

On being a farm wife - And other hazards Joyce Bupp



No way would I ever be a winning poker player.

Not that I've ever wanted to be. But winning card game players must be able to wear a "poker" face, never betraying their pleasure or dismay with the hand dealt them.

"You look like you've just done something dumb," chuckles the farmer, as I hustle from the house in the direction of the car.

Done something dumb? Who me?

Well, not this time. For a change. Actually, I'd just shipped off a packet of written material through the postal service, then received in the incoming mail additional papers that belonged with the packet but hadn't arrived

in time. Correcting the close miss was easy in this case — just a quick trip to a nearby post office. Apparently I wore a glaring look that he translated to "what a dumb thing to do."

Most of the "dumb" things I've authored and must correct aren't that simple. Naturally, the family is quick to help me not forget the more memorable "dumb" things I've done. One kid even offered me a notebook — a large one — to keep track of 'em.

Top vote-getter on the "Official Dumb Things Mom's Done" list is without a doubt the evening the entire family went along to a meeting at which I was to speak. We planned to arrive in the distant town early, to have ample time to

sight-see before dusk, but couldn't find the meeting location. Turned out the town with the similar name — where I was supposed to be — was 80 miles away.

Good fortune flew by in the shape of an eighteen-wheeler with a big CB antennae waving from the cab. I pulled onto the flat, open highway behind him and rode in his high-speed wake most the way, while he unknowingly rode "shot-gun" for me.

We eased into the meeting room just as the dinner appetizer was being served, and the program chairman teetering on the verge of panic.

In a similar instance, closer to home, I arrived to speak to a dinner meeting one evening to locked, darkened building. A month early. The Farmer was conned into taking me out to dinner, but grumbled all evening because I'd made him miss a favorite annual cattle sale.

Automobiles seem to inspire me to new levels of "dumbness."

One morning years ago, I packed the then five-year-old and the year-plus baby into the family car, to back up the road and drop off a couple of magazines to a neighbor, before heading off in the opposite direction.

By the time the kids were situated, I remembered the magazines still in the house, hopped out of the car and ran back in to grab them. Five seconds later, the driverless car was drifting toward the

low bank in the yard with me in hot pursuit. It halted, with a crash, at the woodshed.

Nearly speechless and in tears, I retrieved the pair from the car, with its unharmed front right fender surrounded by splintered siding of the woodshed and clay flowerpots reduced to shards. These were the days — remember? — when baby seats were located in the front seat. After the baby had yanked the gear selector out of park, the five-year-old had grabbed the steering wheel in a terrified effort to help in some way.

More recently, while loading several boxes of equipment into the car, I laid a packet of important papers on the roof. Two miles down the road, panic struck when I glanced around the car's interior and missed the packet. A hasty

backtrack along the busy highway turned up no sign of the zippered, plastic folder.

A day later a good Samaritan farmer delivered the packet back to the office from where it had originated, saving my hide once again.

And, not long ago, I locked up the car to leave it in a parking lot for a couple of days, only to arrive back and find that I'd left a window open. Good thing the weather had remained pleasant, or the ride home might well have been a cold, wet one.

"Haste makes waste" goes an old cliché. Haste also makes the "Official Dumb Things Mom's Done" list grow unceasingly.

Next time you're hit with that sinking-pit-in-the-stomach feeling of having done something "dumb" . . . well, welcome to the crowd.

Chicken Recipe Contest

GEORGETOWN, DE. — A favorite chicken recipe, the one that always brings raves from family and guests, could make you a winner in the 1988 Delmarva Chicken Cooking Contest.

The contest, held on an alternate-year schedule, is open to residents of 12 northeastern states (Virginia to Maine) and the District of Columbia. Two finalists from each eligible state will be chosen to receive an expense-paid weekend at the cook-off finals set for June 10-12, 1988 on Maryland's scenic Eastern Shore.

Recipes will be judged on appeal, taste, appearance, and ease of preparation. Broiler-fryer chicken, whole or any combination of parts, is the only required ingredient. Recipes should make four to eight servings and total preparation time must not exceed three hours.

Deadline for entering is February 1, 1988.

The top winner will receive a ten-day Hawaiian vacation for two plus \$1,000, a Frigidaire micro-

wave oven, Sunbeam mixer, Proctor Silex toaster oven, LP gas grill, and a collection of McCormick/Schilling spices. Second and third place winners will share prizes valued at more than \$3,000.

The contest is sponsored by Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc., the trade association representing the poultry industry on the Delmarva Peninsula. For further information and official entry forms, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to DCCC, c/o Delmarva Poultry, R.D. 2, Box 47, Georgetown, DE 19947.

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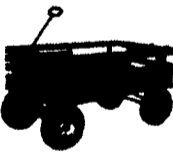


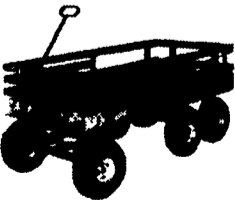
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