

Farm Commentary

By Dieter Krieg

Praise the carpenters

Disasters are destructive, ugly, and bone-chilling. Yet, despite their frightening effects, there's something about them which brings out the best in people.

Good neighborliness and a strong community spirit rings out loud and clear from time to time when tragedy strikes — whether it's clean-up after a flood, a fire, or a community getting together to pick corn for a family which suffered an accident.

A hideous barn fire, such as oc-

curred at the Joseph Boll farm earlier this month, is exemplary of the "Good Samaritan spirit" for which rural America and particularly Pennsylvania Dutch Country is famous. A

triumphant barn raising took place there this week, which is to the credit of the community and all of the families involved. Such acts of friendship and cooperation deserve a tip of the hat and a cheer. Well done, folks!

Don't forget firemen

Not to be forgotten in any tragedy or emergency are the volunteer firemen who risk their lives and well-being in an effort to lessen the losses of disaster victims.

A barn fire breaks out and news is made. A barn raising takes place and it's more news. There are usually some spectacular pictures of the flames and destruction and well-deserved praise for the fellows who unite to do the rebuilding. But how about the firemen? They too are a part of the community — who routinely battle their neighbors' disasters.

Like the volunteer carpenters who erect an entire barn in a day's time, the volunteer firemen do their work without charge. They don't go on strike, they don't even complain. Whether night or day, rain or shine, they jump at the sound of an alarm, trying their best to save lives and property.

Surely, the firemen aren't taken for granted, but their valiant efforts often go unheralded. Talk about Good Samaritans and the volunteer fireman serves as a perfect and outstanding example.

Pond is important too

Farmers who don't have a pond or stream close to their buildings should give some serious consideration to correct this situation. Ponds are more than a site for swimming and ice skating — they're vital for fighting fires.

That fact was dramatically pointed out this past week by Mrs. Joseph Boll, Lititz R2, whose family lost a barn due to fire. "We're so glad we had the pond," she exclaimed, "the

firemen were able to save the stable and milking parlor."

More than 2,000 gallons of water per minute were pumped out of the pond for several hours to bring the blaze under control. Fighting the fire without water from the pond would have been an impossibility. As it was, not only were the milking parlor and lower stable saved, but adjacent buildings were kept from going up in flames.

In pursuit of nonsense

As if the nation's food producers don't already have it tough enough to turn a profit — in the face of inflation, high production costs, bad weather, and a buyer's rather than seller's market — farmers are constantly having to live with a bad image problem because some glory-seeking scientist or doctor wants to grab a headline in his trade journal.

All this talk and research going on about meat, milk, butter and eggs by the so-called experts in the white laboratory coats strikes me as being nothing more than nonsense.

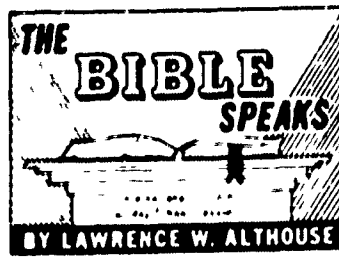
Generally speaking, the healthiest people on Earth are farmers. They're the same people who can eat a dozen eggs for breakfast, along with a half pound of bacon and a quart of milk. According to some doctors and health-food nuts, however, such a diet is practically self-destructive.

Magazines are constantly filled

with such bad propaganda which has undoubtedly turned many potential customers away from the farmer's products. The damage suffered by agriculture because of this uncalled for and often irresponsible kind of publicity is uncalculatable and it will take years of education and research to correct the situation.

This unfortunate circumstance — a thorn in every farmer's side — is like a person's character. It takes a lifetime to build a good one, but only an hour to have it all go down the drain. It's tragic that the farm products which have sustained life since the beginning of time can be blamed for a variety of ailments.

Because of this, agricultural marketing organizations are constantly having to be on the defensive to make their products appeal to consumers. It shouldn't have to be that way.



THE BIRTHRIGHT

Lesson for October 26, 1975

Background Scripture: Genesis 25: 19-34; 27: 29.

Devotional Reading: Philippians 2: 1-11.

The man who served as my guide in the Holy Land, a Palestinian Arab from Bethlehem, told me that shortly after the Dead Sea scrolls were accidentally found in a cave by an Arab shepherd boy, the most important of these, the Book of Isaiah, was given to him for a brief period of time. This priceless scroll was unsuspectingly carried around in the back of his car for several weeks before disposing of it as valueless.

Today, he realizes what a valuable treasure he permitted to slip through his fingers. He simply had not appreciated the value of what he held in his hands.

For a mess of pottage

That true story could well serve as a parable for our times. How often people let valuable possessions slip through their fingers simply because they have no idea at all of the value of these things.

This is one of the themes of the story of Jacob and Esau.

It is not one of those "good guys and bad guys" stories. Neither of these men appear admirable as the writer of Genesis portrays them. There is Jacob, crafty, scheming, covetous, and opportunist who gains personal advantage at the expense of someone else's loss.

