

TAKING TIME

by **Rebecca Escott**

Extension Home Economist



A Father's Regrets

The late Harry Chapin used to sing a gripping ballad, "Cats in the Hat," telling the tale of a father who realizes too late the importance of spending time with his son.

Regrets. As a home economist, I spend part of my work week

helping people develop strategies to juggle their areas of commitment. Most of that work is with frazzled women.

But Dads can't be excluded. For the past six months, I've been working with a "working dad" on a series designed especially for men that will equip them to be

more successfully involved with home and child care activities. Men's involvement is critical to the stability of the family.

For a father, becoming more involved in the lives of his children is not simply a matter of rearranging priorities. According to psychologist, Roderick Gilkey, "What we're talking about is defending the family."

Here are the foundational principles:

- Becoming involved is a visible, physical way to demonstrate care to a spouse.
- Becoming involved provides children with a much-needed positive male role-model.
- Being more involved now means fewer regrets in the future. Unfortunately, 25-30% of

fathers aged 48 to 70 express a sense of regret. One dad said, "I guess I rationalized it and kept thinking that the time would come when I could spend more time with the kids. But I never did. All the sudden they're gone...I can't make up for it"

In some cases farm families have advantages over urban families in this respect. Often parents and children work side-by-side on the farm communicating and supporting each other. But often even for rural families, adults and children are scattered during the day, and at night everyone is isolated working on individual tasks.

It is time to shake the system. Each of us MUST become devoted to a new set of priorities that focuses less on tasks and more on relationships.

And women, we play a big role in making this happen. Asking or allowing another person to become involved in areas that we have formerly taken care of by ourselves means letting go. That person needs power to do things differently. He also needs permission to practice and fail.

That's where my survival series comes in. For three nights, we are allowing men to try new skills (without having their wives looking over their shoulders, correcting them). Quick meals, shopping and quick cleaning strategies, tips for entertaining children-these are

the components of the series. We hope that men will come-even men that are single or may be divorced and not have custody of their children.

Why? Not because it is such a victory to be able to make a great casserole, but because by doing physical tasks you show support to others. This is truly an investment in relationships.

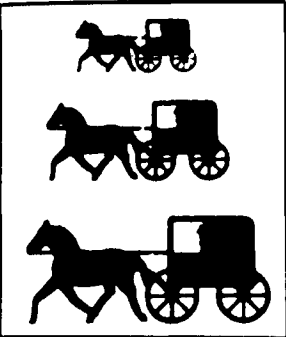
Men, your families need you! You may be wondering how to squeeze this noble cause into an already packed day. Last year, I uncovered a wonderful article by Dolores Curran about "wasting time with Dad". She begins by describing how a father and child spent a day on a fishing trip. The child reflects, "Went fishing with Dad. It was great!" But the father's comments are far less positive, "Went fishing but didn't catch anything. Pretty much a waste of time."

The time you spend with your family is not wasted. Practice valuing it in a new way. The memories that children recall of time spent with dads are usually tales of just "hanging out." these times may be afternoons in a garage or walks home from the school bus. It's YOU they want.

As men learn to devote themselves to the cause of defending the family, they will slowly whittle away the looming threat of future regrets. Women, give them space. Change takes time.

MEADOW CREEK

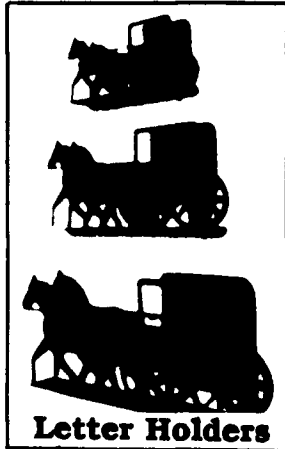
WALL PLAQUES
ALSO SIZES 1-2-3
Free Standing All Steel
5 Sizes of Plaques
W - 1 6 1/4" x 2 3/4"
W - 2 9/8" x 4"
W - 3 12 1/2" x 5 1/2"
W - 4 22" x 9 1/2"
W - 5 32" x 14"



DEALERS WELCOME

WELDING HORSE-N-BUGGIES

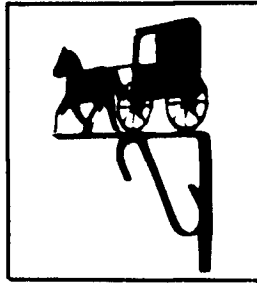
124 Meadow Creek Rd.
New Holland, PA 17557
1 1/2 MI. S. of New Holland Off
S. Custer Ave. on Meadow Creek Rd.
1st farm on left
(717) 355-0779



