

30 Years Of Dedication Recognized At Folk Festival

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Francis "Skimmer" Wilson and his wife Mary have missed only one Farm Show in the past 30 years and only because the Governor declared a state emergency due to inclement weather. The Wilsons' commitment to teaching and their love of folk dance was recognized at the Square and Folk Dance Festival and Contest, as part of the 85th Pennsylvania State Farm Show.

The special recognition all began as a dream during last year's Farm Show. The family decided that it would be a very special event if four generations of the family all danced together this year. The dream was realized when four generations of the Wilson Family, ranging in age from 10-years-old to 77-years-old, walked into the Large Arena in the magenta colored costumes they designed.

John Gianelli, a representative from State Senator Robert C. Jubelier's office, presented a special citation to the Wilsons. State Representative Dick Hayes also sent a certificate of recognition for the couple. County extension agent, Dwayne Hay, who works with the Wilsons through 4-H, presented a woven blanket as a thank you on behalf of their 4-H folk dance students and Bedford County.

The Wilsons are the heart of folk dancing in Bedford County. Their self-started 4-H club pays a monthly dues of a \$1, which goes toward refreshments at lessons. For years, the Wilsons have been providing costumes and transportation with the help of the Friends of 4-H to all the students interested in participating in the program. Last week, their 4-H'ers entered in the Division B (15- 25-year-old category). Mrs. Wilson watched intently as her students performed; she was thrilled when they were awarded a blue ribbon. Four Generations, the team name for the Wilsons, also won a blue ribbon at the competition.

When not teaching their weekly folk dancing lessons or traveling to a demonstration, Mary enjoys doing genealogy work for friends, family, and churches. She also enjoys gardening. According to Mary, "Skimmer" goes to breakfast with his friends three times a week and is in charge of the housework.

Jason White of Selinsgrove, Snyder County, was also recognized at the festival. White is a 95-year-old dancer who began dancing at the young age of 87. Before his division's final dance, the announcer asked him to take a bow.



Raising rabbits is a family affair for the Pajak family who have more than 100 of the furry purebreds. Chelsea, 17, is the state rabbit queen, her sister Julla, 11, is princess, and another sister Kylie (not available for photo) was a former rabbit queen. Parents Fred and Darlene Pajak and Alla, 14, are also involved in promotion and showing.

Rabbits Inject Calming Influence

(Continued from Page B2)

istrar for shows, which helps her gain knowledge and learn.

Both sisters are appalled at the lack of knowledge many visitors reveal at places like the Farm Show. Again and again, they need to prevent people from picking up rabbits by the scuff of neck.

"That breaks the skin away from the muscle," which is a negative when it comes to showing

rabbits.

Unfortunately many pet care booklets teach people to pick rabbits up by the scuff of the neck.

"Pet care is different than show care," Julia said.

The rabbits are raised outside year-round. "Some people think that is cruel, but rabbits actually prefer cold weather over heat. It would be like us sitting around in fur jackets in 80-degree weather," Chelsea said.

To cool the rabbits during

summer months, they are given ice bottles. Water freezing during the winter months does not present a problem, as the rabbits eat the ice.

Chelsea and Julia are active members of the Pennsylvania State Rabbit Breeders Association (PA-SRBA).

Chelsea also holds the title of National New Zealand Rabbit Queen, and she placed third in national competition for Rabbit Queen.

Luzerne County Teen Crowned Draft Horse Queen

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Carrie Martin of Dallas, Luzerne County was crowned Draft Horse Queen by the Pennsylvania Draft Horse and Mule Association at the 85th Pennsyl-

vania State Farm Show.

During her time as Draft Horse Queen, the 17-year-old daughter of Wendy Martin plans to promote the draft horse industry and to assist in a number of draft horse shows and fairs, especially the Keystone International Livestock Exposition.

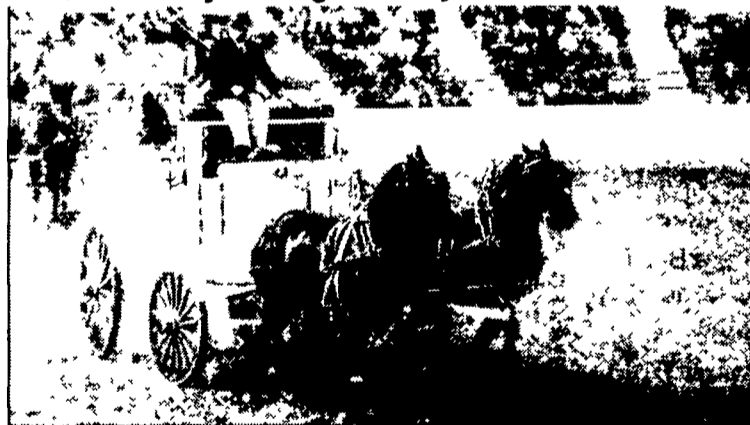
Carrie is a junior at West Side Area Vocational-Technical School. Upon graduation, she would like to seek a career as either a physical therapist, specializing in therapeutic riding for physically challenged children, or as a member of the Mounted State Police.

She has spent four years driving draft horses through 4-H, winning state draft horse competitions in 1998 and 1999. Martin's favorite breed to drive is Percheron, preferring to drive "Tanner Dan" in Single Cart, and "Tanner Dan" and "Skyeview Andre Did It" in Youth Team competitions.

The Draft Horse Queen competition involves writing a resume and essay explaining what each contestant would do as queen. The writings are then evaluated by a panel of judges from the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Draft Horse and Mule Association.



These Belgians competed in the draft horse hitch class on Sunday evening. Photo by Michelle Ranck



Pennwoods Percherons, this year's champion draft horse hitch, came from Centre Hall. Photo by Michelle Ranck



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