

On Being a Farm Wife
(and other hazards)
Joyce Bupp



My worst solo driving nightmares: a flat tire on a lonely stretch of highway, after dark; a broken fan belt crossing a run-down urban area, after dark; a car that simply refuses to start in an airport parking lot an hour away from home. After dark.

"Please car, don't do this to me," I pleaded to my car, parked in the Baltimore-Washington International airport's parking lot. It was after 10 p.m.; a drizzle had started to fall as I'd hopped off the parking lot bus on the last leg of a trip home from a dairy meeting.

My life is heavily dependent on two major pieces of "working equipment" — a car and a computer. And I am basically clueless as to how to make the simplest repair on either.

But this was probably not the battery, since there were lights and ignition turnover, just no engine startup. Nevertheless, a helpful gentleman pulled his car up to mine and proceeded to hook up a set of jumper cables. At least I had a working flashlight. As feared, the old standby jumpstart . . . did not.

"It's probably electronic," I sighed. Just two months before, a similar incident had occurred. But then the car was sitting in our garage and just a few miles from a good friend's family towing service. An electronic-system "map sensor" had failed. Whatever that is.

"Are you sure you have gas?" chuckled my good Samaritan, in a somewhat predictable male-to-female, automotive-problem query. I overlooked that when he generously offered use of his cellular phone to call home and beg The Farmer to come rescue me.

Next morning, The Farmer picked up another electronic part he thought might be the problem and we made the hour-long drive back.

"Try it," he said, after a few minutes under the hood. I did. It didn't. The control panel just kept demanding "check engine," in an indignant square of glow-red-orange color.

Accustomed to being able to repair — or at least make run enough to get to the shop — most anything with a motor, The Farmer has become increasingly frustrated with the "progress" of electronics in equipment. Sensors, under-the-hood computers and electronic monitors that scream "Error! Error! Error!" when something goes wrong don't cut it for our mechanic-magician with electrical tape and vise grips.

However, he doesn't give up easily and kept experimenting with wires and fuses and miscellaneous little electronic hookups. My excitement grew when for the umpteenth time I turned the key and the "check engine" light didn't come on.

"I need a piece of wire," he



Lancaster Society 8

Lancaster Society of Farm Women No. 8 met on May 10. Members toured the Christ's Home for Children in Paradise and then returned to the home of Evelyn Russell in Ronks for their meeting. Gladys Ney gave devotions and hostesses were Mildred Hurst, Arlene Witman, and Evelyn Russell. The June 14 meeting will be at Grace Heilbron's farm in Marietta and the members will have a bakeless bake sale.

wished, glancing around the bare parking lot. Inspiration hit when I remembered the spotlight was in the trunk. Slicing off a section of its wire, he bypassed the electronic blockade.

The car started right up and ran perfectly on the way home. Ultimate diagnosis was a deceased computer. Four days passed before the dealer could look at it — and four more before a replacement was shipped.

Generally not one to long for the "good ol' days," some days I'd like to regress from progress in the mandatory electronic-equipment trend of the times.

After all, if we can bypass a car's new, improved, electronics system with a section of spotlight wire and it runs great, why do we need that computer under the hood to mess it up?

York Society 26

Twelve members of Society of Farm Women York County Group 26 celebrated their 29th anniversary with a trip to Vanity Fair in Reading.

The group was organized in May 1966. Ruth Hake served as the first president. Charter members still in the group are Athena Beshore, Mary Conley, Catherine

Dorwart, Ruth Hake and Shirley Miller. Louise Pennay is an associate member.

The June meeting will be held at Paddletown Church on June 13. Group 20 will be entertained at this time.

The Spring Rally will be on May 23 at Dickinson College in Carlisle.

Berks Society 6

The April meeting of The Berks County Farm Women Group #6 met at the home of Naomi Mest, Oley. The guest speaker was Pastor Bruce Patteiger of Christ Lutheran Church of Dryville. He showed slides and talked about the trip he and members of his church took to the Lutheran Navajo Mission in Arizona.

The May meeting was an Everybody's Birthday Party held at the Pleasantville Diner. Poems were read by Dorothy Wagner and Joyce Mast. Birthday gifts were exchanged and door prizes were handed out.

The June meeting will be held at the home of Karen Hoffman, Oley.

Berks Executive Board

The Berks County Farm Women Executive Board met recently with 20 members in attendance. President, Wendy Lingle, opened the meeting.

Devotions were led by Lillian Bucks of Group #3.

For roll call, members stated if their gardens or flower beds were ready for the season.

A note was received from Martee Mentzer, chairman of the Farm Women Spring Rally, which will be held on Tuesday, May 23rd, at Dickinson College. She stated that Miss Pennsylvania, Kirsten Border, will be a guest speaker. Approximately 62 Berks County women will attend the Rally.

Janet Schlegel gave an agribusiness report. Agricultural night at the Reading Phillies, co-sponsored by the Reading Phillies, the Farm City Council and the Berks Southeast Cattlemen's Association, is slated for June 19. She also reported that new agriculture brochures will be printed

for distribution shortly.

Berks County Farm Women groups are donating to the Berks County Dairy Farmer's Association to help pay for the Dairy Princess Pageant.

All groups are asked to give a donation to the state project—Ag Awareness. A workshop for teachers will be held at Penn State July 23-28. Several Berks County teachers are interested in attending, and they, in turn, would go back to the classroom and teach their students about ag awareness.

Dorothy Lutz, County Convention chairlady, reported that the County Convention will be held on Saturday, October 7 at the Ag Center, Leesport. An auction will be held as well as a Silent Auction. Groups were assigned their duties at the Convention.

New by-law books were distributed to each group.

The next meeting will be held on July 10 in the conference room of the Ag Center.

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