

Believe And Work Hard Is Balzano's Secret To Success

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ASHVILLE (Cambria Co.)—

Even though the 1995 edition of the Pennsylvania Farm Show is over, excitement still runs high in the Balzano household...with good reason. Bobie-Jo, eighteen-year-old daughter of Ted and Mary Balzano, raised "Clem" a 5 1/2 month-old crossbred hog which garnered the title of 1995 Junior Market Swine Grand Champion.

The Balzano clan lives on ten acres located just outside of Ashville. They don't have a large hog operation but it has proven to be a quality one. Along with Bobie-Jo, two brothers, seventeen-year-old Paul, and eleven-year-old Ryan, and a cousin, Shannon McCloskey, raise and show steers and pigs. All four of these 4-H'ers are quite proud of the many banners, ribbons, trophies, and plaques which they have won during the past seven years at various events. Besides Bobie Jo's champion in Harrisburg, she also had the Grand Champion Hog at the Cambria County Fair in September. Ryan had the Grand Champion Junior Carcass barrow which was also Reserve Champion carcass overall at the 1994 Keystone Expo.

The family members have competed against each other at many events and admit to rivalry with each other. A lot of good-natured teasing goes on among them but Paul concedes that the bottom line is that they are all happy when "family wins."

The family is an active one. Ted, a self-employed truck driver, was not raised on a farm but spent a good deal of time on his uncle's farm. This prompted him to begin showing animals and he is glad to see this interest continuing with his family's 4-H activities.

Mary is a stay-at-home mom who likes to keep busy with her

country crafts. She admits to not being too involved with the hog projects but Bobie-Jo is quick to point out that her mom, along with a grandmother and a great aunt, are the children's biggest fans.

Paul and Ryan are both students in the Penn Cambria School District. Both boys enjoy outdoor activities and Ryan participates in the school district elementary wrestling program.

Bobie-Jo is a freshman at St. Francis College, Loretto, where she is planning to major in social work. At the present time, her goal is to work with abused children. In addition to being a full-time commuting student, Bobie-Jo works 20-30 hours per week at two women's accessory stores in a local shopping mall. Her duties there range from being a saleswoman to piercing ears. It's quite a hectic schedule but she managed quite well during the first semester. During Farm Show week she was especially grateful to her co-workers for covering all of her hours so that she could be at the show. These co-workers were thrilled when she won but find it hard to believe that this vivacious young woman raises pigs.

4-H has been a part of Bobie-Jo's life for seven years. In the beginning, she had to be coerced into working with pigs because she really didn't like the way they smelled. She credits her great-uncle, Paul "Clem" Niebauer for getting her started. He is the reason why she affectionately chose the name "Clem" for her pig. Uncle Clem has been a special person to all of the Balzanos and Bobie-Jo says this is because "he's always been there for us."

Clem, Ted, and Paul choose the young pigs the kids will raise. Ted feels that Clem can look at a young pig and visualize how it will look at 240 pounds. Clem has been a 4-



The Balzano Family, from left, Paul, Mary, Ted, Bobie-Jo; and front, Ryan.



Family 4-H members: (left to right) cousin, Shannon McCloskey, and the Balzanos: Bobie-Jo, Ryan, and Paul with some of the awards they have won for their livestock in various competitions.



Bobie-Jo says she owes so much to Uncle Paul "Clem" Niebauer, who shows her how to raise quality hogs.

H leader for 25 years and was honored for this achievement at the Cambria County leaders' banquet. Ted says that Clem takes a special interest in all of his 4-H'ers and will do anything that he can to help a youngster bring out the best in his or her animal.

Showmanship is Bobie-Jo's favorite part of the competition and it is in this category that she has won second place twice at the State Farm Show. Her many years of dance training, cheerleading, and involvement in student government have given her quite a bit of poise and self-confidence. She said that she knew that "Clem," a Hamp-Duroc cross, weighing in at 257 pounds, with excellent length, width, and low body fat, was a

good pig but it was her job to make the judges see that. This was quite an important task as there were about 400 pigs in the competition.

When asked for any trade secrets, Bobie-Jo admitted that she really didn't have any, but if she did she probably wouldn't divulge them anyway. She thoroughly enjoys the competition and agrees with Paul and Shannon that the best part is meeting new people. Ryan pipes in that Bobie-Jo means meeting boyfriends." Ryan likes the shows because he just likes the pigs.

Clem was purchased by Hatfield Quality Meats of Harrisburg. For her efforts, Bobie-Jo will receive \$5,000 plus 1/4 of the

remaining \$12,000 top prize. The remainder of the prize is put into a scholarship fund sponsored by the state 4-H organization. Twelve \$1,000 scholarships were given out to qualifying participants at the Farm Show.

Bobie-Jo has thoroughly enjoyed her participation in 4-H and is looking forward to one more year of competition. After this final year, she plans to stay active in 4-H as a leader. When asked for any "words of wisdom" for younger 4-H members she thought for a moment and said, "If you believe in yourself and really work hard for what you want — you'll be able to do it."

'Hook-In' At Heritage House Museum

ELIZABETHTOWN (Lancaster Co.) — Four rug "hook-ins" with nationally-known rug maker Pat Hornafius will be held at the Winters Heritage House Museum, 43 East High Street, Elizabethtown. The special sessions will be held on the first Saturdays of the following months from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: February 4, March 4, May 6, and June 3.

A member of the Directory of Traditional Craftsmen, sponsored by "Early American Life", Pat has designed and hooked rugs featured

in that publication for eight years. Her hooked rugs have appeared in many national magazines: "Country Living", "Country Home", "Rug Hooking", "Piecwork", and Time-Life Country Crafts.

The gathering will be open to rug hooking students who attended the fall rug hooking classes at the Winters Museum for a special charge. Other experienced rug hookers may join the group for one or more sessions at a cost of \$15 per session, Museum members \$10

per session. Bring a bag lunch and snacks, if desired.

These sessions will be special times for meeting other rug hookers, sharing ideas, and solving problems. There will be no formal instruction. However, during the first session, dying procedures will be demonstrated. Throughout all the "hook-ins", Pat Hornafius will help you with your technique.

To register for the rug hooking sessions, please call (717) 367-4908.