

Join PDPPS For 40-Year Anniversary Bash

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CLARION (Clarion Co.) — Over-the-hill birthday parties are in vogue for people who turn 40. But it will not be a time to mourn the passing of better years when the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess and Promotion Services, Inc. celebrates its 40th anniversary on Sept. 21.

Instead, the upcoming celebration, slated for the Sheraton Inn-East in Harrisburg, will show how much the program has changed for the better and how much it has accomplished since its inception.

From its small beginnings in 1956 when the Miss Milk Maid contest was initiated by the Pennsylvania Association of Milk Dealers until the present with 31 county dairy princesses, the purpose of the program is to sell more milk products.

This grass-roots organization concentrates on the personal touch by using county dairy princesses, alternates, ambassadors, and dairy darlings to hand out samples, recipes, and information to individuals at fairs and special events.

According to Jan Harding, director of PDPPS, these dairy spokespeople contacted 953,418 people last year. It's no easy feat for Harding to keep track of so many spokespeople for the industry, but keeping detailed records is a must for each person involved in the program.

After the individual numbers were tallied, the totals for the past year showed that 1,369 school presentations had been held, 533 promotional newspaper articles had been written and published, 652 television and radio appearances made, 709 store and mall promotions held, 372 non-farm presentations made, 247 farm meetings attended, and 498 special events held.

At the milk punch reception and banquet on Sept. 21, all the former state dairy princesses are invited to participate. The former royalty, starting with Susan Coskery Taylor, who reigned as the state milk maid in 1956, to the current Pa. Dairy Princess Rhonda Joy Kiek-lak, will wear their banners and crowns and introduce themselves and tell what they are now doing.

During its earliest years, from one to 14 counties were covered by each milk maid who then competed for the state title, followed by competition for the national crown. The national competition was discontinued in 1972.

Because of changes in sponsorship of the program, no contest was held in 1967. But the following year, the Pennsylvania Holstein Association assumed sponsorship and each county was encouraged to have a dairy princess, who later competed for the state title at the pageant held in Harrisburg.

To increase promotional activities at the county level, district coordinators were appointed in 1975. Three years later, incentive awards were initiated to encourage county dairy princesses to participate in a wider variety of promotional activities. The incentive program offers monetary awards to those who successfully complete a required number of activities.

Sponsorship changed again in 1979. For five years, Atlantic Dairy Association served as coordinator of the princess program by working with six district coordinators and the county promotional committees. To provide a more uniform program, the district coordinators established the present PDPPS, and hired Jan Harding as program director.

Harding continues in this capacity. This year, Arlene Wilbur of Bradford County was named assistant program director.

The dairy princess program is supported and funded by Pennsylvania dairy farmers through the American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc., Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association, American Dairy Association & Dairy Council, Mid East/Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program, Allied Milk Producers, and independent contributors.

"Much more is expected of the girls than in the program's earlier years," said Charlene Rohrer Ranck, PDPPS secretary.

Ranck, herself, was a state dairy princess in 1981. For her and many other dairy princesses, dairy promotion does not cease when the crown is relinquished.

Since then, Ranck has tirelessly promoted milk with the Chester County committee and, in addition to being secretary of the PDPPS board, is the southeast district coordinator.

She said, "Over the past years, the dairy princess program has gained strength, and solidly stands as the only dairy promotion organization that covers the entire state. By giving support and direction to the county committees, the effects of a grass roots promotion is well established."

Although the 40th anniversary will celebrate the past, the highlight of the occasion will be the pageant, where 31 county dairy princesses will compete for the state title.

Those who attend the pageant will see all county dairy princesses on stage. From these, seven will be named as finalists after being selected from two days of rigorous judging from individual interviews, presentations, speeches, scrapbooks, and informal meetings. The top two speeches and presentations will be given before the banquet audience. In addition, each of the finalists will be required to answer an impromptu question.

In addition to the coronation of a state dairy princess, two state alternates will be selected and the Miss Congeniality Award given.

To support the dairy princess program, Winross trucks with the PDPPS logo will be available for purchase at the banquet.

Tickets are \$20 for the milk punch and cheese reception that begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the pageant.

Reservations should be made by Sept. 18, by sending a check or money order to Pa. Dairy Princess & Promotion Services, Inc. 214 S. St., Box 640, Clarion, PA 16214.

Tickets will be held for pick up at the banquet.

Any questions? Call Jan Harding at (814) 226-7470.



Former dairy princesses attending the 20th anniversary, from left, are Debra Miller Brubaker, 1974; Diane Gillespie Wallon, 1962; Ann Niesley Black, 1968; Rose Winkelbauer Hoffman, 1972; Rosa Lee Morse Smith, 1964; Peggy Staub Morehart, 1976; Linda Forba Lucy, 1965; Carol Virtue Braund, 1958; Marilyn Krantz Sejas, 1970; Beverly Robinson Minor, 1959; Marcia Gnagey, 1973; and Charlene Maust Courtney, 1975.



At the 25th anniversary held in 1981, these former state dairy princesses attended. Front row from left, Lisa Miller Hamilton, 1978; Eileen Shull Mitchell, 1979; Charlene Rohrer Ranck, 1981; Cindy Neely Welmer, 1980; and Sandy Miller Fryer, 1977. Back row from left, Rosa Lee Morse Smith, 1964; Peggy Staub Morehart, 1976; Marcia Gnagey, 1973; Bev Robison Minor, 1959; Carol Virtue Braund, 1958; and Debra Miller Brubaker, 1974.



During the 35th anniversary held in 1991, these former state dairy princesses attended. Back row from left, Charlene Rohrer Ranck, 1981; Sandy Miller Fryer, 1977; Kimberly Bonzo Mayhue, 1988; Tamara Cree Christopher, 1983; Robin Wilbur Hulzinga, 1991; Rosa Lee Morse Smith, 1964; Susan Coskery Taylor, 1956; Pamela Kindig, 1986; and Beth Heald Moore, 1985. Front Row from left, Carol Virtue Braund, 1958; Bev Robinson Minor, 1959; Charlene Maust Courtney, 1975; Kristin Metzker Russell, 1990; Rebecca Sonnen Bube, 1987; and Lynette Loper Pietkiewicz.

Homestead Notes