

Buffalo-cow crossbreeding will produce hardy "cattalo"

As a result of almost three years of experimentation by Dr. P. K. Basur of the Guelph University and the Animal Science Division of the University of Guelph, a "cattalo" was born last week at the Halton Region Conservation Authority's Mountsberg Game Preserve.

A cattalo is the result of crossing a buffalo and a cow. This kind of animal should have the best qualities of both species. The Game Preserve's cattalo is a female and weighs close to one hundred pounds.

The reasons for the cattalo experiment are explained in the following technical data, supplied through Frank Timmermans, manager of the Game Preserve:

Frustrated

Throughout the ages, man's attempts to combine the desirable traits of parental species in the progeny through experimental hybridization have been frustrated by several barriers of reproductive isolation.

These barriers, which effectively restrict gene exchange between species, are built by a variety of mechanisms, all of which may be interrelated.

Depending upon the developmental stage at which particular isolating mechanism operates, interspecific hybridization may result in hybrid inviability, total or partial sterility of the hybrids, or reduced viability of the back-cross progeny.

Several studies Dr. P. K. Basur of the Guelph University, who has been studying hybridization of cattle with bison, chicken-pheasant, ferret-mink for several years says in her report on hybrid sterility that although the domestic cattle and the American bison belong to the same genus, sub-family Bovinae, the two have evolved into ecologically separated species with strikingly different general appearance, natural disposition, nutritional requirements, response to climatic conditions and breeding habits (Baughman 1951). The cattle-bison hybrids combine some of the characteristics of both parents. For example, the 14 ribs, the tufts of curly hair and the thick hide of the buffalo are passed on to the hybrids along with their resistance to diseases.

These hybrids, besides being thrifty and winter-hardy like the buffalo, produce more meat which is low in connective tissue content (Goodnight 1914).

The obviously advantageous traits have prompted hybridization experiments with a view to producing a line of cattalos. This venture, however, has failed on a commercial scale, mainly because of the male sterility in hybrids. One cause of male sterility has been postulated to be the differences between bison and cattle chromosomes. Dr. Basur's study on bison, cattle and

cattalos has revealed that the chromosome number in all three groups is 60; and that the only difference is the Y chromosome, which is metacentric in cattle and acrocentric in bison.



Jr. farmers hold fun meeting

By Kim Mauro

The annual monthly meeting of the Palermo Junior Farmers was held on April 13 at the home of Kathy Newell.

Before the business portion of the meeting activities ranged from card playing to building people pyramids.

Kathy Newell as vice-president called the meeting to order. Anyone wishing to renew their membership as a Palermo Junior Farmer must contact either Mary Anderson or Karen Campbell before April 24. New members are welcome.

Karen Campbell thanked Kathy for her hospitality.

Financing the farm business

By Henry J. Stanley

Professor Gary Hutchison, Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Education, University of Guelph, discussed the question of obtaining finances for the farm at a seminar at the university on April 11. He stated that some farmers pay up to 100 per cent interest rate on borrowed money, and that 58 per cent of machinery purchased had interest rates of higher than 10 per cent.

Forty per cent of Ontario farmers use finance companies. A total of \$90 million in high interest credit is held by farm people in Ontario. Farmers cannot afford this type of credit. This extra cost of borrowing means that a farmer must gross 15 to 20 per cent more per year in order to net the extra \$300 - \$400

required to pay these high interest loans. This is equivalent to keeping two more dairy cows or 10 more steers on the farm.

Discounts

Professor Hutchison stated that farmers must take advantage of discounts. A 2 per cent feed discount certainly can be a worthwhile saving. He stated that banks lend only 8.6 per cent of their total capital to farmers partly because of a lower interest rate.

He stated that we do not have an entirely satisfactory system at present for farmers. The Farm Credit Corporation is costly and does not meet all the needs of the farmer. "A new system of credit is needed", stated Professor Hutchison. "The repayment schedule should be based on the type of farming and the re-

payment capacity of the individual. The interest rate should float and the mortgages should be open ended with some of the principal never being paid off. This will only occur if and when farmers demand it."

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Sheep club takes tour

By Hugh Cook

The April meeting of the Halton 4-H Sheep Club took the form of a tour of sheep farms in the Dundas-Brantford area.

The first farm visited was that of J. B. Gartshore of Dundas who keeps a purebred flock of Polled Dorset Sheep. After a tour of Mr. Gartshore's facilities, the 4-H's asked questions about the operation of the farm. The members were amazed at the simplicity of the operation and the quality of the sheep. Mr. Gartshore's flock is one of the best in the province.

