

# Lake View Farm likes them long and lean

BY JACK HUBLEY

**EAST BERLIN** — Carl Brothers had a dream. And in that dream was a field of lush, green grass studded with shiny black Angus cattle. Years have passed since this Adams County cattleman first envisioned his role in the beef business, and now that image has changed from black to white.

Perched on the shore of Lake Meade, a few miles north of East Berlin, is the redwood A-frame home of Carl and Margie Brothers, breeders of full blood Chianina cattle.

What is currently the Brothers' full-time residence began 14 years ago as a lakeside summer retreat with seven acres, one barn and a horse.

But as his daughter, Pam's, interest in showing horses began to wane, Dr. Brothers, currently chief of oral surgery at Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, decided to indulge his long-standing interest in the cattle business. In 1978 Lake View Farm acquired its first herd of Angus-Chianina cross steers and a cattleman was born.

Though the busy oral surgeon enjoyed his new avocation, he soon concluded that breeding his own animals and growing his own feed was the only way to succeed in the cattle business.

Accordingly, he plunged full-steam ahead, purchasing two full blood Chianinas from Nittany Farms in State College, and traveling to Texas for a look at other representatives of the breed. The following year the Brothers traveled to Italy, their stock's homeland, in an effort to gain an insight into the direction their breeding program must take.

Carl confides that it was the

breed's appearance that kindled his initial attraction. The animals' size, grace and coloration combined to present the most fetching bovine package Brothers had ever seen.

Researching the breed, the family found Chianinas to be the largest of all cattle, with mature bulls packing as much as two tons on a frame reaching six feet in height. Such animals were reportedly capable of gaining 4.5 pounds a day for a conversion rate of one pound of weight for every 6.1 pounds of feed. Most interesting of all, was the fact that Chianinas yielded the leanest of all beef carcasses.

This latter bit of information was a revelation to Dr. Brothers, a heart attack victim with a fondness for steak and a wary eye for cholesterol intake.

Possibly the oldest breed in the world, the Chianina's roots predate the Roman Empire, and the massive animals still serve triple duty in their native Italy as milk and meat producers, and draft cattle.

Though the breed became known to the free world during World War II, due to legal restrictions, the first semen wasn't imported until 1971.

Cattlemen were quick to recognize the giant breed's virtues. Ease of calving, high average daily gains, and a long-legged bull's mobility and ability to service large numbers of cows were all factors leading to the infusion of Chianina blood into many of the smaller British breeds.

The Chi's (pronounced "keys") popularity is reflected at shows across the country, with Chianina crosses named as grand cham-



In over his head, Dr. Brothers demonstrates the gentle nature of his full blood Chianina bulls.

pions in 33 state shows last year. For the past eight years every Pennsylvania Farm Show grand champion steer has claimed Chi ancestry.

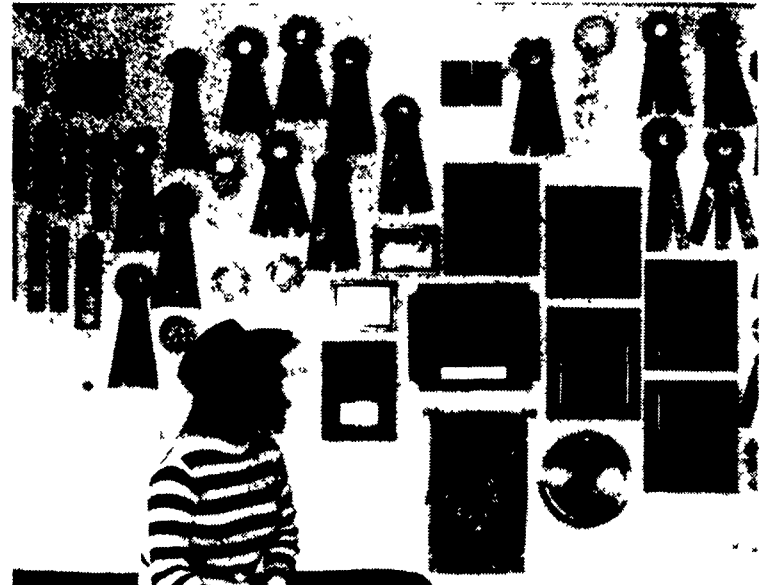
And enthusiasm for the breed at Lake View Farm has paralleled nationwide acceptance of Chianina traits. Starting with a single barn and two head in 1979, Lake View has evolved to 21 full bloods, and two barns with a third under construction. The original barn now houses heifers and show animals, and a larger building now being built will be used for hay and implement storage. The family will begin construction of a fourth facility this summer to be used as a herd sire building.

An open-front barn now containing the main herd will soon become Lake View's bull test center, with the first bull sale slated for next spring.

"The only way to breed intelligently is to know what is going into the animal, and what that feed input yields," Dr. Brothers emphasizes when speaking of the proposed test station.

It's the breeder's intention to follow the guidelines of the Italian Chianina Association, and to cull heavily, with the lower 50 percent of his test bulls being sold for meat, and the elite half being sold as breeding stock.

Through these expansions and improvements, Dr. Brothers hopes to be supporting a herd of 60 full blood Chianinas within three years.



Karen Brothers reviews the fruits of her efforts in the show ring; testimony to the award-winning qualities of Lake View Chi's.



Margie Brothers shows just how big a nine-month old can be. The young bull is LVF Promo.



Celebrating his second birthday this August, LVF Piero was named grand champion at both the Eastern National Livestock Expo, and the York Fair last year.



Located near Lake Meade in Adams County, Lake View Farm is home to a herd of 21 full blood Chianinas. The new barn, at left, will house implements and hay. A herd sire barn is slated for construction this summer.

Such an ambitious undertaking requires all hands on deck at Lake View Farm. With Carl's wife, Margie, taking care of feeding chores in the morning, Carl and daughter Karen take over during the late afternoon and evening.

Much of the herd's reputation among breeders across the country has been due to the efforts of Karen and her older sister, Pam.

Hitching their stock trailer to the family's pickup last summer, the two girls displayed their award winning string at shows in Indiana, Kansas, North Carolina and

Missouri. Returning with a truckful of ribbons and plaques, the girls climaxed the season at Timonium's Eastern National Livestock Exposition, garnering junior grand champion heifer and champion full blood bull honors, as well as grand champion full blood bull, reserve grand champion full blood heifer, and senior champion heifer awards in open competition.

But with Pam a busy medical student at Temple, and Karen slated for admission to F&M in Lancaster, show duties will likely