

Miss Rain Day looks back at her reign



By Mike Jones

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Miss Rain Day 2015 Claire Kreider

WAYNESBURG – When Claire Kreider looks back at her reign as Miss Rain Day, she thinks about the service projects she performed over the past year and the people who helped her.

“I think I really realized that none of this about me,” Kreider said. “Sometimes you get caught up in the moment and think, ‘I can make a difference all on my own.’ But you can’t because it’s not about you. You need these great organizations in the community ... because they are the ones that make a difference.”

Kreider, 17, who is entering her senior year at Waynesburg Central High School, is finishing her last few days as Miss Rain Day 2015.

She will hand over her crown to one of the five contestants, Bryn Patton, McKenna Benke, Alison Blair, Brittany Rhodes and Micaela Ricco, who will be named the next Miss Rain Day during a ceremony at the Waynesburg Central auditorium at 4 p.m. Sunday just before the annual Rain Day festival July 29.

Over the past year, Kreider organized and participated in many service projects integral to the Miss Rain Day title.

She worked on Operation Christmas Card, a nonprofit that collects and sends cards to soldiers overseas during the holidays, and collected 300 cards.

She also participated in the annual Toys For Tots distribution drive and most recently held a car wash that benefited Bowlby Library for its Family Literacy Program.

Kreider said education is very important to her and should be a priority for the community.

Her passion for education showed when she organized a back-to-school supplies donation drive to help underprivileged children get the binders, pencils, backpacks and other supplies needed to start the school year.

“Education is something that’s really important to me and really affects our world and society,” she said. “If you don’t get the proper education, you’re kinda pushed aside and don’t have the same opportunities as everyone else.”

Before Kreider graduates from Waynesburg Central next year, she plans to take some credits at Westmoreland County Community College to prepare her for four-year college, which she has not yet selected.

But her time as a queen might not be over Sunday. She is competing in the annual King Coal Show in Carmichaels next month. If she wins, Kreider hopes to raise awareness about how the downturn in the coal industry affected education through the loss of tax revenue or the impact on smaller organizations.

“People automatically think of the people who have lost their jobs, which is important, but it’s not the only thing that’s being affected by the downturn,” she said. “Education is also being affected.”

Until then, she has one more duty as Miss Rain Day when she will offer simple advice for her successor: Enjoy the experience and do not waste the opportunity.

“It’s really been a surreal experience. I’ve really had the opportunity to do a lot,” she said. “I always tell the girls that they can do as little or as much as they want, but you have to make the most of it.”

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