

Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



Dairy farms certainly have their ups and downs. And for some reason, we seem to remember the bad days longer than the good days.

Because as the river borders the pasture, occasionally a cow or calf or both will end up in the water after falling down a steep bank. Because there are many floods, a fence would not be feasible. So with the scoop on the tractor they are rescued and brought up onto dry land.

We've even had a heifer drown in a drum of water in a far pasture. She fell in head first and couldn't get out. Now we use a regular dairy waterer.

Another odd occurrence that didn't turn out well was the time a heifer fell into a small opening of a big sinkhole. We searched and searched but could not find our animal. Then months later neighbor boy told us that he found a skeleton at the bottom of a sink hole that we did not know even existed. Apparently, she broke her neck when she fell into it.

Cows become sick and die and there is no good explanation for their demise. Even though New Bolton Center carefully examines a cow, no conclusions can be drawn and she is brought home again. Laboratory specimens all

Lancaster 4-H Club

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There were also swamps, and Julie went boating in a wildlife refuge which was covered with lily pads. "It was very different from the bayous," she noted. In the bayous and swamps, everyone kept an eye peeled for alligators, and at least one tour group got to see the fearsome looking animals.

A 17-mile bridge between Lake Charles and Baton Rouge was a fascination for some of the local youth. It went over miles and miles

prove negative to disease.

We've even had naughty boys chase our animals into the river and not allow them to come out again. Eventually they tire of swimming and they drown. Then we're informed that one must be removed from the dam breast at the local mill.

Like I said, it is easy to remember the bad days rather than the good ones when a cow has twin heifers and they are all healthy.

of swamps and trees. Amy Jo noted that the very flat, straight roads all looked alike to her. Fifteen-year-olds can drive in Louisiana, and Stacy said it appeared to her that the young people had more freedom. A form of cruising from one locale to another was the most popular recreation. She commented that many of the young people drove pick-up trucks with dual rear wheels, an indication to her of the rural nature of the parish.

The 4-H program in the parish is operated through the school system, with much of the leadership being provided directly by the extension agents, not by volunteer leaders. There are statewide activi-

ties similar to Pennsylvania, and Lara pointed out that the 4-H'ers will be earning points toward making the trip to Pennsylvania next summer.

Learning about the Louisiana culture was a fascinating experience for the Lancaster County 4-H'ers. They found their hosts very curious about Pennsylvania, with some specific questions about the Amish. It will be a challenge for the local youth to return the spontaneous, open hospitality as they show the visitors the Garden Spot. The Exchange Club members are looking forward to seeing their hosts and several have hinted that they have asked for plane tickets for Louisiana for Christmas.

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