



Snow had been falling, softly, silently, but swiftly, piling up for the past several hours.

With only a half-hour until the start of milking chores, the phone rang. It was John, scheduled for milking and wondering if The Farmer could fetch him in the farm pickup. Snow on most roads was rapidly deepening and his small car might have problems plowing through at spots.

Just as the pickup headed up the road for the few-minute trip, the phone rang again. Expecting it to be our other scheduled milker, Angie, calling to say she couldn't get out the long lane due to the deepening snow, I was surprised to hear her mother's voice instead. And it was calm and controlled, considering the reason behind the call.

"I think we have a chimney fire," she said, asking if The

Farmer could quickly run over to take a look at it, since her husband was working and she was there alone with their three teenage/young-adult children.

While no walls felt hot and no evidence of fire was escaping the chimney, she was extremely concerned over the repeated blaring of their smoke detector and the crackling sounds in the woodstove pipe. And she was understandably reluctant to begin tearing pipes apart in the event it might further stoke flames if there was a problem.

"He just left," I hated to tell her, "but he should be back in a few minutes."

"I'd better call 911," she decided.

Though I listened for sirens from the fire company just a mile and a half away, they never sounded. The longer it went, the more I

began to worry. When the pickup pulled in front of the house soon afterward, my message sent The Farmer hurrying back up the road through the accumulating several inches of snow.

Calling Diane back to affirm that he was on his way, I was astounded when she told me that firemen were already there. Not more than six or eight minutes could have elapsed from her initial call to me.

And, thankfully, everything seemed to be under control.

Relieved over that news, I bundled up in sweatshirts and hat, pulled on a pair of rubber boots and headed out to help start the milking, since we were now minus two for the barn chores. The calmness and quiet outside and the normal peacefulness of the cows chewing their cud inside the warm barn made a direct contrast with the adrenalin still pumping through my system over this potential disaster for our friends.

Milkers were busy on the first round of cows when The Farmer returned. In through the door with him came Angie, who had hitched a ride over in the pickup from her house, now safe, thanks to our instant-response neighborhood fire fighters. One had even plowed the snow in the lane on his way in with his work truck, clearing the way for any needed equipment.

But the problem had been mostly a backup of fumes that set off the smoke detectors, and an

extra hot fire that had spurred the crackling in the pipes. Knowing how quickly a slight overheat can become a major inferno, we all breathed a collective sigh of relief and renewed our appreciation for the dedication of firefighters everywhere.

The Farmer departed to return back to the scene of the woodstove scare one more time, just to make sure there were no further prob-

lems. After the milking was well under way and everything running smoothly, I returned to the house to calm down.

Shortly afterward, The Farmer returned, joined me at the kitchen table and observed with a grin that the day had already generated more excitement (for farmers and firemen alike) than we often see in a week.

All before breakfast. It was just 7 a.m.

## Museum Classes Scheduled In Hershey

HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — Hershey Museum offers a delightful array of children's classes scheduled from the beginning of March through late April. Class sizes are limited to allow instructors lots of time to meet the needs of each child. Pre-registration is necessary and a class fee is charged. For more information about classes and registration call (717) 534-3439.

MAKE AND BAKE PRETZEL CLASS gives active youngsters ages 4-6 the opportunity to roll, twist, bake and eat pretzels "made from scratch." Children will also measure and mix the ingredients. Saturday, March 4, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

WAXWORKS gives participants ages 6-9 the opportunity to experience a bit of the history of home lighting before 1860. By the time the class is over, youngsters will have dipped four, fat, ready-to-use beeswax candles to take home. Saturday, March 4, 1 - 2:30 p.m.

During MADE WITH CHOCOLATE, children ages 4-6 measure, mix, bake and sample scrumptious brownies, paint chocolate pictures, explore the Her-

shey exhibit and get some cocoa beans to take home. Saturday, March 11, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

THIS IS THE WAY WE SPIN THE WOOL teaches youngsters ages 7-9 the skills to card, spin and weave wool. Children will try to master the art of the drop spindle, and use a spinning wheel, then weave the yarn on a simple loom. Saturday, March 11, 10 a.m. - noon.

In EGGS IN A BASKET, children ages 4-6 color and decorate eggs, then embellish a wooden oval box in which to keep the eggs with all sorts of special materials. Saturday, April 8, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD is a lively class with all sorts of food as the focus of interactive songs and activities. Musician Jan Dunkle leads the group scheduled for Saturday, April 22, from 10 - 11 a.m.

BEANS TO BARS, scheduled for Saturday, April 22, from 10 - 11:30 a.m. for ages 8-10 gives young people the chance to work with what the Aztecs considered the "food of the gods." A variety of chocolate-related activities include mapping where cocoa comes from, taste-testing, and making a chocolate lollypop.

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First issue of The Old Country News will be available in the first week of January and March. Also in the March issue, a special section on the 100th anniversary of the founding of Lancaster, PA.

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