

Pearce Family Works Behind The Scenes At Butler Farm Show

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BUTLER — Year after year annual fairs and farm shows draw exhibitors from across the Keystone state to compete for blue ribbons.

Behind the scenes of these annual events are groups of hard-working volunteers who accept the entries, categorize them into classes and help the competitions run smoothly.

Among the volunteers who make up the Butler Farm Show Committee are Robert and Gloria Pearce and their children, Bonnie, Stacie and Drew.

Twelve years ago Gloria exhibited a jar of orange marmalade at the Farm Show. To her surprise and excitement she was awarded a blue ribbon. Through her participation, she learned of the need for committee people, applied and was immediately accepted.

Year after year she and her husband, Bob, put many hours into preparing display shelves, table coverings and skirtings, and hanging class banners in preparation for the annual farm show. In the beginning, Gloria entered many of her garden products, which she canned for winter storage, along with hand-sewn, knitted and baked items.

But as their children grew and joined 4-H, Gloria and Bob entered

fewer items and allowed their children to carry on the tradition.

Stacie, the eldest at 18, is in her second year of studies at Butler Community College and is working toward an associate degree in agriculture. Her involvement in the fair began seven years ago when she joined a small community 4-H club called Dunbar 4-H. She is currently serving her second year as president of the club. Her projects include vegetables and flowers.

Stacie also became interested in sheep and began seeking registered colored sheep to purchase.

A four-year member of the Butler County 4-H and FFA Livestock Club, she has earned a few top awards, including two trophies, with her sheep entries. She has won awards in the rate of gain class with average gain per day of over 3/4 pound.

She also shears all of her breeding sheep and keeps the wool. Gloria eventually turns the cured wool fleeces into beautiful knitted items like woolen sweaters and warm mittens.

Stacie is a national member of the Colored Wool Growers Association.

Second daughter Bonnie, now 16, will be a junior at Seneca Valley High School and is looking forward to becoming a member of the FFA and vo-tech programs this year.



The Pearce family have been active participants in the Butler Farm Show for 12 years. Here, family members Drew, Gloria, holding Prixie, Bob, and Stacie, holding D.C., enjoy a quiet moment with their English Angora rabbits. Missing from this family photo is oldest daughter Bonnie.

She is as active as her sister and has been a member of the Dunbar 4-H Club for seven years. The vice president of the Butler County 4-H Cottontails, Bonnie has entered four English Angora rabbits and five Siamese Satins in the Butler Farm Show.

She shears her rabbits and keeps the wool for her mother to use in making homemade clothing. Bonnie is knowledgeable about spinning and has a unique talent for her hobby. Both Bonnie and Gloria are members of the Butler County Spinners and Weaver's Guild.

During this year's Pennsylvania Farm Show, Bonnie participated as a member of the junior wool team that spun and wove a scarf which was sold immediately after the demonstration contest. She earned a blue ribbon at the Butler County and regional sheep to shawl contests.

Like her mother, Bonnie enjoys sewing and has entered garments in the regional fashion revue for three years. The women in the Pearce family have also entered the district Make It With Wool Contest.

The youngest member of the household is 12-year-old Drew, who is very involved in the rabbit club. He has seven Mini Lops entered in the Butler Farm Show.

He doesn't miss out on the baking contests either. Proud of his baking accomplishments, Drew has entered cookies this year. Two weeks ago, his cookies earned a blue ribbon in the adult class, even though they were supposed to be entered in the youth division.

In the fall, Drew will be entering the seventh grade in junior high school. In a few years he will probably be even more involved in the Farm Show, but for now he's



Stacie feeds her pen of sheep at the Butler Farm Show.

quite busy with his bunnies and baking!

The head of the household, Bob works as a truck driver on a daily route and enjoys being a blacksmith when he has time to devote to his hobby.

By participating in and helping to run the events at the Butler Farm Show, the Pearce family has become an integral part of this yearly event. They, and other families like them, make these end-of-summer events an integral part of the farm community.



The Pearce's youngest child, Drew, feeds his Mini Lop rabbit and her litter.



Gloria does a spinning demonstration for the public. This hobby originated with her children's 4-H sheep projects.

Homestead Notes