

Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



We hear a lot about getting back to the basics of our lives. We are told to recycle newspapers, glass and cans. We are also told to eat more natural foods without preservatives. And to save gasoline by carpooling and by taking local vacations. Of course, it is always easier to apply these principles to others than to ourselves.

Recently, I've been thinking of my youth when it was almost effortless to live a simple life. We had no electricity to waste. We didn't ever have a telephone in my home so we couldn't even waste time talking on it. Our kitchen stove burned corn cobs that the chickens had picked clean and also wood from our meadow which my father sawed each Fall. We had

a parlor stove that burned coal and we gathered around it to dress in our long underwear and heavy cotton stockings. The food which we raised and cooked was kept on a hanging shelf in the cellar. And the milk cans were put into a trough with well water pumped on them to keep them cool. As my father was the only driver in the family, we only went away on Sunday when he was free from the fieldwork. We were almost self-sufficient.

Last Fall at a meeting a group of women were each given a large piece of paper and told to make a poster. They also each received an envelope with one, two or more "paper" coins. The idea was to buy pictures and glue to make a design.

There was a center where the supplies were stored and personnel were there to give out welfare funds and also a minister to counsel us. Such a rush of women clamoring for supplies you never saw.

As I had no "money" in my envelope, I decided to make my poster without help from anyone. So I quietly headed outdoors and found some red, yellow and orange leaves which I put on the paper with sap from a tree.

Maybe I defeated the purpose of the "game" - to show us how we'd feel getting charity-but I was too independent to succumb to the circumstances and beg. The simple life has a lot to be said for it.

Block to speak at Pork Congress

DES MOINES, IA. — Secretary of Agriculture John Block will be a featured speaker at the 1981 American Pork Congress in Kansas City, Missouri, March 11-13.

Block is scheduled to speak on "The New Look In Agriculture" Friday, March 13, as part of the Issues and Answers for Challenging the Future seminar.

Block's background as a hog and soybean farmer and recent policy statements have strongly suggested a re-orientation of future USDA policy under the new administration.

Block is said to favor less government intervention and regulation of agriculture, ending embargoes, and curbing inflation through spending cuts rather than regulating retail prices.

Friday's seminar also features Congressmen Tom Foley and Thad Cochran on the subject of farm legislation in the 80's.

Foley, a democratic representative from Washington's 5th District, is the third ranking democrat in the House. He surrendered his chairmanship of the House Agriculture Committee to assume that post as Majority Whip, but is expected to be named as Vice-Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. Foley also serves as chairman of the House Livestock and Grains Subcommittee.

Cochran, a republican senator from Mississippi, is the chairman

of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. This panel must approve funding levels for all USDA and FDA programs. Cochran is also a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Food safety and the abolition of the Delaney Clause are the subject of presentations by Representatives Wampler and Jim Turner during the Wednesday seminar entitled "Challenging the Direction of Government."

Wampler, a republican representative from Virginia's 9th District, is the ranking minority of the House Agriculture Committee. He is also the author of a bill to create a National Science Council to decide, on a scientific basis, whether suspect chemicals are actually hazardous to human health.

Turner is an attorney with Swankin and Turner in Washington, D.C. and was one of the first Nader-associated consumer activists in the foods area.

Turner is also the author of the book "Chemical Feast" which attacked the red meat and poultry inspection system. He is an adamant supporter of the Delaney Clause.



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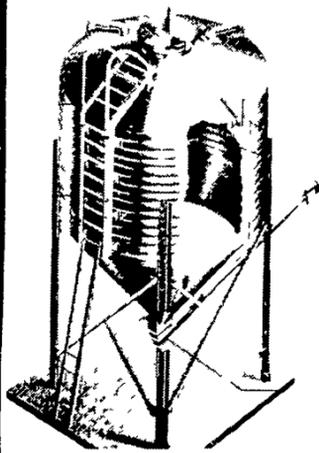
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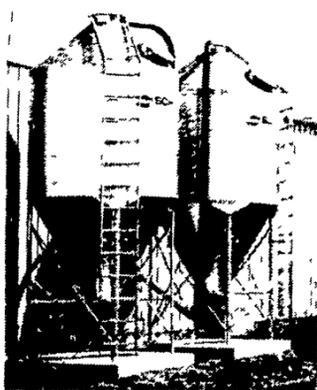
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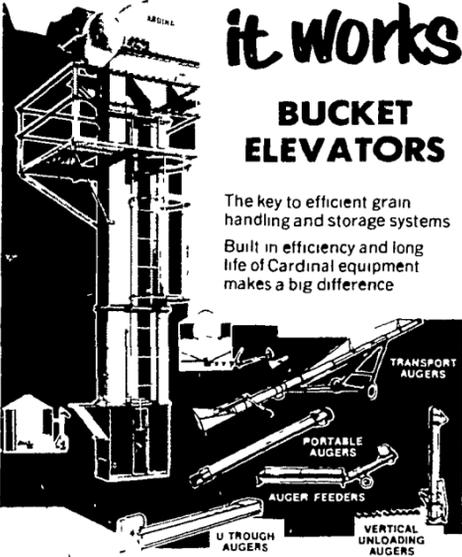


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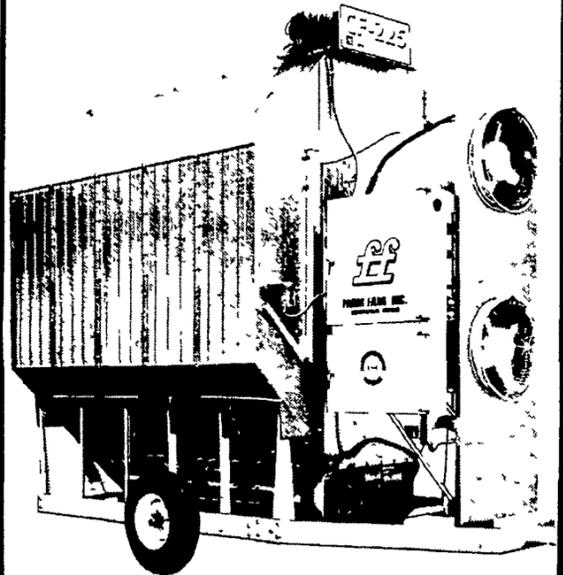
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