

AMERAUCANA BREEDERS CLUB
MARCH/APRIL 1993
VOL. XV #2



OUT WEST

The chicken stamps article in the last issue of the bulletin was quite interesting. After collecting poultry stamps from around the world for many years I found by accident, Mary Lou Phelps was also a collector. She now has our combined collections, so probably has one of the finest in the United States. I still have a plate block of the commorative poultry industry issue signed by the late Frank Gary, of the ABA, who was present when the idea of a poultry stamp was planned.

A number of years back Roumania put out a postage stamp with a full-faced view of the Naked Neck. I sent one of my duplicates of this issue to my old friend, Bernard Kellogg, who is compiling and writing material for a book on this breed. Incidentally, Bernard also has a large collection of glass hens on the nest which I hope to see some day soon. Perhaps this fall when I swing back to Iowa for our upcoming National Meet in September.

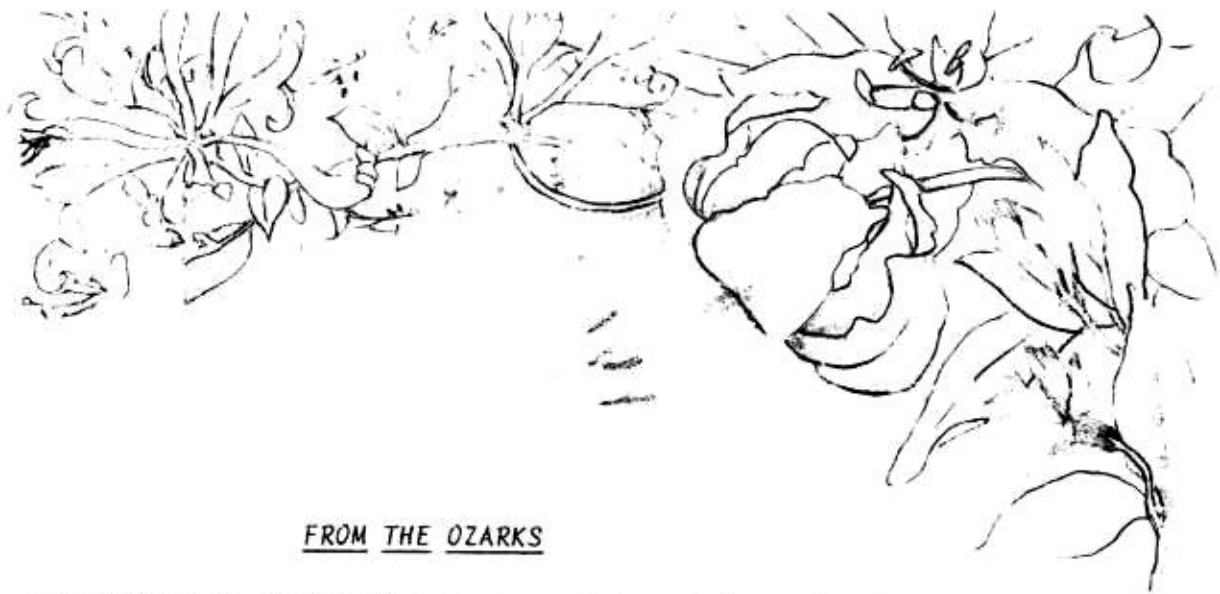
The idea of a breeders forum for our bulletin came to mind recently and I would like to re-instate this feature again this year. I will select a group of veteran Ameraucana breeders at random from those showing at the last National Meet and ask them to comment on various aspects of our hobby that have been successful for them. Topics will include breeding, feeding, showing, etc., and may provide some helpful tips to the membership at large.

If you would like to participate in this exchange of ideas, please drop me a note at: 5545 Marconi Ave. #136, Carmichael, CA 95608. I would like to include a broad range of ideas, so please let me know if you would like to be included in this project, as it is open to all of you who might be interested.

This is a strange year for weather all across the country - I hope your hatch is good!

Don Cable,
President





FROM THE OZARKS

Happy Easter - may all those little blue eggs contain a future champion.

Winter took a vacation until February and then paid us a visit with vengeance. We had 12 inches of snow on the 15th. Then a few days later another 5 inches. But, we had nothing to compare with the one that hit the east coast. We've been cloudy all month -- so far only 2½ days of sunshine out of 25! A few of the spring bulbs are blooming and the red maples are showing. Forecast says maybe 70's by this weekend.

