DHIA record, A22; Ayrshire Breeders, D7; Bedford County DHIA Annual Report, D14; Huntsdale Stock Farms, D23.

Columns

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ternationally-known Rinehart Apollo Dawfin, brought top bid from Pennsylvania breeder Charles Hershberger, Martinsburg.

The 69 head of registered Holsteins averaged \$4,829 in the sale managed by R. Austin Backus, Inc.

More than 1,000 prospective buyers crowded into the sale tent

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Home and Youth

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