

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

**Joyce Bupp**



Ah, can it be already? Our annual Holstein state spring cattle show and sale looms ahead this week, bringing a mix of anticipation and dread. The dread part is based in memory of past cattle hauling adventures, like losing hay on the highway, near-collisions with no-yield drivers, and parts of the truck sides flying off around the ears of startled heifers.

Still, none of our show mishaps comes even close to the high-drama adventures of Chester Countian Carl Yoder and his show rig convoy partner Harvey Stolfus.

Yoder and Stolfus pulled out last Labor Day, bound for the Fall Holstein show at State College. Headed west on the turnpike, his pickup packed with show equip-

ment and trailer filled with cattle, Yoder thought he saw smoke rising occasionally from under the rig. Pulling over at the Hershey exit, his pickup lost drive power.

Lifting the truck hood, Yoder found oil departing beneath and flames flicking up around the sides of the motor. With precise timing, a state trooper headed East spied the fire and hustled over with an extinguisher. He tossed it to Yoder with the request to put the fire out himself, so he wouldn't "get the stuff" all over his uniform.

Fire out, Yoder sent Stolfus on ahead, left an assistant with the cattle, and went with the trooper to a phone to call a neighbor with a similar truck. While the light hookups connected, the trailer brakes and borrowed truck didn't. Still, the owner offered the substitute pickup for the rest of show week. Yoder, proceeding with extra caution, pulled into the Ag Arena just a few hours late.

Show week was uneventful, at least until show day. While Yoder's wife was assisting at the show desk, her brother went to the parking lot, to move her year and a half old car. The drive shaft fell out.

Show ended, Yoder planned an early departure, remembering the long, steep haul down Seven Mountains and his inoperable trailer brakes. When the trailer clearance lights refused to connect as well, Stolfus offered to bring up the rear with his rig. Headed out of town, the two rigs were promptly separated by traffic light stops.

Still, Yoder continued on, shoving the borrowed pickup into second as he cleared the mountain and started down the long grade. Strange. What looked like sparks bounced off the road behind him occasionally. Near the bottom, he eased up into third, and the sparks and hings of smoke disappeared. Imagination does funny things to one's mind, anyway. And, where was Harvey?

But flashing lights and attempts to pass by a pickup to his rear weren't imaginary. On the flats near Milroy, Yoder finally pulled

off into a field, to be greeted with "two guys running up from behind" who yelled about a fire.

On the back of the borrowed pickup, flames licked around his portable milker. As Yoder frantically pitched the milker to the ground and stomped the fire, a Roadway trucker halted his big rig mid-highway and dashed over with a fire extinguisher.

The milker had pushed hay and straw bits through the truck bed, where they ignited on the muffler beneath. News of fire on a truck hauling a silver trailer down Seven Mountains had swept the CB channels.

And, as he pulled back on the road, there in the rear view mirror, finally, was Harvey.

Down the road just a bit farther, Yoder pulled off for gas. But, Harvey had disappeared again. Shortly, he came pulling in, but relates Yoder with a chuckle, "He looked a little mad."

Seemed Stolfus had been halted by a state trooper, who pulled him off and insisted he had a fire on his rig, because it had been "all over the CB." Harvey, unaware of Yoder's plight, had to do some fast talking to convince the trooper that he indeed did not have a fire in his pickup and silver trailer.

One year previous, to and from the State Holstein Show at Meadville, this same traveling pair dealt with flat tires, absence of jacks, and Yoder's truck motor cracking two heads.

Carl Yoder's truck departs for the Farm Show complex this week with a brand new motor and a new transmission.

Now he's worried he won't have anything to talk about all week.



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