

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



Just another day at the "zoo"... "Is it full moon?" I ask The Farmer. In every corner of the maternity pens, there seems to be a newborn calf.

One stands near its first-time-calved mother, seeming to debate if it wants to nurse a bit for supper. Another snoozes, curled up on the soft haylage in the concrete feed trough.

Three are-lounging on the pen's sawdust bedding around Ada, a recently-calved older cow. With this sudden rash of calvings in a few-hour period, we haven't yet moved all the calves into their individual pens in the calf nursery.

Ada has stretched out in the pen to rest and chew her cud after being milked earlier. Almost under her head and against the barn wall lies the bull calf belonging to Splendor, who had also calved recently. A hefty, chunky little fellow, he is so motionless, stretched on his side with his legs sprawled on the bedding, that he appears to be sick.

To be sure he is getting enough to eat, we've been offering him a supplemental bottle of his mother's warm milk. I crawl around Ada's big head to get in the right position to pry open the calf's mouth. He tentatively sucks a bit, tasting the contents of the

two-quart "baby" bottle.

Ada swings her broad, heavy head around and props it on my back while I crouch there. Suddenly the calf's appetite overcomes his sound sleep; he hops to his feet to bump and bang at the bottle. Wedged between the sudden actions of the two, I nearly fall on my face on the pen floor.

Just another day at the zoo... Outside the barn, the multi-hued flock of half-grown chickens are vigorously uprooting geraniums out of the flower border while scratching for bugs and worms. Calm has finally settled over them, after several days of fussing for reunification with their mother hen.

She had abandoned them to take up with the two biggest roosters, one on each side of her, jealously guarding, while they noisily worked their way around the yard. A younger pair of roosters trailed after, also interested in the little brown hen, but no match for the older, tougher birds.

For a day or so, the squawking, squabbling, and screeching from the amorous roosters and the pleadings of the youngsters trying to reunite with their mother got so intense and loud I plotted to relocate the old birds to another barn — or the freezer. But they roosted

Maryland Farm Queen To Be Selected From 23 Contestants

TIMONIUM, Md. — The reigning Maryland Farm Queen, Kristin Archer of Harford County, will crown her successor, the 1994 Maryland Farm Queen, who will be selected at the Maryland Farm Queen Contest, Sunday, August 28, 7 p.m., in the State Fair Cow Palace.

"I consider it an honor to have served as the 1993 Maryland Farm Queen and as spokesperson for the Maryland Farm Bureau," said

that night in a spot just out of my easy reach and won a temporary stay of execution.

Just another day at the zoo.... Bits of what looks like giant bread crumbs litter the patio and I wonder what the mess might be. Then the "light bulb" goes on and I know - the squirrels have chewed up another lawn chair cushion.

This is the second one partially shredded, with bits of the foam stuffing strewn all over the place. What can a squirrel possibly be interested in to munch through a synthetic-fabric cushion cover and root in the foam stuffing? Nesting materials?

"Probably the same thing they're hunting when they chew up the tractor seats in the shop," wryly observes The Farmer, veteran of several tractor seat shreddings by our fluffy-tailed friends.

Solomon scratches at the front door, plotting to sneak a day-long doggy nap on the cool concrete of the basement. Monk, the cat, rushes to the screen, jumps up and hisses at the dog. He backs off, instead stretching out in front of the door so we trip over him every time we pass through.

Just another day at the zoo....

Archer. "It was a privilege to represent the many hard-working people who make up Maryland's agricultural community. I will never forget the wonderful people with whom I met the many exciting experiences during my reign."

Young women, between the ages of 16 and 19, who have earned their place in the 1994 Maryland Farm Queen Contest by winning county Farm Bureau-sponsored contests, will compete for this renowned title, tiaras supplied by Littman Jewelers in Cranberry Mall, and scholarship and cash awards in the amount of \$4,000. The 23 Maryland county farm queens, will be critiqued, during a two-day competition, primarily on their agricultural knowledge and experience and their civic involvement. Each must spontaneously respond to a "fish bowl" question either related to career opportunities or specific farming issues. Poise, appearance, personality, communication skills, and civic involvement are secondary requirements.

The 1994 Maryland Farm Queen will be present throughout the 10-day State Fair to award prizes, and mingle with fairgoers, dignitaries, and media representatives. Her responsibilities will

continue throughout the year as she will participate in a number of activities representing Maryland agriculture. The runners-up will assist the Farm Queen with award presentations and serve as hostesses for dignitaries.

The 113th Maryland State Fair, which will offer a variety of livestock and horse shows, arts and crafts and home arts exhibits, runs from Saturday, August 27, through Monday, September 5.

The Fairgrounds open at 8 a.m. for livestock and horse shows, demonstration halls open at 10 a.m., and the Midway opens at 12 noon on weekdays, and 11 a.m. on weekends. Admission is \$4 for adults, children under 12 are admitted free. Admittance to the race track is included in the admission price of the Fair. Parking is available at the Fairgrounds with handicapped parking at the North Gate entrance to the 4-H Home Arts Building. Free parking is available on a first-come, first-serve basis at the Park and Ride location on Deereco Road. The Fairgrounds encourage use of the Light Rail with an easily accessible Light Rail stop at the Fairgrounds Cow Palace Gate. For general information call (410) 252-0200, ext. 226.

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