I got a phone call "out of the blue" last month - from an advertising agency. They were looking for a chicken to photograph for a Tyson Foods ad. I told them the only white birds I had were Cochin bantams and I really didn't think that was what Tyson had in mind. We decided I would bring over a pair of large Dominiques the following Monday.

I have a 3 year old male I was pretty sure would behave himself, but none of the hens are overly tame. So after chores I brought my "picks" to the house to do a bit of primping - since we had mud ankle deep they definitely needed their feet scrubbed. They got their feet and faces cleaned and dressed with Vetrex. They settled right down in their carriers. Our appointment was for one o'clock.

The building is a huge warehouse type with offices here and there. The photo room was huge and the set up was an old door laid on bales of straw. The birds were totally free. All told, things went real well - nobody escaped! Nuck-Nuck, the male, didn't want to pose - we never did get him to keep his head and tail up at the same time. But they did get a couple good pictures of him and a really nice one of the hen. We had a good laugh over the project, since most of their work is with food products which they put on a plate and photograph from above! One of the fellows said, "At least it doesn't run off." Seems Tyson's idea was to take a broiler chicken, have it "mounted" and use that in their layout. The photographer said that was a real turn-off for him and he wanted to see what they could do with live birds. Who knows, maybe someday the Doms will be famous! It was a fun experience!

No babies around here yet -- the hens are just starting to lay.

Think about those awards for the National in Sept. It'll be here before we know it. We will pass on motel information as soon as we have it from the Iowa Club.

There is an excellent article on feeding oats in the ABA Winter Quarterly by Wallace Leverett. Maybe we could print it in the next newsletter, especially the part on sprouting oats.

Good wishes - good hatching,
Mary Lou Phelps, CDD
Feb. 25, 1993

REFLECTIONS FROM THE BIG SKY COUNTRY

First thing - an apology - to Mary Lou for not giving her recognition for the article on stamps that I used for the cover of the last ABC newsletter.

And a hearty "THANK YOU" to all of you who have written - a note, letter, sent an article or whatever. One of the benefits of being the editor/secretary of this club is the correspondence from the members.

Since I have taken over as Sec/Treas of ABC I have tried to respond to every member who has sent dues with a receipt, membership card and a note within a twenty-four hour time span. I usually get around to answering letters in two or three days. (One of my major complaints of being a member of a club has been the lack of communication...never knowing for sure if my dues are paid or not.) I have always maintained that communication is the life blood of a club.

As you can see from this newsletter our members have written about a myriad of subjects. Unfortunately, I could not use all of the correspondence in this newsletter...saved some for the next time. I hope you will continue to keep me supplied with letters, articles, etc. to print.

Ginny Treager is the Western District Director. I've known Ginny for several years.. when she lived in Great Falls before she moved to Kalispell. I wish I could reproduce the newspaper photos with better clarity. I've always known Ginny was a busy lady. Very impressive winnings, Ginny!

I like Don's idea of the forum. Hope he is successful with it. Should make for some interesting reading. Unfortunately, too many breeders keep the information in their heads. Maybe with the forum more will be shared with the members...experienced and beginners.

As of this writing (3/24), I can only say Jeanne T is in Mississippi...south of Hattiest 3
Since her accident in December she has been unable to go back to work. Her cast is off but she is still recuperating. She had a chance to go to So. Mississippi so drove down with just Crissy, her dog, as company. Haven't heard from her since she left MT. Hope she is okay. UPDATE: 3/29 I just received word that Jeanne is back in MT..but not alone. Maybe Jeanne will write us an article for the next newsletter.

It is never too early to start thinking of the National Show in Sept. Hopefully, by now you have the champions hatched and growing...so now's the time to think about what trophies and awards you want to win. Future newsletters will have more information.

