

# Wentz Post

*A Publication of the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society*

Volume XXXV, No. 2

WENTZ POST Fall 2018

## REFLECTING ON THE PAST TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS



### REFLECTING WITH DIANNE CRAM

*by Pat McDonnell*

Even as a young girl, Dianne loved being outdoors. It was inevitable that when it came time for college, Dianne would choose studying for a career that would match that love, environmental science. After graduation, Dianne was employed as a park ranger in the Everglades. While there, she met a ranger from Arizona who was to be her husband. Dianne worked there for twelve years. Her next position was with the National Park Service at Hopewell Furnace and her work was in keeping history alive; she was trained in museum collections management. Before long came the Army Corp of Engineers who offered her a job which seemed to be allied with her values and interests. It wasn't long before she realized she made the wrong choice. She did not like being in the city. What happened next might be called pure luck. Betty Gamon, the director of the Peter Wentz Farmstead, was looking to replace a curator for the museum. She and Dianne's paths had crossed many times, and she thought Dianne would be perfect for the position. Twenty-seven and a half years later, the rest is history, and Dianne has loved every minute of this history.

Let's go through some of those minutes. Not one minute was typical, never routine, never boring. For example, Dianne has been a curator, she has given tours, done history demonstrations, helped with the camp kids, taken care of the house cleaning, cataloged the library, helped the farmers when needed, and completed all the County paperwork required.

The most rewarding part of her work has been making a difference for future historic preservation; helping visitors to understand and enjoy our history. This extends especially to the young people who have served as volunteers throughout the years. As testament to success of this endeavor, the young people, their children, and even their grandchildren have come back as volunteers and supporters of the Farmstead.

Supervising staff has proved to be the most difficult part of her work; not everyone will always agree, but the supervisor has to have the last word if progress is to be made.

Dianne says that over the years there have been too many interesting, fun and unusual happenings to count. Some include the annual events at the Farmstead, presence of our animals as they take their places on the farm, restoration, reconstruction of buildings and accomplishment of our goals.

Dianne loves every animal at the Farmstead. She doesn't have a favorite. She does have favorite seasons, and they are Spring and Summer's sights, sounds, and scents. These seasons come with the budding of the trees, flowers, and the birth of the lambs. No surprise as the outdoors beckons all here at the Farmstead.

The Candlelight Tour is magical---the moon shedding its light over the barn, the glow of candles, lanterns lighting the grounds and perhaps glistening snow make it so. This is Dianne's favorite event of the year, but it competes with the Spring Shearing---the little lambs getting their first haircuts, the little children watching in awe, the crowd involved in the events and demonstrations---this too is a favorite.

Dianne has been asked many questions by the visitors at the Farmstead. Kids will often ask if she knew George Washington. She tells them that she knows about him from our history books and gives them some interesting facts about his stay at the Farmstead. Visitors often say that they would have loved living in the Farm house in the 18th century. Dianne asks them if they would really like to live without electricity, a modern heating system during the cold winters, no TV, etc. They all have second thoughts as romantic ideas of the time fade away.

At the end of this interview, Dianne was asked what her wish for the future of the Farmstead would be. She answered that it would be the continuation of preserving

*(Continued on page 3.)*

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society is to preserve and interpret the 18th century Pennsylvania German farmstead established by the Wentz and Schultz families, which is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The Society's goal is to stimulate public interest and support the site's heritage through educational programs and public events focusing on the architecture, crafts, customs, and furnishings of the period.

**Peter Wentz Farmstead Society  
Board of Directors****OFFICERS:**

President-Kathrina DeWitt Yost  
Vice President-Carol Allen  
Treasurer-Lee Kirk  
Asst. Treasurer-Jim Hern  
Rec. Secretary-Nadine Vigliano  
Corr. Secretary-Carol Berardelli

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

David Carhart  
Wayne "Duffy" Grove  
Terri Gentile  
Patricia McDonnell  
Andrew Rothenberger

**WENTZ POST**

Volume XXXV, No. 2

Fall 2018

Published as a benefit of membership  
in the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society.

