

# On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



All through the weekend, the thought's been nagging away at my consciousness.

Deadline. Deadline.

Monday is a normal writing deadline day. However, a Monday morning meeting is penciled on the calendar. I will meet this deadline by writing Sunday afternoon, I figure.

The logical, organized side of my brain consciously makes this decision. Doing battle against logics and organization is the opposite side, the one which insists that Sunday afternoons are for relaxation, not for work. For stretching out in the sunshine — or beside the woodstove — to read the Sunday paper. To go for a drive or putter in the greenhouse. To head for the meadows and fencerows, field glasses and bird guide in hand, and dog trotting along nearby.

After considerable emotional wrangling between these two natural adversaries, the logical side of my head has gained an edge. Or, rather, we have bargained.

The Sunday-afternoon-goof-off-side will concede to the logic meet-the-deadline half. We arrived at this negotiated settlement only after the woodstove and Sunday-paper was held out as a reward, once copy was out of the computer printer, and in hand in black and white.

As I begin clearing off the table after a quickie Sunday lunch following church, deadline doom sounds again. What in the world shall we write about this week?

An unexpected phone call brings a reprieve. Placed by the goof-off side of my head? Actually, it is from my parents, who are soon to move from the house which has been "home" to my family for nearly 40 years. They offer a chance for us to see the interior of their soon-to-be new location.

Deadlines will wait an hour or two.

We beat them to the new house. So, since the car needs a tank fill-up, it's off for a quick trip to a service station nearby, until they arrive. And, since it's also close,

we opt to kill a few minutes with a quick drive to the lake nearby, to check if any geese or ducks are harging around.

A bridge-out detour takes us somewhat off the original planned track and through wooded areas bursting with gorgeous new homes. Naturally, it takes a bit of time to properly observe and appreciate this lovely architecture and landscaping.

In spite of a few "shortcuts" via dirt roads, we eventually traverse the peaceful, pine-edged shore of the lake. Not a goose or duck in sight. But what a gorgeous day for a drive.

Another "shortcut" deposits us near the entrance of a county park, an establishment from which I had neglected some weeks ago to order

my usual stock of birdseed for the feeders. Extra supplies are often on hand, however, at the park's nature center. At the farmer's suggestion, we make a quick side journey to the park to stock up on sunflower seeds.

This is still not meeting my deadline.

A couple more "shortcuts" and we are back at the soon-to-be family homestead. Not only will my folks have a lovely one-story ranch home, they are acquiring a backyard that is more parklike than yard. Complete with squirrels. And a bird feeder. Which we promptly fill with sunflower seed.

An image of a keyboard screaming at me has lodged in the logical side of my brain as we depart. Then, the enjoy-Sunday-afternoon side remembers that we must yet bring home a calf from the 4-H's club's petting zoo, part of our community's holiday open-house.

Eventually, logic won out; deadline doom was met, conquered, and victory celebrated with the Sunday papers by the woodstove.

But the farmer figures I can sure find a lot of ways to stall when I don't really want to spend a lovely Sunday afternoon punching a keyboard.

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