

Milk production is no problem for this cow fancier

BY SALLY BAIR
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Most dairy farm families think the dairy cow is pretty special. Some urban people even find the beauty of the gentle creature appealing. But there are few people anywhere who view the cow with the affection displayed by Jeanette Weaver, 530 Maple Street, Cleona.

Jeanette's love affair with the dairy cow is only about four years old, but it is very deep and has taken a place of importance in her life. Her husband of 10 months, Randy, does not object however, and even encourages her by buying more and more cows. Jeanette says, "My collection only blossomed since I met Randy."

Perhaps it is important to note that her collection is not the barn variety of cows which give milk and eat lots of hay and grain. The cows with which Jeanette has an affair, are, in fact sometimes not even recognizable as any of those familiar six breeds of dairy cows. Her cows come in all sizes, shapes, and materials, but each of her cows - or bulls - has a basic resemblance to the dairy cow.

Jeanette counted her "herd" before the interview and found

about 120 cows of various sizes, but then as she talked she remembered some in other rooms, so the total is somewhat uncertain. What is certain is that she cherishes the humble cow and feels she'll never have enough of them.

It's logical to assume that Jeanette was raised on a dairy farm; hence her deep interest. That may be logical, but it would be erroneous. She was raised in Meyerstown in Lebanon County and her only connection to cows was the fact that her grandfather once had a few cows that he milked by hand - but that was before she was old enough to remember.

Nevertheless, she says, "I have liked cows ever since I was little. But my collection started four or five years ago when a girl friend and I were visiting a friend. We talked about cows, and about Bessie the cow and Bop the bull. It started out as a joke." A joke it may have been, but her girlfriend bought her her first cow and Jeanette's collection was begun. Now everyone gives her cows - on special occasions or just because they feel like it.

She met her husband after she began her collection, and he worked part time in dairying, so

she learned to milk cows so she could help him work when dairymen needed time off. About milking she says, "That's neat. Each cow has its own personality. We'd both like to get into dairying but it is impossible. We'll have to settle for a farmette."

Jean works in a sewing factory and Randy drives a tractor trailer.

Because of her interest in her collection, Jeanette has learned to appreciate real dairy cows, and she has found she can tell breeds apart. She enjoys driving in the country and seeing cows on pasture.

Real cows have personalities, and so do Jeanette's inanimate variety. Furthermore, she can easily state who gave her each cow or where she acquired it.

Her collection has been assembled from many places, with flea markets and novelty shops leading the list. "A lot were just picked up," Jeanette states. Her parents frequently go to toy shows and sometimes find cows for her, and she keeps her eyes open for new cows wherever she may be.

Her cows include the usual creamers and figurines, but also stuffed cows - and bulls, place mats, a license plate, a chalk board, a bulletin board, salt and pepper shakers, candles, squeak toys, jewelry, cups and plates, magnets for refrigerator doors, plaques and a cookie jar. The figurines are made of every kind of material, including porcelain, pewter, brass and wrought iron.

Jeanette admits to having her favorites, with the all-time favorite being a very lifelike head done in sculptured porcelain. The cow is named "Blossom." She also has a beautiful "Clementine" created by R.J. Brown, and a Hey Diddle Diddle re-creation by Sebastian. Another favorite is a Goebbel model Guernsey.

There is a wide variety but her husband Randy says it is becoming harder and harder to find new cows which she does not have. "I must be careful," he states.

Her most distant cow came from New York, with most of the collection being found in the neighboring counties. "All my friends know I collect them, and at



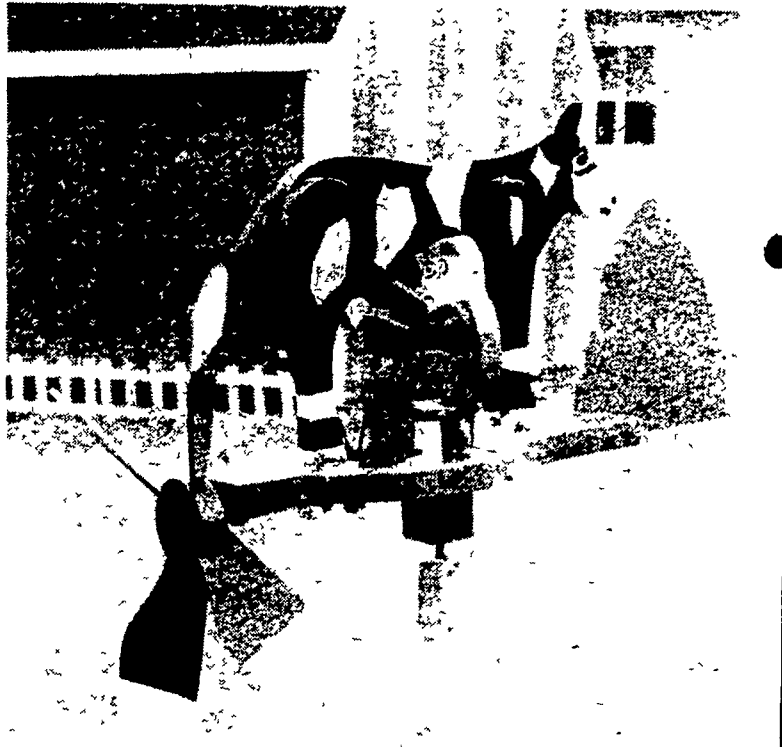
These blue and white cows make a very contented picture and form a small part of Jeanette Weaver's collection.



A close-up view of just one shelf in her multi-tiered collection of dairy cows. If you look closely, there is a cookie jar and a wide variety of figurines.



Jeanette Weaver proudly stands by her collection of cows, which numbers over 120. Some never made it to the case, however, and can be found in other parts of her home.



This yard ornament features a dairy cow and her milker poised to do the job. A stiff breeze makes his arms pump as though he were milking.

work they have become accustomed to it. Friend ask 'Where do you put them all?' I tell them not to worry because I have plenty of room. They don't just stop in the living room. They go everywhere," Jeanette explains.

Cows are such a part of her life, the friend who started her on her collection also took to calling her "Hummy," which for the uninitiated is the name for a baby calf. The name has stuck and it used by other friends.

Randy, who is totally supportive of Jeanette's collection, even took her to see a cow on their honeymoon. It was an oversized model cow he had seen in a

miniature golf course in Wilkes Barre. The Weavers also received a stuffed cow as a wedding present, and it now proudly wears Jeanette's garter from the wedding. She has a pair of "honeymooners" locked in embrace.

One of her more unusual cows is a pregnant cow, which is a glass cow inside of which is another glass cow. On the Weavers' back lawn is an ornamental cow with a man seated ready to milk her. When the wind blows, the man's arms begin to pull, in imitation of the milking process.

(Turn to Page C4)

Homestead Notes