

Housewives Have Little To Do But Read Articles On How To Save Work

By Monte Noelke

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MERTZON — The Shortgrass scene has had to get along without a reporter this week. My wife has been out of town, and six of my sons and myself have been running a batching operation.

Housekeeping sure has improved in the past few years. Push-button appliances, combined with easy-flip-on gadgets have brought more idle time to the women than was ever enjoyed by members of the British House of Lords. Preparing a meal is so easy nowadays that Betty Crocker had better watch out or she's going to end up being classed with the carriage set.

Cooking for schoolboys is the biggest snap of all. Oh, now and then one of them will go off his feed, but on the long schedule, growing students don't miss many meals. The reason my wife has been wasting so much time in the kitchen was that she keeps varying the menus. Since she left, we've been getting by real well on Easter eggs, hot dogs, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

These three items make up a scientifically balanced diet. Betty Furness couldn't come up with a better idea. Once the boys get onto the routine, they should show an impressive gain.

The younger kids have been hitting the cracker jar pretty heavily. Their grandmother was by yesterday, throwing an awful fit about the crumb line extending from the den out into the living room. Women folks have been having nit-picking sprees like that ever since the first autumn leaves fell in the Garden of Eden. If she had paid closer attention, she could have seen that the sugar ants were cleaning up the mess. Ants and cockroaches have always been misunderstood by females. Given a little peace, those energetic scavengers would have solved cleaning problems long ago. The world has yet to invent a broom or mop that can reach where they can crawl.

The milkman tried to cause trouble earlier this morning. He claimed that the only vacant place in the refrigerator to put the milk was on top of the Easter baskets and the beer bottles. I listened to his foolishness for a few minutes, then decided that if he was so dumb he couldn't put up his own product, he'd be a bad influence on the boys. So I told him to go sell his wares elsewhere.

Doing without milk isn't going to hurt this crew. The boys can drink water when they're thirsty. Busybody nutritionists don't know everything about child raising. With these fabulous new dental creams and sugar-free soda pops, buying milk is just wasting money. Also, it wouldn't be one bit surprising to hear, one of these days, that the child doctors and other know-it-alls are in the hire of the dairy companies. Cool water is good for anybody, especially young folks.

Our tomcat must have followed the milkman off. He didn't come in to lunch. I'm sort of hoping he's gone for good. You see, last night he lapped up my wife's canary. The very best he could have expected from her homecoming would be a spine-wringing broom session.

To be honest, I think the cat did the right thing. Having the mother dog and her five pups in the front room was making his life miserable. Such events as hysterical crying by the cleanup lady, and grumbling from his young masters about the chuck, were ruining his disposition. He hadn't felt good since he emptied the goldfish bowl. If old Tom had stayed around he would have been flirting with a serious emotional crisis. I do wish he had held off on the bird until we had less seed on hand.

My mate ought to be home tomorrow. She's going to be mighty surprised to see how self-sufficient we've been. I hate to see this vacation end; it's gong to be awfully hard to go back to the drudgeries of a man's world. Worrying and fretting over domino matches and political scraps will be quite a change after these past days of leisure.