

# Gala Woolley Brings Youthful Energy To Maple Festival

GAY BROWNLEE

**Somerset Co. Correspondent**  
SOMERSET (Somerset Co.) — The newest member of the Pennsylvania Maple Festival's board of directors is just shy of 20 years old, but everything Gala Woolley does is accompanied by a strong commitment and a sunny disposition.

No doubt when they asked her to join their ranks, the outstanding elements the former maple queen who reigned over the 49th Annual Pennsylvania Maple Festival in 1996, possessed — coupled with her energetic enthusiasm — were qualities the board found compatible to its mission.

The maple queen's committee of which she is a member, handles the maple queen scholarship pageant, a classy affair for the 12-15 talented high school senior girls chosen as finalists in auditions held earlier for three times that many girls.

"Being maple queen was my world for a year. They (the committee) became my extended family," the California University of Pennsylvania sophomore reported.

"They amaze me with all the work they do, but they have

everything under control."

She alludes to final preparations for the 51st annual maple festival coming up the last two weekends in April when in Meyersdale, the harvest of sweet water from the Somerset County sugar bush, is celebrated and features good-for-you-all-natural-100 percent pure, maple syrup.

Children, especially special needs children, respond to Woolley's winsome personality. She's an expert hugger — a spontaneous one — operating in the belief that hugs given away, happily, are returned in abundance.

Special education (her preference), and elementary education, compose the dual major she's taking, hopefully to fill an immediate position after graduation.

"I think it's important to teach and get the experience," she said. A master's degree will come later.

"I take a full load, do some extra and do summer. In summer I work with gifted children," she says.

In three and a half years, plus student teaching in the fall of 1999, she will have completed

college.

She can hardly wait, yet, along the way, where youngsters are concerned, she ceaselessly gives of her time.

"The more severe or profound the disability, that's what I want to do," Terry and Alice Woolley's daughter says.

"To help the children have independence and self-help life skills will be so rewarding, I think," she says.

A poem she found for a high school forensics competition about the daily limitations afflicting a person with mental retardation, deeply impressed Woolley.

"Just Smile," the mother of a mentally-challenged teen entitled the work about her daughter.

The imagery of living with the inability to turn a door knob, open a water faucet or brush one's own teeth, etched itself in Woolley's imagination.

Initially, some teens snickered then grew silent as Woolley on the stage, quoted the winning poem.

She later repeated her performance in the Junior Miss and also, the maple queen contests. The monologue, she felt, would

touch people and enable them also, to understand.

"I never wanted to do it to win," she said.

Each week, after days and nights spent cramming textbook knowledge into her mind, Woolley says that working with special children renews and invigorates her spent energy.

She recognizes that Special Olympians, unlike many persons, accept whatever blessings life provides for them.

The various races, for instance.

"They feel so proud," she reports. "They cross the finish line even though they don't win."

"They don't criticize and are so pleased with simple things. They love to dance."

Still, each Saturday at the pool the little one she is trying to teach to swim is a very challenging case to the patient Woolley. In time, as tiny victories are achieved, the no longer fearful child, hopefully, will relax enough to loosen her death grip around Woolley's neck.

"Working with the really delayed is hard," Woolley said. She foresees a future where conquering her natural emotional attachment to these special lives, as a professional, will be her private challenge.

"I know I'll want to bring them home with me."

Each child is a precious gift whom God has given a purpose

for living is her resolute conviction. And those who have tried dissuasive arguments have found her opinion on the matter, unshakable.

Woolley's only sibling is Brenton, her 26-year-old brother who, with their father, operates Woolley Fabrication and Welding located in New Stanton, Westmoreland County.

In Somerset, however, the family residence is on Walters Mill Road.

Woolley belongs to an education honor fraternity — Kappa Delta Pi; is on the Educational Advisory Board which deals with the university's education department; in the mentor program to assist incoming freshmen, and holds a part-time job at Polo's in the Horizon Outlet Center.

She also collects Precious Moments Dolls. Her favorite one is a child in a wheelchair holding a basketball. "Give Ability A Chance," is its caption.

Giving Woolley's ability a chance is what the queen's committee did last fall when they turned over the maple princess fashion show and let her coordinate it at the Somerset Country Club.

"Mom was my backbone," she reports of the assignment to entertain and feed several hundred guests, while the starlets modeled clothes a la mode.

Obviously, the two are the very best of friends.

