

Our early morning quiet . . . isn't necessarily.

Even when the noisy, giant fan blowing air across the cows at the barn to counter the steamy humidity is silenced by cooling breezes, other sounds invade that space between dawn and sunrise. The milking system motors, pumps, and compressors hum a steady, dull background. Jarring noises of an eighteen-wheeler connecting with a bump in the interstate pavement floats up through the 'holler.'

And a chorus of assorted bird-songs float down from the maple canopy, including the chirps of the cardinals demanding a bird-feeder refill.

Often during this "quiet" time

of day, I log onto the computer to access e-mail and check a couple of regular websites on the Internet. But, on one recent rare occasion, the dial-up failed to make connection. No e-mail or www-website checking in that early morning quiet time.

As the day wore on, though, websites turned up with embarrassing frequency. For as long as I can remember, this phenomenon has occurred annually, as the summer wanes and wobbles toward fall solstice. Reality is, the entire farm has become one big web network. And there are umpteen addresses of the sites, accessible through fww. - FarmWide Web.

One, website, located right on the front door and visible to all

who pass through, could be labeled *fww.frontdoorweath*.

Host for this website is a small, front-door spider. Its dusty web is neatly woven around the circle of grapevines shaping the door decoration, and carefully attached in among the fluffs and folds of the fading-pink paperhusk bow. From this lair, the spider awaits the assorted bugs it may snag as they are attracted to the porch light and become its breakfast guests. A sort of spider *fww.bugbuffet*.

Not too far away is another web location, *fww.bathroomwindowsscreen*. This site, originally installed to discourage insect pests, instead supports a couple of patches of web woven by a cousin to the front-door resident. Surrounded by the patchy web, the spider host enjoys a view of the backyard framed by trees and the vista of contoured fields beyond.

A more highly developed site, with oodles of links to web hosts, caught my attention recently while milking. Several large vented sections in the dairy barn ceiling connect with fans installed high up in the barn attic. It's part of the ventilation system designed to continually

exchange the body heat given off by cows with fresh outside air.

At *fww.blockbarnventilation*, horde of webweavers has strung sites across the four-by-four, metal, louvered vents, constructing huge spider metropolitan areas. Their combined efforts, further layered with fine dust rising from the sawdust bedding we use, providing an efficient barrier to air circulation.

The long-handled shovel that is part of our regular milking equipment, used to clean stalls before attaching the milking machines, proved to be a great way to connect with this website. And wipe it off the network. But not without a shower of dust as the site collapsed into limp lumps of unwanted webbing. That site has been reopened as *fww.airmovesagain*.

To be honest, the longer one

surfs around the farmstead, the more websites become apparent. There's *fww.Spanishmoss*, the visual effect rendered under the old barn by colonies of spinners. At *fww.frilly fences*, our artistic arachnids have woven fanciful, symmetric webs among the split-rail that surrounds the yard, truly lovely sites when the dew which gathers on them sparkles in the early-morning sun. And a vast website exists at *fww.pureorganicplants*, our backyard and garden where the absence of pesticides encourages spider creations hanging on everything from the seven-foot sunflowers to the diminutive and dainty gerbera daisies.

Indeed, our FarmWideWeb is getting highly cluttered and is badly in need of some cleaning up. There is an effective web virus that should do the trick.

You can access it at *fww.broomsweeps-clean*.

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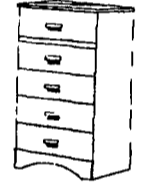
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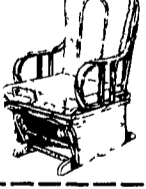


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