

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

What goes with June more than roses?

Other than brides, graduations, and strawberries. And, roses compliment all those, too.

For years, I attempted to grow picture-pretty roses. While I never spent a fortune on them, they still account for considerable time investment over the years of purchases, plantings, and thwarted results. Over the past many years, I've planted and planted them in the lower, sunsplashed section of the lawn border, where the soil is rich and is the last to dry out, even in drought conditions. Containers of "rose care" additives have come and gone, leaving us with some of the healthiest looking dead rose stumps around in that area of flower bed, where roses just ought to thrive.

Most of the garden-backbone perennials and bushes do fine in our garden. Iris have thrived and reproduced until several large clumps are almost demanding separation. Not a major challenge, since iris will grow just about anywhere they're not standing in water. Except for those water-loving types which thrive with damp feet, like the dainty white Siberians, which I had in the border for years, slowly diminishing in numbers, until I moved them to the edge of the first pond. Bursting with vigor, they rival similar relatives in yellow and sky blue for showiness.

Daylilies likewise thrive here. Of course, a daylily, especially the old-fashioned single orange types, make an effort to bloom even if dug up, tossed in a corner and ignored for awhile. Peony bushes return each year, hostas have nearly taken over several shady areas, and one section of border has grown into a thick tangle of blooming shrubs much loved by the mockingbirds. Especially as a launch spot for attacks on the blueberry bushes nearby.

But roses? Frankly, I'd just about given up on 'em.

Except for two old reliables. One is a bright pink hybrid tea, which faithfully returns year after year, blooming off and on all summer long with almost no care. The other is also a bright pink, a plant which turned out to be a climber in a non-climbing location, sends out huge, thick arcing stems bearing almost-lethal thorns, fairly "bug" resistant and yielding enough lovely flowers each year to keep tweaking my interest in these fussy things.

But, between the two, in about a 25-foot stretch, is no-man's-rose land. Just days ago, I unearthed and moved the faltering remnants of a fading clump of thorny-stems, offering one last shot to a faltering survivor. Having finally come to grips with the fact that there is an always-wet drain field under that area, I have given it over completely to annuals and bulbs. Two dozen

dahlias are already thumbing their blooming noses at the pernickety rose remnants.

"To heck with roses," I had finally decided after seasons of repeated frustration.

So, when The Farmer lugged home some \$2 leftover roses last year along with a supply of hardware and miscellaneous repair stuff, I wondered if I should bother. Then my eyes focused on a neglected section of potential around our old spring house, the lush weed growth testimony to rich, well-drained soil. A likely place for roses, I figured, ignoring the plant-no-more-roses vow I had made. These potted orphan-plants begged for a little Tender Loving Care.

Turned out these were not hybrid teas, but smaller bloomed floribundas which promise to be more durable and less persnickety. Sure enough, they survived the summer drought, warm-and-cold extremes of winter, spring's wide-ranging weather, and are poking up blooms and new growth.

Offering added encouragement is the pink-blooming climber, which has literally covered its vigorous octopus-growth of jaggy stems with dozens of fat blooms, probably almost as many as the last five years combined. Maybe I CAN grow roses after all.

We shall see. Because I returned home from a couple-day meeting to discover on my way to the barn this morning an assortment of potted, left-over but lush rose bushes parked on the basement porch. Along with a four-foot-tall rose "tree." And I know where to put them so that they have a fightin' chance.

Wait "til I tell him that rose tree will need to be tucked into a trench next fall so its graft survives winter's zero temperatures.



Brianna Smith holds flowers from the cutting gardens at The Greensmith, owned by her mother Deb Smith. The Greensmith, Sand Hill Rd., Selinsgrove, allows customers to stroll through annual flowers, foliage, and herbs to pick their own bouquets or place custom orders. In addition, The Greensmith grows annual bedding plants, perennials, and flowering shrubs. They specialize in custom container gardens and sell unique "blooming antiques" — chairs, pails, watering cans, teapots — all overflowing with flowers and foliage. Check out the landscaped theme areas such as butterfly, herb, English cottage, and fragrance gardens. Open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. or by appointment. Call (570) 374-7544.

### Ladies' Day Out

MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.) — June 19 is set for the annual regional Ladies' Day Out for the Pennsylvania Farmers Association. Hosted by the Lancaster County Farm Bureau, a special day is planned for all women of the "agricultural persuasion", held at the Leola Family Restaurant.

The program for the day will include speaker Nancy Wiker

who will answer the question "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?" A luncheon complete with door prizes and other entertainment will allow time to spend at the shopping outlets nearby.

Tickets are \$12 for the day. Send reservation to treasurer Esther Stoltzfus at 5675 Lincoln Hills Drive, Gap, Pa. 17527 or call her at (717) 442-4961.

### Herb Fest To Feature Nationally-Known Speakers

YORK (York Co.) — The second annual Pennsylvania Herb Fest is scheduled June 24 at the York Exposition Center.

Nationally-known speakers will teach on growing and using

herbs in cooking, crafts, and medicine. About 65 herbal vendors and a herbal luncheon will be available. For more information, call (717) 528-7979.

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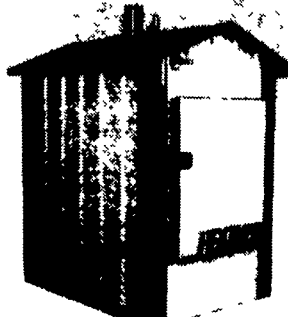
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