

**On being
a farm wife
- And other
hazards
Joyce Bupp**



We are slowly recovering from the loss of two beloved, long-time companions.

Their demise occurred almost at the same time, after having served faithfully and productively. Both played a role in our everyday lives, so much so that a sort of mourning period lingers.

It was actually a week earlier that the first symptoms of unhealthiness turned up in the computer. Busy writing for this column, I hit the key combination to save the last few paragraphs. Having lost copy in the past to sudden power outages, saving the data to the disk every few paragraphs is just second nature as a protective measure.

But, the "Save" command brought only a "Disk error" explanation to the screen. Tried again. Same result.

Now a bit of worry set in. Perhaps the drive head just needed cleaned, though it had been done not long before. But to exit my word processing program and be able to go into the cleaning mode, I'd lose all that had already been written.

Luck held while I finished and printed the column. A telephone diagnosis suggested a simple, no-

cost, interior cleaning job on a particular lens would probably render the patient good as new. I tore the system down, hauled the computer to the "hospital," and after an hour's worth of outpatient surgery, owned a computer with considerably less interior dust.

It worked! Until a week later. In the middle of another column. Another call brought a more costly diagnosis: probable "mother board" problems. Engine failure, so to speak. My system faced a major transplant — considerable expense with no guarantees — or replacement.

Consultation with a computer-whiz friend and a timely sale on a computer of considerable more size, speed and capability — and less cost than my dying, obsolete model had been — made the decision to "pull the plug" inevitable. Discovery that my old printer could be adapted lessened the pain.

While still waiting for the replacement surgery to be completed, fate swiped a second friend.

We had planted the pair of willow trees in the back yard when the kids were just small, probably some 20 years ago. One was a

corkscrew, with curlicue, erect branches. The second, slightly smaller but more spreading, was a classic weeping willow.

The kids rarely played in the corkscrew willow; its growth habit was too tight and dense. But the weeping willow, which had split early into two distinct trunks, was a natural jungle gym.

A playhouse platform in it could be reached on the crude wooden steps nailed to the one trunk. Cats spent as much time in it as did the kids. Yearly, a pair of mourning doves returned to build their nest and raise a family. Robins found the willow, which overlooked both flower and vegetable gardens, handy for launching worm attacks.

Roots of the willow now protruded from the ground at its base, making mowing there hazardous to the mower blades. But, in the nature of weeping willows, most of the root system was right there, near the ground surface.

After years of having rain run down the tracks, the moisture accumulating where the two main sections split near the base, the center of the graceful willow had rotted. Under the force of the year's latest round of relentless winds, unsupported by the shallow root system, half of the willow simply fell over.

Two days later, an early morning cracking sound signaled the collapse of the other half.

A new computer arrived home to replace the hole on the desk and calm my growing panic of having to write without a word processor. (Thanks to Shrewsbury Radio Shack computer surgery specialist Dr. Mike and his assistants Cal and Tom for their dedicated and good-humored guidance through this reconstructive operation!)

The gaping hole in the backyard skyline and the ragged hole in the border will take a little longer to be reconstructed with a transplant.

'I Love You, Mom'

(Continued from Page B4)



**Heidi Negley
Cumberland Co. Dairy
Princess**

She's not a mother yet, but she hopes someday she will be. I know she'll be a good mother. She's loving, kind, and patient.

She has been like a mother to a few calves, a pig a batch of kittens, and a lamb. She pitched a tent in the barn to stay closer to her pig that was ready to give birth. She even takes care of her brother like a mother hen, protecting him from harm.

I believe God chose Heidi just for the purpose of being a daughter any mother would be proud of. I must be the richest mother.

Joyce Negley

**TO MY MOTHER,
BARBARA BERNARDINI:**
Thoughts of Mother bring to mind
A loving lady, wise and kind
Blue eyes that shine, pink cheeks
aglow—
She is more dear than she can
know.

When as a child I was distressed,
She put my petty cares to rest
"Not feeling well, what's bother-
ing you?"
She'd ask, and then the truth
pursue.

By her kind words my fears
allayed,
Her care helped me be unafraid
Compassion, courage, Love and
play
She taught me in her gentle way.

"And how are you, dear Mrs.
Bloom?"
She'd ask as I from room to room
Would wheel my "baby" carriage
fine,
Wherein there rested "Caroline."

While cooking if she burned her
finger,
She suddenly became a singer:
"O my gosh, my gee, my jingo—
I (just) burned my Little pingo"

New seasons brought such joy to
me—
For Mom another singing spree:
"Over the river and through the
wood"
And other songs from her
childhood.

At first, she'd sing and I would
listen,
But before Long we were in
unison
Singing oh so merrily
We cared not if we were "on key"

And now, Dear Mother, I ask You:
How can I give the thanks you're
due—
As time goes by, the more I see
Life's beauty, joy, and ecstasy:

Rich gifts, please know, YOU
gave to me.

Helen Elisa Meador

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