



# Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

## Is there a puma in your parlor?

Stray cats have never been unexpected guests on the farm, and their dropping in without warning has been accepted by farmers from the time the first mouse was caught stealing grain. Town people have always journeyed out to the country with their unwanted felines where their population explosion of cats could live "happily ever after" if they stayed out from under tractor tires or farmers' feet.

But there may be some deeper "meows" coming from the milk-begging prowlers stalking Pennsylvania farmers' granaries in the near future. These overgrown "kitties," though, would more than likely scoff at the milk pan you offer and walk off with the whole cow.

What are the possibilities of your stumbling out to do the milking one morning to face a nervous herd of cows and a heavy-weight "kitty" licking over-sized paws at the parlor door? Most farmers only think of "lions and tigers and bears — oh my" when they see reruns of Dorothy and friends scampering down the yellow-brick road on their way to Oz.

But some people fear the day may be coming when these wild creatures may be taking up residence in Pennsylvania's more populated areas.

Imagine the surprise of farmers who are picking corn by the light of the harvest moon, and suddenly the tractor headlights reflect burning, yellow eyes. Even those farmers who only vaguely remember English literature courses would suddenly recall William Blake's eerie poem "Tiger, tiger." But instead of those eyes "burning bright in the forests of the night," the poem would suddenly be modified to corn fields of Pennsylvania.

Not only would Pennsylvania farmers be serenaded by singing frogs on a warm summer's night, they would hear the spine-tingling baying of wolves as they offer up nocturnal canine concerts.

According to some folks, these scenarios aren't as far-fetched as they might seem. And they blame future possibilities of Penns Woods being inhabited by wild denizens of the dark to recent changes in the Pennsylvania Game Laws.

Earlier this month we reported amendments adopted July 1 which will further restrict the exhibition, possession and dealing in wildlife through tougher safety regulations for zoos and wildlife menageries and additional permit requirements.

A new permit has been established for persons who sell or keep bears, wolves, coyotes, lions, tigers, leopards, jaguars, cheetahs, and cougars, or any cross-breed having similar characteristics. These folks now will have to shell out money in order to keep their unusual pets.

For those people who keep wolves, bears, or any of the great cats as pets, a fee of \$200 per

animal per year will be charged by the Game Commission. Previously, there was no fee.

And, anyone who sells more than one of these wild animals per year will have to obtain a special dealers permit costing \$500 per year. Heretofore, no fee was charged.

The state also has established housing codes for any wild animals kept by private individuals as well as zoos. According to Jerry Wendt, assistant chief of the PGC's Division of Law Enforcement, these rules were established for the comfort of the animals and the safety of the general public.

"Before now we never had any control over how dangerous animals were confined," said Wendt. "If a person wanted to tie a lion out in his front yard with a rope, he could and we couldn't do anything with it."

But, according to one concerned individual, these new regulations will cause great economic hardship on people who already own animals of this type — remodeling holding facilities to comply with the new regulations and paying the necessary permit fees. He fears there may be an epidemic of turn-outs when people who can't afford to comply with the law release their "wild" wolfdogs or over-sized cats.

In the Aug. 14 issue of Lancaster Farming, Dick Anglestein reported on a sighting and eventual capture of a bobcat in rural Lancaster County. This was a highly unusual event since bobcats are considered an endangered specie in Pennsylvania and are seldom seen, except in the more isolated forestland of the northern tier regions.

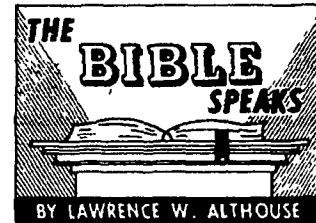
What made this 12-pound bobcat even more unusual was the fact that it was sighted during the day, since these cats are generally nocturnal by nature. Representatives of the Game Commission agreed that it was far from the norm for this year-old feline to have ranged so far south of its natural habitat.

Was there a connection between the new Game Law which went into effect July 1 and the healthy, good-conditioned bobcat which was found streaking across the fields near Manheim just a few weeks later? Or was it simply a freak coincidence?

For those of us who jump at our own shadows, and shriek when face-licking Rover rounds the corner of the barn after one of his nocturnal jaunts, we certainly hope it's the latter.

PGC's Wendt offers his reassurance, saying these wild animals are far too valuable to just turn loose. Besides, the estimated 100 to 300 people who own these types of "pets" have a year to make up their minds about keeping them or selling them — the first-year permit is issued free of charge.

Nevertheless, you might want to lift the lid of your bulk tank a little slower next time you're ready to dip out a pitcher of milk. There might be a tiger in your tank.



## WHEN PERSONALITIES CLASH

August 29, 1982

Background Scripture: Acts 15:22, 30-41; 17:1-15; 2 Corinthians 7:2-16; 8:1-6, 16-24; Titus

Devotional Reading: Titus 2:1-10.

One of life's greatest lessons for me—and, I'm sure, many others—have been the realization that not everyone has to like me. Admittedly, it seems life would be more enjoyable if they did, but it is not a prerequisite for living a happy life under God. In fact, as Jesus demonstrated so clearly, if one is faithful to God, the possibilities of being despised by some people are greatly enhanced.

### A Sharp Contention

I have discovered a corollary to that principle: it is not absolutely necessary that all of us have to be able to work side by side. Don't get me wrong, Christian love demands that we go to great lengths to love one another and Paul repeatedly admonishes us to give visible expression to our oneness in Christ. Many people don't really work at those objectives nearly enough.

