

On Being a Farm Wife
(and other hazards)

Joyce Bupp



Why?
"Why is it a poppy, Grandma?"

"I don't know why it's called that, Josh. But isn't it a pretty color? See, there are lots more of them coming here on the pond bank. Maybe they'll be different colors."

"Why are they here?"

"Because Grandpa planted some wildflower seeds here last year and some of them grew into these poppies."

No, we don't want to pick them all, because we need to let some of them go to seed for more next year."

Why?

Why, indeed? On this evening-walk-around-the-meadow time, our five-year-old quizzer was exercising two of his favor-

ite loves: picking flowers and asking questions. Before we wandered very far from the plant source of the fire-engine-red poppy bloom, we had decided maybe we needed a "mommy" to go with the poppy. And maybe a grandpoppy and a grandmommy bloom, too.

Farther along, we yanked off a couple of stalks of what I grew up calling wild mustard, and The Farmer calls "yellow rocket." Or maybe they're two different plants.

"Why are they yellow rockets?"

"I don't know, Josh. Maybe because they're tall and stand straight up in the air, like rocket ships ready to blast into the air."

Ahead we spotted the first blooms of the young rhododen-

tron shrubs planted in the more shaded areas along the little stream which flows out of the meadow. We don't want to pick those, I suggested.

"Why?"
And before my explanation was out that the plants were still too small to have stems broken from them, the cluster of fuchsia pink rhodie blooms had been added to the growing bouquet for his mom. Oh well, a little pruning never hurt.

Adding to his growing fistful of colorful wild (and tame) flowers were a few stalks of one of the common plants which thrives along the roadsides, lumped in what that assortment we usually generalize as "weeds." This one produces quite a pretty little flower, pure white, each separate blossom slightly less than inch wide. Its five triangular petals are each shaped like tiny, elongated hearts, clustered around a sort of teeny, feathery center. And poking out of the center are hair-like, yellowish-white reproductive parts, rooted deep into the puffy green calyx under the five Valentine petals.

them. Or even cared. But when added to Josh's fistful of blooms, they were really quite dainty and pretty. They even had a light, sweet scent, a definite plus in any bouquet.

Later, at dusk, Derra Dog and I walked the short distance to where a whole patch of the white blossomed roadside weed was blooming. Flowers for indoor bouquets are rather sparse right now and a bunch of them plopped into a small white

stoneware pitcher made a very attractive natural arrangement, scenting the whole corner of the kitchen.

Intrigued, I dug out a couple of weed and wildflower identification guides and repeated the kids' favorite question: Why? One would think some botanist could have come up with a name more appealing than "bladder campion."

How would you explain that one to a five-year old plant lover?



PA Forestry Judging

Four 4-H members were chosen to represent Pennsylvania at the National 4-H Forestry Invitational event, held on April 29 at Ag Progress Days woodlot in Rock Springs.

The National Invitational will be held from July 30 to August 3 at the Jackson's Mill 4-H Camp in Weston, West Virginia. Chris Stroup from Warren County placed first overall, as well as first in the forest evaluation and tree identification events and second in the written exam, insect and disease identification, and the compass use events.

Wayne Chmiekwski from Warren County placed second overall. He had first place finishes in tree identification and compass use events. Richie Ainey from Susquehanna County placed third. He placed second in tree identification and forest evaluation, as well as third in insect and disease identification.

Tim Heyler from Tioga County placed fourth overall, with a first place finish in the written exam and a third place finish in tree identification. The fifth place finisher, Julie Dunkerton from McKean County, will replace Wayne Chmiekwski on the team. He has a commitment to the armed forces. Julie had second place finishes in the written exam and insect and disease identification events. She also tied for third in the forest evaluation event.

Pennsylvania Chapters of the Society of American Foresters, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Penn State School of Forest resources, and International Paper - Mason Division sponsored and assisted with this year's event.

Franklin Co. Dairy Judging

A team from Franklin County took second place honors in the senior 4-H division at the Penn State Dairy Science Club Dairy Judging Contest held March 18 at University Park.

Team members included Emily Stuff, Mercersburg; Rachel Oliver, Greencastle; and Kyle Burdette, Mercersburg. Stuff placed eighth overall in the contest, and Oliver placed tenth. Burdette was fourth high individual in reasons.

Other 4-H members from Cumberland County participating in the contest were Aaron Horst, Travis Harshman, Matthew Reichard, Christopher Goetz, Melinda Martin, and Barbara Reichard. The coaches were Dale Mummert, Brian Derr, and Emme Mellott.

Irish Hill Shamrock Club

The first annual meeting of the Irish Hill Shamrocks was called to order at 2 p.m. on April 16 in Birchardville by Jamie Holbert. 11 members attended the meeting.

New officers were elected, including President Matt Fearnley, Vice President Chantal Richard, Secretary Melissa Zamorski, and Treasurer Chris Stanis. Club members decide that dues would be \$2.50 for this year.

Club members discussed 4-H State Days and filled out enrollment sheets. It was also announced that projects need completed by August 18 so they can be in the fair building for the 4-H Fair, which is August 20 through 24.

The next meeting will be held at the Birchardville Hall at 2 p.m. on May 20.

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