

# Amanda DeSio Is State Fair Queen, Bev Gruber Named Fair Person

HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) - Amanda DeSio, McKean County Fair Queen, was crowned the 1998 Pennsylvania Fair Queen at the 12th state coronation last week in conjunction with the Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs annual meeting in the Convention Center. Amanda is the seventeen year-old daughter of Gerald and Kathy DeSio of Kane.

Forty-three contestants who had been first place winners at their local fairs competed for the honor. The contestants, ranging in age from 16 to 21, were judged on an essay, a five-minute speech on "Why You Should Come to My Fair," a personal interview, and evening gown competition.

Named runner-up was Jessica Watson, Lebanon Area Fair Queen. Her parents are Jeff and Laura-Jean Watson, Kleinfeltersville.

The queen is currently a senior at Kane Area High School and plans to begin college next year to major in psychology and sociology. Some of Amanda's school activities include National Honor Society, student council, choralliers, orchestra, jazz band, marching band, and majorettes. She is the SADD president, Spanish club secretary, opinions editor of the school newspaper, and this year founded the high school's first literary magazine. She has twice won the title of Intermediate Unit 9 experienced debate champion and was chosen for an honorable delegate award at the 1997 Penn State Model United Nations. Outside school, she takes dance classes and assists in teaching dance lessons. She is a radio announcer at WLMI-FM in Kane and is working with the local family center on a new youth center. Some of the charities she has volunteered for are the Crop Walk and American Heart Association. She enjoys playing violin and piano and writing poetry.

Amanda received \$1,500 in scholarships and was also named Miss Congeniality by her peers.

Jessica answered the impromptu question "How would you convince a business person of the importance of sponsoring an event or exhibit at your fair?" by saying that youth are very important. "Youth are our future, and what better thing than to invest something in our youth. I would just encourage them to help in that way, to be able to help in a young person's life.

Jessica is home-schooled and takes courses at Lancaster Bible College and F&M. Her awards include Bronze PA Discover Card Tribute, 1995 Myerstown Voice of Democracy, 1996 Lebanon County American Legion Essay Contest, WCTU Diamond Speech Medal, semi-finalist 1995 Miss PA Teen USA, listed in Who's Who American High School Students for three years, and 4th runner-up Miss PA Teen Sunburst. At the National 4-H Congress, she was on the leadership team and a soloist. She sang in sign language for the National Association of County Ag Agents.

At the 1995 & '96 PCC/PSU Summer Institutes, she won awards for talent, speech, and quizzing, and was selected to attend NICE where she served as vice-president and sales manager of the co-op. Her activities include co-directing "Joyful Noise," leading music at Youth for Christ, acting in "Martyred, the Chet Bitterman Story," a TV role on "Pete's Place," teaching dance, directing musicals, and singing.

The other finalists were Tiffany STahl, Greencastle, Franklin County Fair Queen; Cassie Croner, Berlin, Somerset County Fair Queen, and Carolyn Davis, Lititz, Elizabethtown Fair Queen.

Another highlight of the annual convention is the naming of the 1998 Fair Person of the Year. Well-known for her community efforts this year's winner is Beverly Gruber, New Tripoli.

Gruber is owner/manager of SCS Management, a multi-association firm that has clients such as the Pennsylvania Livestock Association and the Pennsylvania Campgrounds Owners Association. She is also the public relations director of several county fairs.

But maybe her best known work has been promoting the state fair association. In the early '80's Bev worked as project coordinator for Venango County Small Business Information Project in Oil City. She is a former home economist in the Venango County Agriculture Extension and a home economics teacher in the Allegheny-Clarion Valley High School.

Beverly has been involved in the Grange and the Farm Bureau. Of special interest is her work with the Allentown Fair, the Schnecksville Community Fair, the PA Fair in Philadelphia County Park, and the Venango County Fair.

For more than 30 years she has been involved in the Pennsylvania Farm Show and the Keystone International Livestock Exposition. To her credit, she has visited 106 of the 113 fairs in Pennsylvania plus 25 fairs in other states, including California, Alaska, and Florida.

In accepting the award Beverly said, "It is always gratifying to be recognized by your peers. This is especially true in an industry you have enjoyed and worked in for a lifetime. I can only thank those people who have worked with me in our efforts.

In other awards the following winners were named: Premium



Beverly Gruber, left, was named the 1998 Fair Person of the Year by the Pennsylvania Association of State Fairs at the annual meeting last week. Fay Fulmer made the presentation. Bev's sons Clay and Brett Snyder and her husband Henry join in presenting the honor.

Tabloid, first, Hookstown Fair; second, Washington County Fair; third, Elizabethtown Fair. Also winning were Premium Book, first, a tie, Elizabethtown Fair and Greene-Dreher-Sterling Fair, second, York Fair, third, Albion, Harford Fair and West End Fair.

Other winners were Video (amateur), first, Hookstown Fair and second, Fayette County Fair. Scrapbook winners were first, Elizabethtown Fair, second, Warren County Fair and third, Spartansbug Fair. Promotional Materials winners were first, York Fair, second, Greene-Dreher-Sterling Fair and third, Hookstown Fair.

Fair Display winners were first, Denver Fair, second, Kimberton Fair and third, Centre County Fair. Best Overall was Elizabethtown Fair.

Judges for the queen pageant included Betty Dale, Bellwood; Mary Ann Keith, Huntingdon, and Edward Buss, Fogelsville. Attendance at the Fireman's Banquet Friday evening was 1020. At the coronation luncheon attendance was 650.

Amanda will represent the 112 fairs across Pennsylvania for the next year.



Amanda DeSio was crowned Pennsylvania Fair Queen for 1998.

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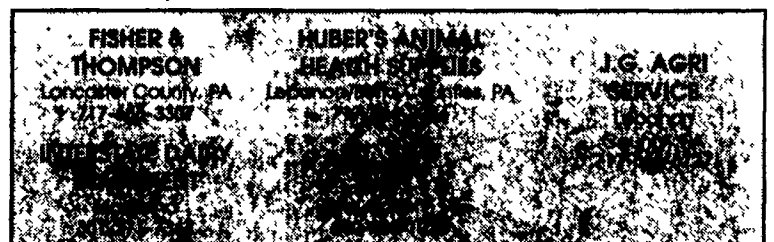
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