

Virginia Dairy Princess Touts Milk As Eighth Natural Wonder

GAY BROWNLEE
Virginia Correspondent

BRIDGEWATER, Va. — Joanie Will, the Virginia State Dairy Princess, declares milk is the eighth natural wonder. In fact

The best payoff for her efforts since then have been from the dairyman himself. Will says a word of appreciation or thanks from the farmer goes a long way toward feeling good about her re-

she is employed.

Serving individuals from the giant ice cream sundae in a kids plastic swimming pool for July National Ice Cream Month was a barrel of fun.

The small gifts she gives away are provided by the Southeast United Dairy Industry Association (SUDIA).

Will can't emphasize enough how important and helpful the dairy maids are to the success of a dairy princess work.

Will says, "You wouldn't need a princess to promote milk if there were no farmers."

So she applauds dairy farmers and is honored to promote their health-giving product — MILK.

Got it???

Will's successor to the crown will be named in January 2003.

Following is a dairy recipe contributed by Will:

Chicken Divan

- 2 cups cooked diced chicken
 - 2 cans cream of mushroom soup (or chicken soup)
 - ½ cup mayonnaise
 - 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 - 1 cup shredded sharp cheese
 - 4 cups soft bread crumbs
 - ½ cup melted butter
- Place chicken in baking dish. Combine soup, mayonnaise, and lemon juice. Stir until smooth. Pour over chicken. Sprinkle bread crumbs and cheese on top. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes.



When reminiscing about her reign as the Virginia State Dairy Princess, nothing is as refreshing for Joanie Will of Bridgewater as a mug of cold milk while sitting at the table reviewing a scrapbook full of memories.

last January 25 at Fredericksburg, that was the gist of the skit that helped to elevate her to the pinnacle of state title ownership.

Milk really is a natural wonder if only more consumers would realize it.

Will knows that drinking milk, eating cheese and ice cream all contribute to the strength of the bones she needs to run and kick while engaged in soccer. And soccer is a game she has loved for quite a few of her 17 years. Even as a high school freshman, she was good enough to play on the varsity soccer team. Currently, for the Turner Ashby High School girls team, the princess is a senior occupying the position of right wing.

Representing the dairy industry of Virginia, Will has tallied miles and miles, up and down, over and across the majestic Shenandoah Valley. To the north and Winchester, to the south and Roanoke, to the east and Richmond, the state capitol. In between she attends DHIA meetings and all types of other events throughout the state.

A promotion in Maryland was a night to remember. She and other dairy maids handed out milk at a soccer game. Not only did they witness the U.S. women's team play Pittsburgh but also Mia Hamm, who is Will's soccer hero, in action on the playing field.

"Most promotions have been good experiences. I think I'm still nervous when I give speeches or a milk toast," she said, confessing that on those occasions she felt a bit taut.

She recalls segments of the state competition before an audience at the convention that attacked her nerves.

"One thing I remember," she said, "Marty Potts (the coordinator) asked: 'Do you need a hug?' What a boost it was to take Potts up on the offer."

The open spaces in her daily appointment diary began to fill up as soon as the event was over. Among the first official duties was a visit to the Virginia General Assembly, where she was introduced to the state law makers.

Chaperoned by Beverly Will, her mother, Will traveled to Hagerstown, Md. to meet the state dairy princesses from Maryland and Pennsylvania. She also attended the dairy princess seminar held in Pennsylvania. Will and her counterparts were fine-tuned to deliver solid dairy knowledge to the public with feminine grace and courtesy.

responsibilities.

"It always makes me feel good to hear a farmer say, 'Thank you,'" she said.

Her dad, Joe Will, along with her grandfather and uncle keep a 100-head dairy herd of primarily Holsteins and 20-25 Jerseys. The business also includes two poultry houses which during the 2002 AI outbreak escaped unscathed, according to Joe.

Jenny Will, 15, and Charlotte Will, 13, have picked up additional farm chores since their elder sister has so many promotional responsibilities mainly tending the chickens. That's been a blessing to Will who shows Jerseys and belongs to the Rockingham County 4-H Dairy Club. She showed the grand champion Jersey breed animal at the Rockingham County Fair. Jenny and Charlotte showed Jerseys too as they exhibit as a family.

Mall promotions for Will have included one at Valley Mall in Harrisonburg where live animals were on site.

"It was popular. We had calves coming from everywhere," Will said. Another memorable occasion was competing with Miss Farm Bureau, the Virginia Beef Queen, Miss Virginia, and the state Commissioner of Agriculture Carlton Courter in a milking contest. In the art of extracting the warm white liquid by hand his greater expertise caused the commissioner to be disqualified. It seems he out-squirted the competition. Nevertheless, with him out of the running, Dairy Princess Will and Miss Virginia were declared to have tied for first place.

A little girl Will met around the same time was disappointed when the dairy princess was caught without personal photographs to pass out. The youngster was asking for one along with an autograph. Will diplomatically wrote down the child's address and as soon as she got home, signed a picture and mailed it to her.

The first new babies to be born in Rockingham and Augusta Counties were celebrated during June National Dairy Month. Bearing "dairy good" gifts for them the princess paid visits to the parents and their newborns. During the month, she sent dairy messages to the audience of a local radio station.

In more routine requirements, Will presented ribbons at dairy events. She whipped up homemade ice cream for the co-workers at a local restaurant where



In addition to fresh, cold milk, Joanie Will is also addicted to playing soccer. Without milk in her diet for strong bones and teeth, she wouldn't be as good at her game. She is pictured with her soccer ball and a one-year old pet Beagle named Lucy.



Superior 4-H'er Lori Hess enjoys Jatina, a 4-year-old Brown Swiss, and the family farm that dates back to 1915 in the Hess family.

'Hustle' Describes Superior 4-H'er

LOU ANN GOOD
Food And Family
Features Editor

PEQUEA (Lancaster Co.) — Lori Hess said that one of the H's in 4-H originally stood for "hustle" when the organization was founded 100 years ago.

"Hustle meant to serve the community at a moment's notice," Lori said.

Hustle is also what best represents Lori, recently named the county's superior 4-H'er, and a nine-year member of the program.

Lori hustled to meet deadlines in order to excel in school and community organizations. But hustle is not the only "H" that describes the 17-year-old. The 4-H creed that specifies pledging head, heart, hands,

and health have been instrumental in developing her leadership skills and helping her excel in numerous areas.

As president of the Kids and Kows Club, vice president of the swine club, and secretary of the county 4-H club, she said that she uses her head to think clearly, logically, and in planning ahead when lining up speakers, serving refreshments, planning teaching sessions for the younger members, and ordering supplies needed for club work.

Her heart pledges loyal, kind, and sympathetic action toward others and especially younger members struggling in 4-H.

Although Lori strives to use

her hands to excel in every project, she said that she has also learned that winning isn't everything.

She recalls that the first time she showed a calf, it wouldn't cooperate. The calf laid down in the show ring and the halter slipped off.

"Everything went wrong," Lori said, and ended up with her placing last in a long line of novices.

Although tempted to give up showing, Lori persevered. After nine years of showing, she has earned a table full of ribbons and trophies for fitting, showmanship, and breed.

Lori is the only child of

(Turn to Page B12)