Has Spring sprung in your area? My Bitterroots are up, the tulips have grown 6" in four days. Caraganas are starting to leaf out, willows are looking green. Grass has begun to turn green (and grow). Irises are peeking out of the ground. Boy, do I have yard work to do. With my husband building a new shop for his semi-retirement next year, I will have more of the outside chores to do. Sure will cut into my fishing time.. last time we went fishing was 3/21. We drove to Craig, MT and fished the Missouri River. The Missouri has not been good fishing for awhile (too many that abuse it) so we were really surprised that we had so many bites and really surprised when I landed a 3# rainbow. I caught a 14" brown that was released. Jerry caught a rainbow. The fish in the Missouri are hard to hook. There must have been 100 fishermen in a 25-30 mile stretch of the river that day. (Don't worry, Don, We know plenty of places to take you to fish.)

In closing, I'd like to let all of the members know the deadline for getting articles, items, letters, etc to me for the May/June ABC newsletter. It is May 24, 1993. My address is: P. O. Box 824, Great Falls, MT 59403-0824.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Jeanette Frank

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE -

Dear Jeannette,

I was really sorry to hear about Jeanne. I hope that she's progressing nicely and am delighted hear that she's not completely cut off from the outside world. (If nothing else, its nice to be able to dial 911!)

Our big news is that we were really glad to have 911. Our barn burned down, Feb 17, at 2 A.M. We're not sure, but we think that it may have been condensation dripping on a heat lamp. The goats and most of the sheep got out. The two ewes who had just lambed did not.

One of the dogs is chained to the windmill. His barking woke Bill up, and clanging his chain got Bill out of bed. Then he saw the fire and called 911.

By the time the fire department got there the other barn had caught fire - but they got it out. Thank Goodness! The barn is falling down, but it's now the only shelter we have. So we now have rams, ewes, lambs and bred goats all in one barn. We have lots to be thankful for though.

1. We have the other barn.
2. No one was killed or injured.
3. We had insurance (not enough - it never is - but some)
4. It wasn't the ducks or chickens.
5. If the wind had been in the opposite direction - the garage and house would have caught.

It still distresses me to see a black gaping hole where the barn was - especially since we had jacked it up last summer and put a new foundation under it - and Bill had worked on finishing it all winter - all his tools were in the barn, but...

On the brighter side, we finally finished 4-H cultural arts. Susan, Edward and Katherine, who are all in 4-H, have been working for months on Arts & Crafts. Edward is now in the St. Croix Valley Boy Choir and with math classes on Saturdays, I meet myself coming and going.

ey're already planning on North Iowa and hope to get to Centreville in May. Susan is hatching Black large fowl and assorted bantams. She has plans for other large fowl but we only have 2 LF breeder cages and 3 for bantams.

That's all my news. The ice is melting so we'll have mud season for a while - and then SPRING! Call it what they like - SAD, cabin fever or whatever - I want to get outside and see something grow besides mold and mildew.

Pegi Ficken
Wilson, WI

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# Versatility is a winning talent

By ANNE CLARK  
The Daily Inter Lake

When it comes to winning blue ribbons, Ginny Traeger is the tops in northwest Montana; for the third time, she is the open-class competitor of the year for the Northwest Montana Fair.

It takes months to tally all the ribbons that people win at the fair each August. Traeger won a bundle, but her overall award is based on breadth of achievement, not sheer numbers. The winner of the top award must take blue ribbons in at least five open-class categories.

It's a campaign that requires versatility, planning, a good grasp of logistics — and a helpful family.

Traeger took the top award in 1986, the first year it was offered, with nine blue ribbons in six departments. Three years later, as soon as she was eligible for the prize again, she won it with 16 blue ribbons in six departments.

When she gave up her dairy goats, she was a little concerned that she'd never take the top prize again, but she needn't have worried. This year, she swept up 38 blue ribbons in eight departments.

In place of the two ribbons she had earned with her goats, she picked up ribbons in two new departments, fine arts and crafts. So this year, the tally was: fine arts, 1; crafts, 1; foods, 12; needlework, 2; dairy, 1; garden, 6; flowers, 5; and poultry, 11.

*Winning the top prize at the Northwest Montana Fair requires versatility, planning, a good grasp of logistics — and a helpful family.*

Except for the ribbons and a big trophy, she doesn't have anything to show off, because she gave the items to admiring relatives as gifts.

Those relatives were in residence when she mounted her campaign for the prize, cooking night and day the week before the fair.

"They all helped me haul it in," she said, but with 12 extra people at the house during the effort, it meant more than double duty for the cook.

