

Robsons Host Farm-City Day

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for ventilation, the petting zoo was a hands-on experience for young and old alike.

Shawn Norris, his wife Barbara, and their 1-year-old son Steve, all of Wellsboro, attended Farm-City Day with Shawn's parents Tracy and Emilie Norris of Muncy, Indiana and their friends Shigeharu and Minori Kawakami visiting from Fukuoka City, Japan. While walking around the petting zoo, Shawn explained to his foreign friends how their visit to Gray Valley Farm had turned into a learning experience even for him as he read display cards providing information about each animal in the pens. "For instance, I didn't know until now that a pig 'farrows' when she gives birth," he said.

Shigeharu, enjoying the experience, grinned broadly and said

Farm-City Day was "wondrous." Tracy said the day was a totally new experience for the Japanese couple because Fukuoka City is on a small island with a population of 1,200,000. This was the first time the Kawakamis had ever seen a farm.

Next door to the petting zoo, Tom Horton and his son Mike from Towanda gave several sheep shearing demonstrations. Horton used a set of hand-cranked antique clippers to shear the woolly beasts. Mike provided the muscle power to run the clippers.

Horton, who has been known to shear as many as 240 sheep in a day, taking as little as 42 seconds a sheep, said the machines can also be used for clipping cattle and sheering mule manes. After the demonstration, Horton threw wool over the fence for spectators to feel before his son bundled it up.



Marna MacKay of Covington and Ruth Cooper of Millerton spin wool for the on-lookers.

At the other end of the complex was an exotic animal exhibit. Jakki and Anthony Folcarelli of Mansfield brought a pair of Scottish Highlander cattle, a pair of emus, two peacocks, several black bellied barbados (sheep), three Australian black swans (protected by Henry the Goose), and a pot-bellied pig.

"The pot-bellied pigs are orphans," Folcarelli said. Once someone's pets, the pot-bellied pigs outgrew their homes and wound up being "adopted" by the Folcarellis who started collecting exotic animals "for ourselves, for fun."

Of course the Robsons had their own animal exhibit at Farm-City Day, with 56 registered Holstein and several calves in the barn.

While the size of the live cows was a bit intimidating, Brittany Lynn D'Angelo found the fiberglass model of a cow in the yard just her size. With a little help from her father, Thomas, she "rode" on its back. This was their first visit to a Farm-City Day. As Pickle Hill residents, Thomas said the deciding factor for their visit was the petting zoo and all the other animals his daughter could see.

Another mainstay of Farm-City Day was the field tours by tractor-drawn wagons. As Gray Valley Farm raises primarily hay because of soil conditions, those who went on the tour witnessed a round baler and bale wrapper in action. At the apple orchard, county extension agents Lee Hoar and Earl Robbins provided information on how to bring old fruit trees back to life by proper pruning and discussed the benefits and liabilities of the multiflower rose. Howard Rutledge, from the Agricultural



Rebecca Webster places second in the pedal tractor pull for 10-year-old girls.

Stabilization and Conservation Service, was on the trail further along the tour to talk about the Robsons' conservation practices.

While on the surface one exhibit, the mobile museum — World War II, Pennsylvania on the Home Front — looked out of place among all the agricultural displays, a few surprises were inside. Like a time warp 50 years into the past, the museum offered insights on what it was like for Pennsylvanians back then: the rationing of food and fuel, war bond sale drives, and even agriculture was recognized in panels showing how victory gardens provided extra food and scrap metal drives recycled such material as broken plow points.

With so much to see and do in one day, no wonder Tioga County's Farm-City Day is having an impact on neighboring Bradford

and Potter counties. According to Sherri Elder, a member of the farm-city committee, "This year several persons from Bradford County attended, not only to enjoy the day but to learn from our 'expertise.' We keep telling them, it is only due to the tremendous 'team effort' that we succeed."

Farm-City Day Contest Winners

Pedal Tractor-Girls: Britanni Smith, 4, Kerri Evans, 5, Megan Moore, 6, Krysti Hilfiger, 7, Raquel Loud, 8, Amanda Forsburg, 9, Renee Booth, 10, Annie Dyke, 11, Michelle Hilfiger, 12

Pedal Tractor-Boys: Kendal Snyder, 4, Eli Morgan, 5, Brandon McMullen, 6, Russell Brown, 7, Ira Nienhueser, 8, Tim Johnston, 9, Josh Cheves, 10, Travis Comfort, 11, Jeremy Shoen, 12

Mary Shaw of Tioga won the door prize of a free year's supply of ice cream

BALE THROWING

Jr. Boys: 1 Blair Chapel, 2 Jacob Tomlison

Jr. Girls: 1 Bell Booth, 2 Renee Booth

Men: 1 Mike Brown Sr., 2 Earl Wood

Women: 1 Gene Brown, 2 Sue Giles

WIRE SPLICING

12 yr. olds and under: Matt Cabagnaro

13-16 yr. olds: Matt Tice

17 yr. olds: Jason Kriner



Jennifer Giles of Mansfield visited Farm-City Day for the first time and found these little pigs to her liking at the children's petting zoo.

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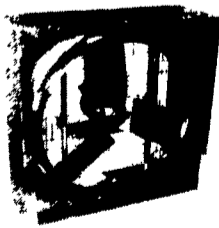
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