## Science Fair Students

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In the contained atmosphere technique, Sarah controlled the amount of gases reaching the eggs under cool conditions. Several different tests were conducted on the eggs: after candling, she tested them for the relative thickness of the albumin, or the egg white; pH of albumin; and others.

What Sarah soon discovered was that, because of the natural cuticle of the European-style eggs, without processing, after 20 weeks without refrigeration the European method stood up to the American processed eggs. They were of better albumin quality.

"When Americans process eggs, they break down the quality of the eggs," she said, because the washing removes the cuticle. The cuticle allows the egg to regulate the transfer of gases from the outside of the shell to inside the egg — critical also to prevent egg quality degradation. The cuticle coating also provides a natural defense against microorganisms that break down egg quality. Sarah believes that Americans, who want "sanitary" eggs, are "lulled into a false sense of security" by the effects of egg washing. A lot of why consumers shop for the washed eggs is simply "aesthetics."

Next year's project will look into using anti-bacterial jells, similar used by restaurant employees, and the effects on egg quality. Sarah has applied to the Governor's School For Ag Science this year.

She intends to study ag science and minor in poultry or food science at one of several colleges, including Penn State, North Carolina State, or University of Tennessee. Sarah placed second with her project in biology. Her adviser is science teacher Robert Hertzler of Hempfield.

**Patrick's Look**

**Into Soil Types**

**And Erosion Control**

Patrick McCudden, 16, is a

sophomore at Hempfield High School.

What he found out that soils with the least uniform particle size have the potential to be the most erosion prone.

In his project, "The Effectiveness of Erosion Control Methods On Various Soils," Patrick found out that Duffield and Beddington silt loams can be worrisome for erosion.

Patrick, son of David and June McCudden, placed first in the earth/environmental science category in competition at the county science fair.

He collected soil from various sites in the school district, including Beddington silt loam, Lindsod, Duffield, and Manor silt loam. In all, he collected about a half cubic meter of soil in all. The soil was dried with dehumidifiers.

The project was set up with the bare soil on a 10-degree slope. Fifteen liters of water were used on the slope. Three buffers were used to determine their effectiveness, including a grass buffer strip, a stone filter bed, and a mesh netting.

Water was entered over the top of box and run through the box. What Patrick discovered was that the least uniform soil particle size proved to be most erosive — especially the Duffield and Beddington silt loams.

Patrick became intrigued when, in 8th grade in an earth science project, he saw the erosion results in some local streams. He saw stream erosion, a "very major problem in Lancaster County," he said.

The most effective erosion control method was the grass strips using a commercially available mix. The mesh netting worked to control erosion. The least effective was the crushed stone.

In all tests, grass was the most effective because the blades protrude up higher and screen, slowly

the water down and allowing the sediment to drop.

Next year's projects will look into tillage methods and their effects on erosion control, according to Patrick, who plans to attend college and study biology.

Patrick's adviser is Vicki Strohecker.

**Greg's Quest**  
**For Pure Water**

Gregory Plotner, 17, is the son of Edd and Cheryl Plotner, East Petersburg. An 11th grader at Hempfield and an Eagle Scout, Gregory found out that more than 40 percent of the nation's waterways are contaminated to the point they can't be used for drinking or recreating.

So during the first year of the project, "A Five-Year Study On Stream Water Purification: Developing A Method," Plotner looked at the microbiological effects of iodine and boiling to remove bacteria from water. He used them separately and found that boiling the water removed 68.2 percent of the bacteria *Staphylococcus Edidermidis* and *E-coli*. Iodine, a nonmetallic chemical element, removed 75.4 percent of the bacteria.

In the third year of the study, Plotner used a man-made filtration system that, like the iodine and boiling, proved only partially effective at 79.9 percent.

Additional research included adding enzymes to the experiment. But the concentrations required were not effective in eliminating *E-coli* because of the bacteria's tough cell membrane.

More work is needed, using another enzyme to break down the fatty lipids in the wall, Plotner noted.

Senior champion Plotner will be going to the international fair in Fort Worth. His adviser is Glenn Shaffer.



Gala Woolley, former Maple Queen, is backdropped by a photographic display of her reign in 1996.

## Mother's Day Tribute

Surprise your mother, wife or grandmother by sending one of her recipes to be included in a special tribute to mothers in the May 9th issue of Lancaster Farming.

Include a few sentences about her and a picture if you have one. Make sure that you include your name. Your address must also be

included if you want the picture returned.

Submissions must be received in our office by May 4 to be included. Send the information to Lancaster Farming's Mother's Day Tribute. Attention Lou Ann Good, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.