

## On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



One of the fringe benefits - supposedly - of increasing age is the right to offer advice.

Years of experience - supposedly - make one wiser, more careful and more likely to make sensible decisions. This is an oft-repeated, taken-for-granted, precept of the way life works.

But, one of the wisest bits of philosophy to come my way in a long time was shared recently by the 15-year-old son of a farm wife's friend. Of course, it had been imprinted years ago on his memory by his grandfather, who may well have first heard it from his grandfather, which is the way wise advice should be passed on.

Some years ago, she was tapped to help load finished cattle, because the kids, who were more experienced at such chores, had returned to school after summer vacation. On asking Dan, their youngest, what she needed to know to assist in this farm-wifely chore, he offered her this advice. "Keep your mouth shut and don't play with your stick."

Anyone who's helped load livestock of any sort knows you'd best pay careful attention. Even a loading cane, used to turn the 1,300-pound, half-wild, Angus-Charolais cross steer before he flattens your foot - along with the rest of you, - is of no value if you're playing with it.

The temptation to daydream, to dawdle, to draw in the mud with your toe, watch cloud figures, or drag your protection stick back and forth over the steel gate to hear it clatter is almost irresistible to youngsters - and sometimes assisting farm wives.

Family members must still be able to converse civilly and continue living together beyond that hour of loading steers, hogs, heifers, or whatever - so heads up, pay attention, and don't pay with that

stick, for crying out loud!

That philosophy strikes me as applicable to just about any job.

Computers play an increasingly larger role in our lifestyle. Minus power, they're as worthless as a kite without string. Every couple months it seems, our electrical supply cuts out for a few brief seconds at some unexpected moment. If the data in the computer hasn't been saved on a disk, it vanishes to never-never land. Frequent "saving" is obviously important.

Every now and then, I get complacent, lazy, forgetful, or in a hurry, and neglect saving every few paragraphs. Inevitably, that's when the power goes poof.

Having to rewrite a lost page of copy is a painful reminder to stop playing with the stick.

A more recent incident of "head in the clouds" could have been even more painful.

From the day she first entered the milking herd as a new heifer, Element has been one of those cows that you don't surprise. She's perfectly fine dealing with one activity at a time, but get her just slightly rattled and she'll nail you with a wicked, well-aimed back foot.

Most cows in our herd have "pussycat" personalities. The few jumpy, irritable individuals are tolerated only as long as they behave within reason, milk well and don't develop health problems. Element is such a cow.

In fact, she'd settled down so much that I recently got a bit careless. While I was washing her before milking, and not really paying attention to who I was prepping, Element got distracted by other activity.

The ensuing wallop from her foot landed square on my arm, just below the shoulder, and effectively knocked my breath away momentarily. Luckily it wasn't

If you're among the increasing number of Americans who are taking responsibility for their own health and fitness — or if you'd like to be — a new book *Health And Fitness Excellent* by Dr. Robert K. Cooper may provide the accurate and easy-to-follow information you need. It can also dispel a number of fitness myths, including the following:

• **Myth: To lose weight, diet.** Fact: Research suggests that fad diets fail. Many diets damage health and make it easier to gain later.

• **Myth: By doing lots of sit-ups leg-lifts, you can melt fat from your stomach.** Fact: Spot reduction doesn't do much. Traditional sit-ups and leg-lifts can even contribute to lower back pain, protruding abdomen and poor posture.

• **Myth: The best way to deal with anger is to vent it.** Wrong! Suppressing your anger and explosively venting it are both linked to a death rate that is double that of effective reflective coping

my face, as has happened to a number of dairy farm friends, and it resulted in nothing more than a small bruise.

Playing with the stick again. So, Dan, if you don't mind, I'd like to adopt for my own your advice to not "play with the stick."

As for the "keep your mouth shut" part....well, that's another, whole story.

## Avoid Fitness Blunders

techniques. Among the potentially life-saving tips from Dr. Cooper is the five-step "Instant Calming Sequence," which gives you command of your thoughts, and emotions under stress in less than a second.

• Step 1. Be sure to continue breathing without interruption.

• Step 2. Put on a happy face no matter what your mental state. It increases blood flow to the brain.

• Step 3. Keep a balanced

posture.

