

# TAKING TIME

by Rebecca Escott

Extension Home Economist



This past week, I once again celebrated a long-standing family tradition of making fastnachts for breakfast on Tuesday in anticipation of Lent. Getting up early in the morning to finish the process gave me time to think about this special event.

The recipe I used was given to me by my great-grandmother. It's the one my grandmother and mother use, too. I wonder if my great-grandmother learned it when she was young. (She never needed to measure any of the ingredients. She could tell if it was okay by the feel of the dough.) Anyway, in the early hours of the morning, I reflected on how this simple recipe of yeast, flour and mashed potatoes linked me to my family across at least four generations.

Family traditions are crucial in an era when children and parents are scattered across the globe. Simple routines on days sprinkled throughout the year will unite us in thought and will stir warm memories. We need that. We need to sense our link to other people

and to other generations. Traditions support families. They give members a sense of security and belonging. They are tools that help us communicate our values. Emma Wisdom, author of *A Practical Guide to Planning a Family Reunion*, suggests emphasizing traditions that draw children into the circle of conversation or activity and make them feel comfortable and connected.

Traditions are often linked to holidays, but they don't need to be. In fact during the dreary months of winter, your family may really enjoy the challenge of creating a fun, new family ritual. Or you may want to reminisce about something you all did in earlier years but haven't tried recently. What tradition could you resurrect just for a night?

As I'm writing, my mind is recalling a host of traditions and rituals that I treasure. For instance, when I want to salute my husband for an accomplishment, I always bake peanut butter cookies. I also remember the rituals associated

with visiting grandparents. At the one home, we would always race to the attic first thing to try out the trapeze that hung there. When we visited my other grandparents, I could count on a "pretzel for the road" as we got ready to leave.

One of the good things about family traditions-and yet one of the difficult things-is that they can change as families grow and change. Families sometimes get so bogged down in living ALL the routines to a point where the meaning and joy are lost. Don't get caught in that trap. Think about how a tradition could be

modified. And when you are ready to break away, out of choice or necessity, try this. The loss of giving up a tradition is sometimes less painful if you take a few moments to write down your memories about it. When would you practice the tradition? Who would be there? For how many years was this an important part of your life or the life of your family? If you have pictures, these may capture the nostalgia in a special way. Once the tradition is written, it is preserved. That frees a family

to say, "This will always be a part of our history. We will not forget it" (even if it is no longer practiced).

Traditions throughout the year help bind families together, I'd love to hear some of your family's traditions and their meaning to you. Send a card with your story or suggestion to me at Lehigh County Cooperative Extension Office, 4184 Dorney Park Road, Allentown, PA 18104. Perhaps in the coming weeks, we can share a few ideas.

## Dieticians Organize Hunger Awareness Week

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania Dietetic Association announced today it is coordinating Hunger Awareness Week, March 13 - 20, in observance of National Nutrition Month. From Pittsburgh to Philadelphia, registered dietitians in cities across the state are collaborating with their local anti-hunger networks to assist in food collection and to provide educational programs on food safety, menu planning, and basic nutrition for feeding-site volunteers.

The week-long event kicks off with a press conference at the Capitol Rotunda in Harrisburg Monday, March 15, at noon. State officials and representatives from various state food and nutrition organizations are scheduled to speak.

"Hunger Awareness Week 1993 is a statewide event that en-

ables dietitians, anti-hunger organizations and community groups to work together to help feed the hungry in our own neighborhoods," explains Cynthia Brylinsky, R.D., President of the Pennsylvania Dietetic Association.

For the name of a registered dietitian in your area who can provide information on local events contact the Pennsylvania Dietetic Association at (717) 236-1220.

## Briggs Scholarship Goes To Guyton

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Stacy Guyton was awarded the Leo Briggs Memorial Scholarship of \$500 at the 33rd annual meeting of the American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc. on February 15 at the Sheraton Inn, Syracuse, New York. Scholarship eligibility is based on leadership in the area of dairy promotion, and interest in agriculture or nutrition as it pertains to the dairy industry.

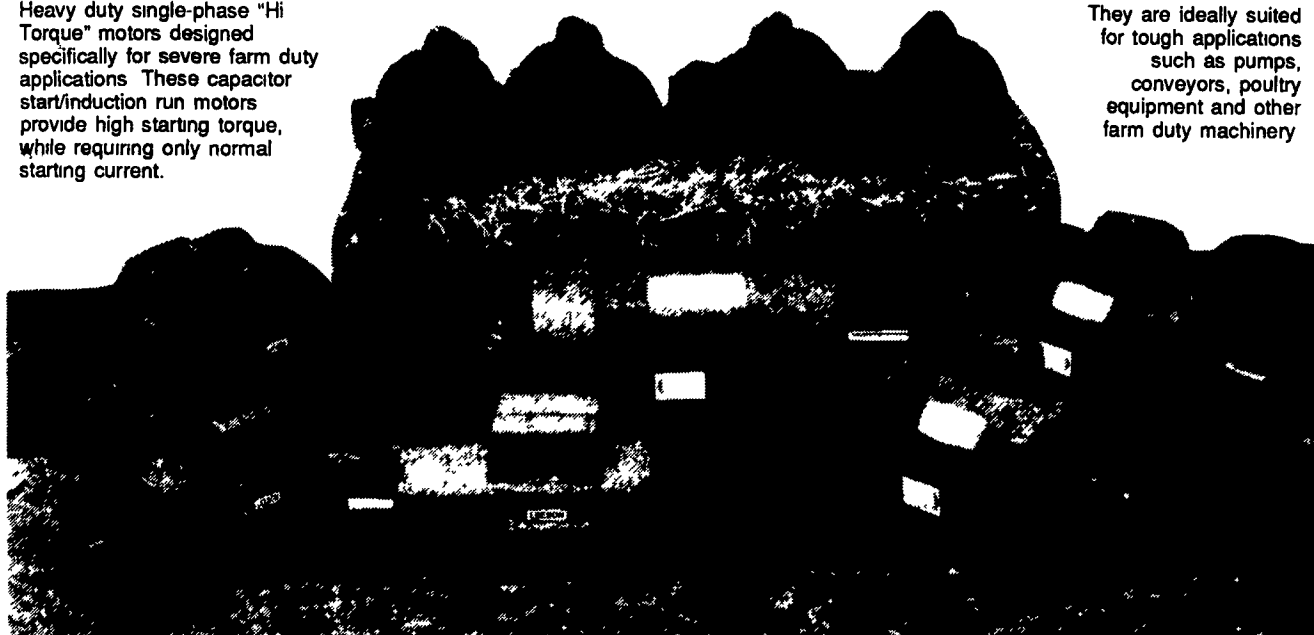
Guyton is from Jefferson,

Maryland and attends Virginia Tech. At school, Guyton is active in several organizations, including the Virginia Tech Dairy Club and American Dairy Science Association. In addition to her school activities, Guyton works for her family on Guy-Dell Farm and at Gaywinds Farm, where she deals with all aspects of the dairy operation. She works as a dairy correspondent for the farm publication *Farmshine*, reporting on dairy promotion events. Her future plans include managing a dairy herd, and continuing as a dairy journalist.

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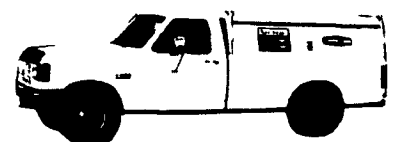
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