

# Farm Show Family Competes, Works Together

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Mercer Co. Correspondent

GROVE CITY (Mercer Co.) — When the Barbour family welcomes visitors to discuss the Angus cattle they plan to exhibit this year in Harrisburg, brothers Harry and Donald are respectfully absent from the questions and answers that precede a feature story.

"It's really about the kids," said Harry, who co-owns most of the herd of about 75 Angus and about 12 Limousin with Donald, their brother Bill, and their father, who is also named Donald.

As a family that competes together as well as works together, the Barbours said, a big part of the equation includes giving credit where credit is due. For this reason, in talking about the animals they will enter at this year's event, cousins Janice and Jeremy (whose fathers are Donald and Harry, respectively) point to each other's successes as eagerly as they point to their own.

Janice, who has shown cattle at the Farm Show in three previous years, is quick to praise Jeremy's showmanship — saying that despite his newness at the state level, Jeremy's skills have improved greatly.

"I'm very impressed with how far he's come," she said. "A lot of people will rely on others for help when they are starting out, but Jeremy will do it all himself. He will take the risks. He will do the work, and he's not afraid to make mistakes."

With this year marking his second time showing in Harrisburg, Jeremy acknowledges Janice as a mentor, friend, and role model. "When she gets in the ring, she is a good showman," he said. "And she taught me a lot about showing. When I started going to shows, I started going with her, so I learned from her."

She's a lot of competition," he said, "but we're family — so it's not that bad."

Janice agrees that competition is a factor, qualifying her statement by saying that it's more than competition. "We have to work together," she said. "So I'm cheering him on, too. In his succeeding in a way I succeed — because we're not showing individually, we're showing as a family. It's like we're showing as if it's our last name, not our first name. We earn credit for that instead of just for ourselves."

Janice and Jeremy are traveling to Harrisburg along with their fathers. In this year's event each of the cousins will enter two animals. In the March 1998 bred heifer class, Janice will show "Rains' De Gayla Skylight" (sired by "Dequantae"), who earned the supreme champion title this year at the Stoneboro Fair. She will also show a heifer in the February 1999 class. Janice took a first place ribbon for a March heifer at last year's Farm Show.

At this year's show Jeremy will enter "Rains' Dug Out," a March 1998 bull (sired by "OCC Back

Stop") that took a grand champion ribbon last year in Harrisburg when owned by breeder Dale Rains of Mercer. The bull, which Jeremy co-purchased with his 10-year-old brother David for the purposes of showing and breeding, also earned reserve champion at the 1999 Pennsylvania Breeders Show and supreme champion at the 1999 Stoneboro Fair.

Jeremy is also entering "M.B. Queen Cary 9205" (also called "Heify" and sired by "OCC Emulate") in the March 1999 heifer class. At last year's Farm Show, Jeremy earned a fifth-place ribbon.

Both Janice and Jeremy agreed that showing cows has had a positive effect in their lives, and both named responsibility as something developed throughout the process. "When you get up in the morning," said Janice, "you can't say 'I'm too busy for this today' — it keeps a lot of kids out of trouble," she said. "And when you get in the ring it really pays off."

When they are not preparing cattle for show at the Farm Show, Janice and Jeremy both maintain busy schedules. Both have been active in 4-H since early childhood, and both reside in Stoneboro, where they participate in extracurricular activities in the Lakeview School District, where Janice is a junior and Jeremy attends seventh grade.

Janice started with cows by helping her older brother, now in college, she says. However, her earliest shows included hogs instead of cows due to her young age and small size. Jeremy, along



Jeremy Barbour, at halter, will show "Little Timmy," Jeremy's crossbred steer. With him are Jeremy's father, Harry, and Jeremy's cousin, Janice.

with his brothers Alex and David, also began showing at an early age.

In addition to the cattle, the Barbour family collectively owns about 600 acres, which supports their herd as well as their Stoneboro-based wholesale

nursery. The nursery, in business since 1954, specializes in rhododendrons and a variety of groundcovers that include ivy, pachysandra, and myrtle. They also own a second nursery that deals in retail bedding plants.

## Showman, Novices Have High Hopes

JINNY WILT

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GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.)

— A veteran showman and two show-ring novices have high hopes as they anticipate the upcoming Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Fairfield area cattleman Kevin Diehl will undoubtedly still feel the butterflies as he steps into the show ring with his cattle despite the fact that he has been doing it since the early 1980s when he was in his late teens.

In fact he looks forward to the Farm Show because it is not only good for his business, it's a social occasion. He is a breeder of Polled Hereford cattle, some registered and some mixed.

New to the farm show ring this year will be Laura Holtzinger, 6, and her brother, Travis Holtzinger, 4. The two are the children of Kevin and Karen Holtzinger, who operate a dairy farm west of East Berlin.

