

Gwen Owens Tells How She Juggles Family And Career

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Lancaster Farming Staff
LEESPORT (Berks Co.) —
Gwen Owens knows what it is like to juggle career, home, church, and community responsibilities. The co-anchor of WGAL News 8's Morning Report survives on only four to five hours of sleep each night in her attempt to do a good job at everything she does.

But a television viewer watching her dynamic presentation would never suspect that Gwen is — tired.

Gwen divulged her battle with fatigue and secrets for juggling a full-time career and family when she spoke recently at the Berks county Extension Spring Awareness Day.

She said that she arises each morning at 2 o'clock in order to leave her Philadelphia home and arrive at the Lancaster television station to write the news copy and to broadcast at 6 a.m. She returns home at 2:30 p.m. except for three days a week when she is working on special projects or doing a public relations appearance.

Then, its caring for two preschoolers while her husband Kevin works until 9 p.m.

How does she do it?

Three factors: "I'm a firm

believer that God doesn't give us more than we can handle. I look to God every morning for guidance and find in Him a firm foundation," she said.

Another factor is a supportive husband who cheers her on and gets the children up, feeds, and dresses them each morning.

Then, there's Gwen's mother, whom Gwen calls "The Rock of Gilbrater," who cares for the children during the day.

In her job, Gwen said that she is fortunate that she is by nature a talker and a good writer.

As a child, Gwen was known to talk nonstop. Her mother would sometimes try to silence her by saying, "Gwendolyn, let's have five minutes of quiet."

"It was impossible for me to be quiet more than two minutes," said Gwen who now asks her mom, "Did you ever imagine that I would grow up and actually get paid for talking?"

Despite career and personal successes, Gwen has needed to make sacrifices to juggle both career and family.

To move up in the newscasting world requires moving from station to station. Before marrying, Gwen postponed her wedding twice in order to secure a firmer

position in her career. While her husband-to-be was patient, Gwen eventually decided that it was time to put her professional life on the back burner and take care of her personal life.

She quit her news anchor job in Virginia and accepted a less challenging job in order to marry and live in Philadelphia with her husband. Eventually, she was hired by Channel 8, which is close enough to commute but the three hours spent commuting siphons time from her already hectic schedule.

Recently, Gwen fell asleep and hit a telephone pole. Although she escaped serious injury, the accident made her realize that her body is too tired to handle so much responsibility. She has slowed down in her public appearances, but finds it extremely difficult to say "no" to opportunities with students.

"I think I can be a role model for kids and I feel guilty to turn them down. But my family is most important. I can't do everything," Gwen said.

Gwen reminded the women in the audience that no one is a superwoman, that it is important to put family before career, that everyone



News anchor Gwen Owens, center, talks about juggling family and career responsibilities. Joan Cook, left, and Fay B. Strickler, extension home economist, helped plan the Spring Awareness Day at Berks County Ag Center.

needs a higher power from which to draw strength, and that everyone needs a supportive spouse or friend to cheer them on.

Tip From Cumberland County

Dairy Princess Diane Myers

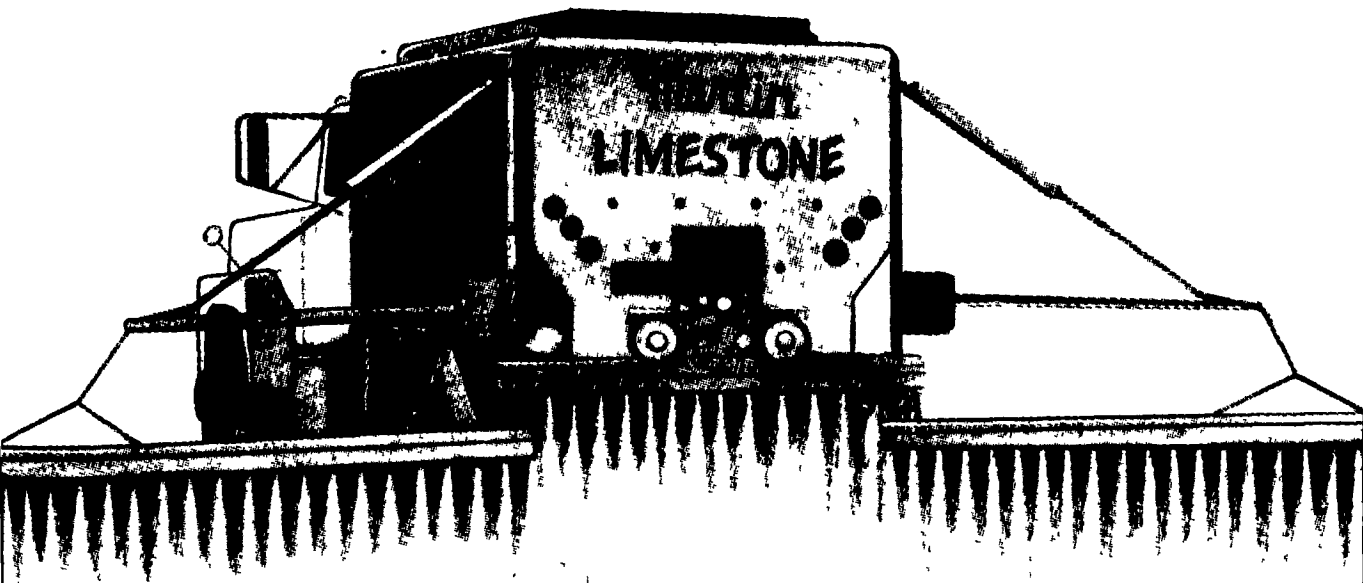
One myth about sports and milk caused by drinking milk is that milk causes "cotton mouth". Drinking milk or using dairy products aids in the resistance against stress fractures and other sports injuries. So grab a glass of stress, pre-event anxiety, and lack of fluids. "Cotton mouth" is not off to your favorite spring activity.

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