

Kids Korner



King of the Hill and Follow the Leader are a few games the lambs appear to be playing in the meadow.

This Little Lamb Followed Stephanie To Church Last Sunday

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LANDISVILLE (Lancaster Co.) — You've heard about the lamb that followed Mary to school. Lambs are still showing up in unexpected places.

Last Sunday, which was Easter, Stephanie Kauffman's little lamb followed her to church.

Named Little Joe, the Southdown lamb is extremely tame. Because the minister wanted to talk about Jesus being the good shepherd, he asked Stephanie to bring one of her lambs to church.

It was an easy choice to select Little Joe from the 39 sheep Stephanie raises on her grandparents' property.

"He's my favorite," 11-year-old Stephanie said as she gave the woolly lamb a hug.

Smack in the middle of a Landisville housing development, her flock of 39 lambs romps in the meadow.

"It's my fault. I started it," Stephanie's mom Ellen said as she points to the frisky lambs.

Growing up, Ellen took little interest in her family's steers and pigs. She wanted a lamb for a pet.

To pacify her, Ellen's parents, George and Lorraine Lewis, bought her a lamb. Because lambs

require different care than the other livestock, George accompanied his daughter to 4-H meetings so he could learn the basic sheep care.

"Compared to other livestock, lambs are not very intelligent," Ellen conceded. But what her first lamb Annabelle lacked in brain power, she made up in personality.

"Annabelle was so tame, she followed me everywhere," Ellen said. Annabelle didn't even need a halter in the show ring, but followed her owner docilely without a halter.

Ellen and her parents grew attached to the flock of Hampshires they soon accumulated. In her first competition, Ellen showed the champion Hampshire.

"At first I only had breeding sheep because I couldn't bear to part with a market lamb," Ellen said. She was thrust unwillingly into market sheep, when her dad picked a lamb from her breeding flock and encouraged her to show it at the local fair.

"I was so embarrassed to take it," Ellen said. Compared to the purchased market lambs others were showing, Ellen was convinced her homebred lamb didn't stand a chance.

Surprisingly, the lamb won "everything."

When Stephanie expressed interest in showing lambs, she had a request. She wanted a Southdown lamb, which is smaller and easier to handle than the taller Hampshire breed that her mother had shown.

"When I was into showing, few people had Southdowns. Now there are more Southdowns than any other breed at the shows," Ellen said.

It's unusual, but just like her mother, Stephanie won big in her first year of competition. She won a trophy that was bigger than her for showing the supreme champion sheep at the Elizabethtown Fair.

Although she's won several ribbons since then, she said, "Sometimes you win, sometimes you don't do so well, but that's OK, it gives you a chance to figure things out."

Stephanie loves the lambs born on the farm and names each one. She and her neighborhood friends spend hours walking the lambs and watching them run and push each other trying to get to the water trough.

Stephanie is following in her mother's footsteps. Not only did she win in her first show, she also joined the Lancaster County Livestock Judging Team. She hopes to win at the state level and travel to national competition just like her mother had done.

Although Stephanie participate in local judging, she needs to be 13 before she can compete at state judging, but that doesn't deter her enthusiasm for attending all practices and competitions.

On Saturday mornings, most kids her age sleep in. Not Stephanie. She's up at 5 a.m. in order to meet the team and travel to distant competitions.

According to Stephanie, those participating in livestock judging, learn to read, use performance data, and give reasons for placing animals in competition.

For several years, Stephanie accompanied her mom as part of the Ag in the Classroom program. Stephanie took her lamb while her mom told students what's involved in raising sheep. This year, Ellen was too busy teaching eighth graders at the Milton Hershey School to accompany Stephanie. So Stephanie primarily did the presentation herself.



On Easter Sunday, Little Joe went to church with Stephanie to help illustrate the biblical story of Jesus being the good shepherd. Of the 39 sheep Stephanie raises on her grandfather's property, Little Joe is her favorite. But Stephanie can identify every one.



Much of the knowledge Stephanie has about sheep, she learned from her mom Ellen and grandparents George and Lorraine Lewis. Her mom won many awards for the Hampshires she raised growing up. Now Stephanie is winning many awards for her Southdowns, a breed she prefers because they are smaller and easier to handle.

"I figured out what to say and wrote it on notecards to help me remember," Stephanie said of the presentation.

Stephanie toys with the idea of someday become a lamb queen. Her mother had reigned as Pennsylvania Hampshire Queen and acted as the national queen at the national breed show.

Stephanie plays community soccer and the viola. She also takes an after-school Spanish class. During the Easter season, Stephanie and her lamb participated in several church plays, where lambs are often associated with the life of Christ.

Stephanie's schedule became so busy that she had to make a choice. She elected to stay with sheep and livestock judging in-

stead of gymnastic competition. She continues with gymnastic classes but no longer competes.

A straight "A" student, Stephanie said she prefers science classes if the teacher makes it interesting. She also likes music, art, and gym.

At home she likes to play with her many cousins. In addition to playing with the lambs, the cousins like to do flips on bars and watch the Hershey Bears' Ice Hockey Team.

While her mom is pleased to see her daughter enjoying lambs, 4-H, and judging competitions just as she had done, Ellen said, "She's not pushed to do this. It's rewarding to see her take it (judging and showing) seriously but have fun doing it, it isn't the thing for you to do."



Stephanie and her grandpa spend lots of time with the 39 head raised for show and to sell to other 4-H'ers.