"My nephews ate all the reject cookies," she said, noting that they were quick to label any item of food a "reject," so they could consume it.

On top of all the cooking, she also worked as a judge in the 4-H dog show during the fair.

Even with all that work and all her entries, winning was far from a sure thing.

She found that a red rose she entered had been swept inexplicably into the professional category, and a pair of chickens were apparently judged using criteria for the other sex.

"Some things that you think are wonderful don't even take a ribbon," she said. "A lot of it depends on what the judges like; it's one person's opinion."

The secret of winning is to fend off discouragement and keep trying, she said.

"The same exact item that didn't win one year might end up best-of-show the next; that happens whatever you're showing."

And she has one more secret, she added.

"My husband, Doug. He's the one who lets me stay



GINNY TRAEGER displays a year's worth of blue ribbons. (Inter Lake photo by Anne Clark)

Feb. 23, 1993

Jeannette Frank,  
Ameraucana Breeders Club  
P.O. Box 824  
Great Falls, Montana 59403-0824

Dear Jeannette,

Thank you for the nice note and the request for information about me and my chickens. I am interested in breeding large wheaten Ameraucanas.

Last year was my first experience back with poultry in many years. I raised 100 chickens of several different kinds. About 30 birds came from hatching eggs from a friend (pit games and Rock Cornish broilers) and from a breeder of standard exhibition New Hampshires. I ordered, from a hatchery here in Indiana, some brown egg layers and 10 straight-run Ameraucanas. Well, the hatchery made a mistake on my order and sent me 50 sexed Ameraucana pullets. Was I surprised when I opened the box and saw all those cute little chicks with beards and bright eyes!

Of course, the Ameraucanas were of every color and mixture. I have culled them hard, ending up with about a dozen. I selected for vigor and good size, abundant plumage, color and type. I got several wheaten pullets from the batch, including one very beautiful one in terms of color and type. Her flaw, from an exhibition standpoint, is her green legs. Only a few of the batch had slate legs, and most lay green rather than blue eggs. But they have been good and persistent layers.

Now it seems there are several people breeding large wheateans, but a few years ago when I was looking I couldn't find anyone. This April I am getting some large wheaten hatching eggs from ABC member Wayne Meredith in Waukesha, Wisconsin. I will breed them next spring (I'm really counting my eggs before they hatch!) to each other and try an outcross on a few of my hatchery strain.

I would be interested in working with other breeders of large wheaten Ameraucanas in the future to develop this variety. I like the charming, rustic beauty of the large Ameraucanas, especially in wheaten.

Sincerely,



Richard Gilbert



159 Klaus Anderson Rd.  
Southwick, MA 01077

February 24, 1993

Ameraucana Breeders Club  
Jeannette Frank, Sec/Treas  
P.O. Box 824  
Great Falls, MT 59403-0824

I'm writing for my daughter, Allison, age 11, who became interested in Ameraucanas through her 4-H poultry club. We've always had the usual barnyard chickens but she wanted something special to raise and breed just for herself. She chose Ameraucanas because they are rare around here and loved the idea of the blue eggs.

We ordered some through a catalog and out of twelve, only one was close to standard. After joining ABC we were put in contact with other people including Mike Gilbert. Last fall, we purchased a pair of blacks, and a silver and blue hen from him. These are now being bred.

Last spring, we were given eggs by a local man who was extremely helpful and generous to Allison in her pursuit. Out of the hatch we got several beautiful Wheaten and white pullets and cockerels. He also gave to her a "platinum wheaten" cock. Not a standard, but a real gorgeous bird. He is a silvery-blue with bright orange hackles and saddle. Allison is going to try breeding him with two different hens and see what she can come up with.

Allison takes her bird-keeping seriously and cares for them with great love. She washed and prepared several birds for the fall shows; in every show she took Best of Show (Junior Bantam) and in one show she took best reserve. She also won the state purple ribbon for most points. She seems to have a good "eye" for her birds and we let her decide which to cull and keep. In one year she now has twenty hens and roosters, which she is breeding. I think I know what her secret is, although she'll kill me for divulging it - She whispers and talks softly to her birds while holding them in her lap - especially the hens who are very dear to her.

