

# Kid's KOrner

## Lots Of Animals Make Life Fun

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**GREENCASTLE** (Franklin Co.) — Ashley, Whitney, and Grant Meyers love animals. Like many farm children, they have calves, dogs and chickens, but some rather unusual animals live at Tidy-Brook Farm also. Chukars (wild partridges) live in a pen in the yard. And there have even been ducklings swimming in the bathtub!

That came about like this: The children's father, Alan, accidentally destroyed the cover of a duck nest while he was making hay. (The mother duck won't return to her nest if the cover is ruined.) He brought the eggs into the house and put them under a heat lamp in the kitchen. Every day, the children sprinkled water on them and turned them, just as the mother duck would have, and they hatched! When the ducklings were a couple days old, the children put them in the bathtub so they could swim. After that, they were kept in the barn until they were old enough to fend for themselves. Then the family set them free in a nature preserve that has a large pond. They mingled right in with the other ducks.

Grant, 2½, loves the chukars. "He thinks they're special," his mother, Kendra, said. His great-uncle gave them to the family after he had hatched them out in an incubator.

Grant brings in the chukar's

daily egg. The eggs must be kept at room temperature for several days before being incubated, so they are stored in the cellar and the girls turn them every day. Then their great-uncle will put them in his incubator.

Ashley and Whitney feed the calves from the dairy operation that their parents and grandfather, Mark Meyers, run.

The dogs, Taffy and Tootsie, are an important part of the farm. They are Jack Russell terriers, and are ferocious when it comes to killing groundhogs. The rest of the time, they are gentle family pets. They stay close to the farmhouse most of the time. If the children go to their grandmother's house nearby, Taffy and Tootsie follow and stay outside her door until the children go home.

Ashley, 7, collects bugs. Last fall, she found three cocoons and kept them in a container all winter. (Her mother found them in the garage and wanted her to throw them away, but she didn't.) This spring, butterflies came out of the cocoons and laid some eggs in the container. Ashley took them to school to show to her first-grade class at Shalom Christian Academy.

Whitney, 5, along with her sister, feeds, waters and gathers the eggs from the family's flock of 12 chickens. She is very excited about entering kindergarten this fall. Some of the preparations have already been made — she



A favorite activity for Grant, Ashley and Whitney is taking a ride on the "train" their grandfather made for them. Here, their father is the "engineer."

passed her kindergarten test and "I got my shots!" she announced.

One activity that Ashley, Whitney and Grant enjoy together is the "train" their grandfather made for them. He made it from apple juice concentrate tubs after seeing a photo of one in a magazine. The train, which has padded seats, is pulled by the 4-wheeler.

Having lots of animals around makes life a lot of fun for Ashley, Whitney and Grant!



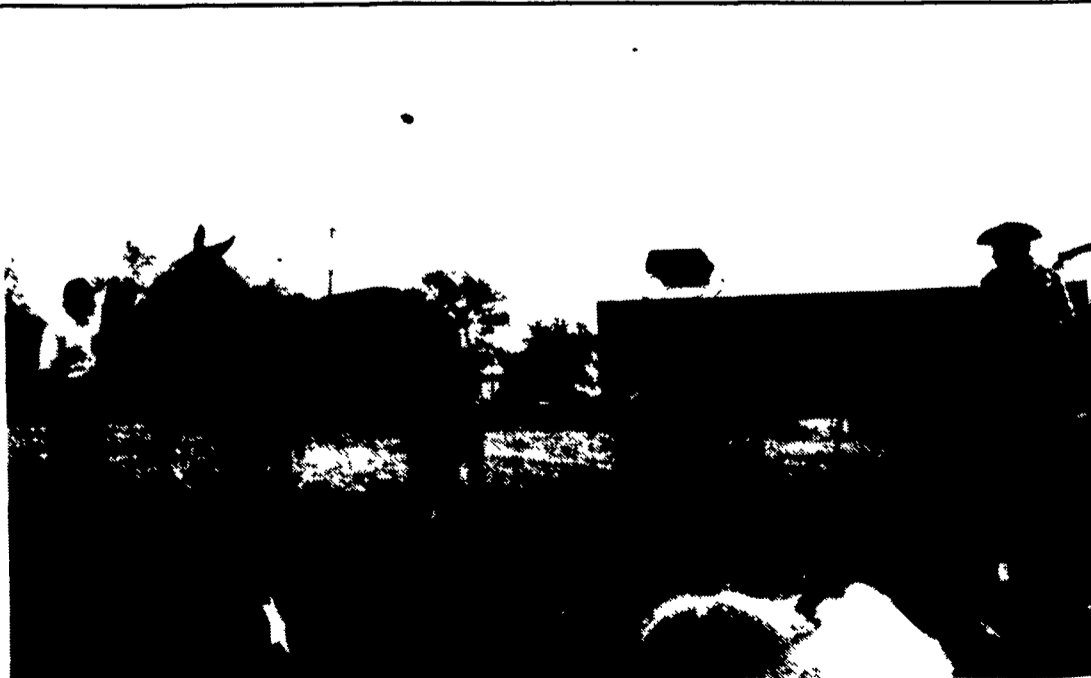
Grant and Taffy, a Jack Russell terrier, are great friends.



Ashley, Whitney and Grant love to feed the calves!



Grant keeps his chukars in a pen in the backyard.



Fourth grader Sarah Westley of Hamburg took this picture. It shows Dennis Bower, right, head teacher at upper Bern Elementary School, explaining how mules were used for farming during the pre-Revolutionary period. Sarah's class spent a year learning about the history of Shartlesville. Bob Adam's, left, a sixth grade teacher, keeps an eye on the mules.