



Mrs. Marlin Hitz

A Busy Farm Wife Who Enjoys Traveling

by Sally Bair
Farm Feature Writer

Mrs. Marlin Hitz, Annville RD1, is a bubbling, enthusiastic farmer's wife who sums up her whole philosophy of life very simply: "I love people."

Talking with her about her family and activities is a delightful experience because she shares her thoughts so candidly.

This Lebanon County farmer's wife is very active in her church and in Farm Women activities. Although she keeps current on farm problems and progress she no longer works the long and busy hours she once did.

She attributes much of her happy attitude and her ability to be busy outside the home to her "understanding family and wonderful husband." And in the course of the conversation she makes it clear that her role as a farm wife was something she chose, not something she just got into.

She was born and raised a "city girl" in Lebanon, but she says, "I always wanted to marry a farmer. I knew what I wanted." And it's obvious she looked until she found just what she wanted. She admits she could never carry on her busy schedule without the complete understanding and encouragement of her husband.

The best part of living on a farm, according to Mrs. Hitz, is the "excitement." "No two days are ever alike. I was always running for a part, or working in the field or doing something different." The bad part about farming, as every farm family knows, is that the work is never done. But Mrs. Hitz says with a laugh, "Life's too short to worry about getting all the work done."



Part of Mrs. Hitz's work as a state director for Farm Women includes making arrangements for the fashion show which is part of the annual convention at Farm Show time.

The Hitz's four children were born in rapid succession in five years, so Mrs. Hitz explained that she was too busy having babies to do much work outside the home. "My husband never told me I had to work," she says. But after her fourth child she made up her mind to help with the work so they wouldn't need to have hired help, because, as she put it, "They were always breaking some piece of equipment and not telling Marlin about it." So from then on she says, "I helped fill silo and helped with the milking. I helped milk until our oldest came back from the Peace Corps several years ago."

Her second child was a daughter, Marlene, now Mrs. Gordon Sheetz, and Mrs. Hitz says Marlene helped care for the younger children and "could cook when she was ten."

Now all three sons are active in the dairy operation. They are Guy, a graduate of Delaware Valley College in dairy husbandry, who worked in the Peace Corps in India; Boyd, 22; and Scott, 19. They all graduated from Annville-Cleona High School. At Dol-Mar Farm they are presently milking 89 Holsteins. There are 110 acres on the home farm and they rent another farm. According to Mrs. Hitz, half of the milk is sold through their juggling store, where



Selling milk from their dairy store is part of the daily work for Mrs. Marlin Hitz.

they also sell skim and chocolate milk and orange juice.

The store is now just a small building at the end of the driveway, but construction is underway for a much larger dairy store which will include a limited line of groceries and a deli case. And most important, they will also sell dipped ice cream from their new store, something which Mrs. Hitz says is a rarity in that area of the county now.

All of the products are currently sold in plastic bags, with the "bottling" being done by someone else. New equipment for processing the milk will be bought for the proposed store. Mrs. Hitz says they hope to open the store by December 1. She has her turn taking care of customers from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. every day.

The Hitz family loves to travel, and according to Mrs. Hitz she and her husband have seen all but two of the United States. They have also traveled to Europe on two occasions with Farm Women - sponsored tours and spent their 25th wedding anniversary in Hawaii.

One of the family's most exciting adventures was traveling for ten weeks through the west to Alaska, living out of a tent trailer. Five years ago they took another extended trip west for eight weeks and traveled by motor home to Alaska and the Northwest Territory. Mrs. Hitz says, "Traveling in the motor home was pure luxury compared with the tent trailer." One of the best things about traveling as a family, she adds, is that "you really learn a lot about each other when confined in a car or mobile home."

Although now the family is beginning to go their separate ways with two married children, the Hitz's continue to enjoy traveling. They traveled to Kansas City in their mobile home to the National Future Farmers of America convention where their son Boyd will receive the American Farmer degree. They traveled with eleven people in the mobile home, although to sleep, of course, they stayed at motels.

It is particularly exciting for Mr. and Mrs. Hitz to return to Kansas City, because Marlin received an American Farmer degree himself. Mrs. Hitz remembers that trip well, because her husband wouldn't go if she couldn't accompany him, and she had a three-week old son. Well, true to form, she got her doctor's permission and went along, but they were only allowed to travel 300 miles a day, she remembers.

They also attended the convention two years ago, and Mrs. Hitz says, "It's such an inspiration to the FFA boys to see the convention." The biggest difference since her husband got his American Farmer degree she says is that "the girls have gotten in!"

Mrs. Hitz has been a very active member of Farm

Women Society No. 3, which she joined as soon as she married a farmer, 25 years ago. She said she looked on it then as a "night out." "You also learn from other farm wives that they share the same trials and tribulations and frustrations."

She said, "It was a learning experience, with older women giving advice to younger women. It was particularly helpful for someone who came from the city."

She laughs as she relates some of the reasons she needed advice as a young farm wife. She said she recalls vividly the first time she tried to make pie dough with lard. She had great difficulties, and called her mother-in-law who suggested that she try adding a little more flour and if that didn't work, "throw it out." Mrs. Hitz says, "I threw it out."

Mrs. Hitz says she did not become very active in her group until her "children could take care of themselves." But since then she has served a five year term as county president, and two years ago was elected as a director on the state board. Since then she has been busy, because part of her duties as a state officer is to attend other counties' conventions. About the traveling she says, "I really enjoy it - it's fun to have a carful of women and travel together to meetings. We can talk and really get to know one another."

Another aspect of Farm Women which Mrs. Hitz says she really enjoys is the opportunity to have a "a night out with the husbands." She said this was something young farm couples didn't have much time for. She added, "The fellowship was terrific and they are all down-to-earth people."

The Hitz family are members of the Campbelltown United Methodist Church. Mrs. Hitz is currently president of the Missionary Society and as such is a member of the Administrative Board. Until a few years ago she served as a teacher for junior high girls and was a member of the choir.

The Missionary Society conducts programs at retired persons homes, has Bible study and assorted other programs throughout the year. They also sew lap robes, cancer pads and Christmas stockings for various homes and hospitals.

Mrs. Hitz says, "I really like to be busy. If I weren't doing the things I have now, I would really have to hunt for something, because I need to be busy."

She recalls that when Guy returned from the Peace Corps and began working at home she had a feeling that "nobody needs me." She then began working as a saleswoman for Amway products, and now has four

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Sewing comes almost second nature to Mrs. Hitz, who says she makes almost everything she needs.