



The Boyd family are strong supporters of the 4-H program. When Gerald received the Superior Achievement Award, these family members congratulated him. Kneeling are a sister Sarah and cousin Brian Boyd. Parents Deb and Kerry Boyd are beside Gerald. At left are a cousin Jody with parents Bruce and Linda Boyd. At right are his Uncle Darwin and Aunt Linda Boyd. The fund for the Superior Achievement Award was first established in honor of Gerald's grandparents, Elmer and Pauline Boyd, 14 years ago. His grandfather had been a 4-H leader for 29 years.

Siblings Turn Rivalry Into 'Making The Best Better'

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"My father believes that doing a project book is just as important as showing an animal and that everything should be done as well as possible," Gerald said.

The siblings must have followed well their father's instructions.

The scrapbooks compiling the story of their 4-H involvement are outstanding. Creativity in arranging pictures, news clippings, and information tell an intriguing story.

Both show journalistic flair in stories expressing their emotions that fluctuate while they work on various projects.

The friendly sibling rivalry paid off this year when their blue books were named the best in the county.

In a surprise farewell to Gerald at the 4-H Livestock banquet recently, Sarah gave a heartwarming speech about her brother.

"It's going to be a sad time next year when no big brother Gerald will be telling me what to do or not to do—when he isn't there to sit with at the shows, share jokes, and listen to me complain," she said.

"He's a wonderful kind of person who makes a great impact on people's lives. He directed my steps instead of telling me what a complete jerk I was acting like at times. It's hard to believe that it took eight years to realize how much my brother means to me."

"I was totally shocked. It was really special of her to do that for me. I didn't realize how much I meant to her," Gerald said.

"We bonded together to make the motto 'Make the best Better,'" Sarah said. "We stuck together."

When it comes to livestock, the whole family gets involved. His mom has a nanny goat and his dad's favorite is pigs.

"We always say Dad spends more time with the pigs than he does with us," Gerald said a smile.

Sarah shares her dad's obsession with pigs, but Gerald prefers dairy animals and is intrigued with goats, after showing them for the first time last year. "Goats," he said, "are humorous with a nice

disposition."

Gerald attends Millersville University where he pursues elementary school teaching and special education degrees.

It was actually through showing cows that Gerald's interest in special education was piqued through learning to know someone with Down's Syndrome who shows dairy animals.

"I really like working with kids," Gerald said.

Gerald has also had experience in teaching kids by serving as a 4-H teen leader. During the 4-H Fair Tent Out, Gerald was in charge of all the games with the kids.

Sarah, 11, attends Ephrata High School. She wants to be either a high school gym teacher or an extension agent.

Gerald said that his father, who is a 4-H leader, pointed him in the right direction, but never pushed him.

"It was my idea to get involved with livestock judging. I did it one year for experience and then wanted to quit. But my dad encouraged me to do it one more year," Gerald said.

Lucky he did. That was the year the team took first place in the state and at national competition Gerald placed 15th out of 140 in individual competition.

But it was a trip that a group of 4-H'ers made to Poland that made the biggest impact on Gerald's life.

"It was the greatest experience of my life," Gerald said. He was especially impressed with the self-sacrificing acts of his host family,

who treated him like a king.

"The trip gave me a whole new perspective on life," he said.

"Americans take things for granted. I try not to do so any more," he said. "We have so much compared to what they have."

Gerald was also impressed with the value the Polish people put on families. "My host family came home in the middle of the day just so they could be together," he said.

Especially heart-rending was touring the Holocaust camps near Poland.

"Life doesn't last forever. We can't take each other for granted," Gerald said.

"I'd like to tell other kids," he said, "that 4-H affords many opportunities that allow us to reach for the stars. But you can only achieve your dream if you put time and effort into it. As future educator, I believe 4-H is an organization that will allow troubled youth to reach for the stars, thus keeping them off the streets."

As a means to enable non-farming youth to have the opportunity to work with livestock, the Boyds allowed a boy from a non-farm family to keep an animal on their farm and show it in 4-H competition.

While many 4-H'ers idolize Gerald, he said, "I have disappointments, animals die, I don't get what I expected from breeding, the animals may act stubborn, but I learned that when you get in a negative slump, hang on tight to faith because you have to believe that your luck is going to change."

Oxen Teams Needed

WALLKILL, N.Y. — Oxen teams are needed to participate in the fourth annual Shawangunk Day being planned for Oct. 3. Prizes will be given for the oxen pulling event, but those interested in participating should register now. Craft and food vendors are also needed.

Shawangunk Day features tractor and garden tractor pulls, free apple pie making, music, demonstrations, food, handmade crafts, pony rides, and other activities for young and old.

For more information, call (914) 895-2900.

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