

Susan Eck Crowned Strawberry Queen

BY BARBARA MILLER
Lycoming County Correspondent
MUNCY - Susan Eck, daughter

of Kenny and Nancy Eck of Muncy, is the 1986 Pennsylvania Strawberry Queen. Susan was

chosen from a field of four at the second annual pageant, held Sunday, June 8, at the Lycoming Mall. Approximately 150 people attended the event.

The brown-eyed brunette will be a junior next year at Lycoming College, Williamsport. She is majoring in biology and plans to become a medical technologist.

Susan is a member of Tri-Betz, a biology honors society, and sings in the college choir.

"I know strawberries front to back," Susan stated during an outstage interview. Susan has worked during the summer for the past several years at the farm of her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Styer, who grow strawberries commercially.

She noted she has planted strawberries as well as made them into jams and jellies. If she were chosen queen, she said, her main priority would be to promote the sale of strawberries to the general

public.

As for qualities she possesses that would make her a good strawberry queen, Susan replied, "I like to meet people. I feel I can talk to people easily."

This ability to communicate she attributes in large part to enrolling in several public speaking courses while a 4-H member. For 14 years, Susan belonged to 4-H and said she particularly enjoyed raising pigs each of those years.

Susan Smith, Muncy, the 1985 Strawberry Queen, said the highlight of her reign occurred at the Farm Show when she presented a gift to Gov. Thornburgh and his wife. She advised the new queen to, "Be yourself. Have respect for yourself and most of all for God." She thanked the Pennsylvania Strawberry Growers' Association, Tom and Daisy Styer, and her family for their help during her reign.

First runner-up in the pageant was Roberta Riddell, daughter of Robert and Roxie Riddell, Montgomery. Other contestants were

Jody Derr, who resides with her grandparents, George and Polly Budman Sr., Muncy; and Kathy Murray, daughter of John and Anna Murray, Muncy.

The queen's coronation will take place at a strawberry festival scheduled next Sunday afternoon, June 15, at the Muncy Historical Society, Muncy.

The strawberry pageant became an annual event shortly after Gov. Thornburgh proclaimed Muncy as the strawberry capital of Pennsylvania in 1982. This was done in recognition of the half million quarts of strawberries picked each year from farms in the surrounding area.

The 1986 Strawberry Pageant was judged by Tom Murphy, Lycoming County agricultural agent; Gloria Clegg, Muncy Historical Society; Kate Humbert, home economist from Montour County; and Lorraine Campbell, of Boscov's sporting department.

Emcee was John Yingling, manager of a local radio station, and Greg Owen was pianist.



Susan Eck (left) was recently crowned Pennsylvania's 1986 Strawberry Queen. Roberta Riddell was named first runner-up in the contest.

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