

Lancaster 4-H'er Juan Figueroa Wins in National Blue Form Contest

BY SUZANNE KEENE
Home and Youth Editor

Lancaster 4-H'er Juan Figueroa was happy, but slightly confused, when a letter arrived two weeks ago informing him that his "blue form" had topped a recent competition. He thought he had won in state competition, when in fact he was receiving a national award.

But a talk with Lancaster County 4-H agent Zoann Parker cleared up any confusion when she assured

him he had indeed won a national honor.

"When she told me that it made my day," Juan said. "I couldn't believe it at first. I honestly didn't think I was even going to place."

Juan received the honor in the foods and nutrition category of the National Blue Form Contest. To earn the award, Juan completed a 17-page "blue form" or report outlining all of his 4-H activities.

The award entitles him to an expense-paid trip to National 4-H Congress in Chicago this December.

During the six and half years he has been a member of the Lancaster City Teens Club, 18-year-old Juan has focused his 4-H activities on nutrition and physical fitness projects.

Because he entered 4-H through the Expanded Foods and Nutrition Program, Juan was limited in the variety of projects he was permitted to select. However, the 6-foot-one-inch teen notes, "I really was interested in sports."

Juan is a senior at Ephrata Christian School, where he is a forward on the basketball team; the team won the state championship in their division for the past two years. He was also a member of the all-league soccer team this year.

To stay in top physical condition, Juan jogs the three miles home from his after-school job at Burger King. His busy schedule, which begins at 5 a.m. and often ends as late as 11 p.m., allows him to waste little time. Juan said the bus ride to school takes about 45 minutes to an hour, so he uses that time study.

Juan got his start in 4-H when he saw a group of kids gathered around a college student. Upon investigation, he found a 4-H club led by Barb Herr and Jan Allen and decided to join.

Although his peers taunted him about belonging to a 4-H club, Juan opted to continue in the program. "City people think of 4-H as farming and cooking," Juan explained. His buddies considered 4-H a program for girls only.

"Jan Allen was the one who really encouraged me to continue," Juan remembers. "I

promised her I'd try for Outstanding 4-H'er."

Juan sees winning the blue form competition as one step toward that goal. "By competing in this I think I have a better chance of winning Outstanding 4-H'er," he said.

Lancaster 4-H agent Zoann Parker has only words of praise for Juan. "Juan is a one in a million kid," she said. "He has a lot of personal desire to achieve and goes the extra mile to do a good job."

Juan is also well liked among his peers and leaders, Zoann noted. Adult leaders selected Juan to be this year's 4-H camp host and he was chosen by leaders and peers to be a council member at Leadership Congress.

In addition to his most recent honor, Juan has a number of other awards to his credit. He was a

member of the Lancaster County physical fitness team, which placed ninth at State Days in 1983 and was named to the 4-H honor roll that same year. He attended Leadership Congress at Penn State two years ago.

Following high school graduation in June, Juan hopes to attend Fairhaven Baptist College to study secondary education. He credits 4-H with helping him make that decision.

As a 4-H teen leader, Juan had the opportunity to teach younger kids and to encourage them to continue in 4-H. That experience, he said, "has helped me decide what I want as my future."

That future should be a bright one if he approaches it with the same attitude he has adopted toward his 4-H activities. "I want to be like the 4-H motto says, 'to make the best better,'" Juan said.

Trailblazers 4-H Club to Host Horse Show

YORK — The Mount Zion Trailblazers 4-H Horse and Pony Club will hold an "Open Schooling Show," Saturday, June 7 at Spring Valley Park.

Featured this year will be a "Greenbroke Championship" along with English and Western championship and reserve champion. Six trophy classes, such as English and Western Equitation, Walk-Trot-Jog Equitation and 4-H Pleasure, will also be offered. Ribbons are offered to six places.

The horse must have less than two years showing experience to be eligible for classes such as Greenbroke Pleasure, Greenbroke

Riding Pattern Class, Greenbroke Break and Out.

Among the 26 classes offered are Open Grooming and Showmanship, Lead Line Equitation, Bosal Pleasure, Costume Class, Trail Class, Cross Rails Jump and Novice Hunter.

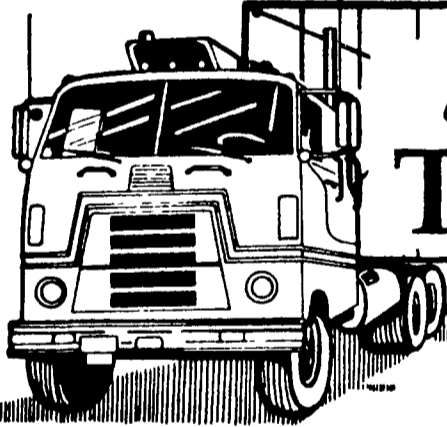
Food and refreshments will be available the day of the show. The show begins at 9 a.m. with Herm Gailey judging. Participants will pay a \$2 entry fee per class.

Copies of showlist and directions to Spring Valley Park are available by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Mount Zion Trailblazers 4-H Club, c/o Fran Knaub-Keller, 3446 Druck Valley Road, York, PA 17402.



Lancaster City 4-H'er Juan Figueroa reviews the letter informing him of his win in the National Blue Form Contest.

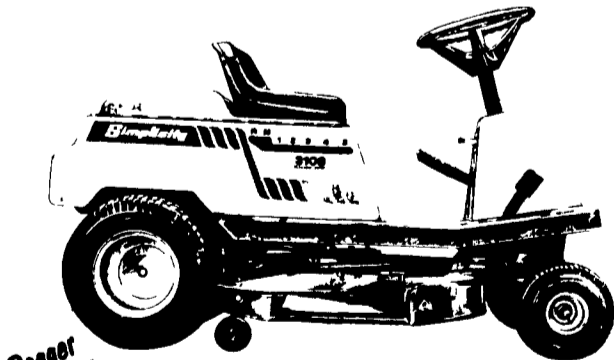
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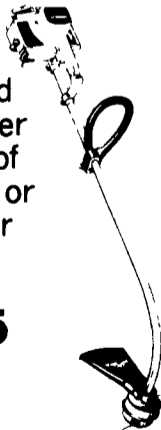
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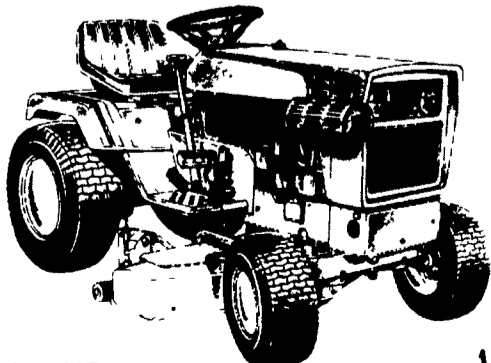
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