

Dairy Promotion Educates Consumers And Representatives

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CARLISLE (Dauphin Co.) —

The names Jan Harding and the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess & Promotion Services, Inc. are synonymous.

Now, add another name, Betty Reibson. Her name and face may be unfamiliar to most, but she is destined to become as dearly entrenched as Jan is in the lives of those who work in dairy promotion.

Jan is not retiring. But, responsibilities have increased since the inception of PDPPS. Betty was selected by the board of coordinators to assist Jan so that Jan may have more time off.

Betty is no novice to dairy promotion. She and her husband Milo own a dairy farm in Forkesville, Sullivan County.

In 1988, their daughter Sally became a dairy maid. The following year, she was chosen Sullivan

County dairy princess and later, a state alternate. Betty became a full-fledged worker in county promotion because she needed to provide transportation and chaperone her daughter to many promotions. Betty also accompanied her daughter to the three-day dairy princess seminar.

"That's when I began to understand that we must promote our products. We can't sell milk just because it's good for us. People must be convinced," Betty said.

Betty continued helping with dairy promotion after Sally's term ended. In recent years, she became more involved with state promotion.

"I want to make it clear that I am not Jan's replacement. I am her helper," said Betty, who portrays a happy, positive outlook on life.

Betty describes her county as a place where one must drive at least an hour to get anywhere. It's primarily known for its lumber busi-

ness and as a resort for tourists.

But the small number of farmers certainly doesn't let the county take a back seat when it comes to dairy promotion.

The county has a week-long celebration in anticipation of the June Dairy Parade, when the county dairy princess is chosen. Four-H clubs, other community clubs, and business make floats according to the theme chosen by the dairy promotion committee.

Last year, the theme was, "Milk—The Winning Ticket."

This year, the town is celebrating its bicentennial so the chosen theme is, "Milk—200 Years of Goodness."

The Lion's Club and the Dushore Fire Company put on carnival-type entertainment and a barbecue. Dairy events include making a giant sundae and a cow and goat milking contest for city folks.

During the community fair, milk samples are handed out at a dairy booth. A contest to dress animals and other fun events are held.

The celebration actually begins a week before the parade with an Open House at the reigning dairy princess's barn. About 85 to 90 percent of the people who attend are from non-farming background. The farmer brings out four of his best cows for a mock cattle judging contest. The visitors are given a few pointers on what to look for before judging the cows.

A petting zoo, door prizes, and a short program is given that tells a family history of the farm. People tour the barn where they view the farming equipment and are told how much it costs. Feed company representatives are on hand to tell how much silage a cow eats and how much it costs to raise a cow. A semen company explains the technique and the costs involved. The committee hands out milk and doughnuts while the visitors view displays set up to educate non-farm people.

In October, during the annual Endless Mountain Craft People and Flaming Foliage Event held by the local Chamber of Commerce, the committee passes out recipes and samples of dairy products. Another successful event is school band concerts where the committee hands out milk punch during



During a district meeting held for the south central district, Betty Reibson, right, and Jan Harding discuss the responsibilities of Pennsylvania Dairy Princess and Promotion Services.



Beth Heald Moore, the 1985 Pa. Dairy Princess, gives her daughter an early exposure to the dairy princess program. Beth is now a PDPPS coordinator for the south central district.

intermission.

"This is a very successful way to reach the non-farming community," Betty said. "The people love it, and come back to ask for recipes. We are at an advantage because we only have one high school in the county and two elementary schools."

Betty is emphatic that all these events do not happen because of her. She said, "I'm not the big cat. I'm just one of the many people who help. Mary Lambert is really the person who keeps the program alive in the county. Everyone is asked to help whether or not they are on the dairy promotion committee."

Part of Betty's responsibilities as Jan's assistant includes helping the dairy princesses in their duties during Ag Progress, All-American Show, Farm Show, and coordinat-

ing events by making sure dairy princesses and alternates are chauffeured to the places. She also has set up a computer program that keeps track of each county promotion to determine the winners for the incentive program. Eventually, Betty may work into more of the business part of program.

Sometimes Betty needs to remain away overnight. That means her husband and son need to assume her responsibility for feeding the calves morning and evening and other barn duties.

With the help of their oldest son Scott, the Reibsons farm their own 250 acres and rent an additional 100 acres. They milk 80-90 registered Holsteins.

Another son Randy will graduate from Penn State this spring. Sally, a junior at Lycoming Col-
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Heading dairy promotion for Dauphin County is Jay Kopp, former county dairy princess Tonya Scholl, left, and her mother Linda Scholl. Kopp, who is a dairy farmer with 125 cows on 500 acres said that being on a dairy promotion committee helps him see where the money goes and the consumer's perspective on the product. Kopp's daughter Jayanna is the present Dauphin County dairy princess.



Becky Sonnen, 1987 Pa. Dairy Princess, now works for Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association and teaches dairy promotion at PDPPS seminars.



Dairy promotion often includes county princesses and PAPPs personnel. From left, Betsy Dupuis, PAPPs; Jennifer Grimes, Pa. Dairy Princess; Nadine Houck, PAPPs; Amella Saunders, Warren County Dairy Princess; and Maurel Raub, Perry County Dairy Princess.