Interesting tour

The second stop was at the farm of Werner Grusshaber near Brantford. The tour was very interesting because few of the 4-H's had ever seen Finnish-Landrace sheep. As Mr. Grusshaber pointed out the value of this imported breed is in multiple births. One pen contained 24 healthy lambs conceived from eight ewes. Another ewe had five viable lambs and was nursing all five.

The last farm visited belonged to Lloyd Deeks. Mr. Deeks keeps a small flock of good quality sheep.

For all who went on the tour it was a most enjoyable day.

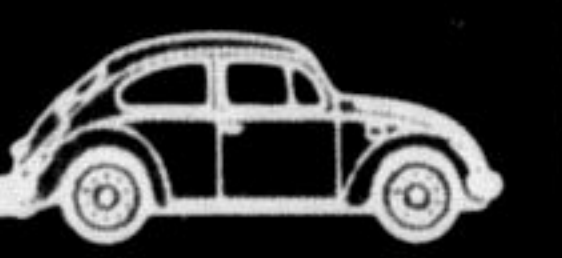
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Lounging Lassies hear make-up talk

On March 25 at Hillcrest Church the Ashgrove Lounging Lassies 4-H club met for a special meeting on beauty care. Mrs. Ingles from the Georgetown Pharmacy was the commentator. She brought several products and explained how to use them. She demonstrated how to put on make-up on Marlene Hume and Verna Fisher.

Visiting the club this week were Silverwood and Limehouse 4-H members.

Later Mrs. Ingles passed out some pamphlets and some sample make-up.

Meeting five

The fifth meeting of the Ashgrove Lounging Lassies was held on April 8 at Hillcrest Church.

Committees were selected to work on the cover design and skirt. Achievement Day has been changed to May 27.

Mrs. Mills talked on cosmetics, hair care, shapes of faces and complementing hair styles. Mrs. Cunningham talked about fitting your garment. Then members did samples of a facing with a gradual curve and another facing with a sharp curve.

BASHFUL BOBBY has lost his nickname. The bull buffalo at Halton Region Conservation Authority's game preserve at Rattlesnake Point was named "bashful" several years ago because his female companions didn't produce offspring, but it was later discovered Bobby was too young at the time to father any progeny. He's been making up for it ever since, and the herd has grown rapidly. Last week a son of his became the proud father of a "cattalo", a cross-breed between a buffalo and a Holstein cow, following an experiment conducted by the University of Guelph. —(Photo by J. Jennings)

Delay decision teacher pay cut

Halton County Board of Education has yet to decide on a proposed pay cut for the substitute teachers in the county.

The matter became a controversial issue several months ago when the board passed a staff recommendation urging the cut. At the following meeting Trustee Fred Armitage objected to the cut and the board held the problem over for future study and discussion. The board had set April 13 as a deadline to settle the salary question. Thursday they extended that deadline.

Large crowds of substitute teachers have attended a number of board meetings including the meeting Thursday. Since the dispute broke open the substitute teachers have formed their own association and won the support of the Oakville Labor Council.

The board would realize a saving of \$90,000 if the pay cuts go through. Substitute teachers would have salaries cut by 25 per cent.

Mr. Armitage has suggested the board should look at ways to make better use of their substitute teaching staff and upgrading the staff, rather than cutting the salary.

Senior administrators will study the matter and bring in a recommendation at a future meeting.

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Tips on getting lawn into shape

By Burke McNeill

Lawns are rapidly drying these past few days and there are several things that can be done now to improve them for this summer.

Raking the dead grass and leaves should be done prior to fertilizing. Use a lawn rake, bamboo or metal, removing all the debris you can without disturbing the grass roots. Once this is done, fertilizer can be applied.

Apply a complete fertilizer, preferably using a spreader. It can be done by hand but this generally results in uneven application and most garden supply stores will lend a spreader with the purchase of fertilizer. If you have any doubts about the ratio of fertilizer to use, consult

your local supplier. They will be glad to assist you.

Many homeowners enquire about rolling the lawn in the spring and on established lawns it is not really necessary. Rolling does help to flatten the earth-worm mounds. If you don't like the feel of these mounds, rolling will smooth them out.

If you are starting a new lawn this spring, this should be done as soon as possible. Grass seedlings establish best in cool weather and must be growing well before the heat of July and August. For best results, the new lawn should be seeded before May 15.

For more specific information on lawns, contact the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food office for the publication entitled "Lawns".

NOTICE TO PARENTS

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Registration for admission to Kindergarten in September, 1972, in the Elementary Public Schools of Halton County, will take place on Friday, April 28, 1972, between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon; and 1.15 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. in the school which serves the attendance area in which the child resides.

