

A Month in the Life of Lois Foster

Angus cattle, chores, llamas, gardening, office work and grandchildren fill the days and nights of the American Angus Auxiliary president.

A normal day at Seldom Rest Farm keeps Lois Foster in the office, with the usual farm business, phone calls and letter writing, until about 2 p.m. Breakfast, lunch and an occasional farm visitor are sandwiched in.

Problem is, at this farm most days are not normal.

Along with Angus cattle, Lois, her husband, Dale, and sons, Bruce and Scott, raise confectionary sunflowers, corn, soybeans, alfalfa and a registered llama herd (christened Mama's Llamas) at their farm near Niles, Mich. To top that off, they collect antiques and Model A Ford cars. Because of their Angus herd expansion, they recently dispersed an apple and peach fruit business.

Serving as Auxiliary president requires at least a half day and two evenings each week of office work for Lois.

"This ranks at the top of my schedule, along with spending each Friday with my two grandchildren, Andrew (3 1/2 years) and Danielle (1 year)," she says.

A late-night person, Lois enjoys watching Johnny Carson. "I never just watch TV. I must be doing something else at the same time, such as labeling photos for my albums, reading the newspaper, composing letters or planning menus," she says.

To help you get better acquainted with this seldom-rest lady, we've asked Lois to keep a journal during the month of April. Here is how she recorded it:

April 1:

Attended church at the Trinity Lutheran in Berrien Springs. Met new minister.

Some auction buyers picked up their purchases of yesterday's fruit equipment and balance of auction "clean-up."

Bruce and Scott enjoy being the first to play an April fool's joke on me, watching my reaction, upon hearing a calf was born today with a white blaze on its face.

Wrote thank-you notes to secretaries at the National Live Stock and Meat Board in Chicago for the tour and hospitality afforded us last week while attending a CattleWomen leadership forum.

Prepared early mail of the week and

took to Niles post office. Dale and I just can't resist stopping at the newly-opened Dairy Queen for the first banana split of the season!

April 2:

To town, to do the banking. Had a family board meeting. Sent my Auxiliary mail and made phone calls.

Ordered Berrien County Youth Fair beef display promo material from National Live Stock and Meat Board, plus Michigan Tourist Council material for the Michigan Angus Auxiliary. Painted five-inch Angus cutouts for Futurity table decorations.

April 3:

Some long-time friends unexpectedly dropped in for a two-hour visit. Nice. Most of the day was spent on the phone and doing office work. Scheduled meetings and ordered supplies, fertilizer and embryos.

In the evening we began grooming the llamas for an exhibit at an upcoming antique plow day in Berrien Center.

April 4:

Completed an insurance policy farm owners update for agent, including equipment and cattle with values. Returned A.I. tank to supplier by Federal Express. No buses running due to strike.

Met with neighboring farmers to discuss removal of fence row and long-term lease to facilitate better use of new irrigation system. Evaluated cattle purchase bids for incoming open recipient cows. Attended church's Lenten service in evening.

April 5:

Helped Bruce and Scott get an early start with the cattle for Michigan Futurity. It's a rainy day. Helped load iron "junk" from our farm shop on the 2-ton truck. Returned wagons borrowed for auction. Time for farm's spring "spruce-up." Helped program four donor cows.

April 6:

Attended the Michigan Futurity and Michigan Beef Expo. Took banquet decorations and red and white carnations for the ladies. Prepared apple pie for banquet celebrity pie auction to raise money

for Michigan Auxiliary treasury. My pie sold for \$60!

April 7:

Today's the Michigan Futurity Angus sale. Worked in Auxiliary Ways & Means booth. Took pictures and associated with many persons in our beef industry. Engaged CattleWomen display for Youth Fair beef display.

April 8:

Have our llamas on display at antique plow day. Enjoyed brunch with a member of the Meat Board.

April 9:

Back to bookwork. Checked apple tree removal progress on the fruit farm. Prepared our facility for cattle to arrive. Read cattle heats for embryo transfers. Checked baby calves. Returned A.I. tank to UPS station. Made Auxiliary phone calls.

April 10:

Hired electrical stray voltage detection specialists to check our farms. Then we had a meeting on their results. Went grocery shopping for Easter and refreshments for farm guests. Helped daughter, D'nece, select drapery material.

April 11:

Farm meeting today. Also babysitting day with the grandkids. We had guests for our evening meal.

