



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

A farm girl through and through, Betty Rundel, 76, still likes to crawl onto the tractor and farm until the work's all done, but says sometimes her sons get in the way of letting her do what she likes doing best. However, she is quite content feeding the farm animals, checking crops and watching the harvest come in.

Farm girl still helps harvest fields

By Vera Sloan

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Betty Rundel is no stranger to hard work. She says it was her dad, Arley Christiansen who taught her how to work when she was four years old when he sat down with a milk stool and a bucket to teach her how to milk cows. She said she learned how to dress a chicken at about the same time.

Her love of life on the farm has never dimmed, and is as great today as it was when she was a curious 4-year-old at her parents' heels wanting to learn how to do everything they were doing.

Rundel grew up as a farm girl, but she fell in love with a barber while she was in school in Denver – about as far away from farming as you can get for a gal from Northwest Kansas. They married in 1954, and moved back to Colby to set up shop.

So while her barber husband, John Rundel, cut hair and shaved whiskers, Betty stayed home to raise the four little boys that came into their life.

Then in 1963, she took a job with the Thomas County Treasurer's office and stayed until 1973 when she traded the treasurer's office

setting for a job at TG&Y, in west Colby.

She said in the meantime, she and her John had purchased a home on Cottonwood Drive, and had bought the Dairy Barn, a small cafe in downtown Colby across the street west of Someplace Special. She cooked in the cafe and raised boys. During this time she and John also built the car wash next to Love's Country Store.

"Then we moved to Cottonwood Drive," Betty said, "and of course with four boys, they have 'stuff.' Some of the stuff they had was a dog, a goat, motorcycles and cars.

"One of our neighbors had a lovely swimming pool and were getting ready for a big party, and of course the boys' dog jumped into that nicely cleaned pool! Then there was the goat – it was forever climbing on one the other neighbor's car. I told John I just thought it was time for us to move, because all the neighbors were going to hate us."

She said Elden VanCampen at that time put his house and 20 acres around the homestead up for sale.

"That was in 1977," she said, "so we sold the Dairy Barn and bought that place, just west of Cottonwood Drive, and moved boys, stuff, and all."

Rundel still lives there today. She has since

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