

On Being a Farm Wife

(and other hazards)

Joyce Bupp



There's always a special announcement waiting when I log onto our Internet connection server.

Generally they turn out to be some sort of sales pitch. Surprise, surprise.

One recent one was for a digital camera, easily had for only x-number of easy payments. For more information, just click on the "tell me more" button.

Another, which has popped up more than once, is the opportunity to subscribe to an on-line greeting card opportunity for only x-bucks per year. I send cybergreetings occasionally — free ones.

So, I'm cheap. Here in south-central Pennsylvania, we prefer

to consider ourselves "thrifty." (And yes, I reuse plastic bags and aluminum foil, too.)

Which is why I was amused at the latest promotion beaming from the screen when I logged into cyberspace a few days ago. It announced: "Easily create the garden or yard of your dreams!"

Lumping the words "easily" and "garden/yard" together in a sentence is a dead giveaway to hype beyond reality. But, I could have the software to help me have beautiful land and gardens for free. All I'd have to pay would be the shipping and handling. And it would provide a database of a couple of thousands of plants, especially recommended for our particular growing condi-

tions (lots of cacti, apparently?) as well as hundreds of garden objects and structures for decorative purposes. (And lots of links to other stuff for sale, adds our family computer professor.)

Sounds like a seed catalog to me — and see how fast my mouse clicks the "no thanks!" choice. Software stacked from here to the moon isn't going to do battle against the anti-garden forces hovering around our back yard.

For instance, our lower lawn this summer sports what appears to be a "go-kart" track. We are not practicing for NASCAR, but spent the last few months hauling twice-daily, tanks-full of water to enhance our failing source. And the tractor and tank made its circle right in our straw-colored yard, creating the nice racetrack effect.

Then there's the cow hospital corner.

Cindy and Marilyn are two older cows, both which developed sore feet. Foot care and treatment left them with extended "ouchiness." Cindy was first, turned out onto the shaded lawn for greater comfort and better footing. After several days of extra attention, her condition improved to where

she began meandering around the yard. The night she plunked down to sleep in the flower beds I suggested she graduate to pasture.

Two days after Cindy was returned to more proper cow facilities, Marilyn came in line for lawn occupancy. Same scenario. Same spot in the flower bed.

Adding to the barnyard atmosphere of that corner is this summer's Canadian goose hatchlings, now all grown up. But the willow at yard's edge offers the most comfortable, cool spot this muggy, hot summer and the flock of nearly 20 gather there during the heat of the day to alternately lounge and splash. Every day, they work their way a little further up into the yard.

With our ponds literally drying up in the meadow, like many others in the area, the geese are finding ideal spots at more of a premium than in many past years.

But that "free" software doesn't address a lawn full of lounging geese or 1,400-pound cows munching the marigolds.

Guess we'll skip that offer, too.

DelVal To Offer Food Service Management

DOYLESTOWN (Bucks Co.) — Delaware Valley College announced recently it will offer a new major in Food Service Management beginning the fall semester.

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For more information call Mike Simone, chair of business administration, at (215) 489-2213.



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