



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

Hello and goodbye

Saying goodbye is never an easy task. And this week, as Lancaster Farming says "so long" to Donna Tommelleo as a staff writer, we find no exceptions to the rule.

During the past year and a half, Donna has helped fill the pages of Lancaster Farming with words and pictures that have touched at the heart-strings of Pennsylvania's farm families, exploring the state's number one industry from end to end. Although she is quick to point out her area of expertise is the "bovine beat," Donna quickly assimilated the knowledge and interest needed to accurately report on a wide gamut of agricultural news, from horse shows to goat shows, stories on sludge to articles on aerial seed application.

But Donna's "true love" when it came to story assignments was covering the dairy industry, whether on the farm or in the legislative halls of Washington or Harrisburg. Getting those features and fast-breaking news stories wasn't always easy though, and the efforts left Donna with quite a few stories of her own that never saw print — until now.

One particular instance I recall took place shortly after Donna enthusiastically arrived on the job, fresh out of Penn State with two impressive degrees and eager to excel as a news reporter. The scene was a Lancaster County dairy farm; the time was nearing sunset.

Donna had completed a thorough interview of the dairy operation and was all set to hop inside her dark blue Citation. Searching in her pockets for her car keys, Donna's stomach sank when she realized they were missing. With thoughts of finding a "needle in a haystack" surging through her mind as she contemplated the fruitlessness of retracing her steps through field and barn, a quick glance through the wound-up-tight window revealed the beginning of an embarrassing moment, for there were the keys — still in the ignition.

Sprinting up the farm lane to the barn which was already disappearing in the dusklight, Donna explained her plight to the farmer who then proceeded to teach our novice "car thief" the rudiments of opening locked car doors with the aid of an unraveled coat hanger — a trick she's used more than once since then.

Another dairy story found Donna face to face with none other than President Ronald Reagan. In a frenzy of telephone calls to Washington, Donna's past record was run through the FBI computer and she was

cleared to follow in the president's footsteps in a whirlwind visit to Leon Wilkinson's Chester County farm. Following her editor's advice to do something other than faded jeans, Donna searched her closet for a suitable dress for the occasion.

All was going according to plan until Donna and the Pa. Dept. of Ag staff she was traveling with arrived at the farm and were almost arrested as they insisted on getting past the guards. Talking their way through the momentary blockade, Donna and friends had to make double-time to meet the presidential helicopter. Dashing across a pasture field, Donna, who is an accomplished athlete, hurdled the obstacle of her attire and kept pace with her accomplices in low-heeled shoes.

After gaining the barnyard and reaching their destination, Donna once again displayed her determination to get the top story by shouldering her way in for a "get-their-best-side" picture of Reagan, Block and Wilkinson. Whether it required scrambling over fences or climbing aboard a wagon loaded with cameras and crews of the presidential press corps, Donna was not to be deterred.

This stick-to-itiveness of Donna's also has given her the courage and desire to achieve a dream most nonfarm kids would never have set as a goal in life. That's to be a dairy farmer. Just last January, Donna purchased her first dairy heifer and learned that it's not easy raising a calf in an apartment . . . traveling those extra miles to and from the farm where she was boarding her heifer was a lot different than taking a few steps out to a barn as she did one year on a N.J. Holstein farm. But Donna persevered, and today she is the proud owner of not one, but three, Guernsey heifers.

Whether it's the color cow or the common Penn State ties that brought them together probably never will be decided, but starting next week Donna will be beginning a new career on an expanding Guernsey operation owned by John and Ginger Myers of Littlestown, Adams County. (Ginger was our Adams County correspondent until the demands of dairying, a growing family, and newspaper reporting necessitated a choice.) And guess who will be filling in as our new Adams County correspondent; that's right. You'll still be seeing Donna's byline on the pages of Lancaster Farming.

So it's really not goodbye, but "see you later," Donna. Best of luck on the farm.

OUR READERS WRITE

Right exposure

Thank you very much for Sally Bair's article on the Pa. Farm Museum's 1983 Farm Show exhibit. Since I staffed the exhibit on Sunday afternoon, I had the privilege of talking to many visitors who had made a special

effort to see us just because they read the article in Lancaster Farming the day before.

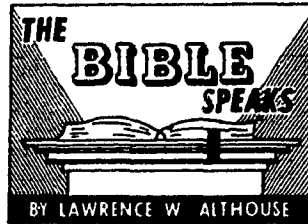
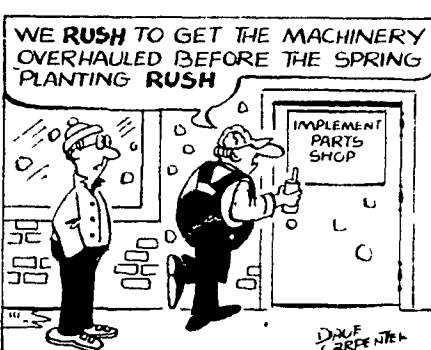
The exposure in your paper means a lot to me both professionally and personally, since it occurred coincidentally

with the Bollinger's honor as Master Farmers. They are family and we are all deeply committed to our heritage, and in a sense, represent a living tradition of same.

