



Cows are a priority on the Wenger's Farm but that does not interfere with the opportunity to develop personal talents. Dean, 19, attends Penn State York Campus; Eric, 17, is Lancaster County Superior 4-H'er; Neil, 15; and Troy, 10, help parents Nelson and Alma on the farm.

Wenger Family: Where Cows And Kids Excel

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MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) —
Seventeen-year-old Eric Wenger is only a junior at Manheim Central High School but he has already accumulated an impressive portfolio of printing jobs that he has completed.

He has also developed a computer course that he teaches to county 4-H'ers, and he has printed a computer class manual that is being adopted by other 4-H computer clubs.

For his computer work, his excellent public speaking skills, and for his many other achievements in the 4-H program for the past nine years, Eric recently was lauded as winner of the 4-H Achievement Award, formerly called the Lancaster County Outstanding 4-H'er.

Only one of 13,100 county 4-H'ers receives this annual award. It was a dream of Eric's for many years to attain the award.

"It's a great feeling to help kids

learn something and master it," Eric said of his four years of teaching computer.

His accomplishments are all the more impressive because Eric is self-taught on computers. He and his mother invested in an Apple computer and a laser printer for their desktop publishing business.

"Eric seems to get all the money-making projects and I get all the volunteer ones," said his mother Alma, who learned desktop publishing skills from Eric.

Self-motivation seems to be a common quality of Eric's. Typical of his response to mediocre printing jobs are the words, "I can do better than that."

With creativity, organization, and neatness, Eric has proven his ability by designing the catalogue for the Lancaster County Holstein Show, a church history book, many brochures for various events, and a newsletter for the Mastersonville 4-H Club. Every week, he types and lays out the

bulletin for Erisman's Mennonite Church where he is youth group vice president.

At school Eric is a member of the National Honor Society and on the yearbook staff, a former band and orchestra member, and a former member of Student Council. He likes business subjects and plans to pursue college studies in accounting.

The one thing that Eric does not excel in is sports, he said. And, something that he can do well but does not enjoy is working on the farm.

"Milking is not my thing," Eric said.

Nonetheless he obediently gets up two mornings a week to take his turn that is divided up among his three brothers, Dean, 19; Neil, 15; and Troy, 10.

The four boys help their dad, Nelson, with the family's 115-acre Manheim farm. They rent additional land to raise about 40 acres of alfalfa, 5 of mixed hay, 60 plus of corn, 13 of barley, and 8 acres of beans.

With four sons in the family, the tractor work is more appealing than barn work and even Alma likes to run a neighbor's six-row for some custom combining.

"You call that work?" asks Nelson, who said he usually gets stuck with the cows, which is the farm's prime emphasis. The 54 Holsteins and the replacements that they raise have herd averages of 20,600 pounds with 788 fat and 666 protein.

As an ambassador for the 4-H program, Eric visits schools and clubs across the county to encourage students to join local clubs.

Eric shows prospective 4-H'ers the thick scrapbook that records



Eric shows his 10-year-old brother Troy the scrapbook he uses to tell prospective 4-H'ers about the opportunities the 4-H program provides.

many memories Eric has of involvement in clubs such as rabbit, cooking, air rifle, Seeing Eye dog, and woodworking.

"There are so many different clubs and each one offers lots of memories that every kid can have," he tells them.

It even makes school work easier, according to Eric. It was in 4-H, that Eric participated in speech contests.

"It's nerve-racking during the critiquing, but it makes school speeches so much easier because most of the kids haven't had much exposure to public speaking."

Eric is president of the 125-member Mastersonville 4-H Community Club. In addition to farm work and his desktop publishing business, Eric works part time as a cashier at Bomberger's Store, Elm.

Homestead Notes



Because Eric was not satisfied with the computer material available to teach a 4-H Club, he developed a manual that is now being used in other counties. He also does desk top publishing for many organizations including Lancaster County Holstein Association.