

Geddes filly to compete at World Clydesdale Show



Mike Geddes holds the harness of his filly foal Mikashan Adelynne, born May 4, 2015. The foal will compete this week at the World Clydesdale Show in London. (submitted photo)

By Barb McKay

There will be record attendance at the first World Clydesdale Show to be held in Canada in 16 years and Kincardine native Mike Geddes has high hopes for his young filly.

The 2015 international show is being held at the Western Fair District in London this week. The show is held every four years and has not been held in Canada since the first World Clydesdale Show was held in Carp, Ontario in 1999. Geddes, who grew up in Kincardine and now lives in Clarksburg, has experience showing his champion Clydesdale horses, but this will be his first time showing at the World Clydesdale Show. He is a founding member of the show and on the committee this year as barn manager.

The event is drawing Clydesdale owners and breeders from across

feature event - the eight-horse hitch. Geddes said it is the largest class of hitch teams ever assembled. The Budweiser eight-horse hitch team will also attend and make appearances most days.

Geddes is an experienced horse breeder who owns 12 Clydesdales and raises one to two foals on average each year. One of his mares was awarded the title of grand champion at the Fredericton Exhibition in New Brunswick the second week of September. Horses are in his blood. His family owned horses for generations and his grandfather, Elmer Pollock, raised Clydesdales in Kincardine. Geddes brings a team of Clydesdales to a number of local events, including fall fairs, the recent Ripley Reunion and annually to the Kincardine Scottish Festival.

"They are kind-hearted animals with a unique soul," Geddes said



...at the Ripley Fall Fair's poultry
...n by Jamie's Reptiles.



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Huron-Kinloss woman graces Faces of Farming calendar

Matt McIntosh
Farm & Food Care Ontario

Wanda Snobelen has had a stake in agriculture and the beef business ever since she bought her first Charolais cow at 12 years old.

Since then she has significantly expanded her beef herd, and delved further into a diverse farm life.

Snobelen is featured as the 'March 2016' farm feature story in the 11th annual Faces of Farming calendar published by Farm & Food Care Ontario, with her page sponsored by DeKalb Canada.

The third-generation to be raised on her family's Ripley-area beef farm, Wanda took her first foray into raising beef cattle as part of a 4-H beef club project. Now she helps harvest nearly 5,000 acres of farmland -- and raises 120 Charolais cattle of her own -- on her husband's family farm in Ripley. She is also the new face for March in Farm & Food Care Ontario's 2016 Faces of Farming

Calendar.
"We moved to Ripley in 2000. My in-laws had a business in Tiverton that I worked at for a few years, but [my husband] Sam and I have farmed full-time ever since," said Wanda. "When I moved, the beef cattle came with me."

The farm where Wanda currently lives and works is actually part of a wider farm business owned by her, her husband Sam and his family. On their 5,000 acres, Sam and Wanda plant corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and barely, with a small percentage being used as pasture for Wanda's cattle. While she primarily looks after the beef side of the business, Sam is primarily involved in crops. Of course, both Wanda and Sam help each other with their respective tasks when the need arises.

What corn the farm produces, said Sam, is sold directly as a cash crop, but the bulk of their acres are used to produce wheat and soybeans for Snobelen Farms. The seed dealership

is actually another side of the Snobelen family business originally started by Sam's father, Mike. The dealership is currently run by his brother Troy, as are several local grain elevators.

Sam and Wanda say they have no immediate plans to expand the farm right now, but instead says that he and Wanda are quite focused on "producing more in a better way" with the land they have.

Following that focus, Sam said their farm was one of six initial Canadian farms to meet "Round Table Responsible Soy" qualifications last year.

According to its official website, Round Table Responsible Soy is a worldwide standard designed to promote "environmentally correct, socially appropriate and economically feasible soy production."

"It's essentially a sustainability audit for your farm that allows us to access export markets in a number of different countries," said Sam. "Everything from your fuel

consumption and chemical storage to making sure you're treating employees well is looked at... it's supposed to ensure you're farm is working in a sustainable way and looks to see if you'll be able to produce crops the same way 20 years from now."

As for the animals, the male and female cattle raised by Wanda are marketed as breeding stock or herd replacements, though some bulls are also marketed to cow-calf beef farmers as well. Wanda enjoys spending as much time with her cattle as possible, but says her favourite day of the year is when the first calfs born in the winter. Considering how much of a commitment a 120 head cattle herd can be, though, it's perhaps not surprising that Wanda's second favourite day of the year is in the spring when the cattle can once again go out to pasture; at that point, says Wanda, she gets "a bit of a break."

Like beef cattle, 4-H also continues to be part of



Terry Scott White/Faces of Farming 2016

Huron-Kinloss' Wanda Snobelen is featured in the 2016 Farm & Food Care Ontario 'Faces of Farming' calendar for the month of March.

Wanda's life, at least somewhat indirectly. In an effort to help current members of the organization, she happily provides space on her farm and personal expertise in the training of their calves. Her assistance helps them prepare for show competitions, or just improve their relationship with the animals.

"We try to help them all the way along. The last few years all the kids we worked with got to show their cattle at the Royal Winter Fair," said Wanda. Both Wanda and Sam say the

main reason behind many of their business decisions really comes down to their love of agriculture.
"It's amazing because you get to do something different every day," said Wanda. "I love my cows and I love my farm. I really have the best job going."
The "Faces of Farming" calendar is designed to introduce the public to a few of Ontario's passionate and hardworking farmers -- the people who produce food in this province.
For more information visit www.farmfoodcare.org

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