



Staff photo/ Laura Mazur
Member of the Auglaize County Tail Waggers 4-H shows off her dog's obedience training to a judge during the club's dog show held at the Auglaize County Fairgrounds.

Canine control

Hers hosts dog show

LAURA MAZUR
Staff Writer

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Verhoff, the daughter of Mary and Brad Verhoff, who got into the club because of McKinney, said, "I thought it'd be fun and interesting."

4-H'ers can learn through a variety of steps with their dogs.

From sub-novice, to novice, to graduate, to open, club members go through everything from basic commands to showmanship as seen

on Pedigree professional dog shows on TV.

Katelyn Sharp, 9, of St. Marys, who is a second year member of 4-H, got her start last year in dog care and decided to move up to obedience this year.

"I wanted to do something with my dog," Sharp said of her Maltese, Molly Lininger.

She joined after the encouragement of a friend. She likes to put Molly's hair up for "important events" such as shows.

Sharp, the daughter of Kara and Cody Sharp, also said a larger dog might be easier to work with because her legs wouldn't hurt as much from bending over in training.

Kody Seger, 13, of Minster, said she had confidence that his border collie, Miesha, could

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Staff photo/ Megan Veit
Fifth-grade student Travis Rohrbach holds his duck, Lucky, that began as a school project. Rohrbach said he plans to release her after she learns to fly.

Talking to the animals

By MEGAN VEIT
Staff Writer

After being father and friend to more than 500 animals, members of his fifth-grade class bestowed the title "Animal Boy" upon Travis Rohrbach.

The fifth grader's eyes twinkled with excitement as he talked about his work with animals he said he has done "as long as [he] can remember."

"I got my first pet when I was two," Travis said.

He said he has loved animals for as long, taking in strays that find their way to him and contacting the animal shelter.

While waiting for the animals to be picked up, Travis said he cares for

them.

His home menagerie includes a dog, a snake, an aquarium of fish and Lucky, the mallard.

"Right now I'm trying to get my fish tank perfect," Travis said.

After seeing several of his fish attack the others, he began pouring stress medicine into the fish's tank.

"I used to have 18, now

I'm down to 12," Travis said of the fish before they began receiving the stress reducer.

He mentally documents the fact the fishes' aggression decreased, and he said he hopes to rebuild the tank's population soon.

Lucky is unique among Travis's pets.

She began as a project at school and after a raffle in class, Travis was cho-

sen to bring her home.

"I'm releasing her as soon as she learns to fly," Travis said. "I've grown attached to her."

The sparkle in Travis's eyes dims with the thought of her release. Yet he said he understands the release is best for his newest friend.

Travis also said he knows she must learn to fly first so she can escape prey and find a family.

"If she isn't accepted by the ducks at the river, she can fly to a new home," Travis said.

Lucky is not the first animal Travis will return to the wild.

When a friend found a

See TRAVIS, Page 5

"I don't care what I do as long as I work with animals. It's been my dream since I was 2."

— Travis Rohrbach

See the Sheds

AUGLAIZE
Equipment Rental

Farm From Page 3

time goes on, fewer and fewer people understand the processes and what it takes to farm.

The couple recently started refocusing on how to promote the industry over the last year and are working on these types of things.

Dan Fullenkamp said the easiest thing about farming is he has learned to accept the variables the father has given him and has decided to stop trying.

"Every day's different," Dan Fullenkamp said. "I don't get bored. I'm surprised every day."

Beck Fullenkamp said she likes the repetition in her duties on the farm of milking and feeding the cows.

The most difficult thing to do is the paperwork of insurance, taxes, workers' compensation and other required forms, Dan Fullenkamp said.

