

Top Bidder Pays \$1,225 For Grand Champion Shawl

HARRISBURG — National records were smashed to smithereens as Rich Brandt farm Real Estate of Reading, Berks County paid \$1,225 for the grand champion shawl during the Fifth Annual Pennsylvania Sheep to Shawl Contest, held at the Pennsylvania State Farm Show Wednesday night, Jan. 14.

Three thousand visitors cheered on as Brandt doubled the previous record of \$620, set by himself in 1985 and matched by Deb Bittenbender of Mechanicsburg, Cumberland County in 1986. Harry Bachman of Annville, Lebanon County served as shawl auctioneer.

Crafters of the winning 82-inch-long shawl were the Fiber Friends representing Schuylkill County. The team finished the champion shawl in one hour and 57 minutes. Team members included Barbara Blander of Ringtown; Kathleen Liddle of Pottsville; Barb Fessler of Tower City; Kathryn Otto of Jonestown and Allan Corman of Pine Grove.

The Fiber Friends, along with 9 other teams, had two and one-half hours to shear a sheep, spin the wool into yarn and loom an original design shawl to a minimum of 78 inches long and 22 inches wide. The Fiber Friends loomed an eight harness undulating twill shawl in shades of blue and creamy white, creamy white, creating a tapestry effect. They also took home \$150, a grand champion plaque and the travelling trophy.

The Fiber Friends were also honored by the 50 participating craftspersons with the "Team's Choice" award.

The second national record came quickly as Ray E. Hillard Jr., of Gossett Livestock Premises, Mifflintown, Juniata County paid \$900 for the reserve grand champion shawl, made by the Bobbin Bunch, representing Lehigh and Lancaster Counties.

Members of the Bobbin Bunch included Diane Huddleston of Macungie; Betsy Johnston of Bethlehem; Alice Gillespie of Danielsville; Jean Sattler of Easton—all Lehigh countians, and Jim Shearer of Mountville, Lancaster County.

Harrisburgers Kevin and Sue Ricker purchased the third-place shawl at \$125 from the Welsh Mountain Kindered Spirits representing Lancaster, Lehigh and Chester counties. The team made a Swedish Lace pattern shawl in spring shades of peach, blue, green and creamy white.

Team members included Louise Kramer of Elverson; Diane Bachman of Stevens; Tina Mickley of Denver; Mark Barbazon of New Tripoli and Amos Stolfus of Morgantown.

Darryl and Bev Breniser of N.H. Eby Inc. of Blue Ball brought the bidding back up, paying \$350 for the fourth-place shawl, made by the Barefoot Treaders from central Pennsylvania.

Representing this team were Mary Hubler of Hummelstown, Dauphin County; Peggy Schott of Lebanon; Berks countian Debbie Mikulac of Womelsdorf, and Lancaster countians Dean Zigler of Lititz and Bernie Walker of Manheim.

Pick-A-Way Spinners, representing the Berks County area, sold their fifth-place shawl to David and Mildred Schneider of Waverly, New York for \$200. This is the third shawl for which the Schneiders have purchased.

Butler County Pedalers, representing Butler County making a white-on-white shawl with floating block pattern, sold their sixth-place entry to Don and Rose Gallagher of Elizabethtown for \$200.

Auctioneer Sherman Allan of Conneaut Lake, Crawford County, purchased a Bronson Lace Weave shawl from the seventh-place Hill

and Hollow Handspinners of Huntingdon and Centre Counties for \$200.

Another \$200 bid came in from Rodger Gearhart of Lititz, Lancaster County, purchasing a shawl made by the Ewe-nique Spinners of Lancaster and Lebanon Counties.

The Spinning Woolettes of Berks and Lancaster Counties crafted an original twill design shawl in rich neutral colors of cream, taupe and black, using a silver fleece. Gus and Maryanne Crissman of Rocky Ridge Farm, Bradford, McKean County, purchased the shawl for \$200. This was the third shawl purchased for the Crissman's wardrobe.

