

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



There's just no understanding it. No understanding it at all.

Here I've already given them the best years of my life, and this is the thanks I get. You give 'em your love, you give 'em your devotion and they turn around and treat you like this.

And, to add insult to injury, I found it out in the rudest way.

There I was peacefully snoozing in my own living room, like I always do in early evening, curled up with the cozy afghan on the beanbag chair. Everyone else goes to the barn, the house is peaceful, and nothing disturbs my after-supper nap.

Then from out of nowhere, without even the slightest warning, mind you, this hairy, smelly beast came galloping through my house, invading my house. I leaped straight into the air out of a sound sleep and streaked into hiding.

And he came after me. Running. Jumping. Barking. Likely to scare me to death. Such an indignity. Such an embarrassment. Life hasn't been the same since. It's an unforgivable cat-astrophe.

A dog in MY house.

As if it wasn't bad enough when they used to let that other dog in sometimes. He'd curl up on the basement stairs landing and I'd have to make a dash down the steps and past him to get down to my litter box. He never bothered me though, or chased me, or even paid any attention to the kittens I used to raise in here.

Now, though, now it's a different story. Frankly, I don't feel comfortable setting a single paw down anywhere but upstairs, where there are beds to crawl under and an attic to flee to if I have to.

Now he's outside most of the time, so once in a while, I'll let

them carry me back downstairs, or I'll sneak down and peek around the corner. But even when he isn't there, it smells like he is. That funny-looking dog food is in a bowl right next to my cat food dish. And he drops hair all over the rug where I used to stretch out to sleep on hot summer afternoons.

And the way they fuss over him! "Nice Solomon. Smart Solomon. Pretty dog. Solomon's a goood boy."

Why, it's enough to give a dignified cat like myself a hissy fit.

Miniature collie, I heard them say. Four years old. Has to be given away by a former neighbor. Barks, but wouldn't bite. Grew up with a cat, so wouldn't chase them. Ha! That's what they think.

Why doesn't he go chase the barn cats? I wouldn't mind helping him with a couple of them, in fact.

And, bark. Why, he barks at everyone that comes close to the place. They seem to think that's OK, that he's letting them know whenever anyone's around. Me? I'd like to slip him a hairball to hush 'im up before he interrupts my catnaps one more time.

So what if he has a beautiful long coat and waving tail? So what if he catches Frisbees and fetches balls and sticks and bats balloons in the air and rides in trucks and barks at those big, galloping cows? Next thing, he'll probably even take over MY favorite black rubber ball and chase shoestrings.

Well, I'll show those ingrates. I'll just stay upstairs and sleep on the beds and hide in the attic and not sit on their laps and purr or rub against their ankles or keep their chairs warm or any of those housecat responsibilities they've come to expect. That'll show 'em. Maybe they'll get rid of this pest in MY house.

Come to think of it, I did hear

them discussing something about getting him nullified, or neutralized, or naturalized, or something like that. Seems to me I remember them talking about that before they took me to that awful place that made me feel so blah for a couple of days. Boy, I hope they go through that with him. Bet he wouldn't chase me for a while. Yep. Betcha' that'll fix him.

Association Takes Time To 'Handspin'

LITITZ (Lancaster Co.) — Members and guests of The Greater Appalachian Llama Association (GALA) gathered at Northwest Farm on April 8, 1990 for a seminar, "Handspinning with Llama Fiber."

Co-chairing this event were Marj Gerhart, Northwest Farm, Lititz, and Lynn Zerphey, Sheepberry Farms, Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

Gerhart and Zerphey have been handspinning for several years and had participated in local and state demonstrations and competitions.

The seminar opened with a brief overview of llama fiber. Some of the positive characteristics of llama fiber are warm, light in weight, soft, and many natural colors. On the negative side, llama fiber has little elasticity, is harmed by sunlight, and is subject

to some shrinkage and moth attack.

Participating in the seminar was Carol Sanderson, owner of the Golden Lamb spinning/weaving studio in Lititz. An accomplished spinner and weaver, Carol demonstrated proper hand carding techniques (combing the fibers). She brought two styles of spinning wheels, a Luet and an Ashford, and gave each member an opportunity to spin on each type of wheel.

Throughout the seminar, there was lively discussion of llamas; when crias, baby llamas, are expected; and plans for llama fiber sweaters. Marj Gerhart modeled a woven/knitted vest made from the fibers of her llamas, alpaca, and sheep. Other natural fibers were on display, such as sheep wool, angora rabbit, mohair (goat fiber), and dog hair. A brief discussion on blending fibers and the techniques for producing multi-fiber yarns were also covered.

Contestants Needed

GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.) — A search for contestants for the Adams County Dairy Princess and the Little Dairy Miss contest is underway.

The winner and alternate of the Dairy Princess title will receive a \$100 wardrobe and other gifts and incentives. The little miss contestants must be between ages 4 to 6. The winner will receive a \$50 wardrobe.

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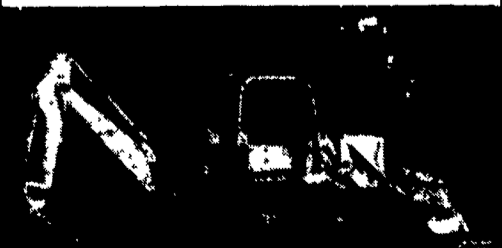
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