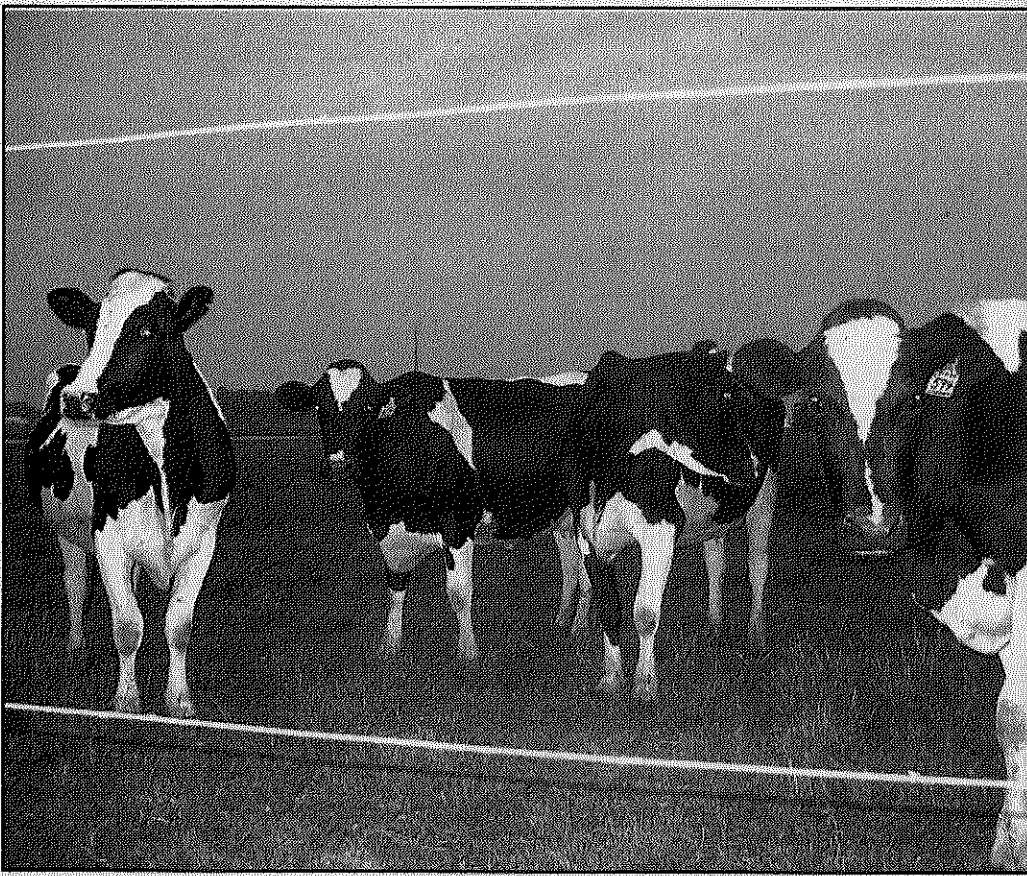
He said he would take manual labor over required paperwork any day.

"I come and go as I please and do my work whenever," Dan Fullenkamp said. "I don't watch a time clock, but sometimes I work until midnight."

The Auglaize County Fair is typically exciting for the Fullenkamps.

When Dan Fullenkamp is growing up, his father would get the feed ground and set up ahead of time and basically stop milking the week of the fair, this week set aside as family vacation.

When he came to have his own family with Beck,



Staff photo/Laura Mazur

More than 70 acres comprise Beck and Dan Fullenkamp's farm, the Othmary Dairy Farm, which produces crops as well as the milk from more than 70 dair cows.

their own children have looked forward to it, as well. In addition to Julie, the Fullenkamps also have two sons, Dave and Brian.

The Othmary Dairy Farm continues to see a variety of visitors throughout the years, from field trips, to those learning about farming and even those from foreign countries.

Approximately a dozen priests, brothers and sisters who have visited the Maria Stein Spiritual Center from far away lands have also visited their farm while in the area.

These visitors have come from Africa, Argentina and a number of other countries.

Ties have run deep and even far sometimes for this family, even if they may not be directly connected.

Two exchange students from the Netherlands have also stayed at the farm as part of their college training. One of these students has kept in touch with the couple even after his three-month stay to the effect that the couple even traveled overseas for his wedding a few years ago.

The Fullenkamps said this particular student fit in like one of the family because his own farm in the Netherlands was much like theirs.

They're even excited to know that they are now expecting their third international "grandchild."

"It's a way to see Mother Nature up close and personal with the weather, babies being born and crops coming up," Dan Fullenkamp said of the farming way of life. "You get to see all of life's opportunities, good and bad."

Abstract From Page 4

own at her most recent show in Florida. The center of the work is a multicolored background that blends David Brandt's abstract method with

own art work.

Two of Brandt's children also pursued careers in art.

David Brandt took his career to California, where he shows large abstract acrylics. Linda Brandt, the daughter of Marge Brandt, participates in shows with her mother, including a Florida show featuring "The Fourth Day."

Brandt instilled an

appreciation for art in her children from an early age, often showing her work to their friends as well when they came to visit.

While Brandt started painting in 1968, she did not sell her first painting until 1970 — selling five in her first month.

In 1972, she transitioned to watercolors, which she continued with until last year.

