

State House Honors Dairy Farmers, Dairy Princesses

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in more than 22 years on Sept. 24 to attend the state dairy princess pageant in Harrisburg, the last official proceeding with his daughter reigning as state princess.

He took a four-day stretch of vacation then. On Monday he took one more day of vacation and got his first visit to the state Capital and his first visit with the governor.

And he got to see his daughter being honored by the state House of Representatives.

Both parents said they are very proud of their daughter, who is currently working with Sonny's Photography in Erie, a business that takes student photographs.

Rhonda said she is equally as proud of her family, which includes older sister Renee, who served as a county dairy maid in 1990.

According to Kieklak, her parents' dedication to the dairy industry and the hard, but rewarding work she witnessed her parents perform served to motivate her to seek the special day honoring dairy farmers.

"I got the idea from what my speech was last November," she said. She said that Dorothy Naugle from Allied Milk Producers, helped give her advice. "She wasn't there Monday, but she deserves recognition for her efforts working with me."

Kieklak said she sought political recognition because of the impact. "I just wanted (dairy farmers to) be recognized. I knew that if politics would be involved, it would be public."

She said she was aware of Scrimenti and at her high school graduation party, she talked to him about the day of appreciation. She said originally she intended to hon-

or all farmers, but it was changed to specify dairy farmers, which was fine by her, as long as the other farmers don't feel they aren't appreciated by her, because they are.

The resolution passed the House by a 201-0 vote.

On Monday, while waiting along the walls of the House chamber for the legislators to settle into their places and come to order, she said she was somewhat shocked at the apparent Alice-In-Wonderland chaos that seemed to dominate.

"I was real suprised that they ever get anything done, because it was real chaotic," she said, "but when (Rep. Scrimenti) was done talking, everybody clapped, so they must have been listening."

Kieklak said the day was very exciting for her.

"It was overwhelming," she said. "There were a lot of people there — Angela Werley, Jan

Harding, my parents, her parents — and we were called up to the House floor and the citation was read and presented and they recognized both Angela and I, and we had our photos taken with the speaker, and I thought it was over with and then the governor made an effort to come out."

"It's exciting," her mother said. "We're very proud of her. We're blessed. She's a great person. It's been a great year."

Richard said the experience for him was "great" and he also was very proud of her accomplishments, but not surprised.

"Usually when she starts something, she goes until its finished," he said. "If she didn't get it passed this year, she'd get it passed next year, she's very determined."

The Kieklak farm goes by the name of "Four-R Farm," a reference to the family of four and the fact that all their names begin with "R."

But it also refers to the dedication and ethic of working and sac-

rificing for a goal, in this case the farm.

Richard is the third generation on the farm. His grandfather started it and Richard took it over from his father.

They own 100 acres, rent 200, and milk 50 cows and have about 20 heifers, both registered and grade Holsteins.

Robin said Monday was icing on the cake.

"I would put the whole year as dairy princess as one of the best times the family had," she said. "(Monday) was like the crowning achievement."

Rhonda, who is looking to pursue a college education, said that her advice for others is not to give up when things get tough and to put a complete effort into convictions.

"If you have a dream, or you feel that your goal can be reached, put in a 110-percent effort and you can accomplish it," she said, adding that Monday was "my year's work and it kind of marked that my year was over."

But it is just the beginning of Oct. 7 as state Dairy Farmer Appreciation Day.

Penn State Open House

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — The Penn State University College of Agricultural Sciences' Department of Dairy and Animal Science has announced an open house for prospective students to be held Saturday, Oct. 26, at its University Park building.

According to a news release, registration and refreshments are set to start at 9:30 a.m., with the program starting at 10 a.m.

The open house is designed to provide information most often requested by college-bound students applying for admission into undergraduate programs offered in Penn State's Department of Dairy and Animal Science.

The day's activities will include sessions on the dairy and animal science major, undergraduate experiences at Penn State, the admissions process, housing, financial aid, career guidance, clubs and judging teams.

After a lunch buffet, families will have the opportunity to meet with an academic advisor and tour the Penn State campus.

Those wishing to attend should call LuAnn Weatherholtz at (814) 863-3664, by Oct. 22, to make reservations for lunch.

For more information on the open house event, or programs offered in the Department of Dairy and Animal Science, call Keith Bryan at (814) 863-0569, or Dale Oliver at (814) 863-3914.

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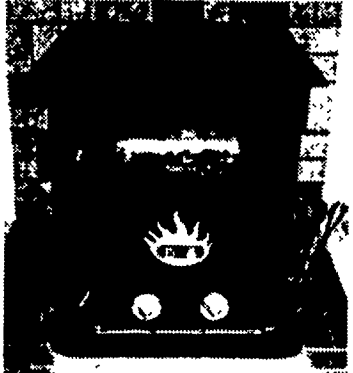
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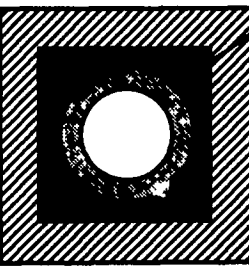
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