

On Being a Farm Wife

(and other hazards)

Joyce Bupp



The "Stars and Stripes" flies from our front porch this Independence Day week.

An American flag waves there in the breezes, not just on our nation's birthday, but on every day that is not wet or stormy (most of the time lately!) or when I'm not here to hang it from the porch railing holder. We've gone through several flags since we began flying one years ago, in support then of a young Marine friend sent to the Middle East during the Desert Storm operation.

Our current flag is one contributed recently by our daughter, to replace the worn red-white-and-blue banner which had faithfully waved for a couple of years. Its fading colors and tattered edges testified to days of exposure to sunshine and, worse, the harsh

battering of the persistent winds of last winter and early spring.

We fly the flag, this week and every week, in tribute to and support of all the men and women serving in our armed services, and especially for extended family members and personal friends in the military. We fly the flag as well in honor and remembrance of those who have served in the past. Our nation exists only because of their dedication to the cause of upholding our principles of freedom and defending our independence with fierce national pride.

But our flag flies for others, as well, whose lives and sacrifices make the American way work with a myriad of other contributions. Too often, the threads they weave through the fabric of our free and democratic society go

unacknowledged and unappreciated.

Our flag flies for those who faithfully report to jobs, day after day, which help keep our nation running, healthy, and moving ahead. It flies for the policemen, the firemen, the emergency responders, the medic folks, and countless volunteers who look out for our safety and health — sometimes at great danger to their own.

Our flag flies for those who labor in jobs like picking up the trash of our wasteful, throwaway society, keeping our sidewalks, highways, parks, and public areas clean and neat. It flies for hotel maids and restaurant busboys, for those who do commercial laundry, hang from skyscrapers washing windows, and empty office trashbaskets, for the millions of maintenance people unseen and often overlooked. Until they aren't there.

Our flag flies for the utility folks who shinny up poles in the aftermaths of thunderstorms, blizzards, tornadoes, hurricanes, and piece back together our power networks to keep lights on and motors cranking. It flies for tow truck operators and mechanics who rescue us from vehicle breakdowns, uptown, downtown, out in the middle of nowhere, sometimes in the middle of the night. It flies for repair folks of

all sorts, who keep the wheels of life greased and turning.

Our flag flies for those who care for and teach children, especially those who guide them through the critical foundation years. It flies for those who work with the special needs, the gifted, the physically challenged, the learning disabled.

Our flag flies for those who counsel wayward youngsters, who listen to troubled teens, who befriend our aged. It flies for those who open their hearts, their homes, their lives to the lonely, the lost, the homeless, those down-and-out for reasons beyond our, or their, control.

Our flag flies for those who labor, by day, by week, by year, at jobs of manufacturing, and construction, inventing and engineering, at creating jobs and stimulating our economy. Each one is a cog that helps keep commerce turning.

Our flag flies for our fellow

farmers, the one percent of our population which keeps the rest fed. They persist, despite bashing by weather and bureaucrats, commodity price levels at less than cost of production, urban encroachment, and competition from food sometimes produced in places around the world far from the strict inspection and food safety regulations required of the domestic industry.

We are free because we are not hungry. We are free because only a tiny fraction labors for the provision of food, providing for the rest to pursue industry and inventiveness and entrepreneurialship that generates jobs, fuels commerce, stimulates the economy.

We fly the flag because we are a free and independent nation. We are free and independent because we are well-fed.

May our flag long fly over a nation that never takes that for granted.

Who's Been Dairy Farming The Longest?

KINGSLEY (Susquehanna Co.) — Shana Mack, Susquehanna County Dairy Princess, is seeking the dairy couple who has been actively farming the most number of years. She would like to honor this couple at a special event this year.

The requirements are that the couple live in Susquehanna County and are still milking cows.

Please send nominations with the couple's name, address, phone number and number of years in the dairy farming business to Shana Mack, RR 2 Box 199, Kingsley, PA 18826.



Shana Mack, Susquehanna County Dairy Princess

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