Nadine A. Steinmetz
Curator of Rural Life
Pa. Farm Museum
of Landis Valley

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OTIS



THE PRODIGAL'S BROTHER

January 23, 1983

Background Scripture:

Luke 15

Devotional Reading:

Luke 15:4-7

Few of Jesus' parables are as well-known and popular as the story of the Prodigal Son. Yet, despite that fact, there is a part of this story that is frequently passed by without due attention. For many people, the story seems to end when the celebration commenced: "And they began to make merry."

If you are the "prodigal" type, then that may be far enough for you - it is wonderful to know that God's love is like that of the father who forgave his son and welcomed him back into the family circle with great celebration. Lots of us, however, are more like the character in the parable who doesn't even enter the scene until after the celebration has begun.

A MAN HAD 2 SONS

As Luke begins the story, we are told that "There was a man who had two sons." Although most of the narrative is devoted to the younger son, the Prodigal, we must remember the other son, the Prodigal's brother - for many of us often share something in common with him.

The brother of the Prodigal was not at all like his younger sibling.

He was hard-working, steady, dependable, and apparently had no great compulsion to sow the wild oats that so intrigued his brother. Apparently, he did all the right things, just as his younger brother had done all the wrong things.

Yet, although he had apparently done all the right things, he had done them for the wrong reasons: "Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." He had played the part of the "good son," but apparently not because he wanted to serve his father, but because he wanted something in return. He begrudged the celebration thrown for his brother because he felt that the Prodigal was getting what rightly belonged to him.

"THIS SON OF YOURS"

In other words, the older brother believed that his good service had earned what the father was giving to his undeserving younger brother. He thought that his service to his father placed him above his brother. In fact, his disregard for the Prodigal is evident when the elder brother speaks of him, not as "my brother," but as "this son of yours."

How often is it that we are resentful, jealous and envious when we think that one of God's children is getting something that either rightfully belongs to us or is undeserved by them? Isn't it our own insecurity with God that makes us jealous when he is benevolent to someone else?

We may come to God complaining about the good fortune of "this son of yours," until he reminds us that the Prodigal is also "your brother."

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent
Phone 717-394 6851



To Be Alert for The Meeting Season

This is the time of year that a lot of educational meetings are held. And, they're held during this season of year for a good reason - you have more time to attend meetings. During the spring, the summer and into the fall, there's just too much field work that must be done. Take the time to become acquainted with the meetings of interest to you and your operation. Some meetings are designed to reach certain production groups such as Dairy Days, Livestock Days, Crops and Soils Day and Poultry Day but others are programmed to reach all agri-business people like the Computer Awareness Day, Estate Planning and Farm Transfer Arrangement meetings.

Also, many agri-business and lending institutions conduct meetings to keep you abreast of the changes in their organizations. We urge you to mark your calendar as these meetings are announced and attend as many as possible.

To Be Aware of Child Labor Laws

If you have boys or girls between the ages of 14 and 16 that plan to operate a farm tractor or machinery on a farm, other than your own farm, be sure they have the proper certificate. Under the child labor regulations, the law requires that those boys or girls between 14 and 16 years of age, be certified and carry a certification card before they are permitted to operate hazardous equipment. Some equipment listed under the law as hazardous are: a tractor

with over 20 PTO horsepower, corn picker, hay baler, feed grinder, fork lift and many more. Again on your own farm, your children can operate any equipment that you feel is safe for them.

The certification process in most areas is through the Vocational Agricultural departments in the schools or through the 4-H Tractor Clubs. Contact either for more information.

To Preserve The Top Soil

The spring of the year is an excellent time to develop some soil conservation practices on the land. Contour strips, terraces and diversion ditches can all be established before the 1983 crops are planted. These various methods of controlling water will not only prevent soil losses but will help hold more water on the higher slopes and fields. Good topsoil is a precious natural resource, and every land owner should make an effort to keep it from eroding. Farmers that are growing continuous corn should be very careful to keep their soil from washing away. In these cases terraces can be established to help slow down the loss of both water and soil. The addition of extra organic matter in the form of crop residues, green cover crops and livestock manure will help keep the soil loose with a higher water holding capacity.

To Use Farmers Tax Guide

I hate to mention it, but it is Income Tax reporting time again. For farmers, this becomes quite complicated and usually there are many changes from one year to the next.

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