

State archery winner sharpens mental skills with shooting sports

BY JOYCE BUPP
Staff Correspondent

LEWISBERRY — Tom Itle was right on target when he joined 4-H at age eight.

And, this Redland High School senior is still hitting the mark through 4-H. Less than a year after he released the first arrow from his Jennings compound bow, Tom Itle was declared the state's 4-H archery winner.

It all began when his parents, Tom and Nancy Itle, moved their family to the Lewisberry area ten years ago. Seeing a need for a localized 4-H group and having an interest in project work, they organized the Redland 4-H Community Club.

"Since they were involved, the whole family attended meetings," remembers this outgoing and enthusiastic young man. "The kids accepted me right away, even though I was only seven then."

In his first year as an "official" club member, Itle signed up for geology, bicycle and a baking project. Later, his interests would broaden into leathercraft, vegetables, strawberries and leadership areas.

But it has been in the field of archery that Itle is hitting it big. York County's shooting sports 4-H club was a new one this year, attracting widespread enrollment. Itle signed up for the archery area, boosted with encouragement from an uncle who has competitively shot for a number of years and who holds state archery honors.

In addition to the ten-week course with the club, and leaders, who "really gave me a lot of help," Itle determinedly practiced on his own time. The outdoor range where his uncle shoots is nearby in Harrisburg. Itle figures he spent an average of three sessions a week there, perfecting his techniques and aim. Also, he's quick to credit his parents' support.

"They let me go practice as often as I needed and never complained. I still tried to get my chores done at home, though," he hastily adds.

In addition, there was more practice in the family's back yard, where Itle and his dad have built a target range for his archery interest.

Archery, this young expert figures, is a "head" sport, demanding intense mental concentration. But Itle says he enjoys such challenges and believes the sport is helping him learn concentration and discipline.

He hopes that these qualities will carry over in his pursuit of his career goals. Planning a major in economics with a minor in accounting, Itle hopes to become a corporate lawyer. For right now, he expresses an interest in finding a college where he can combine studies with his sharpening shooting skills, perhaps with a scholarship arrangement.

"I like business, and I like people," says the Redland teen. "4-H has helped me develop mentally, taught me responsibility, and helped me with leadership skills, like getting up in front of people."

Among his leadership activities are serving as county council treasurer, local club president for three years, participating in State Days and Leadership Congress, and representing the county at Capitol Days in meetings with local legislators.

The 4-H program has also put cash in his bank account, as his initial hundred-plant strawberry project blossomed into a part-time business. Itle now has an eleven-row planting, with more than 800 plants, and banks his berry profits toward college. Part of those earnings this year went toward a typewriter.



Tom Itle combined two of his favorite 4-H skills, archery and leathercraft, to design this delicately crafted quiver for his shooting arrows. It won him a blue ribbon at county roundup and the York Fair.

Although there is no national recognition of 4-H archery as a project awards area, Itle has spoken with a few people about the future possibilities. He plans to continue working with the sport, perhaps as a leader, since he has progressed to the limit in 4-H project work as an archer.

Itle constantly stresses the safety angle that the 4-H archery skills teach, noting that members first and foremost are taught that

they are handling a deadly weapon and must exercise extreme care in shooting.

Then, too, there is one sideline that he mentions, almost as an afterthought. Archery season for whitetail deer opens in just a few weeks. It will be his first. And already he can see the exact spot where he will be his first morning out, a 4-H'er putting his skills—hopefully—to use in a secluded spot in the northern York County hills.

Indiana County teens say 4-H helped shape their futures

BY BETH NESBIT
Staff Correspondent

INDIANA — By speaking with the following final-year 4-H members from Indiana County, it is plain to see how much the 4-H program has helped them establish themselves in a world of uncertainty.

Jody Nesbit, the daughter of Jerry and Karen Nesbit of Marchland, is a ten-year member of the Northern Indiana County Dairy Club. She has carried a wide variety of dairy projects throughout the past ten years, including breeding several champion registered Holsteins. She is currently an important part of the Nesbit dairy operation.

Missie Mallino, the daughter of John Mallino, Marion Center, has taken projects in home and family management, home environment, photography and cooking. She has

participated in the National 4-H Conference in Washington, D.C. and National 4-H Congress in Chicago. She was also Indiana County's 1984 4-H queen. Missie is currently a freshman at Indiana University of Pennsylvania where she is majoring in business administration.

Suzie Ruffner, the daughter of Barbara Ruffner, Indiana, has been a member of the Sleepy Hollow 4-H Horse Club for ten years. The youngest of five, Suzie has had two brothers and two sisters to follow in the 4-H horse program.

Her family has owned horses for a quarter of a century and Suzie has owned Registered Quarter Horses for the past six years. She is presently employed by the Savings and Trust Company in Indiana.

Lori Blankenship, the daughter

Don Welk

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confidence he has learned through his 4-H experiences will help him do well no matter what his job is.

A member of the Garden Spot Chapter of the Future Farmers of America, Don has carried corn, dairy and tobacco projects. He won a first in the state tobacco proficiency contest, with his six acres of tobacco. He earned his

Keystone Farmer degree in 1985.

Don stresses that getting to know people is one of the benefits he has enjoyed in 4-H. "You help them out and they help you out. I think I learned leadership by helping other 4-H'ers do things."

For Don, being a 4-H'er has helped him grow in many ways, and will prove a firm foundation for him as he begins working toward a career in the dairy field.

Michelle Dean

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January, she says candidly, "I am going to cry when I sell my steer. I always get so attached to them. It has been a part of me for 11 years."

However, she says, "I realize that it is time to go on to something else."

And so, she will conclude a

rewarding 4-H career, with many ribbons, trophies and awards to her credit. But it is the intangible rewards that will remain with Michelle the longest.

"Having the steers has taught me responsibility, and learning new skills has helped keep my interest. I am definitely glad I joined," Michelle concludes.



Jody Nesbit is pictured with her five-year-old cow that took first place in the Pennsylvania Junior Holstein production contest.



Suzie Ruffner stands at the halter of Corais Mindy while displaying the plaque she received as Premier Showman at the Indiana County Fair.



Missie Mallino seriously studies while wearing the clown outfit she wore many times to present her winning 4-H demonstration.

in between showing horses, Lori attended the National 4-H Horse Roundup in Harrisburg and was a member of the State Horse Bowl team. Lori is currently a freshman at Indiana University of Penn-

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