

Mercer County Dairy Princess Likes What She Promotes

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GROVE CITY (Mercer Co.)—

In her competition skit, dairy princess contestant Katie Hanna portrayed a senior citizen testifying to the benefits of drinking milk. "Even though I didn't appreciate all that calcium then," she reflected on stage, "my bones, teeth, and muscles sure appreciate it now. And you can tell, because I'm still drinking milk from a cup — not putting my teeth in one!"

As newly-elected royalty for Mercer County, Katie is ready, she says, to sink her teeth into much, much more — eager to meet the challenges that come with her crown. In addition to writing a variety of articles and speaking to both farm and non-farm groups about the industry, as dairy princess Katie will participate in promotional activities on the radio as well as in schools, store, fairs, and parades.

But for this 16-year-old high school student, juggling a busy schedule is already part of a lifestyle filled with responsibility and achievement. As well as working five days a week in Greenville, where she milks cows and performs calf and heifer chores on the Leisure Lane Dairy Farm, Katie serves as president of the 4-H No-Bull Dairy Club, president of Lakeview Bible Club, circulations editor for her high school newspaper, president of the school show choir, and peer mediator at Lakeview High, where she is about to

enter her senior year.

Katie also serves on the board of directors for Students for Charity, plays the flute and tuba, and belongs to a variety of groups that include her school cross country team, chorus, chambers ensemble, women's ensemble, marching band, concert band, pep band, brass ensemble, and Sandy Lake Wesleyan Church. In addition, Katie belongs to the National Honor Society and is listed in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*.

To be eligible to run for dairy princess, Katie explains, Mercer County contestants must either have parents who work in the dairy industry, be employed on a farm, belong to 4-H and own at least two dairy animals, or have served for a year as a dairy maid. Qualifying was easy, she says, since she has met all, instead of one, of the listed requirements.

Although her exposure to the dairy industry began at home, with a father who has worked on various farms, Katie's influences also included her aunt and uncle, Tammy and Tim Hanna, who own and operate Hanna Dairy Farm in Fredonia. Tammy, who has also participated in the dairy princess program for many years, was probably responsible for Katie's early involvement, which began at age eight, when the little girls' program began in Mercer.

"This is my ninth year in the program," she explains. "I've been a Dairy Darling, a Dairy De-



Joining Mercer County Dairy Princess Katie Hanna, center, are Marsha Croskey, left, and Dawn Seckler.

light, a Delightful Dairy Daughter, and a Dairy Maid. After the first year I was hooked, and that was my dream: to be the pretty girl with the crown. I'm pretty excited. I've waited a long time."

With hobbies that include meeting new people and working with animals, Katie said she expects to excel in her role as dairy princess. Also, she said, since her duties will include presentations to people in various settings, the coming year will help her develop those skills so necessary for success in business and marketing — two of her current professional interests.

"It's going to be a lot of fun," she says. "I also think it's going to be a lot of work, but I'm looking forward to it." As far as the marketing aspects of the job, Katie says she realizes that, in order to effectively promote a product or idea, the presenter has to be a believer. "I believe you have to like what you're promoting in order for it to go over well. If you don't like something, you're not going to do a good job of promoting it."



Dairy Maids Crystal Robinson and Miranda Moore are following in the steps of Mercer County Dairy Princess Katie Hanna, who is a former dairy maid and has been in the dairy promotion program for nine years.

Luckily, dairy products — ice cream in particular — rank among Katie's favorite foods. At the moment, her preferred varieties in-

clude an Eddy's limited Girl Scout edition, which is flavored with thin mints.



Katie Hanna tells flower presenters Sarah Slater and Sarah Patterson that her dream to become dairy princess began when she was a little girl.

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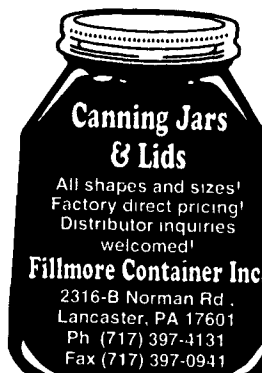
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