Yet, neither is Esau very compelling. It was evil of Jacob's birthright, but it was even more monstrously sinful for Esau to sell it. Not only did Esau sell his precious birthright, but he did it without any sense of loss. "I am about to die," he croaks, "of what use is a birthright to me?" (Genesis 25:32). So, as the saying goes: "Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage."

Even though he was farm-housed, even though he may have been on the brink of starvation, Esau sold out too cheaply and thus exposed a fatal flaw in his character: he was heedless of his God-given gifts. It is no wonder that the writer of Genesis concluded that "Thus Esau despised his birthright" (Genesis 25: 34).

What have you done to me?

There are lots of people in this world who "despise their birthright." They have no sense at all of the great potentialities that God has placed within them. Like Esau they have a habit of saying: "Of what use is it . . . to me?"

There is a strange kind of retribution that dominates the next episode of the story. Jacob flees from his brother's wrath and settles with his uncle Laban in a far land. He works to win the hand of his beloved Rachel, the daughter of Uncle Laban.

The big day arrives and the wedding feast begins. The bride is heavily veiled because of tradition. So, it is not until they retire for the



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

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To Utilize Corn Fodder

The making of corn stalks into livestock bedding at this time of the year is a very good practice providing we get better weather to dry the stalks. After the corn is picked or shelled, the stalks can be shredded or put through a rota-beater, allowed to dry, and then baled for bedding purposes. Shredded corn stalks have good water absorption qualities and can be used for bedding with all types of livestock; the one exception would be liquid manure systems where it should not be used. In many cases the animals will eat some of the corn leaves for roughage needs. Due to the high price of straw and other bedding materials we urge some attention to shredded corn fodder this fall.

To Avoid Acorns For Dairy Herd

Dairymen should not be grazing their milking cows in pastures with oak trees. There seems to be a very good acorn crop this fall and if the milking cows get started to eat acorns, they will drop in their milk production for the rest of the lactation. In fact, there could be some bloating and digestive troubles if any bovine would eat too many acorns. We suggest special care of the milking herd if grazing in woodlots containing oak trees.

To Protect Milk Quality

Due to adequate moisture on most pasture areas at this time, the growth of forage is going to be very lush and succulent. Also, some dairymen may be grazing the alfalfa or clover fields at this time of the year. All of these forages are very palatable to cattle, but some caution should be used to prevent bloating and to prevent "grassy" flavored milk. The milking herd should be allowed to graze only during the middle of the day and at least 4 hours prior to the next milking. All animals should be allowed to graze legumes (alfalfa and clover) only when the crop is dry and after some feeding of dry matter such as silage or hay. Legumes, and especially wet or frosty

evening that he realizes his uncle has put one over on him: the trickster has been tricked!

It might just as well have been Esau who said, "What is this you have done to me?" but it wasn't. Instead, now it was Jacob who was on the bad end of the deal. He was saddled with a woman he didn't want. Even worse, he didn't have the woman he did want. When Laban gives his slimy excuse, Jacob must have shuddered to think that he had once been like that.

Whatever it is that God puts within the lives of each one of us, we must learn to value our God-given birthrights, to hold on to them and develop them and use them in his service. For that is why he gave them to us.

legumes, may cause severe bloating.

To Observe Cattle Closely

Newly purchased livestock of all kinds should be segregated from the rest of the herd and watched closely for the first two weeks. Most types of respiratory infections will show up during the first week or ten days. Cattle feeders are especially reminded of the importance of observing their cattle several times each day to look for "slow" cattle and to give them prompt treatment. The "eye of the Master" is still very important in order to reduce losses and to get all animals started quickly. A minimum of stress and excitement is also suggested for the first week.

PUNCH LINE OF THE WEEK



Farm Calendar

- Monday, Oct. 27**
Pa. State Grange meeting and convention in Lancaster County. Continues through the 30th.
- Tuesday, Oct. 28**
Garden Spot Young Farmers will be meeting at 7:45 p.m. in the ag classroom of Garden Spot High School for a discussion on swine finishing houses.
- Wednesday, Oct. 29**
Dairy Show at the New Holland Sales Stables beginning at 10:00 a.m.
- Friday, Oct. 31**
Pa. State Poultry Princess contest and banquet to be held at the Embers Restaurant in Carlisle Pike - Rt. 11. Social Hour begins at 6:30 p.m. with dinner at 7:30 p.m.
- Monday, Nov. 3**
Manheim Young Farmers meeting at the Manheim High School ag classroom 7:30 p.m. - program on preparation and storage of farm equipment.
- Wednesday, Nov. 5**
Lancaster County Conservation district meeting at the Farm and Home Center 7:30 p.m.
- Pa. Young Farmers Convention** in Mechanicsburg at the Penn Ram Motor Inn continues through the 6th.
- Thursday, Nov. 6**
Lancaster County Poultry Association dinner at the Historic Strasburg 6:30 p.m.
- Lancaster County Holstein Association dinner at the Harvest Drive Restaurant Intercourse.