They will be joined by their big sister, Shannon Holtzinger, 17, a senior at Bermudian Springs High School, who will be showing every day of the Farm Show except one, in dairy, breeding sheep and market lamb competition. She'll also pick up the FFA Keystone Degree at a special ceremony.

While Shannon will travel back and forth to the Farm Show Complex in order to continue practicing basketball with her high school team, her mother, Karen, and 3-year-old sister, Paula Holtzinger, will join Laura and Travis for the week at the show. The family begins bedding on Jan. 5 and will bring their animals in on Jan. 6.

Karen notes that the Holtzinger

family looks at it as a time to help educate the general public about farming. One of the particularly educational times is when a calf is born, but Karen said she doesn't expect that to happen for her family this year.

Kevin Diehl looks forward to the day when his son, Justin, 9, who showed and sold a steer in one of the Adams County shows this year, will join him in the Farm Show show ring. Right now, the father said, his son has as much as he can handle with one steer, "and you almost need two if you're going to show at the Farm Show."

Laura will be showing her lamb, Marshmallow, which she has worked very hard with over the Christmas school vacation. Weighing in at 42 pounds, the dark-haired, bright-eyed kindergarten will face a challenge in handling her nearly 700-pound calf. She may need some help, her mother said with a smile.

But, Laura appears undaunted as she adds, "I like to show my calf and win ribbons." And, for that matter, it's also fun meeting her friends at the show.

As for Travis, he had just awakened from a nap when the interview took place, and only shook his head yes when asked if he would be showing his lamb Snowball.

The Holtzinger children give credit to Ronald and Yvonne Trostle of Red Lion for advice on showing their Southdown sheep.

Kevin Diehl, who owns 150 acres, farms 500 acres on which he "makes a lot of hay."

"The cattle thing is just one facet of what I do. I make a lot of hay and market that hay mostly in southern Maryland. Most of it's

timothy hay that goes for horses. I raise some row crops, but I'm slowing phasing out of that. It's going to end up where pretty much all of my acreage is going to be in growing hay. The farm has always been a diversified farm — we also have an apple orchard. I've got 17 acres of apple trees . . . in Adams County it's really small.

"It's been a good thing being diversified over the years, but just the way times are now in agriculture it's very hard to stay diversified because you've got to have a different set of equipment for each different enterprise and equipment is a major expense. You have to go one avenue and focus on that," he said.

"The cattle business and the hay business kind of complement each other. The cattle eat your mistakes," he said with a chuckle.

In addition he has had a part-time business, started right out of college, showing cattle at the farm show for other people. He started it in 1984 when people wanted to show their cattle, but didn't want to do it themselves.

"I'll be going up to the Farm Show this year and I'll have two head of my own and I'll have about seven head from three other people," he said.

What does the Farm Show mean to him?

"That's a good question," he said. "For many people farm show is a tradition. People who show livestock in general, it's an enjoyable time. For the most part, you're not showing cattle for the profit of it," although he said you do promote your breed and it's good for business.

"The Farm Show is probably one of the best shows that I go to

that you're able to accomplish that (sales). There's a higher percentage of people who are interested in agriculture, while at fairs only 98 percent of the people are just doing it because they don't get to see a cow every day.

"There's a higher percentage of farmers at the Farm Show. There's no carnival involved, it's an agricultural show and you're able to talk to those people. The Farm Show is as good a place to sell cattle, either there or off your farm. We've had a good success selling bulls at the Farm Show," he said.

While a favorite memory of the Farm Show is co-owning the champion Hereford bull one year and the reserve champion another year, he also has had a few missteps.

One year he brought his bull inside the day of the show and, because it was cold and the animal had stiffened up standing around, he gave it aspirin to help limber it up. But to his amazement, the bull was allergic to aspirin and had there not been a veterinarian nearby, he would have lost it.

Another time he was bringing an animal off the back of a truck and it slipped on ice, breaking its leg. This time the animal had to be put down.

Both families are geared up for the show, and age doesn't seem to make a difference in how the event is viewed. Just as you hear excitement in 6-year-old Laura's voice when she talks about showing her animals, you catch the same in Kevin Diehl's, too.

## PA Grange Sponsors Biotech Panel Discussion

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania State Grange is sponsoring a panel discussion on biotechnology during the Farm Show. The meeting will be held on Monday, January 10, from 1 - 2:30 p.m. in Room B, located above the Main Exhibit floor.

Called "The Biotechnology Brouhaha," the discussion will feature scientists, industry experts, and educators on scientifically altered agricultural products.

Questions answered will include whether bio-engineered

agricultural products are safe for human consumption, whether the development of these products are ethical, and what it means to farming operations in Pennsylvania.

The meeting is open to the public and will include special guests -- Sam Sherk, Penn Ag Industries Asst. Vice President; Dr. Paul Backman, Director of the PA Agricultural Experiment Station at Penn State; and Jeffrey Moyer, Rodale Institute Farm Operations Institute.

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