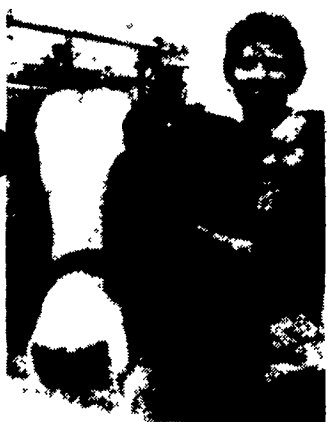


On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



When I was a kid, I loved the wind.

The wind was a companion of play. It toyed with kites, dipping and flipping their colorful paper bodies, tweaking their ragged tails, gently dragging them high over our heads or rudely tossing them to the ground.

Sometimes, the wind would macrame a kite through a tree, just like those flown by hapless, round-headed Charlie Brown of Peanuts comic strip fame.

Wind enhanced the performance of our toy airplanes of lightweight balsa, lifting them gracefully into the air, sometimes into stunt-flying loop-de-loops — and onto the house roof on a regular basis.

A stiff breeze likewise added a tailwind to the "birdies" we batted back and forth in endless summertime badminton games on the side lawn.

Of course, only one player was the beneficiary of the wind, the other having to whack the cork-and-feathered target twice as hard to try to get it back across the net to the opponent. Whacking a birdie hard enough to counter a stiff headwind sometimes sent it right into a tangle in the cross-strings of the racket.

Winds set the stand of hardwoods behind our home into murmuring protest and whistled overhead in the television antennae. Snuggling down on a windy night, probing gingers of air rattling the windows, made for a safe, contented feel of innocent childhood.

Over the years, my affection for wind has matured to respect, with occasional bursts of dread and fear. Too many benevolent breezes turning to violent destruction in the matter of mere moments have left me wary of wind.

South winds once stirred vi-

sions of tropical islands and palm trees. Now, they churn images of weather maps overlaid with swirling cloud patterns ominously curling up the East Coast bearing loads of snow, sleet, rain, ice or hot, humid (remember that?), hurricanes, and various other wind-blown surprise weather packages. And while the "westerlies" usually generate drier winds, they do freight in those gusty, summertime, thunder-rumblers tossing lightning, hail, and haysoaking cloudbursts.

Wind lashed nights no longer generate that safe, smug, snug-in-bed sense of my childhood. Instead, will the wind . . . or blown sleet . . . or falling trees take out the power lines somewhere between the co-op's sub-station and the dairy barn? Will heavy gusts yank barn roofing away from the rafters? Are all the wide, barn doors securely closed? Is some cow in premature labor off in some wind-battered pasture corner delivering a calf?

Despite all that, I still welcome the wind — when it's on more benevolent behavior.

I like the way it flaps clean sheets on the washline and purposefully shakes out wrinkles in the white, ruffled curtains hung to dry in the sunshine. It stirs the pond's flat surface and breaks it into thousands of sparkling diamonds when it ripples across the waters. Grain fields do "the wave" as summer breezes dance over acres of golden, ripening heads. And wind is vital for drying and

curing our acres of hay.

We keep tabs on the wind, not with a weathervane but the colorful wind sock fastened between the barn and house. Our present one is in the shape of a fish. On calm days, the fish looks as if it's been out of water too long; when it's blowing parallel and appears to be fighting to swim upstream, look out.

My favorite wind accessory, though, is wind chimes. Their

melodious tinkling sounds are a musical accompaniment to the brisk breezes of spring and the faint stirrings of air through long, lingering summer evenings.

Knowing what the winds of weather have delivered so far this year, our wind chimes will honor this traditionally-breezy month of March by remaining where they've been all season.

Inside. Safe from the wind.

Bucks-Montgomery Searches For Volunteers, Princess Candidates

OTTSVILLE (Bucks Co.) — The Bucks-Montgomery Dairy Promotion Committee is gearing up for its 1994-1995 promotion year, which will kick off with special activities during June Dairy Month.

To prepare for the year's upcoming programs, the committee is seeking candidates for its 1994 Bucks-Montgomery Dairy Princess Pageant. Any single young woman, between 16 and 24 years of age, whose parents or guardians are engaged in dairy farming is eligible to compete. A young woman also is eligible if she herself owns at least two dairy animals in a bona fide 4-H or FFA

program, or is a dairy farm employee, or is a daughter of a dairy industry employee.

The committee also is seeking volunteers to help with promotional programs and activities. During the year, the committee promotes milk and dairy products at schools, grocery stores, county fairs, community events, and farm meetings throughout the two-county area.

Anyone interested in competing in the 1994 Bucks-Montgomery Dairy Princess Pageant or serving as a member of the committee is asked to contact Tanya Martin, chairperson, at (215) 795-0454.

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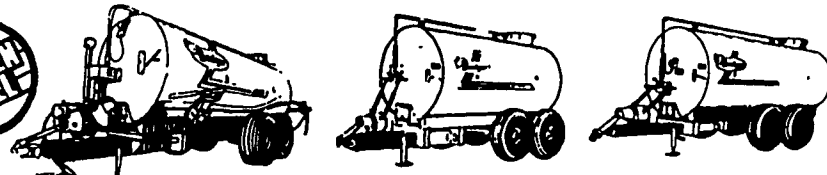
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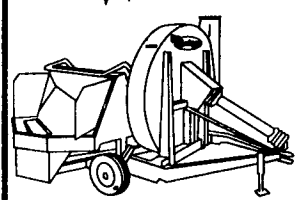
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