



The Horning family enjoys a breakfast of French toast and milk. Lingering conversations around the table are commonplace for the Horning family who stress family togetherness and spurn infringements such as television.



Lancaster County Alternate Dairy Princess Jamie Horning credits her mother with teaching her to cook. Both believe that using real dairy products is the secret to great tasting food.

Welcome To Turnpike View Registered Holsteins

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
STEVENS (Lancaster Co.) — If you're traveling the turnpike, you may want to drop by Turnpike View Registered Holsteins, Stevens.

Sure, you'll need to scale the fence that lines the turnpike between the Lebanon and Reading Exits, but the visit is guaranteed to be worth the few scratches and jean rips from climbing over the turnpike fence.

Perhaps that isn't the best way to drop in on the Paul and Shirley Horning family, but it's a farm where most everyone seems to find some excuse to stop by.

Visitors share in the laughter, fun, and even the work with the parents and children, Jamie, 17; Lindsay, 11; Dustin, 14; and Kelly, 12.

"People are always here. They just seem to show up," Shirley said. "We are blessed to live on a farm and enjoy sharing it with others."

"My friends seem to get a kick out of staying overnight and getting up early to feed the cows," said Jamie, who is Lancaster County's alternate dairy princess.

As a spokesperson for the dairy

industry and a viable asset to the family farm, it's not surprising that there are plenty of homemade specialties made with milk, cream, butter, and other dairy goodies for guests to indulge in.

Friends delight in riding the four-wheeler and performing acrobatic stunts on the trampoline. One thing guests won't do at the Horning's home is watch television or videos.

"When I tell people we don't have a TV, people think we are Amish," Jamie said.

"But a home with no television set is a decision made by the parents and happily endorsed by the children.

"We feel it's important to spend time together. If we had a television, I don't think we would talk together or read as much," Shirley explained.

Talking together comes naturally in this family, where each other's word's spill over accented with easy going laughter and the oft-repeated phrase, "do you remember when? . . ."

All the children enjoy reading. Jamie reported that she read four books in the last six days.

The 120-acre farm was Paul's grandfather's farm and later his

father's. For many years, the family lived on a nearby farmette while Paul continued to help his dad on the farm. In 1994, Paul and Shirley moved on the homestead.

They milk 85 Holsteins, bred for show and type.

"I'm an old-fashioned breeder. I don't breed with a high index but for big strong cows," Paul said.

He's proud to report that most of the farm's cows get to be 13-14 years old.

Paul said his greatest desire is to see family dairy farms survive despite the negative statistics.

He said it's really discouraging to hear predictions "from guys who think they know it all."

At one of the seminars he attended in recent months, Paul said that participants were told to

look to the right and to the left and told that only one-third of those farming then would still be farming five years later.

"I came home so discouraged. I thought I might as well quit right then," said Paul, who is well-acquainted with the economical struggles of farming.

"When I took over the farm, we hit high grain prices and depressed milk prices," Paul said.

The recent upsurge in milk prices has offered him a glimpse of hope for the future.

Although he hears predictions that milk prices will drop severely

again, Paul believes there is a chance that the experts are wrong.

He's a farmer who loves his cows and knows everyone on sight by name.

"When it's time for classifying, I can put all 71 papers in order while sitting here in the house because I remember where every cow's stall is located," Paul said.

Homings' DHIA rolling herd average is 24,300 pounds.

"I use some BST (bovine somatotropin) because I felt forced into it when we had depressed milk prices and I needed to generate

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HOMESTEAD NOTES



Life at Turnpike Dairy Registered Holstein Farm is never dull for Jamie, 17; Lindsay, 11; Kelly, 12; Dustin, 14; and Gordon, their blue heeler dog. The farm is a great place for recreation, but friends who come think it is even neater to help with the chores.



The Horning family delights in sharing their farm with others. The 120-acre farm has been in the Horning family for three generations. From left are Kelly, Mom Shirley, Jamie, and Lindsay.