Letter Holders

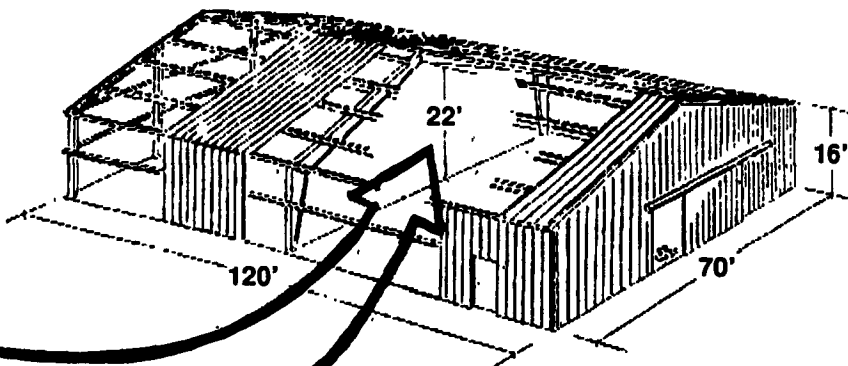
Lamp Post & Wall Hanger With Bracket

L - P 12 1/2" x 5 1/4"



Lawn Ornament
L - 1 32" x 14"

RIDING ARENAS



40% MORE CLEARANCE THAN WOOD TRUSS CONSTRUCTION

- 26 ga. Painted Sidewalls with 20 Year Warranty
- 1 Personnel Door
- 2 - 10'x10' Sliding Doors
- Freight Included to Job Site
- 10 Skylites Included

\$319*
sq. ft.

- 26 ga. Galvalume Roof with 20 Year Warranty
- 3:12 Roof Pitch
- 30# Ground Snow
- 70 mph Wind Load
- All Steel Construction

★ OTHER ARENAS COMPARABLY PRICED

- Custom-Built Packages Designed For The Do-It-Yourselfer
- Detailed Step-By-Step Assembly Instructions Included
- Let us show you how you can build faster, more economically... and get more riding arena for your money than you thought possible!
- Other Accessories Available

GROVE CONTRACTING SERVICE

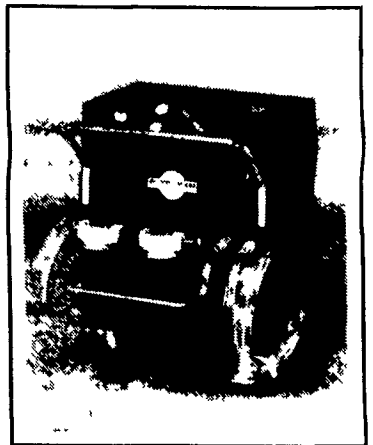
Orwigsburg, PA
(717) 366-0696
Call Today And Ask For Lynn Grove

MILLER DIESEL, INC.

DIESEL FUEL INJECTION & TURBO CHARGER SPECIALIST
6030 Jonestown Road
Harrisburg, PA 17112
Phone 717-545-5931 — Interstate 81 Exit 26
"PORTABLE GLYCLEAN" ANTI-FREEZE RECYCLING SYSTEM

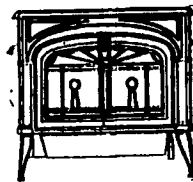
- RESTORES USED ANTI-FREEZE TO BETTER THAN ORIGINAL CONDITION IN APPROX. 30 MIN.
- REDUCES HAZARDOUS WASTE
- \$\$\$ BIG SAVINGS \$\$\$

FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION, WRITE OR CALL



LOOKING FOR...

- STOVES • HAMMOCKS • GAS GRILLS
- PATIO FURNITURE & MUCH MORE.



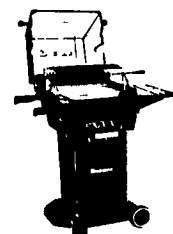
Vermont Castings



Hatteras Hammocks



TELESCOPE PATIO FURNITURE



Ducane



Your Complete Hearth & Patio Store
Bowman's Stove & Patio, Inc.
(717) 733-4973

906 E. Main Street, Ephrata • Rt. 322
(1 Mi. E. of Rt. 222)
M,T,W, 10-6; Th. & Fri. 10-8; Sat. 10-4