

State Representative

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Sheila said of the barn used to store hay and machinery.

The Millers moved on the farm with only three Polled Herefords. They converted the overgrown land, cleared some woodland and turned it into hay and grain fields. At first, they used only five acres for pasturing. Now they use 30 acres divided into 12 paddocks. Deer are prevalent in the area, and knocked down several fences until the Millers invested in high tensile fence, which works well for their purposes.

When the Millers first purchased the farm, Sheila was editor of *Lancaster Farming*. "I had access to a lot of information that we applied on our farm," Sheila said of the crop management and barn building styles they selected.

"It was also through my job at the paper that I became interested in politics," Sheila said. "Through covering hearings in Harrisburg and legislature work in Washington, I got to know the senators and other legislators."

She accepted a job on the Senate Ag and Rural Affairs Committee of which she was later named executive director. Daughter Emilie was born during her 10-year stint on the committee. In 1992, when the seat for the 129th district became available, Sheila, through the proddings of many in the farm community, ran for state representative.

It was a seven-way primary and Sheila was the only one with a true farm background. After winning the primary, she proceeded to also win the general election — the first woman representative elected in Berks County.

"I refuse to run a negative campaign, which puts me in a minority position," Sheila said.

Like any political involvement, Sheila has occasionally been verbally attacked. While campaigning with her mother, a total stranger berated her for being a crooked politician simply because she was involved in politics.

While Sheila was inclined to remain diplomatic, her mother's protective instincts arose and she said, "That's my daughter and I

don't want you talking to her like that."

In retrospect, funny incidents such as those brighten the harsh realities of the political arena. Emilie was only three years old when she overheard adults talk about an upcoming tough political race. On the morning of the election, Emilie asked her mother if they would watch people running around the track for the race and if her mother thought one of the older men would be able to run fast enough.

Now 11 years old, Emilie has had plenty of exposure to political processes. She likes to visit the senators in Harrisburg, and thinks the rotunda is pretty.

"But I don't want to be in politics because I see how late my mom needs to work at night. I used to say I wanted to be the first woman president, but I don't say that anymore," Emilie said.

In the summertime, Mike and Sheila share responsibilities by taking Emilie with them to work. Or, sometimes grandparents care for her.

During the school months, Mike feeds the cattle before starting work at the Purina dealership in Richland at 7 a.m. Emilie and Sheila check the cattle before Emilie catches the school bus. Mike returns home at 4 p.m. when Emilie arrives home on the bus. Together they feed the cattle. Since Sheila became a representative, Mike does most of the farm work.

As she pointed to stacks of reading material on the coffee table, Sheila said, "The trouble with my job is that it can be a 24-hour day job. It requires lots of reading and I take it with me everywhere."

Sometimes Sheila reads mail and issue-related information until 2 a.m. and is up again at 5 a.m. to begin the days work, which requires her to study and be an expert on almost every concern that pertains to people living in her district.

"It's demanding, but rewarding to be of service to people," she said.

Sheila is pleased to have had three bills that she sponsored

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When the Millers first moved on the farm, the 1790's log house was the only standing structure. Since then, they covered the log house with stone in keeping with the time period.



This newborn bull calf will be weighed before it is 24 hours old. Cattle are bred to have birth rates around 80-90 pounds, because larger weights often cause birthing problems.

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