

Miss Congeniality Reviews Year As Lancaster County Dairy Princess

LOU ANN GOOD
*Food And Family
 Features Editor*

GAP (Lancaster Co.) — Anne Fisher is the friendliest, most-outgoing dairy princess in the state. That's what 30 of her peers decided when they selected her as Miss Congeniality at the state pageant last year.

Of that award, Anne said, "I was shocked. I consider myself friendly but not the person who would be the first to talk with others."

This past year has definitely honed Anne's communication skills. She's been many places and met many people through dairy promotions, and talks with ease to both individuals and crowds. No doubt that's what her peers saw in her—the ability to put others at ease without the pretense to impress.

The 18-year-old also has a new appreciation for dairy farmers and dairy products. That came as a result of a mission trip to Mexico.

Anne explained that in Mexico, few places have access to pasteurized milk. So, for 10 days, this self-proclaimed "big dairy consumer" was deprived of milk. When she was given a glass of milk on the 10th day, Anne said, "It was the most wonderful milk I've ever tasted."

That experience gave Anne a new appreciation for the opportunity the U.S. citizen affords to have a glass of milk or an ice cream cone whenever desired.

"I no longer take dairy farmers and dairy products for granted," Anne said.

Unlike most dairy princesses, Anne doesn't live on a farm. But she does have a connection to the dairy industry. Her dad is part owner of Fisher and Thompson, a dairy equipment company.

Because she isn't immersed in dairy farming everyday, she sometimes felt at a disadvantage among the farming community because ag terminology isn't always familiar to her. But promoting dairy products and the health benefits connected to it comes quite easy for her.

"I've always been a big user of dairy products," she said.

Anne heard about the dairy princess program through a friend whose family was active in dairy promotion. The Gordon Hoover family encouraged her to compete in the county pageant.

At first, Anne declined because she didn't consider herself a pageant person. But being a "people person," the opportunity to help with promotions appealed to her. She decided to participate just to have fun. She expected to serve as an alternate and thought she could handle that responsibility.

When she was crowned county dairy princess, she felt a bit overwhelmed. "But the committee did a great job. They really helped and clued me in to what I needed to know and do," Anne said.

Although most promotion is done in the county, Anne also helps with major events throughout the state. One event was Walk for Hunger, conducted in Philadelphia. Anne handed out yogurt and chocolate milk to the participants. She also needed to wear a cow costume and lead the crowd in some exercises. The bulky cow costume hung loosely on her.

Later many people remarked that the cow looked so skinny, which resulted in Anne being nicknamed the "One Percent Cow."

Anne lives with her parents Amos and Jane in a wooded area known as the Welsh Mountains. She has two sisters, Samantha, 16, and Brooke, 13, and a brother Shawn, called Buddy, 10.

Anne will soon graduate from Conestoga Christian School. She plans to take off a year before college to determine the direction she wants to go career-wise. That doesn't mean she'll be sitting around. Instead, she is taking emergency medical training (EMT) courses this summer, she will assist a photographer, and she has a couple things lined up to work with kids.

All these jobs are possible considerations for a career.

She believes the EMT training will help her decide whether she should seek a career in the medical field. Anne enjoys watching operations on television and she is fascinated with biology and human anatomy studies.

"I guess you could say I love blood and guts," Anne said. While family members and friends recoil from watching operations on television, Anne is fascinated with the process.

After photography courses at school, Anne has been encouraged by a teacher who noticed Anne's aptitude for photo composition. The teacher recognizes Anne's talent and is pushing her in that direction.

Anne also enjoys working with children. She compiled a scrapbook of pictures she took of children. "People fascinate me," she said.

In school, Anne is involved in soccer, basketball, tennis, drama, and choir. She also plays handbells and piano. She's taken gymnastic classes for six years and spends a lot of time doing homework.

"Sometimes I feel my workload is too big, but now I see that almost everything is going to end at the same time," Anne said of high school graduation that brings her involvement in so many activities to an end. Her reign as dairy princess will end June 22 when she crowns her successor.

This realization gives Anne a fresh perspective. She said, "I'm trying to enjoy every minute of everything I have to do."

Her nonfarming friends take an interest in her dairy princess activities and are very supportive. Anne said she believes her involvement in dairy promotion has increased her peers' appreciation for dairy farming and the industry.

Anne said, "This past year has been an experience of my lifetime. I thank Jesus, who has brought me through the whole year. It's a blessing to have Jesus' help in my life."



Lancaster County Dairy Princess Ann Fisher, voted Miss Congeniality by the 30 other dairy princesses representing their counties at the state pageant, always likes an excuse to enjoy an ice cream cone.

Milk Consumption May Reduce Obesity, Diabetes Risks

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — A new study published recently in the Journal of the American Medical Association suggests that young adults who consume more dairy products, such as milk, cheese and yogurt, may be less likely to become obese and develop the insulin resistance syndrome (IRS), a key risk factor for type 2 diabetes and heart disease. These findings are consistent with a growing body of research that demonstrates dairy's role in reducing the risk of obesity and chronic diseases.

The researchers looked at the eating patterns of 3,157 African American and Caucasian young adults, both male and female over a 10-year period. Two comprehensive food intake reports were averaged — one taken at the start of the study and one taken seven years later — to determine participants' habitual intake of dairy products and other foods.

The results showed that overweight individuals, regardless of race or sex, who consumed more dairy products had a lower risk of developing IRS. While overweight individuals typically consumed fewer dairy products than their normal-weight counterparts, those who consumed the most dairy products had a 71 percent lower incidence of IRS than those who consumed the fewest dairy products. In addition, those who consumed more dairy foods were more likely to have healthier eating habits overall with higher intakes of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and lower intakes of sugar-sweetened soft drinks.

"We've known for some time that adding more dairy foods, such as milk, cheese and yogurt, may help reduce the risk of high blood pressure, osteoporosis and possibly even colon cancer," said Amy Mobley, a registered dietitian for the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program. "We can now add dairy foods to the list of helping to control weight and reducing the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes."

The researchers say that the decrease in milk and dairy product consumption over the past few decades, accompanied by an increase of soda consumption and snacking among children and teens, may play an important role in the current epidemics of obesity and type 2 diabetes, as well as in the increase in heart disease rates.



Lancaster County Dairy Princess Anne Fisher, center, with parents Amos and Jane Fisher at home in Gap. Anne said her interest in the dairy industry perked when she was little. "I remember how I loved to accompany my dad to dairy farms when he was on call and needed to fix milking equipment," Anne said in reference to her dad's part ownership in Fisher and Thompson, a dairy equipment company.