

## On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



Somehow, it seemed the appropriate, final touch.

Matter of fact, the buzzard staggering around the yard merely capped the day of back-to-back close calls.

Actually it had begun days before, with the Farmer using power-grinding tools repairing a piece of equipment. When his right eye turned an irritated-red shade a day or two later, he attributed it to a bit of metal that had flown from the grinding site and "probably scratched it."

No, he wasn't wearing his safety glasses. It was just a quick job that would only take a minute...

Insisting the eye was getting better, he had rejected suggestions to see our family doctor, whose office is the lengthy distance of a good quarter-mile up the road. But, here it was, Saturday morning, and the eye was definitely worse. And, under very close scrutiny, a pinpoint of metal was visible near the edge of the blue cornea.

Prepared for a visit to the hospital emergency room, I chanced a call to the doctor. His answering service caught him as he prepared to mow his office lawn; the Farmer was to come immediately.

In minutes, not one, but four, tiny fragments of metal had been removed from the badly-infected eye. A special antibiotic ointment was needed - immediately - from

the pharmacy to complete the treatment. I hustled off to town, prescription slip in hand.

"You may have trouble finding this," I was informed by the druggist, who had none in stock. She did, however, make a quick call to a sister-store a half-dozen miles away, where it was found to be on hand.

His eye treated and patched, the Farmer rested it at least a half-hour or so, before disappearing. When I caught up with him, a mechanic friend was departing. Instead of a hoped-for simple repair, the spray truck required the major transplant of a new timing chain. Naturally.

And, though driving wasn't advised, the Farmer was soon spotted behind the wheel of the towing pickup, "just to bring back a wagon on the field road."

Cleaning seemed more productive than nagging. Waging war with the vacuum cleaner against the endless dirt, dust and cobwebs, I still heard the announcement of the youngest as the front door banged and he beelined to the refrigerator.

Fire? What was on fire??

"The chopper." But it wasn't really on fire. A bearing got hot and started smoldering the hay dirt around it.

"Did you have a fire extinguisher?"

"Yeah, but it was in the truck."

That's real helpful; his sister had taken that earlier to use in towing filled wagons.

Imagine. Two rounds of farm safety nagging in the same day.

With a hint of storm clouds on the horizon, attention moved from dusty cobwebs to the straggly lawn. A heavy, gray cloud front silently sped over the farmstead as the last rakeful of lawn grass was tossed on the perennial border.

Gusty winds briefly cooled the air in the barn, bringing a gentle, but steady rain. Worst of the ominous-looking, thunder-laden section of weather front slipped east toward the river, leaving us with two-tenths of an inch of moisture. Enough to at least rinse dust from our emergency plantings of sudan grass for extra winter feed.

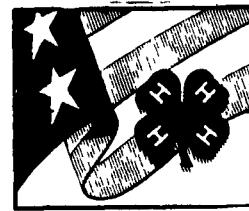
Milking underway, we shooed "One-Eye" toward the house to rest his still-irritated eye hiding under the patch. His wild gesturing at the barn door brought us hustling. There in the yard, surrounded by a dozen stalking, curious, but cautious cats, was a juvenile turkey buzzard. Slowly approaching the bird, our eldest was quickly "grossed out" as the buzzard rallied it's unique enemy defense: regurgitation of its last meal.

Carefully corralled and set high on a limb by our tall son, the vulture dried its feathers enough to eventually flee the indignity of our amusement, and stalking by the cats, which were totally fascinated with this giant bird.

The eye is improving. The truck is being repaired. Not a bearing, but something simpler was ailing the chopper.

Later, word came out that a tornado had reportedly touched down in the county. All we got was a soggy buzzard.

It seemed like a good omen.



## 4-H HAPPENINGS

### Presentation Night

Last month 4-H'ers from Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, and York counties gathered for Presen-

tation Night. below are a list of the gold winners.

**Gold Winners**  
Cumberland County  
Jerome Beas, Sarah Stets  
Dauphin County  
Kristin Brubaker  
Franklin County

Jennie Shelly, Jason Mowery, Kelby Mowery  
Lancaster County

Tanya Dawson, Jeff Kreider, Eric Wenger  
Kandi Mullen, Anita Meck, Brian McLaughlin  
Lebanon County

Stacy Habecker  
York County

Vanessa Debnam, Hannah Stauffer, Kendra Miller, Wendy Debnam, Tina Shaffer, Gail Rishel

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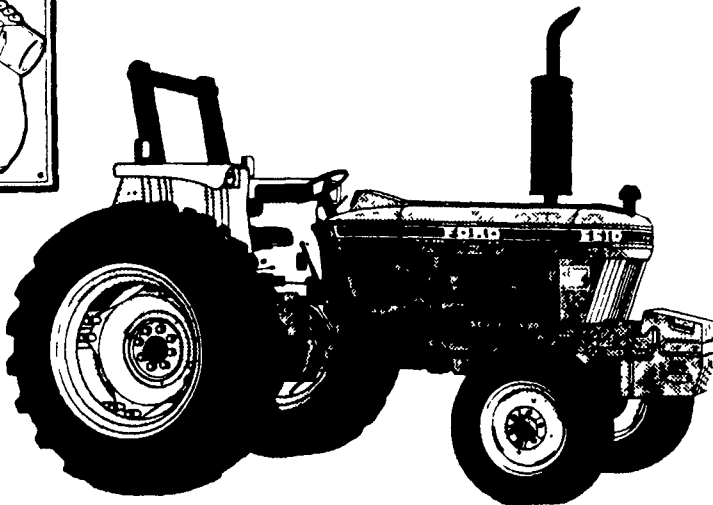


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