

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



I miss the flag.

When our service men and women began shipping out for Desert Storm, Old Glory waved numerous home around our neighborhood.

"Wish we had flag up on top of the silo," I said to our son one day, after he commented on the outpouring of community flag support.

"I'll put one up," he promptly volunteered. And soon after, a flag waved from a sturdy pole he had fastened at the top of the 80-foot-high haylage silo. We all felt good about the flag waving there, our own little way of honoring our military serving around the world.

Desert Storm became part of history. A series of rain and high-wind storms eventually bent the pole and shredded our flag. Our son climbed the silo to retrieve the tattered Stars and Stripes for proper disposal.

I miss that flag. I miss its constant reminder, as it flapped and snapped in the breeze, of the freedoms our brave men and women have gone to war over the centuries to uphold. Freedoms we take for granted, freedoms we abuse, freedoms we have to fight for someday right in our own backyards — or back forty.

With each annual Memorial

Day, it seems our freedoms are increasingly threatened — not by totalitarian societies intent on revising the world order — but by ourselves. Our freedom is in danger from over-taxing, over-regulation, over-whelming growth of the bureaucracy and overburdening the productive segment of society with support of the non-productive.

Freedom, sadly, generates apathy. Far too few voters made the effort to cast their ballot in the recent primary election. But those responsible folks who did seemed to loudly shout "Enough!" to endless government spending.

Among them are farmers whose food-producing fields do not continually add to population growth (cept for groundhogs!), do not demand additional police, education complexes, transportation facilities, recreational areas, water, sewer or more landfills. Yet, farmland taxes, like all property taxes, continue to rise to pay for services demanded by growing communities.

Farmland preservation is "politically correct" at the moment. It's also a common-sense move to assure land for growing food and not shopping malls for our grandchildren's grandchildren.

Well, maybe: Taxes and regula-

The Antique Engine, Tractor and Toy Club, Inc. will hold its 8th annual Show on June 4, 5, and 6. This show will be at the Kemp-

tions, while certainly necessary, pose significant threats to agriculture if they continue in unabated proliferation. What value preservation if a property can't be productive with practicality or affordable to cultivate?

Nutrient management legislation recently passed in Pennsylvania will ultimately regulate how many animals can be maintained on a certain size farm. Now, proposals are being presented that would regulate the use of water for agriculture in the Susquehanna Basin. ("Sorry, Bossy old girl. I know it's 95-degrees out there but you drank your allotment this morning.")

Wetlands, endangered species, pollution, energy, conservation are all controversial issues with long-term impact to agriculture's ability to keep producing cheap and abundant food, a key reason America has remained so prosperous over the centuries.

Certainly, we need guiding legislation in all these areas, administered with common sense. But legislation produces regulations, which produce administering bureaucrats, which produce more regulations.....and on and on, which taxes rise endlessly to pay. Enough is enough, already.

For Memorial Day, I'd like to put a flag back up to proclaim my beliefs in the freedoms for which this country has always stood. Sometimes, I'm not quite sure I know exactly what they are anymore.

But, thank God still for the freedom to publicly say that. (end)

Antique Tractor Show

ton Community Center located on PA Route 143 North of the Kempton exit of Interstate 78. Friday, setup will begin at 8 a.m. and continue throughout the day. An added attraction this year will be organized tractor pulling by the Pennsylvania Tractor Pullers Association.

Tractor pulling will begin at 6:30 Friday evening with the 5,500, 7,500 and 9,500 pound stock tractors followed by the 8,000 and 10,000 turbo modified stock classes. Exhibitors of the engine club will be running antique engines and farm equipment during all days and evenings.

On Saturday morning the slow engine contest will begin at 11 a.m. followed by the antique tractor parade at noon. At 1 p.m. there will be a slow tractor race, 2 p.m. a teeter totter competition and 3 p.m. antique tractor pulling. To qualify as an antique tractor for the competition the manufacturing date of the tractor must be before 1959 and the tractor may not be modified. Following the antique pull the 11,500, 13,500, 15,500 pound stocks and any 10,000 and 12,000 turbo modified stocks that have not competed will be run.

Sunday morning at 11 a.m. there will be a slow engine contest (winners of the previous day may not compete) and at noon an antique tractor parade. At 1 p.m. there will be a kiddie pedal pull, 2 p.m. a barrel rolling contest and 3 p.m. a blindfold driving contest. At 1 p.m. tractor pulling will be continued with the class to be announced followed by two classes of 4 wheel drive stock truck, pulling.

There will be flea market, crafts and vendors spaces available for the duration of the show. Antique car and truck owners or clubs are invited to exhibit. Over night, self-contained camping will be permitted. Refreshments and bake sale items will be available.

A parking donation of \$2 per car will be requested at the gate. No alcoholic beverages will be allowed upon the show grounds. For more information about the show or flea market space contact David Semmel, Show Secretary at 5731 Paradise Road, Slatington, PA 18080 or call him at (215) 767-4768. Tractor pullers can contact Gerald F. Miller, PA Tractor Pullers Assoc., 6432 Abbey Road, Wind Gap, PA 18091 or call (215) 863-8060.

Choose Work Clothes That Make Sense

Farmers, like others who work outdoors, are at increased risk for skin cancer and other conditions related to overexposure to the sun's harmful rays.

While unnoticeable from one year to the next, over a lifetime, skin damage can become chronic. With the longer work days and more outdoor work spring and summer bring, farm workers need to don appropriate protective clothing.

It's particularly important to keep children's protected from the sun's ultraviolet rays. Since most of an individual's lifetime exposure occurs before the age of 18, taking small precautions now can help to prevent serious health problems in the future.

Many agricultural workers wear a baseball-style cap to shield their eyes, leaving the back of the neck and ears exposed. A better cap design for sun protection has a

panel around the back to protect the neck and ears from sun damage. A wide-brimmed straw hat also offers good protection. Many styles are available to suit your personal taste and work needs.

It may be tempting, particularly for young men, to go shirtless while working in the sun and heat. But keep your shirt on. It will protect your skin from sunburn, flying debris, scratches and insect stings. Choose clothing that is loose fitting but without extra material which may get caught in machinery or snagged on tree limbs.

Wear sunscreen on exposed areas such as the face and forearms. To be effective, the sunscreen should be applied about 30 minutes before you go out. Even on hazy days, enough ultraviolet radiation can reach you to cause skin damage if you're not protected.



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