

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



Another gorgeous sunset is playing against the backdrop of the western sky.

Another panorama of blue sky awash with spreading patches of pink, colors changing even as we watch. Bright fuschia pales to a soft rose. That gentle pink softens still more as blue deepens, and gives way to jutting fingers of purple and gray.

Sunsets are lovely, at any season. Their evening beauty ushers in a winding down of daily farm chores, a slower, more peaceful time of day, a gentle tranquility.

I have always loved sunsets, their glorious, vibrant colors glowing in a last hurrah at the end of day. Lately, though, glowing sunsets have become a source of considerable frustration.

Instead, we'd like a couple of really bright, really glowing, really RED sunrises. Red sunrises, like in the rhyme: Red sky at night, sailors' delight; red sky at morning, sailors take warning."

And you know, most of the time, that little weather ditty is

pretty doggone reliable.

Red sunsets promise fair weather to follow. Clear, sunny, bright days. The lovely array of sunsets of recent weeks have brought just that -- clear, bright, sunny, hot-hot and dry-dry days.

Red sunrises are a prelude to "bad" weather: clouds, storms, wind, rain. Boy, could we ever use a stretch of that "bad" weather. (One of the reddest sunrises I remember preceded a hurricane...)

"Bad" weather would be good. "Bad" weather would be great. "Bad" weather would be welcome across much of the region.

By comparison, areas of the midwest and the south have been practicing "man overboard" drills from their back porches. Well, they're almost that wet. Inches of rain, week after week. Two million acres of flat, Mississippi Delta farmland underwater, just a few weeks ago, according to a friend from there.

R-A-I-N. A "four-letter" word. Here, because we don't have nearly enough. Elsewhere, because

they're swamped (so to speak) with it.

The benevolent, warm, dry spring which got farmers happily into their fields on an early schedule has quickly turned into a temperamental tyrant. Always sky-scanners, farmers are getting stiff necks of late peering for long stretches toward the heavens. Searching for the slightest hints of precious moisture to save millions of dollars of seed and plant nutrients already tucked into the soil.

Never in my lifetime memory has it been so hot, so dry, so long, so early in the season.

Never before, in my memory time, has young corn curled into tight-tipped, "pineapple" foliage -- by Flag Day.

Never have we planted soybeans to have them lay for three weeks in powder-dry soil, unresponsive, ungerminated.

Never have the pastures been so dry, so brown, so crispy -- so void of nutritious grass for the heifers -- by mid-June. The meadow hillside is so reminiscent of the dry, sagebrush-infested, semi-desert grazing areas of the West that The Farmer claims he's begun watching for antelope.

Never has the alfalfa turned so quickly from a lush green, kissed with the purple of opening blooms, to stretches of pale, greyish, sickly, give-up-the-ghost foliage -- so early in the season.

Never have we been feeding the hay that we should be storing up for the winter -- by the first day of summer.

Never has the sound of rain-drops spattering on the roof and the maples outside the house been any more welcome than in the early-morning darkness of a recent Sunday morning after more

than a month with no measurable rainfall.

Never have I been more ready to trade those peaceful, pastel sunsets for a couple of ominously red sunrises promising "bad"

weather.

If you have a couple you'd like to swap, call. Immediately. Collect.

We'll pay the freight.

Washington-Greene Names Dairy Princess



Dianne Blissett wears the Washington-Green Dairy Princess crown. She was crowned at the pageant held on June 15 at the Washinton County Fair Grounds, Washington.

RIGIDPLY RAFTERS' "GLU-LAM COLUMN" SPECIFICATIONS

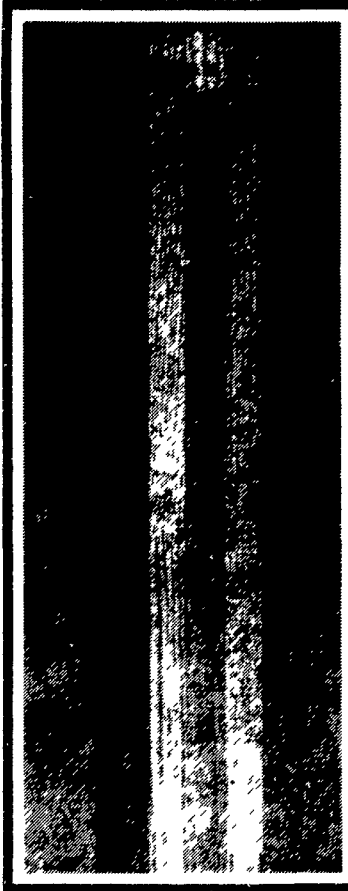
All columns shall be Rigidply Rafters' "Glu-Lam Columns," manufactured of foundation grade #2 southern yellow pine. The laminations shall be glued together at 12% moisture content with waterproof phenol-resorcinal glue. They shall be assembled and clamped under pressure in a controlled environment until the glue is cured.