I wrote to Mike Gilbert (he has been very kind and helpful to us with our many questions) that Allison's hobby is contagious and I have now succumbed. I guess I'll have to pay "Family Dues" instead of "Junior" next year. I just wanted ABC to know how essential your newsletter has been and will try to keep you informed of Allison's progress and failures.

Suzanne Morgan



Dear Jeannette,

As a child I had a father who almost always had some sort of poultry around, even though we did not live in the country. Years ago, in my neighborhood, everyone knew his neighbors (or was related to them) and we all had enough space in the backyard for some sort of critters. My Dad had bantam Cochins at one time, then I remember him raising pheasants commercially for a period. Later his construction/excavating business took most of his time. I was once given three ducks and three chickens for Easter as pets. I raised them as a child and remember many happy moments spent with my feathered friends. Back then, raising them simply meant feeding and housing them. I think the three chickens ended up being roosters because I don't remember ever getting any eggs.

Later on in my life, boys took over my interest and I did not have time for pets. My Dad passed away at the young age of 54. Before he died he had domestic turkeys that took up a lot of his time. He certainly enjoyed them and found that getting fertile eggs was a challenge. The challenge to my mother was getting the carcass of the turkey to fit the oven once my Dad had butchered one to eat. I remember that they got so big that one drumstick fit just comfortably in a small broiler pan. Mom had to remove the legs and wings to get the turkey in the oven!

I have always enjoyed and appreciated the tenderness & innocence of animals. After working in an office for a major insurance company as an underwriter for the past ten years I find the company of poultry and other animals very comforting.

I am now 39 years old...yes, I turn the big 4-0 this year. I am not looking forward to it, but I am thankful for being here. I have twin daughters, who have just graduated from high school and are in the process of setting up an apartment for themselves. My husband, George, enjoys poultry and other animals. After all, he built my coops, feeders, brooders...

Several years ago we moved about 20 miles from our home in Rockaway, NJ to the middle of a cow pasture in a place called Tranquility. And it is just as it sounds. I never thought I would live out of a city but now I never want to live anywhere else but where I am. We found an old farm house for rent and have been here for several years now. This property is part of an old farm consisting of three houses. Our house used to be an old carriage house. It needed a lot of fixing up but little by little we did it. There are no neighbors to be seen. There are cows in the pasture from May to December. We pet and feed them apples & carrots and revel at the many calves born in the fields. And of course the cows make a timely appearance when we have a family picnic and our friends & family enjoy the country "atmosphere".

My poultry hobby began two years ago when my husband constructed an 8'x8' pen with a few nest boxes. We thought it would be great to have a few chickens and fresh eggs. Note that the key word here is few. I started with a dozen of various breeds which were raised by someone who had to get rid of her birds because of complaining neighbors. A local poultry auction is where I found them. They were perfect. Clean, attractive, multi-colored. I was in seventh heaven coming home every day and going on an Easter egg hunt in my own backyard.

Then my family and co-workers were pleading for fresh eggs. I never had enough. Soon I found myself selling a dozen here and there to help pay for their upkeep. I have never made any money on my hobby but my birds have always come close to paying their own way. All of my birds are pets. And each has a name. My husband teased me for naming them and now finds himself calling them by name. He has also found that each has its own personality. I have read every book on poultry I could find. I had several chickens that have had problems. I was horrified when one had a puffed vent and others simply died. None of the local veterinarians would be bothered to look at a chicken and they knew nothing of how to treat a sick or injured one. Many people treat chickens the same way they treat a dog...put in a coop in the backyard, thrown food and water and forgotten. If it gets sick...kill it. That's not what I want for my birds. A lot of hard work but worth it to keep their pens and water clean.



(continued)

Of all my chickens, I have a soft spot in my heart for my blue egg layers, the Ameraucanas. I have broug the breed out into the open in this state. Many people thought chicken eggs were only white or brown. My dozen egg cartons are unique...they consist of mostly blue to blue-green eggs, some white, some brown and a few cream colored. I now have not only Ameraucanas but also Australorps, Brahmas, Silkies, Sebrights and RI Reds and Leghorns. My "small" backyard flock now consists of over 70 birds. This includes turkeys, geese and quail. I would much rather be cleaning out a henhouse than be shopping at a mall full of crowds.