The Wool Bags of Indiana County, designing a Swedish Lace shawl in hues of silver and pink, sold their creation to Dennis Grumbine, Myerstown, and Harry Bachman, Annville, representing the Lebanon Valley Auction Company. The pair then announced the shawl was being given to Mr. and Mrs. Ken Winebark and their new baby. Her husband, the new County Agent for Lebanon County, grew up in the town represented by the Wool Bags.

Not to be outdone, the bidding again gained momentum as 14 youth from the Butler County Cotton Tail Twister 4-H Club entered the ring with a cream and pale-pink shawl they cooperatively made as a demonstration during

the contest.

Cheers rang through the crowd as Bachman's gavel pounded at \$335. Auctioneer Sherman Allen of Conneaut Lake, Crawford County, was the successful bidder. Proceeds will pay for the 4-H's expenses to participate at the show.

Each team was judged on shearing, 5 points; team identification 5 points; speed, 5 points; spinning, 35 points (evenness, uniformity of three spinners); weaving, 20 points; and design, 30 points for a total of 100. Proceeds from the auctioned shawls were returned to each team.

Judging this year's contest were Catherine Creamer, teacher at Parson's School of Design in New York City and owner of "Creamer Textile Design," and Jacki Schell, owner of "Jacki's Handwoven Originals" in Lewistown, Mifflin County.

Bachman was serving his seventh year as volunteer auctioneer. He was presented a gift certificate for a Farm Show Champion leg of lamb from Fox's Food Markets, Inc.

The Pennsylvania Sheep to Shawl Contest is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Sheep and Wool Growers in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and the Pennsylvania State Farm Products Show Commission.

Tax Reform Act Reduces Business Tax Credits

UNIVERSITY PARK — Business tax credits are reduced and investment credits eliminated under the new tax laws. However, farmers will receive a special break on investment credits for 1987 only.

The Tax Reform Act of 1984 had combined investment credit with several other credits to form the general business credit. Prior to 1987 the general business credit earned by a taxpayer could be used to reduce tax liability by up to \$25,000 plus 85 percent of tax liability in excess of \$25,000. Unused credit for a taxable year could be carried back to each of the three tax years preceding the unused credit year and then could be carried forward to each of the 15 following tax years.

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 reduces the 85 percent limitation on the general business credit to 75 percent, effective for tax years that begin after 1986. Thus, the new limitation is \$25,000 plus 75 percent of tax liability in excess of \$25,000.

Investment credit is repealed for investments made after 1985. Any carry-forward of investment credit is reduced by 17.5 percent of the amount allowable in 1987 and 35 percent of the amount allowable in any year after 1987. The reduced amount may not be carried forward; it is lost.

Farmers may realize an unexpected benefit from carried-forward investment credit on their 1987 tax returns. A special provision of the new legislation permits qualifying farmers (defined below) to reduce their 1987 income tax obligation by up to

\$750 through a carry-back of the carried-forward investment credit. The amount carried back is treated as payment against 1987 income tax. The opportunity is available only on the 1987 return and the option must be exercised on a timely filed return.

The amount arising from the special carry-back provision that may be applied against 1987 income tax is the smallest of:

(1) 50 percent of the carried-forward investment credit

(2) The taxpayer's net tax liability for the carry-back period. This carry-back period begins with the 15th year preceding the first tax year from which there is unused investment credit included in the existing carry-forward, but not extending beyond December 31, 1961.

Example: First unused I.T.C. credit was for 1980. The carry-back period for determining net tax liability extends to 1965.

(3) \$750

To qualify for this use of carried-forward investment credit to reduce 1987 income tax, a farmer must have derived 50 percent or more of his gross income from farming during the three tax years preceding 1987; that is, during 1984, 1985, and 1986.

The amount of investment credit used in connection with the above special provision is deducted from the total amount of carried-forward investment credit. Consequently, the carried-forward investment credit subsequent to 1987 is reduced by the amount used in the carry-back provision.

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