

People Who Make The Fair Go 'Round

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Lancaster Farming Staff

NORTH CORNWALL (Lebanon Co.) — Swingin' at the 44th annual Lebanon Area Fair, from July 29-Aug. 5, included lots of new entertainment this year, but it's the traditional competitions and food that continue to provide day-to-day enjoyment for thousands of people.

From 5 a.m. to midnight, volunteers keep busy preparing and serving food, and of course, cleaning up the mess. Catherine Schott, who is in charge of The Eatery, said that 3½ tons of potatoes are turned into French fries. Some of the other amounts needed to satisfy the cravings of fair visitors include 900 pounds of soup, 1,200 hamburgers, 800 of pounds pork barbecue, and 40,000 drinks.

Required daily are three shifts with 25-30 people on all shifts.

"I want to stress that these are all volunteers. None of us are paid for the eight days. It's



To become Lebanon Fair Queen, Beth Kreider wrote an essay on what the fair means to her, presented a 3-5 minute speech, answered the impromptu question about ethics and how it affects her generation, and underwent the interviewing process. The 16-year-old is one busy lady this week. She arises early to pick produce to sell at the family farm's roadside stand before rushing off to represent the fair.



Danette Ocker, right, shows off her Apple Streusel Pie that placed first and enables her to advance to state competition. Dot Martin placed second.

amazing how everyone pitches in to get the work done," Schott said.

Schott celebrated her 65th birthday during fair week. She said, "I love what I do. I hate to retire."

In her years at the fair, Schott has watched several generations grow up and help her in the kitchen.

Baking competitions include a mix of old and new names. An ecstatic Danette Ocker, Myers-town, claimed the top prize in the Blue Ribbon Apple Pie contest. Last year, she took second place, so this year, she used a new recipe.

The unusual aspect of her recipe is that it uses yellow delicious apples.

"I'm diabetic, so I don't want to add much sugar," Ocker said of her choice of the apple variety.

Ocker is following in the footsteps of her grandmother, who was an award winner. Ocker's hobby is baking and one that was perfected with the oversight of her grandmother and mother.

In competition, Ocker also entered and received ribbons for shoofly pie, apple oatmeal coffee cake, oatmeal whoopie pie, pumpkin cookies, and zucchini bread.

At this point, Ocker only enters her local fair, but she is considering doing what many others are doing — traveling the fair circuit to enter other county fairs.

Dot and Deb Martin are a mother and daughter team from the southern end of Lancaster County. The two are prolific bakers who have garnered hundreds of ribbons from local fairs and from the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

At the Lebanon Fair, Deb took first place in the Hershey's Cocoa Cake contest. She's keeping her recipe a secret in quest for the state competition.

Her mother Dot placed second in the apple pie contest with her cream cheese streusel pie.

Another mother and daughter duo who enter numerous fairs also had a good reward at the Lebanon Fair. Katie Myers, Dallastown, took first place with her chocolate brownies. The 16-year-old is a former first-place winner at the Pennsylvania

Farm Show in the same category.

Katie's mom, Belinda, placed third in the chocolate cake contest. Belinda baked the best cake in the state at the Farm Show three years ago.

Mollie Knause, 11, placed second with her Black Forest Brownies. Two years ago, she also placed second at the Lebanon Fair. Her sister Emilee and mother Connie are former top winners in baking competition at Lebanon.

In her first competition, Tara Dice, 10, took third prize for her S'mores Brownies.

"My mom made me enter," the 10-year-old said. Tara wasn't complaining. She hopes to follow in her mother's footsteps. Her mom Lori received the Homemaker Award of the Year this year. This was her fourth year in placing in that category, but the first time to walk away with the top prize.

Competition for the Homemaker of the Year involves setting up a display that includes two sewing articles, a craft, a canned item, and a baked item.

Lori set up an eye-appealing display by covering the table with a folk-art chicken theme. Inside an authentic chicken crate was the replica of a hen. Surrounding the display to illustrate her homemaking skills were a quillow, canned peaches, apron, flowers, decoupage plate, flowers, and a plate of molasses cookies.

Here are some of the winning recipes for readers to enjoy.

Chocolate Cherry Cream Cake

Cake:

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 2½ cups cake flour
- 1 cup baking cocoa
- 2 teaspoons baking soda

Grease three 8-inch cake pans.

Cream sugar and butter together. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat until light and fluffy. Mix flour, cocoa, baking soda, and salt. Blend into creamed mixture alternately with sour cream and buttermilk. Divide dough batter evenly between three prepared pans. Bake in 325-degree oven for 30-35 minutes. Cool. Place one layer on doily-covered cake board.

Cherry Cream Filling:

- 3-ounce package cooked vanilla pudding
 - 1 cup evaporated milk
- Cook in small saucepan over medium heat until mixture thickens. Cool.

Cream:

- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup shortening

Beat butter, sugar, vanilla, and shortening in large mixer bowl until fluffy, approximately 10 minutes. Fold in cooked pudding mixture. Blend well. Add 1 cup chopped cherry pie filling and 1 tablespoon Kirsch cherry liquor. Fold in completely.

Icing:

- 1½ cups butter
- 1 cup cocoa
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 6 cups confectioners' sugar

Melt together cocoa and butter. Stir until smooth. Place all ingredients in large mixer bowl. Gradually add drops of milk until icing is of spreading consistency.



Part of the crew that feeds fairgoers include these volunteers, clockwise from front, Chelsea Horst, 11; Catherine Schott, chairman of the food stands; Dustin Lentz, 12; Mark Ruhl, 13; Kevin Kreider, 13; Eric Ziegler, 14; and Kirby Horst, fair board member and dairy committee chairman.

To assemble cake:

Split or torte each cake layer in half. In between layers, spread ½ cup cherry cream filling. Continue to layer each layer ending with cake. Frost cake with icing. Decorate top of cake with cherry cream, cherries, and chocolate.

Makes one three-layer 8-inch round cake.

Belinda Myers

S'mores Brownies

- ½ cup butter, melted
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup unsifted flour

- ½ cup baking cocoa
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Topping:

- 1 cup mini marshmallows
- ½ cup mini chocolate chips
- ¾ cup fine chopped nuts

Mix together butter, sugar, eggs, and vanilla. Add flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt. Bake 25-30 minutes at 350 degrees. Remove from oven and spread on topping in order listed. Bake 5 more minutes. Place on cooling rack and cool completely. Cut into squares. Makes 9-12 brownies.

Tara Dice

(Turn to Page B9)



Deb Martin, left, baked the best cake in the Hershey's Cocoa Cake Contest, and Belinda Myers, last year's first-place winner, placed third.