I have large fowl Ameraucanas. I have a preference for the large fowl breeds but I do have Silkies and Sebrights (Silver) and some bantam dark Cornish and Old English. My buff Brahmas are bantams

My Ameraucanas are in the blue color. I am breeding now for a true black version. My birds are probably not top notch but I have only been at this for two years...give me time. I really don't care to show my birds. I did win many ribbons last year but I honestly do not like seeing them penned up in cages for long periods of time next to foreign birds, in a strange place and such.

A little over a year ago I felt devastated at not knowing how to treat ailments. Now I can cure colds, prevent disease and even doctor injuries on chickens. It is very satisfying rather than having the "just kill it" approach. I think I'm going to make up tee shirts for the people in my poultry club which say... "Bumblefoot is a bitch". Let people wonder about that.

Well, you wanted to know about me and my poultry. I hope you aren't sorry you asked. I'm on my way upstairs to my incubators which are calling me with new life and promises of new things and pleasures to come.

God Bless,

*Wendy Keith*

3-15-93

Wow! Just got through the major storm that hit us here on the East Coast. I've shoveled snow until I thought I'd drop. Spent Friday preparing for the storm, on Saturday I fought the snow, (having to remove it from the roofs of the coops to keep them from collapsing) then on Sunday (yesterday) I shoveled through 2 feet of snow and drifts to each of my nine coops. Other than not being able to move...all is well.

Regards, *Wendy*

Editors note: What about asking Wendy to be the Eastern District Director? How about it Wendy? Would you consider it?

And on the personal note: When you get those tee shirts ready...I'll buy one. I've dealt with bumblefoot. Let me know how much. I wear a large.

Jeannette



Dear Jeannette,

Our weather's been like a rubber ball. From 50 degrees down to 10 below zero. We've had 10 days of 10 below zero weather lately. We had 10 inches of snow 2 weeks ago. Suppose to get 10 inches more in the next 12 to 15 hours.

I have some chicks hatched in Oct. that are starting to lay. I have two lots hatched in Jan., one lot of 20 and another of 35, about three weeks old. I have 50 fertile eggs due off Fri & Sat.

I'm answering mail and watching T.V. plus had 3 phone calls since writing.

Best regards,  
John Wunderlich

P.S. Here's some things you might find interesting

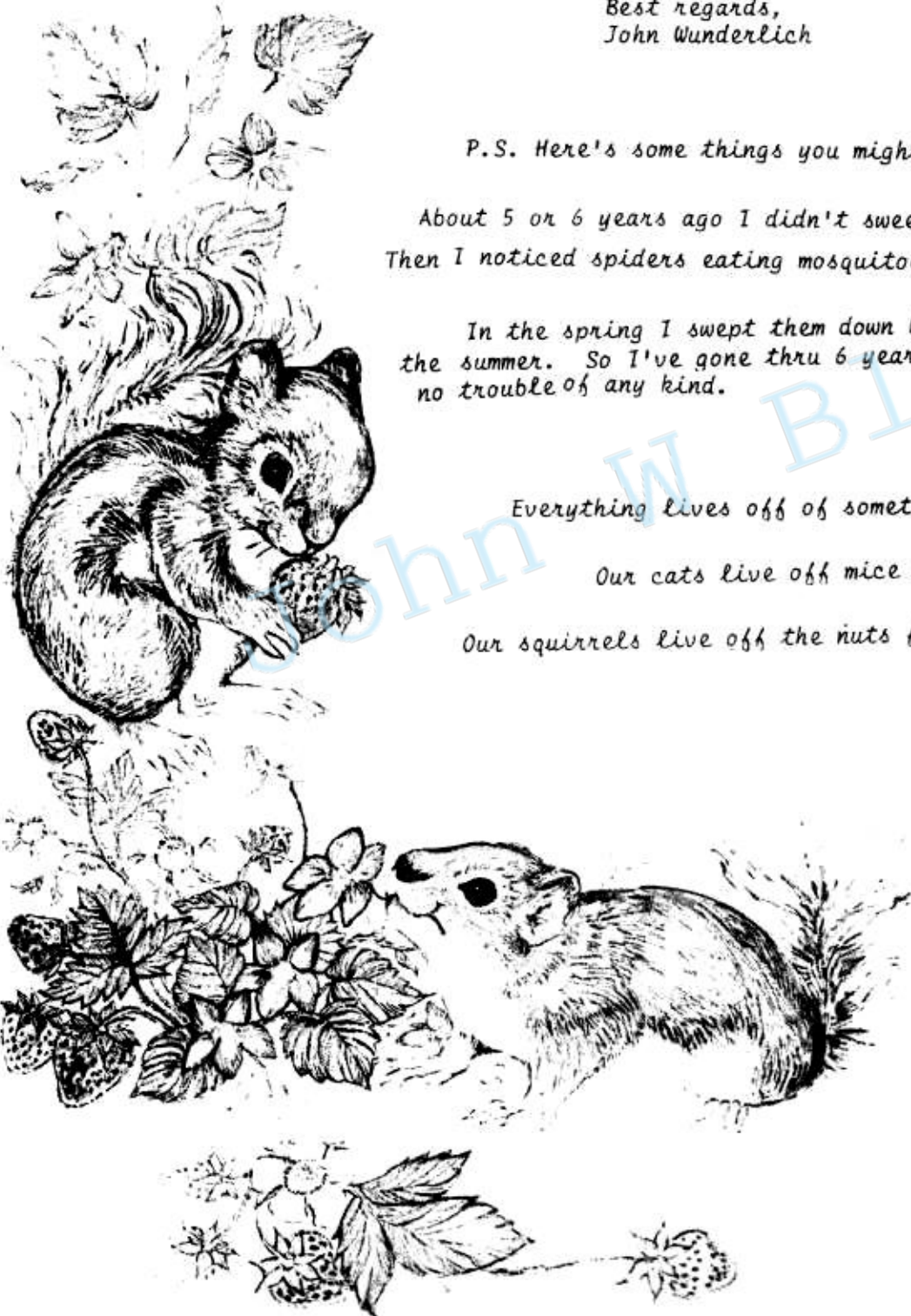
About 5 or 6 years ago I didn't sweep down cobwebs or spider webs. Then I noticed spiders eating mosquitoes and flies caught in the webs.

