

Spending time together strengthens family ties

Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



Our farm has its ups and downs the same as most other farms. For a while everything seems to be going along fine and then we lose several calves or even several cows. At times like these, one almost feels like quitting — who needs so much trouble?

Other times the problems will be with machinery. It will seem as though not a day goes by that we are not on the road hunting a dealer with just the right sprocket, gear or belt. And, of course, these breakdowns happen when the sun shines and not on a rainy day when we'd have time for repairs.

At one time our cat population was so high that we were overrun with them. Then they got a respiratory disease and I was continually digging holes in the field to bury them. Now we are gradually building up our cat family. Our one old mother cat had a litter under the wood pile. At least I think that's where she was

before she moved them under the front porch.

The trouble started when she moved them again to the back porch. They broke off the lily leaves, the peony stalks and chewed up the potted plants. However, the four of them became a bit wary of the area when the orange one,

DELAWARE COUNTY — Take a walk in the country; look for wildflowers in the woods, or watch the squirrels and rabbits in the fields. It almost doesn't matter what you do as long as you do it together. Greta C. Vairo, extension home economist with the Penn

State Extension Service says that one of the hallmarks of strong families is doing things together.

Now that warm weather is finally here, life has returned to the Pennsylvania countryside. So, take your family on an outing. You don't have to go far. You don't have to spend money. Just take the time to talk and listen and look together. Sharing is an important part of building your family strengths.

There's lots to do in the country. If you have young children, help them explore nature by touching, watching, smelling, and listening.

This area has parks, arboretums and other areas to explore. Streams are always fun — you can try a little fishing, wading, or rearranging the stones. To a small child, even a slight hill can be turned into an adventurous mountain climb

No matter what your age or condition, be sure to dress for the occasion. Wear comfortable shoes for walking in the woods. Remember, there is something about the clear country air that makes people hungry, so take some food — something simple like crackers or an apple will do. If you have a field guide or can borrow one from your library, it's always fun to look up birds, rocks, and wildflowers on the spot. You and your family will be sharing a discovery.

When you get home, talk about what you've done, where you've been, and remember the little things that happen. You will be building a pattern of enjoying each other. Enjoying your family is one of the secrets of keeping it strong. Penn State is an affirmative action, equal opportunity university.

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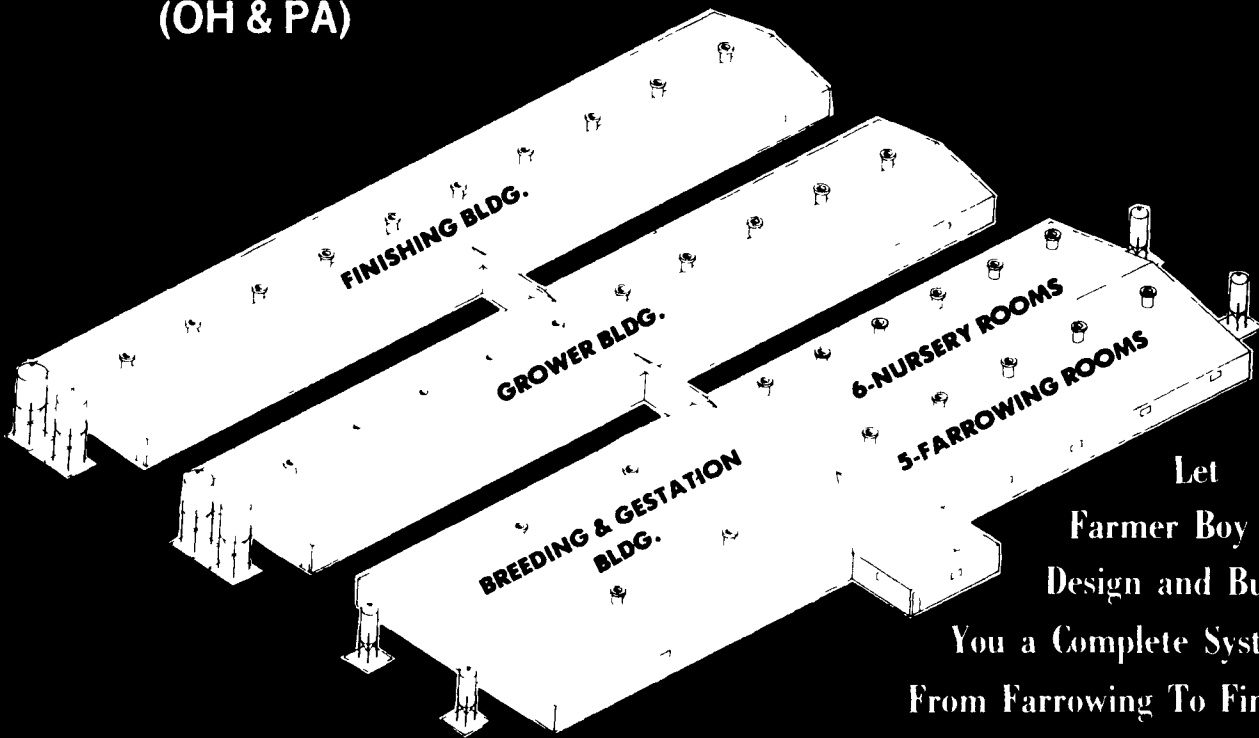
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