Throughout her award-winning career in watercolors, Brandt taught classes in her home studio built by her husband and the Riverside Art Center.

Her airy home studio with its high ceiling and ample work space provided the perfect atmosphere

for classes that at one time reached five per week.

Brandt described the pride she has for her children and students as equal to that which she has in her own work.

Looking ahead, Brandt said she plans to continue with her acrylic works, creating both abstract and realistic pieces.

"Each day is a new day," Brandt said.

She said she is excited, viewing each project as a chance to start anew.

The unpredictability of the work keeps Brandt interested and with no classes currently being taught, she has ample time to dedicate to the new work that is as vibrant as its creator.

For many of the paintings, God gives the name to me.

— Marge Brandt
Wapakoneta-area artist

Dogs From Page 2

perform well in the show as long as she wasn't distracted.

Loud noises and Seger's mother, Diana, seemed to be things that took her focus away from the competition.

As the person to bring Miesha

home initially and who spends most time with her while Seger has been at school, the dog tends to give much attention to this other family member.

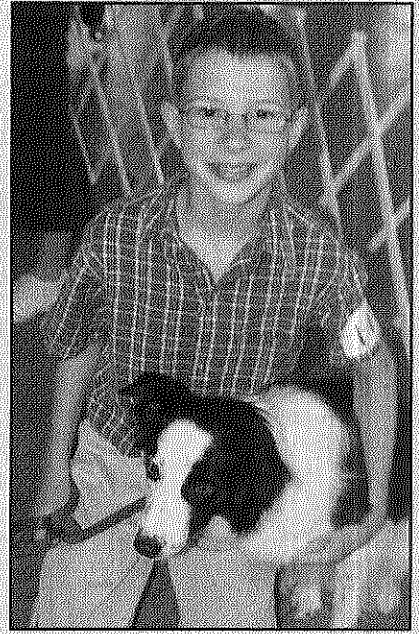
Seger, also the son of Vernon Seger, sees these

almost weekly dog shows with the club as beneficial to each

he and his pet.

"It helps me get ready for [the county] fair and it helps Miesha," he said.

Seger has worked with cats before, while his siblings have all worked



with cattle.

Madison Ruppert, 10, of Wapakoneta, daughter of Jill and Chad Ruppert, said she joined Tail Waggers "for meeting new people and seeing other dogs."

Travis From Page 2

sick newt, Travis said he was quick to take the opportunity to nurse it back to health.

"It wouldn't eat ... we started feeding it smaller crickets and it got healthy again," Travis said.

He then took it to a small creek and returned the newt to the wild.

"He just took off," Travis said, nodding and smiling at memories of the release. "I think he was happy."

This summer, Travis joined with People to People Ambassadors for a 3-week trip to Canada and British Columbia. The trip is the first time Travis will be on an airplane, but Travis said he worries less about the flight than he does about forgetting his camera.

"I'll study black birds and wolves," Travis said. "And we'll go on a glacier. That will be our best chance to see bears."

Travis maintains a large list of animals he

anticipates seeing on his first trip to Canada, and the 4-mile hike each day to see them doesn't deter him at all. He developed his outdoor skills and love of animals through five years in Boy Scouts.

To cover the cost of the trip, Travis worked with the community to host chicken dinners and various raffles and asked local businesses for sponsorship during the past year.

"I have the trip paid for," Travis said during the week prior to his trip. "I still work on getting spending money. I'm just so excited."

Travis said he hopes to use all he learns on the trip, and future experiences with his scouting to prepare him for a career based around helping animals.

"I don't care what I do as long as I work with animals," Travis said. "It's been my dream since I was 2."



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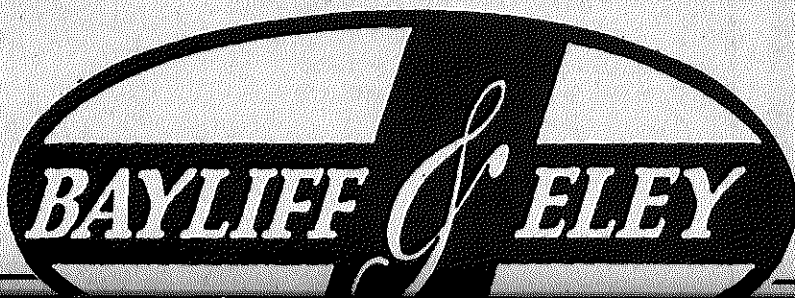
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