• Step 4. Scan all your muscles in one fast sweep of your mind and flash a mental "wave of relaxation."

• Step 5. Acknowledge reality. Focus the mind to respond to the challenge, rather than analyze it.

*Health And Fitness Excellence* is available at local bookstores. Reading it may help set your mind at rest — and your body in motion.

## Maple Sugar Demonstrations

Maple Sugaring demonstrations will be held at Lancaster County Central Park Sunday February 26, March 5 and 12 from 1 to 4 P.M. at pavilions #11 and 12 in the Williamson Area. Reservations are not required.

Maple Sugaring classes will be

offered at the Shuts Environmental Center Saturdays, March 4 and 11 beginning at 1 P.M. Classes are designed for those who want to learn more about starting maple sugaring at home. Reservations are required. Call 299-8215 for reservations and information.

## County Park

### Offers Woodcock Hike

Lancaster County Park naturalist will lead a hike in the Mount Gretna area of northern Lancaster County to observe the male American Woodcock perform his fascinating courtship antics. The hike will be held on Friday, April 14 beginning at 7 P.M. Interested hikers should meet at State Game-land #145 on Route 117, west of

Mount Gretna (parking area is located on the left travelling west from Mount Gretna). The program will last until dark so participants should bring flashlights. The program is free of charge to Lancaster County residents, \$2 per person for non-residents. For information or registration, call 299-8215.

## FARMER BOY AG - One Step Ahead On Quality And Prices

Swine Breeders: Improve Your Efficiency By Detecting Pregnancy Fast And Early.

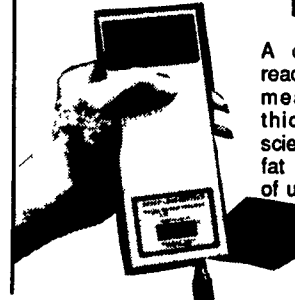


Only \$169.00

RENCO CORPORATION

LEAN-MEATER®

Control Backfat & Increase Profit!



A computerized, direct-reading, digital instrument for measurement of backfat thickness. For accurate, scientific, and foolproof backfat grading through the use of ultrasound.

\$425

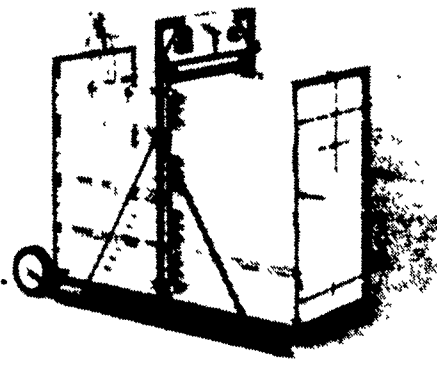
## SMALL ANIMAL SCALES CONTROL WEIGHT & INCREASE PROFIT

Newly Improved Weigh Mechanism Is Accurate To Within 1%

Check these features:

- ★ Easy lift-out locking end gates provide convenient loading and unloading from either end.
- ★ Durable welded steel frame with 3/4" angle braces
- ★ Easily moved by one person with two cushion grip drop down handles
- ★ 5/8" plywood floor is removable for cleaning
- ★ Four steel support legs rest on the ground providing stable, non-vibrating weighing area
- ★ 8"x1 1/2" hard rubber tires with ball bearing hubs and steel rims make movement simple
- ★ Newly designed weight mechanism weighs up to 400 lbs. - Accurate within 1%
- ★ Easy to read balance beam
- ★ New larger version (#4610) offers larger weighing area

\$449.00



Galvanized Hog Panels

34"x16' \$13.95

High Pressure Washers With Wand

• 5 H.P. • 4 GPM

• 2000 PSI

\$1195.00

Swine & Poultry Systems Specialists

# FARMER BOY AG. NC.

410 EAST LINCOLN AVE. MYERSTOWN, PA 17067

PH: 717-866-7565

BEST IN DESIGN, PRICE AND EXPERIENCE

## WATCH FOR

# OPEN HOUSE DAYS

March 15 - 16 - 17 - 18, 1989

Details To Follow!



LAPP'S BARN EQUIPMENT

5935 OLD PHILADELPHIA PIKE, GAP, PA 17527

PHONE: 717-442-8134

SALES & SERVICE