

Meat Judging Team Goes To Nationals

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ing team.

"Being fresh out of college, he had up-to-date information on meat cuts and judging," Hughes said explaining that George had been on the PSU meats judging team.

"I too had been on the Penn State meats judging team," Hughes said. "But that was in 1975." Recruiting the first team members was challenging, according to Hughes.

"Fortunately," Hughes said, "in '84, four of the kids didn't make it on the livestock judging team and were recruited (for the meats judging team) and did very well."

That team won the state competition and went on to national competition. They ended up fifth in the nation overall, high team for beef, and team member Greg Musser was first nationally for beef judging and fourth individual overall.

"We felt we were pretty well off and could put a good team together," Hughes said.

But with George only employed temporarily, Hughes was on his own with the team until 1988 Sue Ann Claudon came to take over the team.

Hughes said Claudon, of Ill., was working for the Packers and Stockyard administration of the USDA in Pennsylvania and so came with a strong knowledge of meats.

In 1988, a Lancaster County team again went to the national contest for Pennsylvania and did well, taking first in beef, first in pork, and first in total judging. They ended fifth overall. The team's week spot was in retail cuts identification — being able to identify the location of the cut of meat on the carcass, the difference between names for cut in which one has been de-boned and the other retains the bone, or perhaps a small portion of another muscle, etc..

1988 team member Rob Rush was first in beef judging nationally and Mike Craig was sixth individual overall.

"We've been competitive when we went out there," Hughes said.

As in many organized youth programs, older siblings influence their younger brothers and sisters to become involved, and former participants have come back to the team wanting to help.

Of the current team coaches, Jeff Craig is a former team member and an older brother of Mike Craig, who had been sixth overall back in 1985.

(Another Craig, Tim, was supposed to be on the current 4-H meats team, but he won the state competition on the FFA division team and is to compete nationally for FFA. He was replaced by Wendall Landis.)

After high school, Jeff went to work full time as a butcher for Stoltzfus Meats in Intercourse.

For the team, having Craig as a coach is a great help — not only does he have the competitive experience, but, because of his work, he is also able to pass on his current knowledge of meat cuts. Also Stoltzfus allows him use the shop after hours to give the team practice on judging meats.

The other coach, Anita Meck, of Refton, was a 1990 team member and brings a variety of livestock meats information. Her strength for the team is her knowledge of the cookery and retail cuts.

Her background includes growing up on a family beef-swine-poultry farm. Her positions as a

beef industry representative, pork industry representative and poultry queen helped her develop a more intensive knowledge of the various livestock meats.

Hughes explained the aspects of the competition as primarily four-fold; retail cuts, cookery, carcass and wholesale cuts evaluations, and giving oral reasons.

The major meat species of livestock are swine, sheep and beef, and the youth must be able to tell the difference between meats, all mixed together in the same test display.

As an example of what members must be able to do, in retail cuts judging they must be able to identify the species from the appearance of the meat; the cuts itself, where it came from, the common name and basic methods of recommended cooking, such as frying, roasting, broiling, etc.

The coaches split up areas of responsibility according to their strengths — Hughes stresses coaching on wholesale and carcass education; Meck stresses cookery and assists with retail cuts; and Craig stresses retail cuts.

There are actually three team members' scores counted during each of the competitions, but four members are allowed to compete and the lowest score is dropped. Therefore, there really is no position on the team that the team treats as second string. No one sits on the bench, in practice or competition.

At state level competition, York County has hosted a number of winning teams and is the team to beat, Hughes said.

This past state win came with Erb taking fourth overall, Bollinger third, Landis ninth and Livengood first. The team also went to York in July and won that county's meats judging contest, held at Godfrey Brothers in Loganville.

All the members share an interest in livestock judging and animal raising, and they were all raised on farmettes, instead of the larger dairy, beef cattle or forage and grain crop operations.

Most of all, each of the team members is actively involved in their organizations.

Dwain Livengood

Dwain Livengood, 19, is the son of Earl and Joyce Livengood, who live along Morningside Drive where they have a small farm to raise and retail produce. They also have a carriage restoration business.

Dwain, a 1991 graduate of Faith Mennonite High School, is employed at the farm, learning the carriage restoration trade and helping with the vegetable truck operation.

Currently the president of the Red Rose 4-H Beef Club, Livengood also competed on the county's livestock judging team and last year was third place individual in the nation. He has one year experience in meats judging.

Wendall Landis

Wendall Landis is the team anchor, Hughes said. The 17-year-old student at Lancaster Mennonite High School, he was on last year's livestock judging team and was second in the nation individually.

The son of Abe and Dottie Landis, Manheim, Hughes said that Wendall is considered the "anchor" of the team because, although he got a late start, coming in to help after Tim Craig left to compete on the FFA team, "he judged livestock for a number of years and he picks up fast," Hughes said. "He was able to learn fast



From the left, the Lancaster County 4-H Meat Judging team, which will represent Pennsylvania this week at national competitions is comprised of members, from the left, front row, Wendall Landis, Tracy Bollinger, Angela Erb, and coach Anita Meck. In the back row, from the left, are Dwain Livengood, coach Jeff Kraig, and Chester Hughes, coach and county extension livestock agent.

and he's excellent on (oral) reasons. Having him come on the team was a boost because it added depth."