April 12:

Composed and typed land leases on ground we rent. Made preparations for school children to visit our farm and learn about Angus cattle.

April 13:

Unusual amount of business calls in and out. Held a farm board meeting. Did some early spring landscape repair around our farm buildings. Picked up Easter flower gifts for family members. Prepared farmyard and Angus cattle and llamas for visitors. Later, I typed and sent out Auxiliary letters.

April 14:

It's our only granddaughter's first birthday party. I'm recovering from a 24-hour epidemic flu.

April 15:

Easter Sunday. We attended church and then had dinner at D'nece's and John's home. Easter baskets to grandchildren and chocolate candy to all. Looked at Angus calf crop with sons and grandson.

April 16:

Tom Burke of the Angus Hall of Fame is here to review cattle for our production sale. We did embryo transfers on four of our donor cows. Checked hired men running chainsaws in apple orchard.

April 17:

Checked wood cutters and picked up apple wood. Then I visited with the irrigation equipment fieldmen. Later I spent time reviewing and updating our auto insurance policy coverage with the agent. Our relatives from Florida called, sharing their latest news.

April 18:

Time to merchandise feeder cattle. I assisted the cattle trailer driver with flat tire repairs. Then we evaluated cattle going to market. Listened to grain market report. Checked auction buyer loading out apple bins. Directed fencerow wood cutters.

We had farm visitors today, including an American Agri-Women member. She brought a silver llama charm to me. The sun is shining brightly today — after 2 1/2 months of winter-y conditions. We did have a spring-like January this year.

April 19:

Helped get semi-tractor to haul feeder steers to market. Also helped I.D. and load cattle. Checked on apple wood cutters. Showed gravel truck where to dump gravel for drives and lanes.

Prepared Certified Angus Beef order for Angus beef promo material. Made name tag (numbers) for calves. Later, I answered Auxiliary mail and phone calls.

April 20:

My day to babysit grandchildren. It's a rainy day. Went to town for mail, banking and grocery shopping for tomorrow's visitors' meal. Continued writing Auxiliary newsletter.

April 21:

Farm board and visitors meetings. Cot the mail out. Left for Goshen Angus sale in Kentucky at 4:30 p.m.

April 22:

Goshen sale day. Enjoyed traveling in the beautiful countryside. We had dinner at a nice restaurant.

April 23:

Back home and to work. Checked apple wood cutters — twice. Helped winrow apple brush for awhile. Ordered Angus A.I. semen. Delivered sunflower seeds to uncle.

April 24:

Wrote and typed Auxiliary news releases and made phone calls. Helped shuttle Bruce, Scott, tractors and trucks to other farms for field work. Prepared a two-day supply of meals for the guys.

Delivered Michigan tourist books to a neighbor for American Agri-Women. Also went to town for Auxiliary gift.

April 27:

Babysitting day. Checked apple orchard for final cleanup. Sowed grass seed for new lawn with grandson's help (and questions)!

April 28:

The usual bookwork. Paid hired help. Took lunch out to Dale in field. Put llamas in pen to breed. Helped D'nece pick up landscape trees from nursery and delivered them to her backyard.

April 29:

Church and dinner. Showed baby llama to friends with children. Spent 20



Lois Foster and two of her "babies" at Seldom Rest Farm.

Purchased grass seed to seed the vacant lot where tenant house burned. Took photos of fruit farm, before and after apple trees. Enjoyed a beautiful sunset.

April 25:

Prepared men's meals in morning. Left for Indiana Angus Auxiliary luncheon cruise. Had dinner with Angus ladies on moored river boat.

April 26:

Attended Indiana Auxiliary's spring luncheon. It was held on a riverboat cruise on the Ohio River, between Louisville and Jeffersonville. It was exciting and delightful!

Returned home, with dinner and shopping at Cracker Barrel.

minutes hunting for mushrooms (found six). Took cold pop out to our menfolk burning apple brush. Helped D'nece plant trees. Had a photo session with our baby llama and a baby Angus.

April 30:

Rainy morning. Went to town, post office, bank, Quik-Print (for Auxiliary), grocery shopping and then met with the iron junk man to sell results of farmsteads cleanup. Later went to the nursery for landscape bedding plants and garden plants. Prepared garden for planting.

Attended visitation for a friend's funeral. Later prepared Auxiliary newsletters for mailing.

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