

Meet Sam Minor -- Pa. Holstein Association President

BY BARBARA RADER
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WASHINGTON — Nestled 30 miles south of Pittsburgh, in the heart of a community called Eighty-Four, lies the busy homestead of the newly elected Pennsylvania Holstein Association president.

And busy it's been since 1971 when Sam and Bev Minor purchased the farm after seeing it advertised in the paper. Both Western Pennsylvania natives, Sam and Bev wanted to secure a small farm but yet be able to expand if so desired. They also wanted to be close to either of their families.

Another goal was to give their four daughters and son the opportunity to grow and expand in the farm business and work with people in promoting milk and milk products. They didn't overlook the thought of a good, sound herd either.

So when Bev saw the ad, she said she quickly replied, "That's the place."

With limited capital, the Minors purchased the 81-acre farm complete with an 1805 house and an 1844 barn. This location has proved to be that special place for them to build their market, The Springhouse, where upwards of 500 people go through the store a day.

The continued objective of The Springhouse, which normally sells 300 gallons of milk each day, is to provide quality milk for its customers. The number of gallons

of milk sold daily increases during the summer due to increased traffic flow for ice cream products and fresh farm produce, especially sweet corn, Sam explained.

As far as the business is concerned, Sam is directly involved with merchandising, but the merchandising effort here is on milk and other farm produce, he said. In addition to milk, different kinds of cheeses, chocolate milk, buttermilk and butter can be obtained from the attractive antique country store.

Besides marketing milk, the Minors also grow their own sweet corn and pumpkins, and make homemade pastries, pies, rolls and other baked goods daily. In addition, homemade soups, salads and sandwiches for the lunch time crowd coming in from several businesses around the area are making food service the fastest growth end in the business, Sam said. He added that Sam's smoked hams are a big demand item, especially around the holidays.

Finding another marketing outlet, the Minors have gone in partnership with Bev's cousins, Susan and Gary Skaggs, and opened a Springhouse store at Station Square, in The Freight House Shops in Pittsburgh. The store features a country atmosphere with an ice cream parlor.

All food, which Gary delivers daily to the Pittsburgh outlet, is prepared at the main Springhouse. The Pittsburgh store employs nine

Attractive antique atmosphere featured



Sam and Bev Minor pause for a moment in their store, The Springhouse, which has an attractive antique atmosphere and features milk and cheese products.

people during the winter and between 12 to 15 in the summer. Many of the employees are relatives, but the Minors do hire outside help also.

Besides the overall business management, Sam oversees the herd and general farm operation. Bev does daily records, and she's in charge of The Springhouse. Their children also take part in the business and are knowledgeable about the dairy, dealing directly with the cows all the way down to serving the customer the finished product - MILK.

Marcia, the oldest daughter, is a junior at Penn State where both Sam and Bev graduated. An agricultural business management major, Marcia is currently serving as the Ms. College of Agriculture representative, is president of the Dairy Science Club and is a Lion Ambassador. Second oldest Kristen, better known as Tee, is also a Penn Stater. She is a freshmen majoring in hotel and restaurant management and is a member of the Penn State gymnastics team.

Next in line are twins Jill and Jody. Both high school seniors, they too will attend Penn State. Jill plans to major in human development, and Jody has chosen dairy science with emphasis on basic sciences. The youngest and only son is Sam, a high school

Springhouse is pride & joy



The Springhouse is the Minor's pride and joy.

freshman. Although college is far into the future, he will most likely attend Penn State also.

In 1975 when Sam and Bev decided to start their business, it took just two weeks before they started milking their cows, processing milk in their own plant and selling it through their Springhouse store. They currently milk 60 head of cattle, mostly registered Holsteins with a few Jerseys tucked away here and there. The grade portion of the herd, Sam explained, was derived from pressure to keep milk on the shelves, especially in the early years, as the demand had increased at this time.

Since starting the operation, Sam has bred practically the entire herd through Atlantic Technical Services. He believes

he is fortunate to have a good, longtime technician, Emerson Morrison, to provide this service.

Emphasis in the breeding program has been on high PDM bulls with a balance for functional type. "During the past couple of years, we've tried to give greater awareness to fat test and to PDT," Sam said. "Past sires that have contributed the most to our herd were Molly Chief and Marvex.

The "star" cow in the Minor herd is an Ivanhoe Star daughter, Princess Merry D Gay Star. In six records she's averaged 24,382 of milk and 754 butterfat with a new cow index value +300. Her two daughters, full sisters by Marvex, averaged 25,188 milk and 766 fat and 28,000 milk with 731 fat, respectively.

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Fresh rolls & pastries



Bev stacks the shelves in The Springhouse with fresh daily baked rolls and pastries.

Standing with 'Star' of Minor herd



Sam Minor proudly stands with his Ivanhoe Star daughter, Princess Merry D Gay Star, who has produced 24,382 pounds of milk and 754 pounds of fat.

Getting ready to milk



Pa. Holstein Association president Sam Minor prepares one of his cows for milking in his four-stall parlor.