Public School supporters may register their children who will have attained the age of 5 years on or before the last day of February, 1973. Proof of public school support will be accepted in the form of the 1972 tax-bill or 1971 assessment notice, or a declaration from the Municipal Clerk's office. A birth certificate or baptismal certificate will be acceptable as proof of age.

If further information is required, call the School Principal or the Chairman of the North Education Centre below:

J. N. Morrison
North Education Centre
Tel: 878-4154

E. Bodnar, Chairman of the Board. J. W. Singleton, Director of Education.

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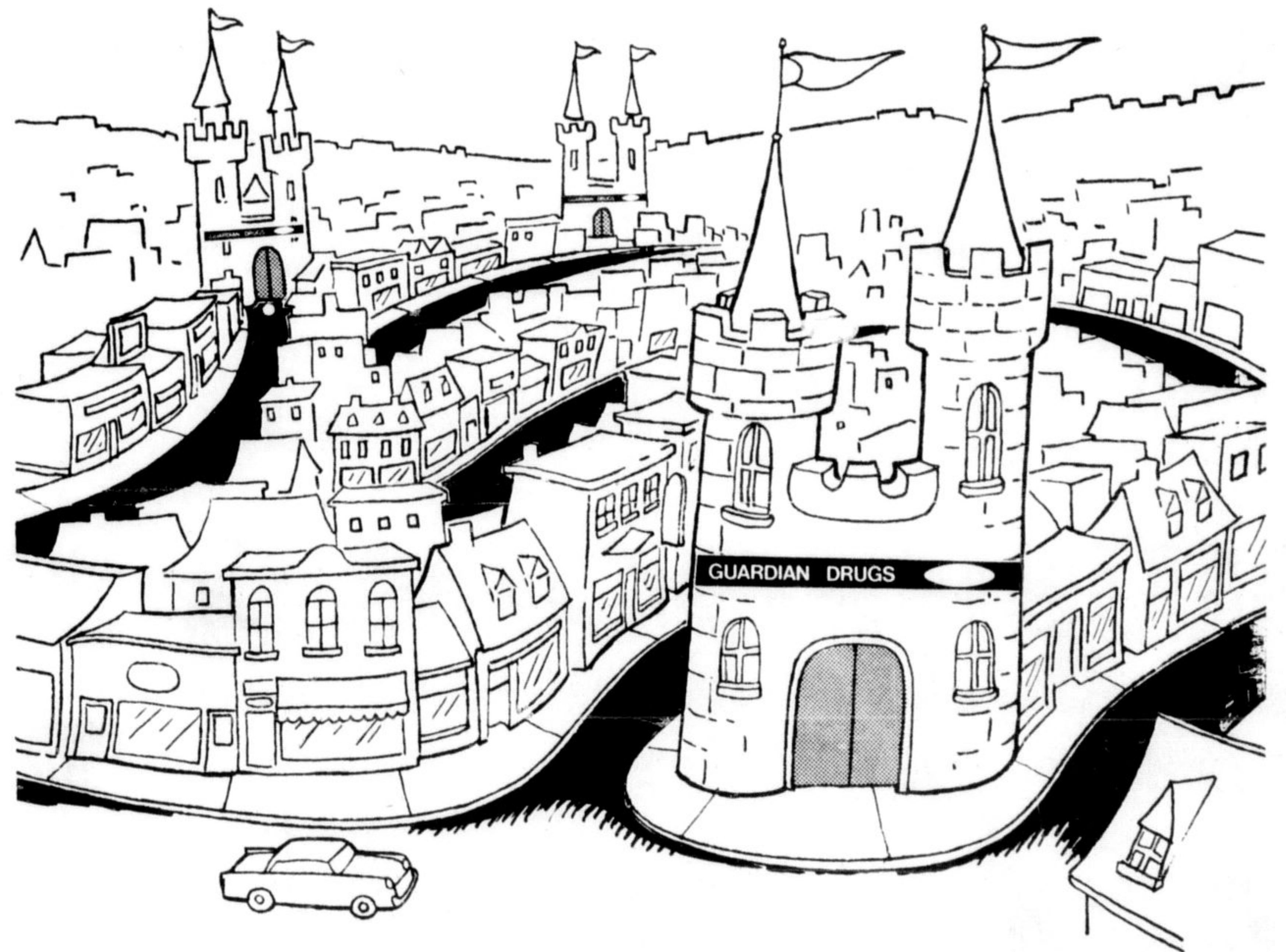
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