

On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



What a rude awakening. "Be aware if you're on your way to work," said the perky announcer's voice on the radio, "that there are spots of ice on roads at higher elevations."

Half-awake from the clock radio, the sky still midnight-black outside the bedroom window, I snuggled deeper into the electric blanket and pondered just how cold it was.

In contrast to the cozy downstairs woodstove warmth, the thermometer on the lack porch registered a brisk 35-degrees. Down in the colder area of the meadow, breaking daylight showed a frosty coating on the big, round hay bales lined up there.

Halfway through my toasted English muffin came the second mental jolt of the morning. Antifreeze, noted the television news reporter, is already in short supply, selling for as much as 80-percent over last year's prices as people hurry to stock up.

Noooooo! I wanted to protest. But, like it or not, facts are facts: it was time to winterize.

Encouraged by the gorgeous, sunny—and warmer—afternoon, I took the first reluctant step toward "winterizing". Lowering the storm window. Which means washing windows.

Cleaning the windows of our century-plus old farmhouse required the single-minded deter-

mination of a charging bull and the balance and flexibility of an acrobat. Bulk of the job can actually be accomplished easily in an afternoon. It's my attitude adjustment about it that takes longer.

Years ago, we insulated our old, multi-paned, wavy-glass windows by installing triple-track-type storm windows. Their layers of glass and screens are designed for easy removal for cleaning at some handy place, like the kitchen sink. But, due to where some of those windows are located, the layers can't be taken out; thus it is our window washer that ends up in the kitchen sink.

Just behind the sink is my primary "window on the world," from which much of the farm is visible. Because the window sill lies several inches below the counter's splash back, none of the storm windows can be removed for cleaning. So, the glass and screen panels have to be raised and lowered a couple of times to reach all the inside and outside surfaces of three separate layers of window.

And the only way to do that particular window one is by standing—literally—in my sink.

Even more challenging is the window directly behind the stove. While the outside panes of the "sink" window are accessible

from the back porch, the outside, upper glass layers of the "stove" window are nearly 20 feet above ground, accessible only with the aluminum extension ladder. The insides of that window, however, can be easily reached. Just by kneeling on the stove burners. Preferably not while something is cooking.

It always takes about two windows before I get the proper routine of raising and lowering sections to reach the most glass with the fewest trips inside, outside, up and down the ladder. After all that, washing the other half-dozen windows on the main floor are a breeze.

In the process, I find and remove several dozen spider

webs—a few with residents—dried bits of houseplant leaves, miscellaneous nuts, bolts, nails, various decorative items and the cat's favorite superball.

Every fall I dread it. And, every fall I'm equally pleased with myself over the results of window "winterizing." Clear, clean glass has replaced the dusty screens, making the beauty of the October landscape outside even more brilliant. And smack in the middle of my now-clean "window on the world" is a trio of squirrels, hogging sunflower seed from the feeder I'd filled while returning the extension ladder.

Wonder if these furry-tailed little beggars could be trained to wash windows?

Raising Responsible Teens

BROOKVILLE (Clearfield Co.) — Plan to attend "Raising Responsible Teens 1994: The Communication Connection." This national video conference on talking with teens will be down-linked on Wednesday, October 26, from 8:30 to 10:00pm. Location will be the Quiet Lounge of the Hiller Building, on the DuBois

Campus of Penn State. "The Communication Connection" will focus on talking with teens openly and honestly about the problems they face and, most importantly, what they want from the adults in their lives.

The intent of this video conference is to provide an opportunity for parents and other youth-serving personnel to discuss with teenagers the issues that teens are confronting every day. The program will be moderated by a teen and will feature panels of teenagers from Wisconsin, Colorado, and New York. The panels will talk to viewers and answer their questions.

This broadcast will feature teens talking about the things they need from parents and adults, and is intended to help adults better understand the challenges and choices confronting today's teens. Primary issues to be discussed will include communication, dealing with peer pressure, setting rules and limits and the importance of emotional support.

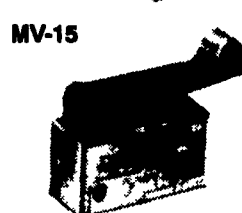
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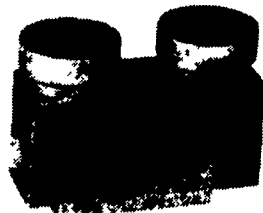
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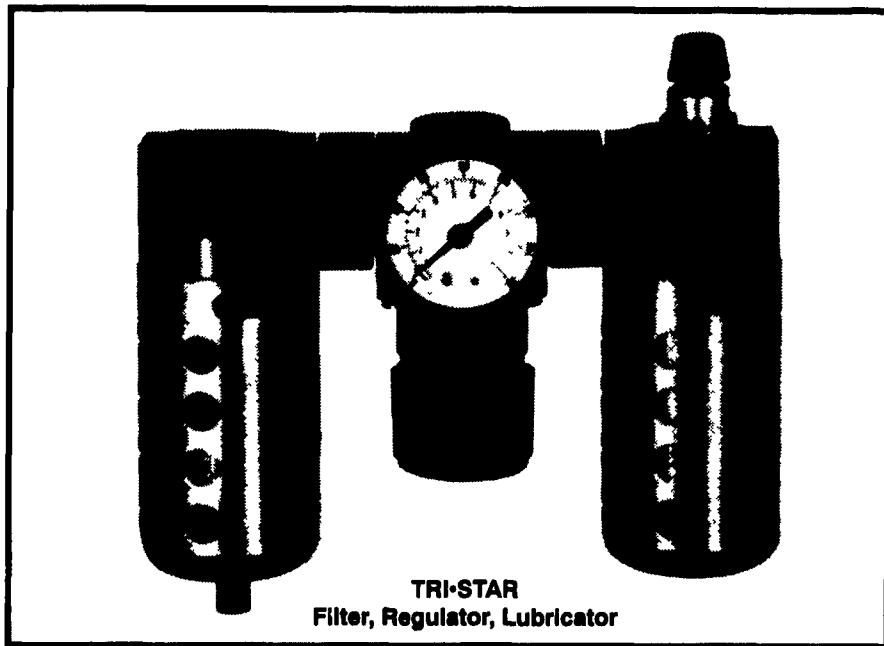
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