The columns shall be CCA pressure treated to a .60 retention factor, a minimum of 12" above the ground line on the ground contact end. The columns shall meet the following test procedures: Block Shear Test, Cyclic Delamination Test, Finger Joint Test and A.S.T.M. D905-49.

We Use

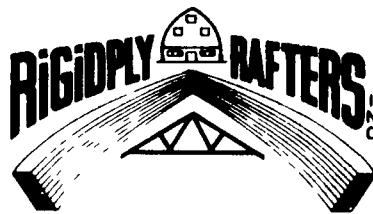


Pressure-Treated Lumber
by *Lox*



The Glu-Lam Post

The Only REAL
Laminated Post



RIGIDPLY RAFTERS, Inc.
701 E. Linden St.,
Richland, PA 17087
Telephone: 717-866-6581
Fax: 717-866-7237



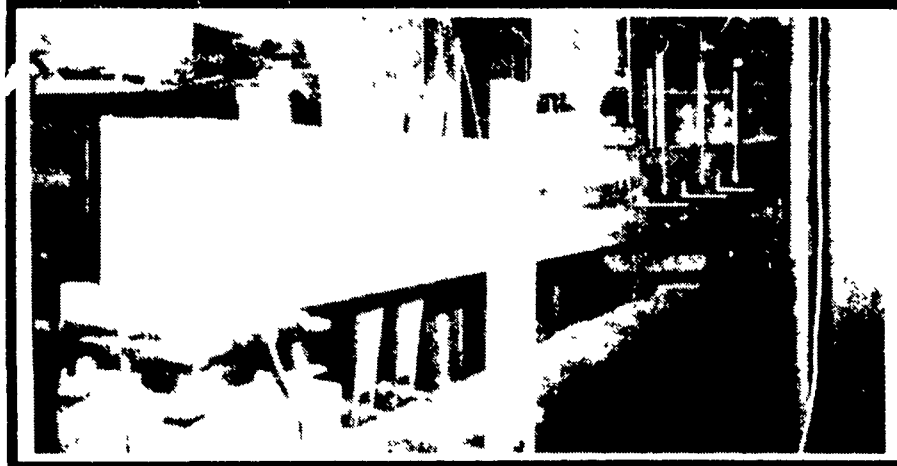
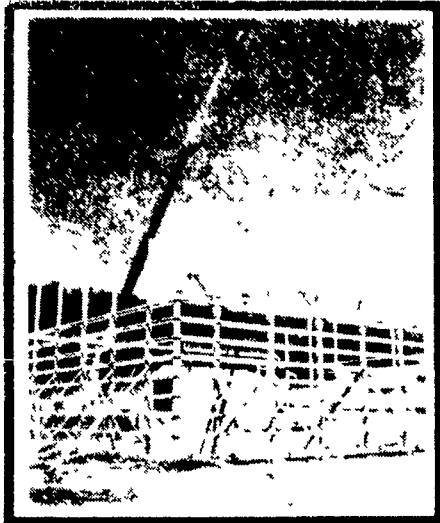
DISCOVER THE LABOR SAVING ADVANTAGES:

- Glued laminated with waterproof glue
- Lighter, straighter and stronger than solid sawn or nailed laminated posts
- C C A. treated laminations are used on the ground contact end
- C C A. penetration is greater than solid sawn posts
- Untreated wood above ground eliminates the need for galvanized fasteners
- Finger jointed to form one piece laminations
- Eliminate cracking, splitting and checking.

STANDARD SIZES

- 6x6 Equivalent — 3 ply 2x6, 4 1/16" x 5 1/4"
- 6x8 Equivalent — 3 ply 2x8, 4 1/16" x 7"
- 8x8 Equivalent — 4 ply 2x8, 5 1/2" x 7"

Other sizes available upon request
6'0" minimum standard treatment
Available in lengths to 60'0"



Tested and Approved for use in the post frame construction industry by engineers at The Pennsylvania State University and Wood Mechanics Personnel.