

These Male 4-H'ers Take Pride In Sewing Prize Winning Clothing

Editor's Note: The 4-H club members featured in the following story are just two of the 4.3 million young people across the country who will celebrate National 4-H Week, Oct. 5 to 13.

In observation of National 4-H Week, Pennsylvania 4-H'ers will be promoting their program as a "people development" program for all youth aged 8 to 19.

Lancaster Farming salutes all 4-H members and volunteer leaders during this week-long celebration.

BY BARBARA MILLER

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BLOOMSBURG — Perhaps it's a touch of male backlash in a time when the women's lib movement daily dominates headlines, but James Aten and Doug Haladay seem to take particular pride in the fact that they are expert sewers. They have accumulated blue ribbons in local, regional, and state 4-H competitions.

"Some are shocked at how good it is...They think it's good somebody like me can make something like that 'cause some people don't think guys can sew," says James Aten, with a prideful glow in his eyes.

James was commenting on the general public's reaction when they discover he has sewn an article of his clothing. The 15-year-old 4-H'er has won blue ribbons at every level, including the farm show, for his expertise.

One aspect of sewing Doug Haladay enjoys is, "Being able to wear it to school and have people be amazed to see that I sew." Fourteen-year-old Doug has garnered blue ribbons in local and regional sewing competitions.

The youngest child of Charles and Barbara Aten of Berwick, James is a tenth grader at the Columbia Montour Vo-Tech enrolled in a distributive education (business) course. For seven years he has been a member of the Centre 4-H Club, taking sewing courses from the beginning along with other projects such as vegetables and cooking.

Barbara Aten, sewing leader of the Centre 4-H Club, says she encouraged her son to sew because it was an artistic outlet and because in their school district home economic courses such as sewing are a mandatory part of education in grades five through eight.

A bean bag mouse was one of James' first projects, but he also recalls making kakh pants with matching jacket and corduroy trousers and vest. But it was a sweatsuit that took first prize at the farm show two years ago.

James' entry at the Bloomsburg Fair this year, that he considers his overall favorite project, took three blue ribbons. The entry was comprised of a light gray wool-blend blazer, dark gray polyester slacks and a light blue button-



James Aten shows his three prize-winning entries at the fair. The light grey blazer, dark grey polyester slacks and light blue button down long sleeved shirt took first prize at the Bloomsburg Fair.



Doug Haladay displays his polyester blend short sleeved shirt with front pockets and matching pants of navy blue polyester that took second prize at the Bloomsburg Fair.

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James says he sews because, "I like to go to shows...I like to win." He adds it could come in handy if he ever needed to make a certain item.

Showing and modeling on hot days, James reports, is one phase of a sewing project he finds difficult.

Some advantages sewing entails for James are that clothes are less expensive and they fit better. And what about girls? With such a small percentage of males involved in sewing competitions, it must present a great opportunity for meeting the opposite sex?

"Yeah, I meet a lot," James confesses with a very wide, fetching grin.

Although James has talent when it comes to designing and sewing clothing, he says he's not interested in sewing for a career. He believes he won't have a lot of time for sewing while managing a career in business.

One of six children, Doug Haladay is the son of Francis and George Haladay of Catawissa. The 14-year-old is a ninth grader is enrolled in the gifted program at Southern Columbia Area High School and a member of the marching and senior bands, Junior National Honor Society, and the basketball team. Doug's career

plans include working as an occupational therapist or finding related work in the medical field.

For the past seven years Doug has been a member of the Roaring Creek Valley Community 4-H Club taking such courses as cooking, flowers and vegetables, embroidery and photography. He began with sewing projects three years ago.

With a polyester blend print short sleeved shirt and a pair of navy blue pleated pants made to be work with suspenders, Doug took second prize at the Bloomsburg Fair this year. In past years, according to Doug, his sewing projects all took first prizes at the fair. Twice, he says, he was eligible to participate in regional competitions.

Despite coming in second place this year at the fair, Doug says his alltime favorite sewing project was this year's entry. The shirt and pants he completed gave him more of a challenge than prior projects, he reasoned.

Doug, who admits he likes sewing clothes better than modeling them, says he became interested in sewing because his sisters sewed. "All my sisters sewed. One sister made a wool outfit which she went to state competition with. I thought it would be fun. She encouraged

me." Doug notes his interest was further piqued when he served as an escort at the regional dress revue for two years.

One edge Doug has on the competition is the fact that his sister, Cindy Knepp, a home economics teacher, is readily available to advise him on any sewing difficulty.

"Modeling in front of the judges and being criticized," Doug observes is his least favorite segment of a sewing project.

Advantages, though, according to Doug, are that he can make clothes less expensively and that he now knows how to mend his own clothes. And what about the

greater opportunity to meet girls?

"It helps," he observes with a smile.

How do male peers react when they discover Doug has sewn a garment he's wearing? Any teasing?

"No. I would say I made the outfit and they wouldn't believe me and I'd say, 'Check for the tag'".

In the future, Doug says, he may consider sewing as a sideline because he has a friend who says she will design clothes if he wants to sew them. For his next sewing endeavor Doug says he's thinking of designing and sewing a tuxedo so he won't have to rent one for the prom.

Homestead Notes

National

