Gwen Yoder is crowned 1984 Lancaster Co. Poultry Queen

BY SUZANNE KEENE

LANCASTER — Magic was in the air as Gwendolyn Yoder was crowned 1984 Lancaster County Poultry Queen during a pageant at the Farm and Home Center last Friday evening.

In an evening filled with magic tricks, the daughter of Vernon and Barbara Yoder, R1 Christiana, assumed the responsiblity of helping to promote the poultry industry in the coming year. Gwen said she is looking forward to meeting the "challenge of giving people new hope," after the avian influenzia struck down many Lancaster County flocks in the past year.

During her reign, Gwen said she hopes to educate people about the poultry industry, centering on laying hens and the egg itself, areas she believes she knows the most about.

Raised on a poultry farm with 15,000 laying hens, Gwen has had first hand experience working in the industry. Her primary chore on the farm is collecting the eggs.

Gwen is a 1983 graduate of Lancaster Mennonite High School, where she was a class secretary and a member of the student council and chorus. She also played basketball and softball, but her favorite sport, she said, is volleyball. She is currently employed by Yoder's Country Market.

Each contestant was required to present a 30-second radio spot promoting eggs. Using Legg's eggs as props for her presentation, Gwen explained the nutritional benefits of eggs. "Nothing beats a great pair of eggs," she concluded.

In an impromptu question and answer session, master of ceremonies Bob Alexander of WHP radio asked Gwen what she would do if she were asked to say something on the radio about Lancaster County's poultry industry. She replied that she would tell listeners that Lancaster County is the first in the state in poultry production and then inform them of the good points of eggs and the industry.

Margaret Herr, the daughter of Robert D. and Betty W. Herr of R2 Narvon, was selected alternate poultry queen and will be assisting Gwen in her promotional activities this year. Margaret will be a senior at Garden Spot High School, where she has been active in track and on the honor roll.

Margaret is very active in FFA, currently acting as county FFA president and chapter treasurer. She has also been involved in livestock and poultry judging and has placed third in the state in public speaking.

Also competing for the title were Denise Mumma, the daughter of Clay and Hilma Mumma, R1 Mount Joy, and Tracy Lynne Prinz, the daughter of Charles and Donna Prinz, 255 Boomerang Drive.

In her closing remarks, 1983 Poultry Queen Brenda Hershey said: "I've made more omlets this year than I'm sure I'll make the rest of my lifetime." Referring to the avian influenza, Brenda said: "We are an industry that has found many solutions to our problems."

In an address to poultry industry representatives present at the pageant, County Commissioner James Huber commended Lancaster County poultrymen for their perseverance in a difficult year.

"The test of a great farmer is his ability to bounce back and respond under adversity," Huber said, noting that Lancaster County farmers did just that in the past year.

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners recently declared August as Poultry Month in recognition of the poultry farmers' ability to withstand adversity.

Judges for the pageant were Vicky Kolenik, 1976 Poultry Queen; Robert Zook, American Bank; and Kay Swartz-Rentzel.

1984 Lancaster County Poultry Queen Gwen Yoder poses with her alternate, Margaret Herr. Both girls will be working to promote the poultry industry in the coming year.

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