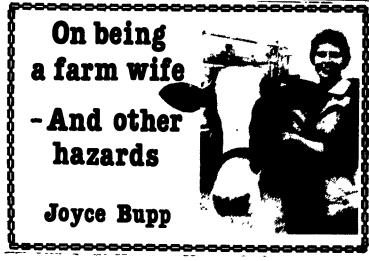


Lancaster Farming, Saturday, July 19, 1986-85



After much soul-searching and emotional see-sawing, I've finally come to a momentuous conclusion. I need a man around the house.

Uh, better let me explain that.

True, there is already one man around here. Around the barn, mostly. Or the fields. Or the shop. Or the machinery.

But around the house? Hardly. Farmers — of whatever commodity — can rarely be accused of hanging around the house.

Now, perhaps with a brand, spanking new house, this whole, pressing issue wouldn't exist.

New houses don't have leaky pipes, cracked window panes, broken appliances, torn screens ... and the list could go on and on and on.

Or do they?

Pipes are the biggie headache here. Nearly twenty years ago, we completely redid the maze of plumbing pipes that crisscross the basement laundry ceiling, carrying water on its rounds from the pump to the rest of the house.

Copper pipes. Copper pipes which rust out when exposed to acid water.

We have acid water. Extremely acid water. Water which leaves turquoise footprints when it drips all over the bathtub. Discolors the insides of the dishwasher. And eats through those copper water pipes until they resemble delicate lace.

While lacy metal is a prized ornamental when it's the wrought iron type, lacy pipes leading to the bathtub make for a duck pond in the basement.

Which we recently discovered late one evening. And, when the pond was sufficiently full, it carved out a small streambed through the front basement carpeting. (At least the carpeting is now clean down the middle.)

Down came the baling twine, duct tape, and miscellaneous piece-n-patch plumbing pieces which have held together the basement plumbing over the past several months.

It was the classic case of "when the going gets tough — er, deep and wet — the tough get out of the barn and replace the house pipes."

Jiggling with the downstairs pipes activated their upstairs cousins. One bathroom faucet, undoubtedly jammed with a stuck piece of rust let loose from the basement "lace," went into a chronic drip mode. Another pipe emerging through the floor caught the epidemic and sprung a pinhole.

A duck pond on the basement, ground-level floor is one thing. A swamp on the second-story bathroom level is yet another. Had a big old bullfrog looked me in the eye one morning as I popped in a contact lens in front of the bathroom mirror, he would have stirred only mild surprise.

That we could have so much water loose IN the house, when we need it so desperately outside, is one of those ironic, unfathomable twists of fate.

Meanwhile, the resident man around the house has returned to the usual demands of calving cows, sheared equipment pins, and drought-plagued, buggy hay.

Our basement pond and bathroom carpeting have dried up; and, at least for the moment, the house can operate without a man around.

But just in case one shows up, I hope he comes equipped with a toolbox.

## Lincoln Community 4-H Club

The Lincoln Community 4-H Club held a swimming party July 8 at the home of Renee and Tom Zartmen.

During a business meeting, the

group discussed projects and the window display.

The next meeting will be Aug. 12 at the home of Scott, Jessica and Doug Hertzog.



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