

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp

Independence Day. Our national birthday. We pause to enjoy it in a nationwide celebration with picnics, parades, fireworks and simple relaxation.

Again we celebrate the rag-tag colonial revolutionaries who banded together, against mighty odds, to throw off the domination, the exploitation, the taxation invoked by suffocating and overbearing rules and rulers.

On second thought, I'm not so sure we've done away with the burdensome taxation, domination and exploitation.

Case in point:

Our old milking parlor had seen its best days, cement block walls cracking and stalls rusting out from age. Strict state and federal inspection regulations on milk production facilities all pointed in the same direction - either drastically and totally remodel, or build elsewhere from the bottom up.

Rather than pour remodeling dollars into what would ever remain an old and outdated facility, we opted to put up a new building to house the dairy herd.

Our tax assessment on that additional barn has now come through.

The property taxes on our farm have doubled.

Doubled!

That assessment is based on the addition of one building - one building to house basically the same herd we milked before - not one single additional inch of land to the property - and certainly not bringing in a doubled income.

Adding insult to injury, local taxing bodies were not satisfied with doubling next year's rates. No indeed. We've received pro-rated assessments going back six months on one tax notice.

On another, from our "school tax" authority, we've been charged for two months.

Picayune that one seems, and it especially angers me. It angers me because the school, in just one instance of regulatory regression, is spending over \$20,000 to add a couple of feet to the diving tank of the pool area. Seems the state regulators changed the depth requirements after the facility had been built.

Regulations say we must fix up or get out of business. Property tax bases, raising funds to meet demands often levied by more and more and more regulations, then penalize us for the fixing up of our properties.

Suddenly, it's become crucial that we stop losing the farmland

Agriculture administrators visit farms

YORK — Bankers and agricultural administrators from 12 countries visited twelve farms

in Cumberland, Franklin and Dauphin counties last Tuesday. The visitors interviewed farmers

on their crop production and observed livestock management practices.

Other stops included the Carlisle Livestock Market and the Cumberland Cooperative Wool Growers' wool pool at the Carlisle fairgrounds on June 17th.

Participants came from Bangladesh, Jamaica, Jordan, Indonesia, Kenya, Palestine, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uruguay and the U.S.A. The visit to Pennsylvania was the first field experience in the United States for the 19 participants.

The training program was conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture Office of International Cooperation and Development, Washington, D.C. It is designed to train the participants to evaluate the impact of development programs on farmers and the rural community.

Donald Overdorff, county agent in Cumberland County, guided one group on a tour to Robert and Mike Barkheimer's dairy farm, Mechanicsburg; Galen Byers, Hickorytown; Fred McGilvray, Blosserville and Dick Frederick, Newville.

Another group was taken by Franklin County Agent William Reagan to the farms of Marlin Hege, Fayetteville; Ted Small, Chambersburg; Dice Statler, Chambersburg and Eugene Wingert, St. Thomas.

A third group visited the farms of Lester Springsteen, and Donald Heishman, both of Newville; Clyde Strock, Mechanicsburg and Eugene Eisenbise, Hershey. This tour was led by the area Farm Management agent, Roland Freund, who was also responsible for coordinating the visit.

Where dairy dollars go

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restrictive than in some larger dairying states.

Maryland, New Jersey and Delaware join in a cooperative seminar for their princesses, with Joyce doing much of the behind-scenes work in arranging the program and securing speakers. This year's Tri-State seminar is the ninth one and will be held July 7 and 8 at the University of Delaware.

Frequently throughout the year, Joyce attends dairy and general public functions as the chaperone for Pennsylvania's dairy princesses.

A long-time Phillies baseball fan, she accompanied princess Cindy Neely to the Philadelphia stadium for dairy day on May 31.

The promotion with the Phillies marked the first time that a state princess had been featured on a television commercial. Earlier, Cindy had filmed the commercial spot promoting "Jacket Day", since vinyl milk promotional jackets were given to youngsters attending the game May 31. Those spots, with Cindy modeling the

that's this nation's most basic resource.

In light of the above experience, I sometimes wonder that we don't lose it even faster, as farmers become disgusted and sell out.

But don't forget: If it weren't for that war of Independence we celebrate, none of us would be free to gripe about things like this.

Happy holiday!

jacket and drinking milk, were shown earlier in May during Phillies televised out-of-town games.

Cindy has also appeared recently on a Pittsburgh talk show, giving a cow-milking demonstration, and will be a featured guest on an upcoming airing of "Good Morning Pittsburgh" where she'll prepare several flavored milk drinks.

Now traveling with her sixth princess, Joyce has accumulated many memories and counts numerous friends for agriculture made by the promotional programs of the dairy industry.

Some of the memories were less than funny when they happened, although Joyce can now look back and laugh.

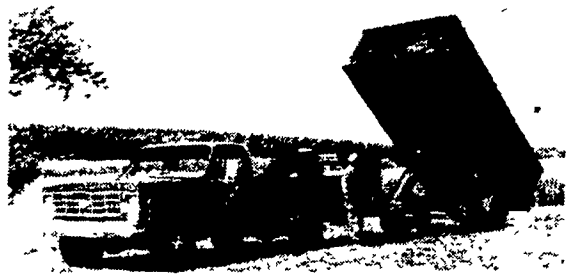
"We overslept for our first live television program," she remembers. "It was in Philadelphia and we'd been doing several promotions, and gotten to bed very late the night before. We did manage to get to the station in time, but we did some fast dressing."

Also embarrassing for one princess, Joyce recalls, was the cow that kept putting her foot in the bucket during a milking contest.

"These girls are so enjoyable. I see them mature so much in the time we're with them. And behind it all, we try to present a good, clean image of milk, dairy products and the dairying industry."

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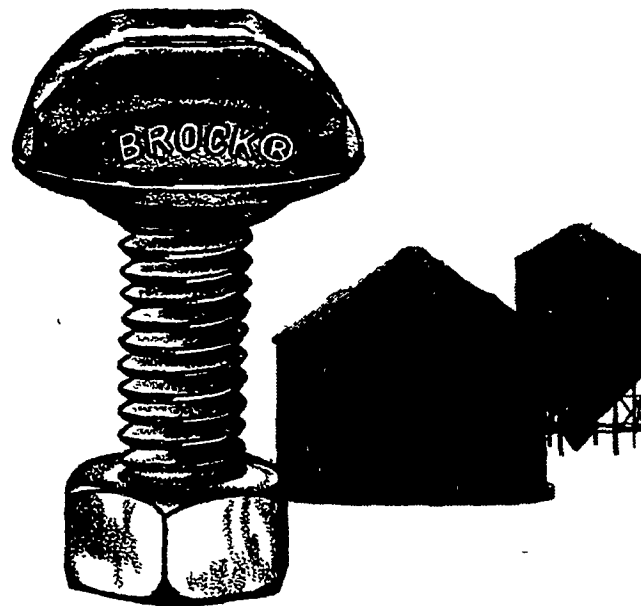
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