

Full-Time 'Mr. Mom'

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more important to spend time with the children than to have money saved for the future.

He is using the time to take the children on field trips, fishing, and to see local attractions.

"One thing that I always wanted to take advantage of is a pick-your-own farm. Every year, as the extension agent, I helped compile a list of those places, but I never had time to take advantage of visiting one. I'm looking forward to it," he said.

In his job as extension agent, a lot of talk about pre-cut vegetables caused excitement in the industry.

"But as a shopper, I see greatly deteriorated quality in pre-cut vegetables and I don't see them as good value," Patton said.

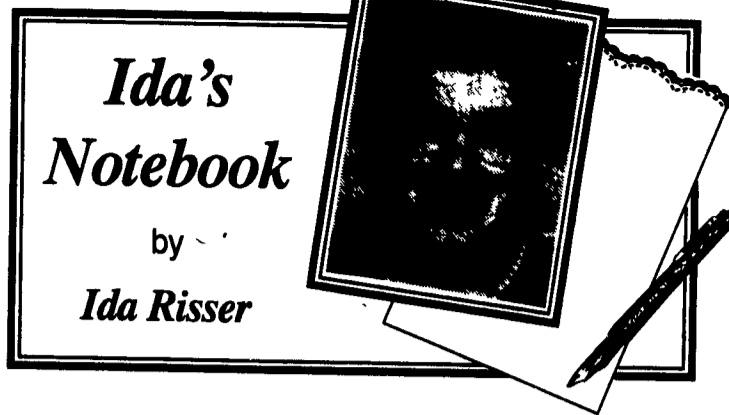
The Pattons own four acres, where Patton has used his horticulture interests to cultivate plants and a water garden.

"Although I'm a city girl, I've always dreamed of having a little piece of land," Carol said.

She grew up in a traditional family setting in the Allentown area. Her parents pushed education. Although gender roles were not stressed in her family, Carol's decision to become a doctor was something "I fell into instead of



Jeff said that he does feel a bit intimidated when he strolls past construction workers sweating on the job. His solution is to wear garden gloves while pushing the stroller. Which, he believes, gives the impression that he was sweating in the garden and only took a break to push his daughter in the stroller.



This Saturday, June 24, my grandmother would be almost 150

planned," she said.

She was a biology major in college when a professor encouraged her to take the exam to see whether or not she would qualify for medical school. She did qualify. Because she loved studying and learning, she decided to train in internal medicine.

She liked working in geriatrics. Although the medical profession doesn't consider that field as prestigious as some, for Carol it has been exactly right. Being a staff doctor for a nursing home facility allows her to work regular daytime hours — a privilege in medical care.

Patton's decision to become a stay-at-home dad not only allows Carol more time to spend with the children after work but also more time to cook and bake.

years old. This fact got me to thinking of some of the stories that I've heard about her life.

She was raised on a large farm in eastern Lancaster County with an older sister and a younger brother. One tragic story tells of the older girls being given the responsibility of watching their brother. Apparently, he wandered away and fell into a small stream in their meadow and drowned. This tragedy had a profound effect on the whole family and the mother spent her later years keeping a room full of dolls that she made. These were given to all visiting children.

My great-grandfather was a farmer who liked to travel as he crossed the ocean several times to

visit relatives. He also is remembered for putting a glass roof on his barn. Some of the blue, green, yellow and amber glass is still in my possession as it had to be removed because it was too heavy and made the barn too hot.

The barn on this property was burned twice. The first time was when a hired girl, who was hunting eggs, dropped her candle. Later, a simple-minded hired girl purposely set it on fire. My great-grandfather was coming home from Lancaster when he got the news. It is said that he immediately turned the team around and went back for a load of lumber to rebuild.

This farm had tenant houses, a blacksmith, a cooper, a wagon shed, pig sty, tobacco shed, and corn barn. The large brick house is still being used as a dwelling and the farm is quite productive.

My grandmother married Benjamin Landis when she was 19 years old and they moved to what is now "Landis Homes," a retirement village. That is where my mother was born.

Now that I've gone down memory lane, it is time to come back to reality and go to work in my gardens again.

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