

King And Queen Farm Finally Has A Real Princess

(Continued from Page B2)

high feed costs and low milk prices. People probably won't be concerned until they have no food. Then they'll ask, "What happened to the farmer? Farmers are a special breed because they just keep going."

Elizabeth believes that people cannot realize the magnitude of work required to farm unless one lives on a farm.

Few dairy farms exist in the Cocalico School District, and, Elizabeth said that classmates often made derogatory comments about the smells and practices of farming. But she was greatly encouraged by her biology teacher.

He had grown up on the farm and his sister, Becky Sonnen, had been a state dairy princess. Elizabeth was thrilled to meet Becky, who now works for Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association and serves as the dairy princess coordinator in Lancaster County. Elizabeth said, "I consider her my mentor. I'd love to have a job like Becky and promote the dairy industry."

One of Elizabeth's responsibilities is to visit schools and teach them the importance of including dairy products in a healthy diet and to look for the real seal to differentiate between dairy products and look-alikes.

"I think it's important to grab the attention of children while they are still young," she said.

Elizabeth is well-qualified to represent the dairy industry. Milk has always been her drink by choice. She is intent on helping women realize the severity of

osteoporosis that results from not including enough dairy products in their diets during their growing and young adult years.

The whole Smith family is involved in 4-H. After moving from New Jersey where the parents were 4-H leaders, they started the Cows R Us 4-H Club and continue to serve as 4-H leaders. The family participates in county, district, and state dairy show competitions.

Generally Elizabeth and her brothers each show three animals at each show; but last year, she showed five. Elizabeth shows Brown Swiss and her brothers show Guernseys.

Elizabeth and her siblings have boxes of ribbons and trophies from competition. Most exciting over the years has been showing the grand champion Brown Swiss at the state level, and the grand champion of junior-owned Brown Swiss at the All American, and receiving the National Junior Bell Ringer award, based on points accumulated over the show season.

"We have our own cattle trailer, and take off in the afternoon and stay overnight so that we're there the next morning for the show," Elizabeth said of the All American Show.

This is Elizabeth's last year to show for 4-H, but she can still show at the national level.

"I love showing and will always help with shows," she said. "It is important to remain alert in the show ring. A cow may walk fine one day, and the next rear up."

Elizabeth said that her family became interested in the Guernsey

breed when they were looking for a gentle breed for her brother Brian to show. Although Brown Swiss are loving, they are often stubborn and pushy when young she said. Guernseys are very sweet and cooperative and just the right breed for Brian who has Down's Syndrome.

Elizabeth credits Brian with having a huge impact on her life. She was three years-old when he was born.

"We don't use the word 'retard.' It isn't a word that should be used to describe anyone," she said in regards to the defense she encounters with other school children.

"Brian is the most caring, affectionate brother. He has a better grasp on life than most people. He never complains, no matter what—and that challenges me," she said.

Friendly and outgoing, Brian functions at a high level of achievement, no doubt because his family is so encouraging of his endeavors.

Throughout his schooling, the family has, at times, switched him to other districts so that he would not be pushed aside. This past year, Elizabeth was Brian's 'date' for his school prom, "but he ditched me for another girl at the prom," she teased him.

Watching all the special needs students dance and have so much fun was a special thrill for Elizabeth. Throughout the years, Elizabeth has babysat for a group of parents of special needs children

and has assisted at Brian's school.

Elizabeth speaks often of her great admiration for her parents who, she said, always encouraged her. It isn't that her parents haven't been strict. One rule is that the teens must be 18 years old to apply for a driver's license. Elizabeth did not consider this request unfair. "My parents drove me wherever I needed to be. And, with the work on the farm, we have plenty to do."

Elizabeth said that she grew up often preferring the company of adults to her own peers. She has always spent time developing relationships with teachers and now with professors at college. She served as a peer mediator for four years during high schooling, student library assistant, chorus, and had a major singing role in the school musical.

At church, Elizabeth serves as an altar server.

The family's love of animals is evident by the four dogs and two cats that are house broken.

"We also have 30 too many Muscovy ducks," Elizabeth said of

those they raise to sell for an ethnic market.

At college, Elizabeth is a Lion Ambassador, whose duty is to represent the Berks Penn State campus by giving tours and help with special events on campus.


"Berks is a wonderful campus. The student to teacher ratio is 30 students to one," she said.

During a college speech class last year, Elizabeth took a cow to school to demonstrate how to show a cow. She had quite a bit of attention walking around the campus with a cow.

"My college adviser has offered to help me in any way possible with my duties as dairy princess. She even came to my pageant," Elizabeth said.

Within days of being crowned princess, Elizabeth had already completed several promotions and was planning more.

One of those promotions will be at Weaver's Market in Adamstown, where she is employed part time.



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