

# York extension home economist retires with wide-ranging skills

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YORK — By her own description, Marcy Seckman was a "late bloomer."

The York County associate extension home economist retired Jan. 31, after 15 years with the Penn State cooperative extension service. Colleagues and friends feted her at a surprise retirement luncheon on Jan. 27 at the Outdoor Country Club.

A graduate of Ohio State University, the former Marceil Nesbitt of Lima, Ohio, spent her undergraduate years studying a clothing and textiles major. Her plans to pursue a career in the retailing field were diverted after marrying fellow engineering student Harry Seckman.

Marcy decided to put her education to work after daughter Barb, and son Greg, had reached their elementary school years. While updating her degree at Mount Mary College, a Milwaukee girls' school, Marcy also taught as a substitute home economics instructor.

She was not quite through her student teaching when Harry announced a career move that would bring the family east. They delayed the family uprooting until she had completed her student teaching work, and then moved to York during the Christmas holidays of 1969.

For the following year, Marcy worked as a home-ec substitute in several of the York area school districts. Early in 1971, she accepted a position with the extension service as a nutrition assistant with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. She was promoted two years later to the position of assistant extension home economist, and in 1978 was named an associate extension home economist.

Marcy's speciality in the home ec field has always been clothing. Through her years with extension she has worked closely with the 4-H clothing projects, helping to coordinate the annual Fashion Revue and coaching the Consumerama team.

She's also become the "pickle person" at the Extension office, handling questions from local homemakers puzzling over food preservation problems. Her husband, Harry, has long been the family's specialist in making sauerkraut and crock pickles, and Marcy's assistance to him has provided her with plenty of hands-on experience to field questions on the topic.

"Sometimes we're like the reference desk at the library," she observes, of the broad range of homemaking and family living topics directed to the extension homemakers.

Researching such questions have made Marcy something of an expert on stain removal, home safety, crafts and home arts, cooking and planning meals. Answers that eluded the extensive files of Marcy and colleagues Joan Lamberson were directed to the specialists at Penn State.

Helping people has been a satisfying part of extension work for Marcy, from offering sound basic advice to a widower facing cooking and meal planning to solving a home canned food spoilage problem for a homemaker inadvertently opening the jar seal when checking lids for proper sealing.

Teaching skills and coordinating educational programs for the Homemakers Groups sent Marcy learning techniques on topics ranging from deboning chickens to designing delicate, hand-cut lampshades.



Final preparations for retirement by Marcy Seckman included going through a variety of files on family living and related topics.

She has also developed a number of programs, including the Todder Topics newsletter, Radio for the Blind, and management programs ranging from financial planning to personal fitness.

"It's such a diversified job," she says of her "late blooming" career.

And, Marcy is quick to add that she's learned a great deal, sometimes from rather unusual sources.

Once, while registering a 4-H youngster for demonstrations, she asked him the category of his topic. His answer: "Peepies."

Mystified, Marcy questioned the youngster further, until he finally looked her in the eye and asked, "Lady, don't you know what a peepie is?"

A co-worker came to the rescue, explaining that a "peepie" is a

baby chick and went under the category of poultry.

The scope of 4-H has particularly impressed Marcy, especially the accomplishments of members in the areas of public speaking and demonstrations.

"Sleeping late," is the plan Marcy has initially for retirement.

Looking a bit further into the future, she and Harry expect to do some southern traveling during winter months. Volunteer work, probably at one of the York area hospitals, is also near the top of Marcy's list of new pursuits.

And, she doesn't totally plan to disappear from the extension scene. When next year's list of extension classes is printed, it's a good chance Marcy will be included as a teacher, sharing the myriad of skills she's learned in the extension service.

## Physically active need more carbohydrates

CAMP HILL — Physical fitness is a common goal among many people today, with fitness proponents ranging from after-dinner walkers to competing athletes.

In general, the physically-active person needs the same nutrients in the same amounts as the inactive person, says Dairy Council Inc., Southampton, PA. The major difference is the need for additional calories and the accompanying nutrients to maintain optimal body weight and, in the young, optimal growth and development.

What about the competing athlete? Are there special problems this person should be on the lookout for?

Much is often said, for one thing, about the pre-competition meal, and many myths abound as to what type of food should be eaten and how much.

The purpose of the pre-competition meal is to prevent hunger during competition. However, the stomach should not be full during the event. The reason for this is that, in general, it can take from one to four hours for the stomach to process a meal and empty it into the intestine. If athletes are nervous about the competition, this process might take longer.

Foods remaining in the stomach during competition may cause indigestion, nausea, and possibly vomiting. Athletes are advised to eat their pre-competition meal

three to four hours before competition.

What types of food are suggested for this meal? High-fat, high-protein foods, such as meats (like steaks and hamburgers) and fried foods (like French fries and doughnuts) are not digested quickly. For this reason they should be avoided or limited in the pre-competition meal.

But foods that contain a high percentage of carbohydrate are easily removed from the stomach.

Cereals, breads, pasta, muffins, pancakes, rolls, and other grain products are good sources of carbohydrate, along with fruits and vegetables. With the exception of dry beans and peas (like refried beans or blackeye peas), foods from the meat group are low in carbohydrate and high in fat and protein.

Cakes, pies, cookies, soft drinks, and sugary foods from the "others" group are high in carbohydrate, but some are high in fat and low in most other nutrients.

Whether you're in training or just trying to get in shape, your diet is important to your performance. The main difference between a training diet and a normal diet, says Dairy Council, is that the training diet is probably higher in carbohydrate. Though you still need protein, fat, vitamins, minerals, and water in your diet, you get these nutrients — as well as carbohydrates — by eating a variety of foods from the four food groups.

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