

## Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



The dry weather in July has affected and will affect many people in many different ways. Naturally, the farmer worries about his corn crop and the price that he will have to pay when he buys feed next winter.

Home gardeners watch their vegetables wilt and dry up from lack of moisture. Until recently, I've been laying a soaker hose along my rows of beans and tomatoes and cantaloupes. The results were tremendous as we've had plenty of all three. I've hated to see the flowers suffer, but felt that the food plants were more important.

Then, we awoke one morning to a big problem. A wooden gate in a dam at a local flour mill had rotted away and allowed the Conestoga River to be five or six feet lower than normal. Tree limbs, rusted buckets and old tires lay exposed. Our neighbors 25 ducks waddled on the muddy bottom. The problem was not the unsightly mess, but the fact that we had NO WATER. Our underground stream that supplies our well, without the pressure of the Conestoga into which it flows, had dropped to a level that the submersible pump couldn't reach.

We were told it would take them a week to make repairs. So I was sent for plastic pipe inserts and clamps. Since the children are grown, I'm called on much more often to go for parts. We managed to get a small amount of water to wash the milking equipment and water the small heifers. We put the heifers in the meadow. The cows can drink from the river, but they prefer the big waterer in the barn.

No way would I want to continue carrying buckets of water from the river to flush the toilets and water the garden.

### 10% August CCC rate

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Commodity and farm storage loans disbursed in August by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 10 percent interest rate, according to CCC Executive Vice President Everett Rank.

The new rate, up from 9½ percent, reflects the interest rate charged by the U.S. Treasury in August, Rank said.

## Green Plants May Provide Fuel

Gas station attendants of the future may be asking automobile drivers whether they want to fill up with regular, unleaded or "leafy" varieties of fuel.

The "leafy" brand would come from certain kinds of plants and trees - the as-yet-untapped sources of petroleum-like substances described in the current issue of Ranger Rick's Nature Magazine, the National Wildlife Federation's monthly publication for children. Preliminary research, says Ranger Rick, suggests that at least 30 different plants could someday be farmed for hydrocarbons - the organic compounds found in crude oil but also manufactured by nature in certain plants.

One such source of "green gold" is the copaiba tree, found mostly in tropical forests. Its sap, almost the same composition as diesel fuel, can be taken directly from the tree and used to make diesel engines run. One acre of these trees could provide 1,000 gallons of fuel a year, according to scientists who are working to grow copaiba trees outside of their native tropical rain forests so that their sap can be harvested more easily and efficiently.

The desert plant "gopherweed" may be another potential source of fuel, one that could produce up to 10 percent of America's needs, according to Ranger Rick. Indigenous to the southwestern part of the United States, gopherweed,

mixed with certain chemicals, can produce several barrels of oil per acre. This plant's promise has prompted one Cleveland-based oil company to draw up plans for a pilot plant to process "gopheroil."

The milky sap that gives milkweed its name can also be processed into fuel, but like most of these plants, milkweed as a practical energy source may be years away. Scientists need to develop a productive, disease-free breed of the common plant before its use will be economical.

Among other plants that may

someday be used to run engines is the sunflower, the big yellow blossom whose seeds are pressed into oil for cooking. With the addition of a little acid, says Ranger Rick, sunflower oil burns better and pollutes less than the diesel oil in use today.

Plants will probably never fill all of the world's energy needs. But if these oily plants are developed and used wisely - avoiding soil erosion and water shortages - they may well take their place along-side oil rigs as producers of automobile horsepower.

## Schrier Wears Md. Crown

NEW WINDSOR, Md. — Jennifer Schrier, New Windsor, is the 1983 Maryland Hampshire Sheep Queen.

The seventeen-year-old lives with her parents and six brothers and sisters on a 136-acre farm. The Schriers raise Hampshire and Dorset sheep. Jennifer is active in all aspects of the farm operation.

Aside from her farm duties Jennifer was president of her class this year at Carroll Christian Academy in Westminster. At school she is involved with the band and the choir, as well as being a feature editor for the yearbook. Recently, Jennifer was named to Who's Who Among American High School Students.

Jennifer, as a member of the

Wakefield 4-H Club, has won several awards with her sheep in Ladies Lead classes at the Carroll Co. Fair and the Maryland State Fair. In 1982, she was first place Senior Fitter and Shower at the Carroll Co. 4-H Fair.

Jennifer takes voice lessons and sings with "Sonrise", her church's youth group. Sewing, especially with wool, is a favorite hobby for her.

Jennifer's future looks busy. She wants to continue improving her Hampshire flock and take up spinning. Her career plans include being either an attorney or a certified public accountant. Whatever the future holds Jennifer hopes she will always live on a farm where she can continue to be involved with Hampshire sheep.

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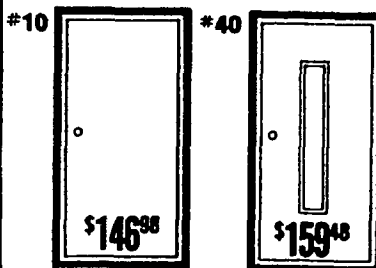
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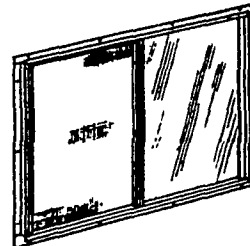
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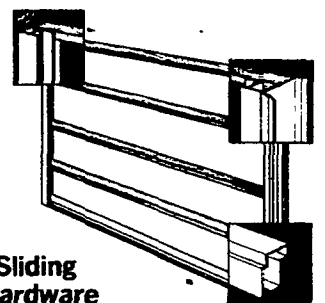
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