

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



Once again, Monk has the free run of the house. The computer keyboard no longer must be parked on top of the monitor. Knives can go back into the utensil basket of the dishwasher.

And the house is very, very quiet.

Our daughter and grandson have returned to Oregon after their three-week visit. Like others across the nation, she and her husband are headed back to their classrooms. But, gee, the place seems lonely.

I'd forgotten the chaos that can reign in the wake of a busy, inquisitive toddler. Or, "28 pounds of perpetual motion" my mother accurately labeled this rarely-still, 15-month bundle of boundless energy with the Grandma-melting grin.

Though a "city kid," he readily embraced farm life and the animals that play such a vital role in it. Tending calves proved to be a favorite event, explaining why the water buckets suddenly sprouted hay and grain littered the floor. Feeding the barn cats was also great fun, although the felines went a bit hungry the evening he dumped their milk down over himself.

Like all toddlers, his attention span is short. Only the most absolutely fascinating (or forbidden) things capture his focus for more than brief periods of time. Stopping in water happens to be one of those things. So, the calf barn water spigot, situated right down at a toddler's level, served as a captivating plaything while the bottles were fed and bedding was put down.

Even the calf housed in the pen by the spigot seemed to enjoy the visitor, reaching down to nibble at his sandy-blond hair. Not in the

least upset, Josh found being nibbled by a calf to be a great amusement and returned repeatedly to keep the entertainment going.

All other diversions fell by the wayside to the lawn tractor, however, which was conveniently parked near the calf pens for several days. Climbing on and off, turning the steer wheel and pretending to work the levers — all while the mower was parked — claimed his absolute attention. Left to watch him one evening while our daughter helped pull a truck out of a wet spot in a field, I enticed him away from the mower seat long enough to finish calf chores — toting him in the backpack.

Even that proved intriguing to Josh, who cleared away the spider webs that were gathering along the roof of one set of pens.

The only resident disturbed by his visit was Monk, our aging, snooty housecat. For the first several days of their visit, she hid out — in the basement, upstairs, behind the living room couch. Gradually, Monk adapted to the small extra in the house who found her positively fascinating, especially when she curled up on a kitchen chair at his eye level. Only once did he try to pet her before one of us was there to "help." His scratched nose attested to the encounter for several days afterward.

After the tears dried, he headed right back in her direction.

But now the blocks, the puzzles, and the balls are piled back into the toybox, on hold until another visit. The highchair, portacrib and car seat being returned to generous relatives and friends who loaned them to us. Wooden spoons, pan lids, plastic containers, and the favorite bag of pret-

## Fulton County Farm Women Plan Convention

Society of Farm Women of Fulton County will host their biennial convention on Saturday, September 7.

The morning program will begin with registration from 9 to 10 a.m. and will conclude after lunch. The convention will be held at the McConnellsburg American Legion in the ground floor banquet room.

Helen Overly will be keynote speaker for the program. Overly-Raker, Inc. is a unique soft-sculpture company which she and Freda Raker started in their basement near McConnellsburg, and which now has international connections and sales across the United States. Overly will recall some of the lighter side of running a growing business, and will also entertain with music on her ukulele. Linda Garber will have a display table from Sheep Ridge Farm, where she sells crafts as well as South-

Farm Women will be the first to see a short video produced by the local Tourist Promotion Agency, highlighting the annual Fulton Fall Folk Festival around the county.

A memorial service, installation of new county officers, bazaar table, and other items are on the program. Lunch features lemon pepper chicken. Cost of the convention is \$10.50 for Farm Women and guests. For reservations, call Mary Culler at (717) 485-3275 before September 2.

zels sit, undisturbed, in their respective cupboards. The Farmer has re-programmed the TV remote and I can step away from the computer keyboard without finding strange additions when I return.

Life is back to as normal as it ever gets here.

Except for the great big hole in our hearts that could only be filled by a toddler's grin and open, outstretched little arms begging to be picked up.



## Berks Society 4

A picnic lunch, games, crafts and homemade ice cream were enjoyed when Berks County Society of Farm Women Group 4 held their August meeting at the home of Verna and Charles Taylor in Loysville, Perry County.

President Virginia Taylor conducted the business meeting. A

memorial to Jean Waldo, a member for more than 20 years, who passed away recently was held.

Elsie Rothenberger and Verna Taylor were appointed to the nominating committee.

A pound auction will be held at the September 3 meeting at the home of Elsie Rothenberger, Powdermill Hollow Road, Boyertown.

## Lebanon Society 21

Lebanon Farm Women Society 21 met at the home of Millie Donmoyer, president. Members were scheduled to go miniature golfing, but, due to rain, the meeting was held on Millie's patio. For roll call, members answered the question:

What's your favorite flower?

New member Terry Shuey was welcomed, a poem was read and reports given on the mystery tour to the Hershey Rose Garden and Museum. Several members volunteered to help at the food stand during the fair.

## Lancaster Society 18

Lancaster Farm Women Society 18 held its August meeting in the home of Dorothy Brubaker. Ella Mae Hershey presented devotional thoughts to the 19 women attending. A

A most interesting and complete description about the training of life assistance dogs was given by a non-profit organization.

The dogs become capable com-

panions to assist elderly with post stroke, cerebral palsy and other mobility-impairment. With the two-year training costs \$8,000, the needy may purchase the dogs for \$300.

President Roberta Shepherdson conducted the business meeting and made announcements before the group sang the theme song and were dismissed.

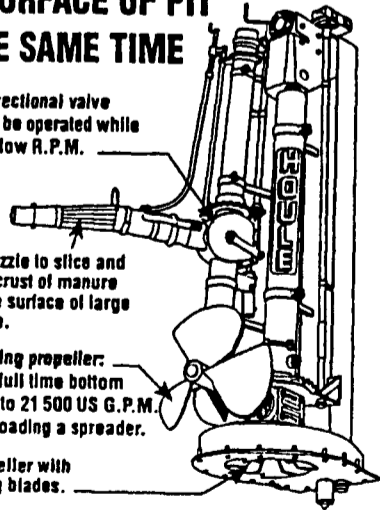
## Berks Society 3

Berks Society 3 met at Jeanette Millers from Barto for a family and so did the adults. Members picnic. Members had lots of enjoyable and different foods and desserts which were delicious. The next meeting will be a trip to The Mercer Museum in Doylestown.

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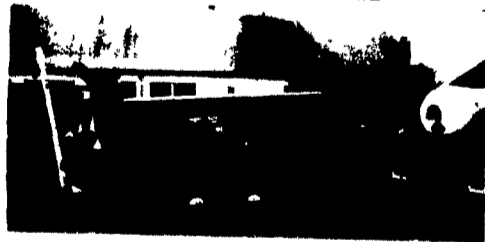
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