

**On being  
a farm wife  
- And other  
hazards  
Joyce Bupp**



There are emotional moments in every woman's life.

Her first date. Her wedding day. Days she gives birth. A child's first day of school.

And smaller clashes with trauma: finding the cat sampling the bake sale chocolate cake, a dishwasher clogging which turns your kitchen floor into a swamp, or getting a flat tire when you're already late for a wedding and dressed in your new cream-colored, dry-clean-only, best summer suit.

Not to mention moving into a new handbag.

Fewer possessions are more precious and critical to a woman's life than her handbag. A woman's whole identity is encapsulated within the leather (or imitation) confines of her purse.

The closest male possession comparable to a handbag is a toolbox, briefcase, or maybe a fishing tackle box.

Males, naturally, are quick to poke fun at handbags. They are also the first to request that this or that be stashed in them at opportune times. Such things as candy bars, road maps, and a list

of part numbers for the haybine.

Women, on the other hand, are frowned upon if they poke fun at the size or contents of a toolbox, or question the need to add more ingredients to a well-stocked tackle box. Still, for supplying impromptu family necessities, such as baby diapers, Band-Aids or a safety pin, briefcases, toolboxes, and tackle boxes are generally useless.

Unless a woman spends her life on a social party circuit (no one I know), a fairly-sized purse is a necessity. Sections, preferably with zipper or snap closure to keep the contents therein are desirable and allow at least a hint of organization. Color, style, and a designer name are optional. The basic idea, though, is a compact, attractive, lightweight unit with the storage capacity of a four-drawer filing cabinet, and U-Haul portability.

It is with extreme reluctance that I personally move from a well-broken, comfortable purse, which feels like home, into a handbag stranger. A familiar purse is like a familiar room — you can find your way around it in the dark. With a

new one, you need a directory, index, or road map.

As you probably guessed by now, I have recently dealt with this stressful lifechange. Just getting through the paper stuffing in the new handbag proved to be a time consuming procedure.

Someone should introduce national legislation to prevent 600 acres or so of trees annually from being chopped down to provide paper for stuffing in new handbags. (This practice is actually encouraged by a Political Action Committee of Litterbugs, Inc., the same people who bring you fast food packaging containers.)

The real adventurous part of moving into a new handbag is the retrieval and relocation process. The deciding which goes where, and with what, and how. A wallet in the checkbook section? Or is that too fat to fit? Lipsticks with a compact, or with the comb and brush? Is there room for the little pack of makeup tissues, several sets of keys and the screwdriver sometimes needed to jiggle the car door mechanism.

And somewhere you must leave a corner to stash the equipment part you'll be asked to pick up on your next trip to town.

One economic plus: by the time you have conquered the move from one purse to another, you will have discovered enough throwaway junk to keep the neighborhood trash service in business for another week or two. And in my case, enough shavings and straw

from the last cattle show to bed a calf hutch.

If you feel about this matter as I do, consider signing up with me as a charter member of HA! (Handbags Anonymous). In place of handbags, we'll carry large, color-coordinated toolboxes. Stocked with chewing gum, marker pens, a pack of Lifesavers and list of family members' jeans sizes.

Just call it another step toward equal rights.

**Perry County seeks  
dairy princess candidates**

LOYSVILLE — All single young women between the ages of 16 and 24 from a dairy farm background are eligible to compete in the 1986 Perry County dairy princess pageant.

The pageant will be held Friday, June 20 at 8 p.m. at the Perry County Fairgrounds in Newport. The pageant will be held in conjunction with the annual Heritage Days.

Any single woman who has completed her junior year in high

school, is not over 24 years of age, never married and whose parents or guardians are dairy farmers, is eligible to compete. A candidate is also eligible if she is a full-time employee on an operating dairy farm or if she owns at least two dairy animals.

Young women interested in entering the contest should contact Beth Anne Rice, R1, Blain, PA 17006 or Roxanne Gable, R1, Box 361 Newport, PA 17074, by May 23.

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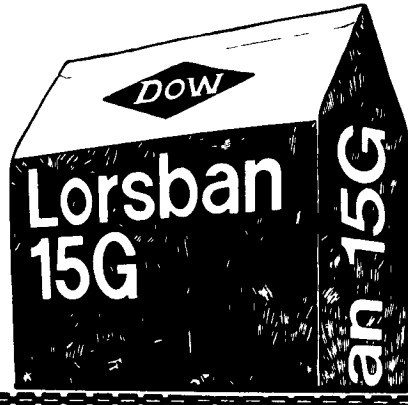
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