

# Holstein Association Chooses Distinguished Winners

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — Senior winners in the Pennsylvania Holstein Association's Distinguished Junior Member Contest are Jill Harnish of Christiana and Rachel Tanis of Centre Hall.

These two women will represent the state in the National Distinguished Junior Member Contest to be held in June at the National Holstein Convention in Pittsburgh.

To receive this award, con-

stants needed to write about their accomplishments in Holstein activities, school work, community involvement, leadership, and their ideas for the future in agriculture and the Holstein industry. Six finalists were chosen. The finalists were interviewed by a panel of judges, who then combined their scrapbook achievements and interview scores to select two winners.

Read about these two outstanding women in their own words.

## Jill Harnish Says 'My Heart Is In Production'

The farm where I was born, raised and currently work is also the same farm where my father was born, raised, and works. My father milks registered Holstein cows, although that was not always the case. When my father was born my grandfather had a registered Ayrshire farm. In the early 1900s my great-grandfather was the first to bring registered Ayrshire cattle to Lancaster County. My father showed Ayrshires extensively as a teen-ager. In 1965 he married my mother and began to take over the farm. He gradually began to switch to Holsteins, and by 1970 my father's herd was 100 percent Holstein.

In the year 1970, my sister Jenny was born, joining my older brother Brian who was born in 1968. The year 1975 brought my arrival. At this time my parents' operation consisted of 40 registered and grade Holsteins. My father also cropped 90 acres of land.

My first recollections of my duties on the farm were holding the tails of cows for my father during milking and cleaning out water bowls, for which I got paid a penny a bowl. Later when I was too

young to be in 4-H, but not too young to show, I had plans of showing one of my dad's calves which I had named Maple. Maple and I made our debut at the Solanco Fair. Everything was fine until show time approached, when I backed out and my sister showed Maple for me.

When I was 8 years old I began regular chores in the barn. After school I would sweep up in the barn and feed my pets. By this time I had overcome my setback of my first showing experience. That is when I decided I wanted a cute little Jersey calf. After three years of having Jerseys as my 4-H project, I guess you could say I wised up, or maybe my thrill of Jerseys just wore out.

In 1987 I won \$300 toward the purchase of a registered heifer calf in the Youth Participation Contest at the Solanco Fair. In March of 1988 my father went to a herd dispersal and bought a December calf, Archview Marvel Marcie, for me to put my money toward. Marcie was the start of my Holstein herd. Because my parents believe you appreciate what you work for

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Rachel Tanis

## Rachel Tanis Promotes Industry She Loves

Through the years that I have worked in the Holstein industry, I have found that it has given me many things. From meeting new friends to watching the Holstein breed develop into something greater from year to year has been rewarding.

**HOME OPERATION:** My experience with the Holstein breed began after my family moved from Mansfield, Missouri to Branchville, New Jersey in 1983 where we resided until 1988. We then moved on to Centre Hall, Pennsylvania because of developmental pressures on our farm. This was a learning experience for all of my family. I am the daughter of Jacob and Sally Tanis III and have two older brothers, Jacob IV, age 24, and Adam, age 23. We have all grown stronger as a family through these moves from state to state and are proud of the fact that we are a family run farm. Presently we have 97 cows on test with approximately 110 young stock. Our herds Breed Age Average is currently at 109.0 points. Aside from milking cows we also raise corn, alfalfa, and soybeans. With my brothers and father working in the fields during the harvesting season, it leaves my mother and me to do the milking.

At the present time, we have a 85-cow tie stall barn. We also have five separate pens for our breeding stock housing and one pen for raising bulls. Our calves are first housed in one of the 15 calf hutches we have and then are moved into a pen where they are gradually weaned off by the 12th week.

**FEEDING PROGRAM:** Since moving to Pennsylvania we have been using a Total Mixed Ration. Our herd average since then has increased almost 9,000 pounds. Our present herd average is 26,374 pounds of milk, 974 of fat, and 849 protein. Our TMR is presently based at 90 pounds of milk.

**MILKING/HEALTH PROGRAM:** Our herd is milked twice daily in a tie stall barn. We pre and post-dip and have been pleased with the results. We would like to see a lower somatic cell count yet, some of our best milkers are the cause for it to be where it is. We make sure that a cow with a high somatic cell count gets her machine sanitized before it goes on another cow. This has kept our cases of mastitis down considerably.

We use two vets for our herd health. One comes once a month to check for pregnancies. The other is a local vet, who is used for our monthly herd health checks. My father takes care of most of our veterinary work except for operations. He is also in charge of doing all of the artificial breeding of the cows. We strive to keep our calving interval at 12.3 months. We have been able to maintain this because of the clean up bulls that we have on our farm. These bulls are also used at the neighbors' farms throughout the years.

**RECORD KEEPING:** Record keeping is completed primarily by my father, mother and myself. My mother's primary concern is with the DHIA sheets since she is the primary milker. She also is in charge of the bill paying in the family. My father does all the breeding so he keeps track of all the latest heats. He is also in charge, along with my brother, of the field work and our feeding program. I am in charge of making sure that the calf registration and vaccination is completed on time. With school and Dairy Princess duty taking up most of my daytime, I find myself at times working late at night on some of the registrations to make sure they are sent out on time. I am also in charge of deciding when the calves are ready for vaccination and when they are ready to be weaned. We have found this sys-

tem to work best for us so far because each of us has a certain interest in different areas.

**RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE FARM:** As stated before, our responsibilities are shared by family members. While serving as an Alternate Pennsylvanai Dairy Princess, Centre County Dairy Princess, and a student at Penn State, I have found myself away from the farm more than before. Yet I help every morning before class when the average 20 calves need fed milk. We also must clean up the feeding mangers in front of the cows, and their beds while they are at pasture. I work closely with my father with the breeding choices of my own cows. I usually follow his advice because I haven't found too many faults in his herd. He and I believe that one breeding choice could affect us in the future. I also feel that careful record keeping is essential in raising a successful herd. Our system so far has proven effective so I plan to follow it when I begin to raise my own herd.

**BREEDING PROGRAM:** Ideal Holsteins have been long known in Centre County for not using the index system. We have found that in our herd, breeding with the "High Number" bull, has not been profitable. We breed our cows to be long lasting and we found that using the index bulls did not give us this. We mainly use Semex bulls because of the strength of the offspring we get. We begin by looking at the maternal line to see how the dam classified and how much she milked. If the dam is not profitable, why invest in a bull out of her? Sometimes we touch base with whether or not the dam is positive on protein or milk for a final evaluation. We also look for improving our type in our herd. We believe that a good looking cow can last in the herd longer than one that is bred for index.

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Jill Harnish