In the spring I swept them down but let the webs come back during the summer. So I've gone thru 6 years without vaccinating. I've had no trouble of any kind.

Everything lives off of something.

Our cats live off mice plus cat food.

Our squirrels live off the nuts from our trees, etc., etc.





Dear Jeannette-

Things have been going pretty good-always busy. I enjoy my work with the cows immensely but the political bull and the red tape dealing with the corporate structure has just about rotten the best of me.

The birds are doing great. I have six AM hens (2 blue, 2 black & 2 white) mated up and in pens. I have been working on eliminating the "red" dominant gene in my blues & blacks. I finally got a blue/black male carrying the dominant silver gene and have him mated with the blue and black females. I believe I have accomplished a small break thru. We'll see what happens when the chicks come along.

Bernard is hatching out my chicks with my old incubator. The incubator has been unused now for about four years. Bernard needed an incubator - so took mine over as he has more time to do a more quality job at operating the incubator. The first AM's are due to hatch the mid-part of March. To date, I have seven red Naked Neck bantam chicks, two full feathered necks and five bare. I got the Naked Necks from Ed Haworth of Tahlaquah, OK this past summer when Bernard & I drove down for a week's vacation in June. We had a relaxing time sitting on the "front" porch watching a full yard of good NN scratching their way around.

I have engaged in another hobby.. Continental Grain dispersed the bottom end of their herd - 10 cows. There were two cows that produced last year and projected for this year close to 20,000 lbs of milk in a 305 day record. I bought those two cows and a two year old heifer that was off to a bad start due to complicated calving but still showed some promise. I found a farmer located by my folks that had room for four cows and had no more \$ to buy any more replacements and needed milk in the bulk tank. We have agreed for now, that he will house the cows in exchange for the milk. I have also purchased a nice quiet heifer that had the misfortune of aborting her calf 2 months early and is on the small side. All of the cows are registered and possess a good string of quality genetics - something to keep me from getting bored and out of trouble.

Well, have to get my chicken chores done - it is a beautiful sunny day - 25° - so need to clean some bird coops. Always good to hear from you. Every once in awhile I have to slow do and make a point of communicating with my friends. Everything is usually in a whirlwind & seems to fly right past me. Take care,

Rande Buske

P.S. Look forward to seeing you at Mason City in Sept.!

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