

# Maple Dell Doing Well With 4-H Program

**EVA MARTIN**  
**Maryland Correspondent**  
**WOODBINE, Md.** — David and Ann Patrick and their family own and operate Maple Dell Farm just south of Woodbine. The love and care exhibited by the Patrick family is what you hear and read about, but seldom have the opportunity to observe. Their genuine friendliness and care of others is shown in their concern to bring farm and city together.

Three years ago, Maryland initiated a 4-H Dairy Cattle Leasing Program to provide non-farm

youth and youth from farms with non-registered cattle the opportunity to work with registered dairy animals as a 4-H project.

This year, five children of the Larry Russell Family from Mt. Airy are participating with the Patricks in this program. Mr. Russell knew the Patrick family from earlier days when he occasionally worked on the farm.

Jeremiah, 15, began his project last year inspiring his other brothers and sisters to accept the challenge. Jeremiah is in the ninth grade at Glenelg High School and

has a senior yearling Ayrshire heifer called Maple Dell Swingers Singer. Jeremiah says he has never seen a calf born and is looking forward to having his heifer calve, hopefully in March. At the recent Wills Show, Jeremiah placed second in Fitting and Showing and third in class placings. He commented, "The Patrick family are nice and generous people. I am learning a lot about cows. It's fun and a lot of hard work. I would like to have a farm and herd of my own some day, or pursue a career in working with and showing cattle."

The Patricks are fond of Jeremiah and asked him to go with them for a week at the Eastern National Show last year, but his mother didn't want him to miss school.

Jeremiah's twin sister, Joellia, has a summer yearling Ayrshire heifer, Maple-Dell IRS Firefly. She really enjoys leading her animal and working to get her ready for show. She says the first day they came to the Patrick farm to work, daughters Carol and Rhonda spent four hours helping them with their animals, leading them, washing, brushing, and teaching them techniques for showing. Joellia says, "It's fun until they step on your toes!" She won fourth place in fitting and showing at the Wills show, "because I didn't look at the judge", but placed first in class placings.

Antonio, 17, the oldest in the family, is a junior at Glenelg High. He says, "my first experience working with my heifer, Chrissy, was not as bad as I thought it would be". One of the things Antonio really likes is that this is a family project, each having their own animal, but they can work together and help each other.

Thirteen year old April attends



The farm sign marks the end of the lane of Maple Dell farm, home of the Patrick family.



Some of the Russell siblings show their leased cattle. From left is Joellia, April, Jeremiah, Antonio and Jonathan.



Maple Dell Farm sits in a pastoral location in Maryland.

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In 1960, I graduated from Lancaster Mennonite High School and worked in the Lancaster law firm of Wenger, Weisman & Zimmerman.

I was married in 1962 and moved to the Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland area. I have been a full-time wife and mother for 28 years and grandmother for 4 years.

Our family has been active in the county and state Holstein associations for the past 15 years.

In addition, I have an income tax and bookkeeping service with an office in our home.

I enjoy meeting people and making new friends. My hobbies are designing and making many types of crafts.



Eva Martin



Joellia Russell washes down her leased animal in preparation for a show.

Glenwood Middle School. Her heifer is a Junior Yearling named Bryanna. She says, "this has been a fun experience, but I don't like getting dirty." She says they learn a lot from coming to the Patrick farm and working with their animals.

Jonathan, 11, has an intermediate heifer calf, Plum-Bottom Hemlock Maple. He likes to brush his heifer and it shows. The fitting and showing judge at the Wills show commented that although Jonathan was fifth in the class, he had the cleanest animal in the show. He doesn't like when his heifer stops when you try to walk her. Jonathan also has three geese as a 4-H project.

The lease agreement signed by the sponsor, 4-H'er and 4-H'er's parents set forth guidelines of what the sponsor expects from the 4-H'er in return for the use of their animal. The Patricks require the 4-H'er to work with their animals, training them to lead, preparing them for fitting and showing, including clipping their own animals. It is also specified in the agreement that they will help care for their own animals at shows.

Another aspect of Farm and City coming together on the Patrick farm is farm tours for nursery, pre-school and school children.

Ann Patrick takes a special interest in this project, helping children and their parents learn about the farm and the special care farmers take to give them good and safe products for their tables.

She begins her tour with the calves in the hutches, showing how well they are cared for on an individual basis. Then as they move on to the box stalls where they are grouped, she tells the children the calves are like children going to kindergarten and learning to get along with other children.

Ann believes hands-on experience, allowing the children to touch, feed, and feel animals, is important to their understanding of what takes place on the farm. Cotton seed meal, soybean meal, alfalfa hay and corn silage are shown to the children and she explains how, when mixed together, they form a total ration for the nutritional needs of the dairy animals. She emphasizes recycling, using the whole stalk of corn, even the fodder for bedding and then returning the manure for plant food to the fields.

In the milking parlor is a blackboard on which treated cows are marked. In case one is missed there, a secondary precaution is a red leg band. She lets children volunteer to be a treated cow, placing the red leg bands on their legs to emphasize the milk from these cows is never to be put in the tank for their consumption.

Ann says although they are concerned about the insurance risk of bringing so many children to the farm, the rewards of seeing the enlightenment in their eyes as they learn is what is important to her.

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