

# 'Adopted' Sisters Represent PA Angus Royalty

LOU ANN GOOD  
Lancaster Farming Staff

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)— Jessica Schmidt, 17, and Katrina Frey, 10, consider themselves sisters, not by blood or by legal adoption, but by the close relationship they honed through involvement in sheep and livestock 4-H Clubs.

Now the two share another activity together. The Pennsylvania Angus Association selected Jessica as the state Angus Queen and Katrina as the Angus Sweetheart. The two travel to shows throughout Pennsylvania and into other states by representing the Keystone State's Angus Association.

Seventeen-year-old Jessica excels in both beef and sheep showing. But it's the hefty black Angus that provides the most challenge to the slender teen.

"I prefer cattle because I get more of a thrill out of working with bigger animals. Plus they have more personality," Jessica said.

The close relationship between the two "sisters" started when Katrina's parents, Nancy and Fritz Frey, Quarryville, were Jessica's 4-H leaders. Then two-year-old Katrina started shadowing Jessica.

Although both parents are veteran showmen who had achieved championships in several states during their youth, it was Jessica who Katrina wanted to emulate. It was Jessica who taught the girl seven years her junior the intricate details of showing sheep and later cattle.

"Wherever Jessica goes, Katrina goes," Nancy said.

Katrina wanted to be just like the teenager who garnered ribbon upon ribbon for showmanship and paying attention to details in record keeping, and other 4-H activities. So far, she's managing to mirror almost everything Jessica has done. Just like Jessica had done, Katrina won the Novice Shepherd of the Year in her first year in Woolies

Club. Both continue to win the record book awards in sheep and cattle clubs.

"I think our moms spur us on," Jessica said of the advantage of having their moms as 4-H leaders. "They're here whenever we have a question."

Interestingly, the mothers consider themselves best friends.

"Four-H establishes friendships between parents as well as between the kids," her mom said.

Jessica's parents, Pete and Laurie, own Susquehannock Farm and Susquehannock Landscape, Drumore, which is situated only a few miles from the Susquehanna River.

Although Jessica's brother, John, 16, owns some of the animals on the farm, most belong to Jessica. In addition to her two Angus cows, two Angus heifers, a crossbred steer, and 33 sheep, the family's pets include four turkeys, a flock of chickens, two dogs, and an assortment of cats.

Representing both the Dorset and Montadale breeds are the ewes and 20 lambs. Over the year's Jessica has bred better genetics which has enabled her to take top prizes consistently in showing locally and in neighboring states.

For seven years, Jessica was part of the livestock judging club. Last year the state team qualified for national competition where they placed 14th.

"That's the highest placing an east coast team ever achieved," Jessica said.

According to 4-H rules, Jessica is no longer eligible for the team after qualifying for nationals.

"I really miss it and wish I could do it again. It was awesome at nationals," she said. She also was a member of the meats judging team that placed first in junior and senior state competitions. Her FFA team also qualified for national competition, where they won a silver medal, again making her ineligible for



Pennsylvania Angus Queen Jessica Schmidt is assisted in her promotional duties by Pennsylvania Sweetheart Katrina Frey. The two have long considered themselves sisters, not through blood or legal adoption, but through the close relationship honed through 4-H involvement. Shown with them are Jessica's favorite Angus, Twizler and Black Hawk.

FFA livestock judging this year.

"I really hope to join the Penn State judging team," Jessica said.

Nancy said, "Jessica is really good at teaching others to fit, show, and shear. She is our number one demonstrator."

Jessica tells her younger charges: "Try your best. Get involved as much as you can, not just at Round-Up. Try your hardest and stick with it."

Jessica was president of the Woolies 4-H Club two years ago, and is a senior at Solanco High School, where she is first vice president of the FFA.

Although Jessica helps with the family's landscaping business by mulching, edging, weeding, planting, and mowing clients' yards, she said her true interest lies in livestock. In the fall, she plans to attend Penn State York Campus to study animal science.

"She isn't sure where career plans will lead her, but one thing is certain: "I want a job working with livestock," she said.

So far, she has earned several scholarships through agriculture and hopes to garner a few more.

Another place to find Katrina and Jessica is in the travel trailer of Frey's Livestock Supplies. They travel from show to show to sell livestock supplies.

"I put the queen in charge of my kids and the business," Nancy said of Jessica's mature ability to manage people and business.

For as young as she is, Katrina has managed to accumulate numerous impressive titles in both cattle and sheep competition. In 1998, with her Angus heifer Princess, Katrina won the Jackpot Division of the Montana Treasure Chest. Princess now has five sons. Katrina wishes they had been daughters; nevertheless two bull calves have been on test.

For two years in a row, Katrina showed the champion ewe in the Suffolk breed at the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

The ewe named Valentine also garnered second and third placings in the Massachusetts Junior Sheep Show and at the Atlantic National Breeders' Show held in Maryland.

Katrina keeps her sheep at her maternal grandmother's farm, and her cattle on her paternal grandfather's farm. This is the lambing season, and it's Katrina's job to bottlefeed several newborn lambs. In addition to helping with her grand-

mother's flock, Katrina has four Suffolk, one Cheviot, and two baby Cheviots and a Montadale.

Katrina is a member of the choir at Mechanicsburg Church of the Brethren. She plays the Clarinet in school and is a fourth grader. Already she is getting a headstart in livestock judging. As a member of the team, she is allowed to participate in all practices and all contests below the state level.

Before she joined the judging team, Katrina already was able to name all the parts of animals and the different breeds. She ex-

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In addition to livestock showing, Jessica excelled in livestock and meats judging, competing at the national levels in 4-H and FFA.



Both Jessica and Katrina excel in sheep showing and have won numerous ribbons at local, regional, state, and out-of-state shows.