Landis is currently president of the Lancaster County 4-H Woolies, and a member of the county 4-H swine club. He breeds and shows Hampshire sheep.

Tracy Bollinger

Tracy Bollinger, 15, is the daughter of Eugene and Carol Bollinger, of Manheim. A student at Manheim Central High School, she is the youngest member and is on her second year on the team.

She is currently secretary of the Lancaster County Woolies and is vice president of the county swine club.

She raises pigs and sheep as 4-H projects and is referred to by Hughes as the "glue" of the team.

"She keeps things together and keeps after the others to make practices and she has helped with recruiting members," Hughes said.

Bollinger has also helped the team financially. During the county livestock auction, she donated all the proceeds from her 4-H market swine to help cover travel expenses to Kansas City.

Her benefactor spirit apparently caught on and William Campbell, president of Hoss's Steak and Sea House, purchased Tracy's sister's pair of market swine and donated them back to the club to be sold for fund raising for the trip.

Angela Erb

Angela Erb, 16, is the daughter of Rick and Grace Erb, of Elizabethtown. Her father owns Leo Kob Co. Inc.

A friend of Bollingers, she is also a second-year team member. In addition to her knowledge, Hughes said he credits her with bringing enthusiasm to the team.

Erb is a student at Lancaster-Mennonite High School and is assistant treasurer in the county Woolies club.

The team is fortunate to have a number of supportive commercial organizations and educational facilities, Hughes said.

"One of the keys to a successful (meats judging team) program is the cooperation of meat establishments," Hughes said. "We've been fortunate."

According to Hughes, in addition to the work being done at Stoltzfus's with Jeff working there, the team has been helped with pork carcass judging at Groff

Meats, in Elizabethtown; beef carcass judging at John F. Martin & Sons, of Stevens; and retail meats and lamb cuts at Willie the Butcher's, part of Stauffer's of Kissel Hill on Rt. 501 near the Lancaster airport, where Tim Kreider works.

They have also been able to practice at Hess Butcher Shop in Willow Street; and in the past, before the owner retired, at the Stonebridge butcher shop.

Out of county, they have practiced at the Penn State Meats Laboratory; Taylor Packing in Wyalusing (Bradford County); and at Godfrey's.

"It's not always easy for them (the meat shops) to work around their schedules (to let us in), but these people have been very generous in allowing us to come in and work," Hughes said.

In fact, Kunzler Meats had helped get the whole program off to a start, allowing the 1985 team to come in for practice. However, since the business uses a lot of boxed meats, it doesn't offer the same educational experience as the fresh cut and carcass operations, which the competitions are based upon.

However, in the future, with the industry trends going more toward boxed wholesale meats, learning how to judge those meat products may become relevant, Hughes said.

The team is adequately financed for their trip to Kansas, Hughes

said. In addition to the donations by team members, 43 different businesses, organizations, and individuals have donated funds to sponsor the team's national trip.

Major contributors include the Pennsylvania Livestock Association; Hoss's Steak and Sea House; Hatfield Quality Meats; and Pennsylvania Friends of 4-H.

The Friends of 4-H is an organization based in State College which acts as a central repository for nonspecific donations to Pennsylvania 4-H.

"We've been fortunate here with industry support helping with travel funds and we have very supportive parents," Hughes said.

The outline for the team is to arrive Tuesday evening, practice Wednesday at retail meats stores, wholesale businesses and packing plants and look at different retail names and cuts specific to that region.

The contests are held Thursday, and on Friday is an awards breakfast. On Saturday, Hughes said the team will try to go on a ranch tour, and the team will get to watch some national invitational junior steer and sheep shows during the day and a club calf sale at night. The team is to return Sunday.

According to Hughes, the teams which usually are strong at the national 4-H meats judging contest come from Florida, Alabama and Illinois.

Metzger Resigns, AGA Takes Applications

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio — Erick A. Metzger, executive secretary-treasurer of the American Guernsey Association, has resigned his position with the organization effective Nov. 1, to assume the responsibilities of superintendent of records with The American Jersey Cattle Club.

Metzger expressed his appreciation for having the opportunity to work with the AGA and its members for nearly 10 years.

He said, "I enjoyed being involved with developing programs to accelerate the breed's genetic progress and to promote the breed domestically and internationally. Guernsey breeders have many opportunities available to them, and I wish the breed and

its owners every success."

The American Guernsey Association Board of Directors has appointed Neil Jensen, currently the director of records and young sire programs, as interim executive secretary-treasurer until a replacement for Metzger is hired.

Anyone interested in applying for the executive secretary-treasurer position should direct his or her resume and questions to: AGA President E. Cline Brubaker, Route 4, Box 540, Rocky Mount, VA 24151. (703) 483-2071.

The American Guernsey Association is the national organization for the registration and promotion of Guernsey cattle and is headquartered in Reynoldsburg, Ohio.