

a day in the life

Juliana Whittenburg

For Juliana Whittenburg of Flying Lion Farms in Zephyrhills, FL, the days start so early, she often wakes up the rooster. Along with her partner, Gary Ellebracht, they have an exhaustive and hectic schedule of juggling the many needs of their growing collection of “family members.” To watch them in action is akin to watching juggling masters perform. Here is a sample day in their lives.

3:30 a.m. Alarm goes off, and being careful not to trip over the dog. Put on coveralls, T shirt.

3:55 a.m. Feed dogs and cat. Move laundry from washer to dryer. Grab soda and gloves. Turn golf cart on, and lights work this morning!

4:05 a.m. Off to feed 39 horses.

5:16 a.m. Time check. Call Gary. He finally answers. “It’s time to get up!”

5:39 a.m. Back to house.

5:41 a.m.

Boots off, gloves off. Get dressed for work. Remind Gary of innumerable detailed chores. Gary goes to finish turning out, lets dogs in on way.

5:59 a.m. Grab jacket, climb over dog to get my purse. Take my vitamins and find something in my shoe...its hay...imagine that! Make mental notes of what I need to do today. Check and answer e-mails. Check website statistics. Grab fresh soda, purse, and turn dryer on one more time.

6:10 a.m. Driving to work. Gary gets gate, kisses me goodbye, and we are off. I work for a radiation oncology practice. Gary builds, services and installs upgrades for cell phone towers. (We can’t wait until we win the lottery so we don’t have to “work.”)

6:59 a.m. I am at work.

10:32 a.m. I haven’t heard from young lady at the barn. I call Stephanie. She is on her way. (It sounds like she is still in bed!) Call Angela (the new girl). “I’ve been here since 7:00,” she said. “You’re supposed to call,” I replied. “That’s how I know you are there, and all is well with the critters!”

11:59 a.m. Lunch. Do e-mails. View updates on farm site, e-mail designer regarding corrections, additions and thank her for a great job, as usual. Speak with Stephanie throughout the day. She rides two and longes one. She is to call me when she gets on and off so I know she is OK.

5:00 p.m. Arrive home, run in and change clothes.

5:08 p.m. Put on gloves, rubber boots, start putting horses up before rain. Get first two barns put up, starts to rain. (It’s pouring, we need it.) Run in house. Put up laundry, dust dining room table, clean kitchen, sweep floor, feed dogs and cat.

5:47 p.m. Gary is home.

6:28 p.m. Gary puts up rest of horses, rubs all mares’ backs, and checks all of them for boo-boos.

6:56 p.m. Gary feeds horses and calls our vet, Steve, to ask about tomorrow’s pregnancy check ultrasounds.

8:40 p.m. Everyone is fed, and he mixes tomorrow evening’s feed. He turns out horses that go back out. Wraps up day’s final errands. I am answering e-mails and reviewing website updates again.

9:35 p.m. Get a shower.

9:50 p.m. Give dog his meds, warm up leftovers for myself and start laundry.

10:25 p.m. Gary calls...on his way home.

10:28 p.m. Take a nap until Gary gets home.

12:03 p.m. Gary gets a shower. I go back to bed.

3:30 a.m. Alarm goes off and it starts again! I can’t wait until the weekend!

