Mercer County Dairy Princess Poses As Tooth Fairy

SANDY BRADLEY

Mercer Co. Correspondent GROVE CITY (Mercer Co.) -Her name is Marsha Croskey, but for a few minutes during this year's dairy pageant, Mercer County's winning contestant became Gladys Molarbee, a tooth fairy that informed her public on all the benefits of drinking milk.

As part of the skit, Marsha presented a large molar that she created by wrapping white crepe paper around newspaper, engaging her audience by saying, "Wow, look at how big this tooth is! She must have really enjoyed her dairy products!'

As well as using humor in her pageant presentations, Marsha displayed her intelligence and courage by also addressing political issues related to the dairy industry: In a speech that referred to internet sites that slam dairy products as "Cyber Cow-Tippers," Marsha criticized the flimsy research on which such criticisms are based - defending dairy products with facts about their nutritional value. Marsha also praised the industry in general, warning that "cyber cowtippers" had no idea of its strength, and referring to the industry as the "biggest cow ever."

When she is not taking political stands for dairy products and impersonating the tooth fairy, 17-year-old Marsha spends time at her Delaware Township home, where she lives with her parents, Lynette and James Croskey. Her time is divided between caring for her 4-H animals, which include dairy goats (four LaManchas and two Nubians) and a Nubian-Toggenburg meat market project.

Marsha also shows a neighbor's llama and helps occasionally on the dairy farm of her aunt and uncle, Kimberly and Thomas Croskey.

The pageant, held June 27 at the Leslie N. Firth Learning Center in Mercer, marked the second 1999, she was named alternate. Also competing for this year's crown was Kim Voohries, who will serve as the 2000 alternate. Dawn Seckler of Mercer was named dairy ambassador.

This year's dairy maids include Becky Aiken, Jessica Beighley, Heather Clark, Nicole Cochran, Emily Davis, Melissa Hanna, Miranda Moore, and Crystal Robinson.



Mercer County Dairy Princess Marsha Croskey, center, is surrounded with dairy year that Marsha has competed maids, from left, Heather Clark, Jessica Beighley, Crystal Robinson, Emily Davis.. for the dairy princess title. In Dawn Seckler, Nicole Cochran, Melissa Hanna, and Becky Aiken.

The program included a song performed by Dairy Darlings Lena Aiken, Moriah Canon, Sabrina Dixon, Samantha George, Laurel Montgomery, Sarah Patterson, Sarah Slater, and Laura Sturgin. A poem was recited by Dairy Delights Rose Baker, Alisha Robinson, and Sarah Snyder. David Croskey and Matthew

Leise were this year's flower presenters. Rhoda Mathias, Dave Trotter, and Chris Waddell served as judges.

The impromptu question asked of princess contestants was as recent high school graduates, what would you say to your high school principal?

"I'd say "thank you for providing such a good educational environment," replied Marsha. "Then I'd probably ask that he try to improve the nutritional value of school lunches!"

Not so coincidentally, Marsha says that people she most admires include teachers in American schools. "They have a pretty big job," she said. "A lot of people think that their jobs end when they go home in the evening, but they don't."

Enrolled at Youngstown State University, Marsha will begin her studies this fall to earn a degree in music education. She plays the saxophone and oboe, and after graduating she hopes to become a director. She said that the coming months will challenge her, but she is eager to embrace her responsibilities are dairy princess. June is dairy month, she said, and she has no school during June. During that time she will work on many of those projects related to her new role as dairy princess.



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