At the same time, it must be admitted that there are some people with whom we work better than others and there are even some with whom we are particularly ineffective. Sometimes we have to acknowledge that reality and make the most of it.

Recently, I was at a religious meeting where another gentleman felt compelled to win me over to his particular doctrinal concepts. After trying for the better part of

an hour, he finally said, "I guess we have to agree to disagree."

And for the first time since I had met him earlier in the day, I agreed with him.

So, we parted that day, obviously far apart in our understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Yet, because we acknowledge that distance between us, I believe we also were able to regard each other in a spirit of Christian love. We accepted our differences and knew that those differences would probably keep us from working side by side in a compatible manner. At the same time we both knew that bridging our differences is the love of Jesus Christ.

### They Separated From Each Other

This is, I believe, essentially, what happened between Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15. The writer of Acts tells us that "there arose a sharp contention" between these two apostles over the inclusion of John Mark in their next missionary journey. Barnabas wanted to take the young Christian, but Paul, remembering that John Mark had failed them previously, was adamant in his refusal. So, "they separated from each other." We might wish that they had been able to compromise or for Paul to have given John Mark yet another chance, but that was not what happened. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and departed in another direction.

According to the New Testament, that was the end of the dispute Paul and Barnabas did not become bitter enemies, nor was more time spent on their disagreement. Instead, agreeing they could not agree, they went their separate ways, each of them continuing to do a mighty work for God. Apparently, their unity in Christ was not impaired by the differences. Reconciliation does not always mean continued collaboration.

## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent  
Phone 717-394-6851



### To Be Alert For Silo Gas

We are fast approaching silo filling time, in fact many farmers are getting their equipment ready now. This is one of the best methods of harvesting the corn crop to get maximum feed nutrients. With our large tower silos, the danger of poisonous gases becomes more important. We urge our farmers to discuss this hazard with their employees and all family members. These gases can develop from one day to 14 days after the silo is filled. Most of these gases have a chlorine-laundry bleach odor and irritate the eyes and respiratory system. Some are yellow and some are colorless. Don't take any chances — warn all your people of this danger.

### To Fertilize Alfafa

The fall of the year, after the removal of the last cutting, is a good time to topdress existing alfalfa stands. The application of a phosphorus-potash fertilizer (according to soil test) in the fall will strengthen the alfalfa roots and result in higher yields next summer. Nitrogen should not be needed on established alfalfa stands. Some growers will topdress with fertilizer in the fall and again after the removal of the first cutting in the spring.

This should result in maximum yields with a healthy stand. When alfalfa plants are well fed and teated for insect injury, they

should be able to stand weather adversities. Alfalfa plants are heavy feeders on both phosphorus and potash. Unless these elements are replaced each year, the plants and yield will suffer.

### To Enjoy It While It Lasts

Considering the general state of the economy and the sad state of the grain business, the hog business has been excellent in recent months. Much of the profit has resulted from the tremendous imbalance between grain prices and hog prices.

Grain markets continue in turmoil and the price of corn in Chicago has dropped below \$2.40. This puts the country price at near \$2.00 in many major production areas. The imbalance between corn and hog prices is not likely to be corrected by increased grain prices. The carryover of all grains is at near record levels. Despite the rumors about too much rain, too cool, too hot it appears that the corn crop in 1982 will be a near record one. This means that corn prices are going to stay fairly low.

Low grain prices and high hog prices have encouraged fairly heavy slaughter but it must also be encouraging the holding of more breeding stock. The prospects of reduced slaughter will bring good returns for hog producers through the rest of 1982. In fact, pork output may stay below 1982 levels until the second quarter of 1983. By then

## Part-timers sold short

I am glad to see someone remembers us part-time farmers ("Help a young farmer, junk your baler," Off the Sounding Board, Aug. 14 issue). When I read the articles on how grand some big farm are, it almost makes me ashamed of my little 47 acres. I grew up on a dairy farm, but

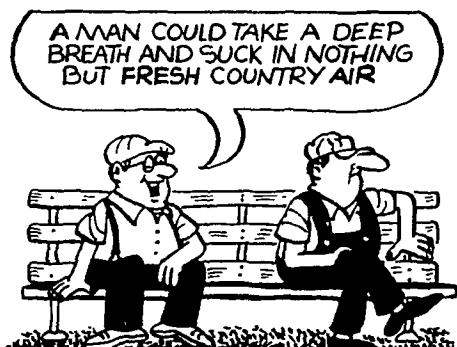
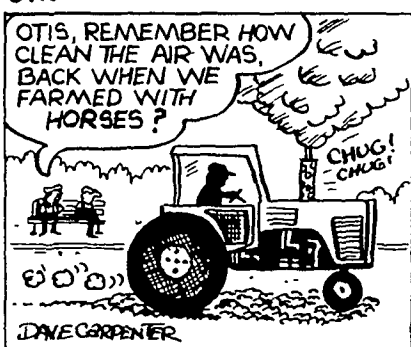
one day I ap just sold out. This fellow came flying down the lane in a Cadillac with a pocketful of cigars and half-full bottle of whiskey, and soon the "home farm" was just a memory.

You are so right when you mentioned how hard we part-

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## Letters To The Editor

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