

# Jill Harnish Attains Lancaster Dairy Princess Crown

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LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)  
— Lancaster County's newly-crowned Dairy Princess Jill Harnish vows to become a dairy farmer forever.

"Maybe I'll marry a dairy farmer or maybe I won't, but either way, I'm going to be a dairy farmer," the decisive 17-year-old told the judges at the Lancaster County pageant held June 13.

Chosen from three other contestants, Jill impressed the judges with her creativity in the promotional skit presented before the audience at the Farm and Home Center.

Dressed in a business suit, Jill portrayed an advice columnist. Among the letters she read was one from a desperate, compulsive woman who chases ice cream trucks.

"Your problem is obvious," Jill said. "You aren't getting enough calcium in your diet. After outlining the need for calcium in the diet, Jill admonished, "If you don't follow my advice, you'll end up with back pains or dowagers hump from osteoporosis."

For the person who wrote complaining of depression and skin that looks like sandpaper, Jill had a solution. "There are 1,900 farms in the county. Get a job on one of them." She promised the hard work in the outdoors would soon have her a picture of glowing health.

Jill prescribed more solutions for her imaginary patients before answering the impromptu question posed by Master of Ceremonies Grover Gouker Jr. who asked, "If you had the opportunity to speak to world leaders about the United States, what would you say makes you most proud of your county?"

Jill responded that she finds it most gratifying to have freedom of religion that allows her to worship the God that she honors in the way that she chooses.

Jill, the daughter of R. Edwin and Arlene Harnish of Christiana, will be a senior in the FFA program at Solanco High School in the fall. The Harnishes farm 220 acres, milk 54 Holsteins of which Jill owns 11. Her 4-H and FFA projects include 7 sheep, 3 pigs, and 1

steer.

Heather Becker of Narvon was named alternate dairy princess. In her presentation, Heather dressed as a French chef who was attempting to fill a dinner request for a full day's supply of calcium. To do so, she considered the impractical possibility of serving 11½ pounds of carrots, 3½ pounds of spinach, or 20 oranges before deciding on a menu with a muenster burger, macaroni and cheese, and cheese cake.

Heather, the daughter of Gayle and Patricia Becker, graduated from Pequea High School and will study at Penn State University in the fall.

Two other dairy princess contestants in the pageant were Melanie Balmer of Manheim and Jesslyn Oberholtzer of Elizabethtown.

Four Dairy Darlings ranging in ages from eight to 10 years old were introduced as assistants to help the dairy princess in milk promotion at stores, farm meetings, nursing homes, and schools. The opportunity to be a dairy darling is considered a grooming process in becoming a dairy princess candidate when age requirements are met.

The four Dairy Darlings include the following: Lisa Blank, daughter of Cliff and Joyce Blank of Gap; Jill Hoover, daughter of Gordon and Carol Hoover of Gap; Elizabeth Young, daughter of Dave and Carol Young of Peach Bottom; and Rebecca Young, daughter of Matt and Linda Young of Peach Bottom.

Robyn Groff in her farewell speech thanked the audience for the honor of representing the dairy industry this past year. She also recognized the Dairy Darlings who assisted her in milk promotion. These included Sarah Bard, Laura Blank, Meagan Good, Laura Hershey, and Amber Shellenberger.

Judges for the event were Phoebe Bitler, Fleetwood; Ernest Miller, Hamburg; and Janice Garber Weaver.

Lisa Risser presented Dairy of Distinction Awards to the owners of four county farms. The program recognizes farms that present an attractive appearance to the community. Specially-designed signs denoting the honor were presented



Competition at the Lancaster County Dairy Princess Pageant resulted in Jill Harnish being crowned by Robyn Groff. Heather Becker, left, is alternate. At right are contestants Melanie Balmer, back, and Jesslyn Oberholtzer.



Newly-crowned Lancaster County Dairy Princess Jill Harnish is surrounded by her sister, Jenny Bowman, and parents, R. Edwin and Arlene Harnish of Christiana.



This team is eager to start dairy promotion in Lancaster County. Dairy Princess Jill Harnish, center, will be assisted by Alternate Heather Becker, left, and dairy darlings, from left, Elizabeth Young, Rebecca Young, Lisa Blank, and Jill Hoover.

for the farmers to display at the farms' entrances.

This year's honorees include Herr-Hope Farms owned by A. Dale Herr of Kirkwood; Howcrest Holsteins, owned by Susan A. and John H. Howard of Willow Street; Pine View Dairy Farm owned by J. Larry and John B. Hess of Lancas-

ter; and the farm of John H. Shank, Quarryville.

In other business, Julie Herr, a former dairy princess and dairy promotion chairperson for the last four years, will resign due to other responsibilities. The committee thanked her with a farewell gift.



Julie Herr, former chairperson for the county dairy promotion committee, left, talks with Phoebe Bitler, center, and Janice Garber Weaver, judges for the pageant.