Editor: Frank Luther

Photography: Jay Ryan, Bea Grove, Sarah Biehl,  
Jack Armstrong, Donna Armstrong

Advisors: Kathrina DeWitt Yost  
Patricia McDonnell  
Dianne Cram

All correspondence should be sent to:  
Peter Wentz Farmstead Society  
P.O. Box 679  
Worcester, PA 19490-0679

Phone: 610-584-5104

Fax: 610-584-6860

E-mail: [mail@PeterWentzFarmsteadSociety.org](mailto:mail@PeterWentzFarmsteadSociety.org)Website: [www.PeterWentzFarmsteadSociety.org](http://www.PeterWentzFarmsteadSociety.org)**PWFS COMMITTEES**

By-Laws-Duffy Grove  
Development-Carol Allen, Dave Carhart  
Finance-Lee Kirk  
Garden-Donna Armstrong  
IT-Jim Karcher  
Membership-Carole Berardelli  
Museum Shop-Susan Bishop  
New Structures-All Members  
Nominating-Jim Hern  
Scholarships-Terri Gentile  
WENTZ POST-Frank Luther

**Peter Wentz Farmstead**

**Hours of Operation**  
**Tuesday-Saturday: 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM**  
**Sunday: 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM**  
**Last Tour: 3:00 PM**

**Closed Mondays and Holidays****Reservations required for group tours.**

Peter Wentz Farmstead  
**Home & Headquarters:  
War Comes to Worcester**

**Saturday, October 13th from 10am-3pm**

Explore how in October 1777 the  
Wentz family coped with General  
Washington & his staff using the  
house as a military headquarters  
during the busy harvest season.

**Night Life on Friday, November 3rd**

*What was life like at the Wentz House  
in the fall and winter after the sun went down?*

Small group tours  
offered at:

7:30                      8:10  
7:50                      8:30

Pre-registration  
required;

Ages 12 &amp; up only!



**REFLECTING WITH DIANNE CRAM, (continued)**

the Farmstead for many, many generations ahead and creating a strong sense and appreciation of history through the education of all Americans so that the future of history remains secure.

Thank you, Dianne, for being the caretaker of the Peter Wentz Farmstead through all its history during these past twenty-seven and a half years.

**LETTER FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR**

*From Dianne Cram*

Looking back on the twenty-seven years I have been here at the Farmstead I know how very fortunate I have been. I have spent my career at a wonderful historic site doing what I love – working to preserve history. How many people get the chance to actually work at what they are passionate about! There is nothing not to like about this Farmstead – the beautiful rural setting (I found out years ago that I'm not suited for urban environments); the history and regional culture; and then there are the most amazing people here who give so much to make it all happen. It has been my privilege to work with such incredibly dedicated staff and volunteers.

I've always liked to think that what we do here truly makes a difference and that there will be a strong future for historic preservation because of the people we reach, especially the younger generation. The children who were in our Colonial Camp when I began working here are now bringing their children to our camps – that just sums it all up!

Our volunteers are the greatest, and I'm so grateful for all the support you all have given to this site and for the wonderful friendship you have given me along the way.

**THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*From Kathy Yost*

Change is all around us and always has been. Think of what change the Wentz family and the entire Farmstead property has seen over the years. You wish you could wind back a movie reel and watch the show from 1700 to now. That would be fascinating. And to think that everyone of us would appear in the show somewhere!

Change means doing something differently. This issue brings you news of great change. As you can see from the lead article, Dianne Cram has decided to retire this month. Talk about change! We salute Dianne for all her efforts over the years and hope that she knows how much the Society values and appreciates all she has contributed.

More changes appear in these pages. We continue to visit with the animals in our children's section and this month it is chickens.

The history of the Farmstead is bigger than just George Washington. This month we include two articles- one written by John Adams and the other written about Ben Franklin. The same way we are impacted by the larger world around us, so were previous generations impacted by their peers.

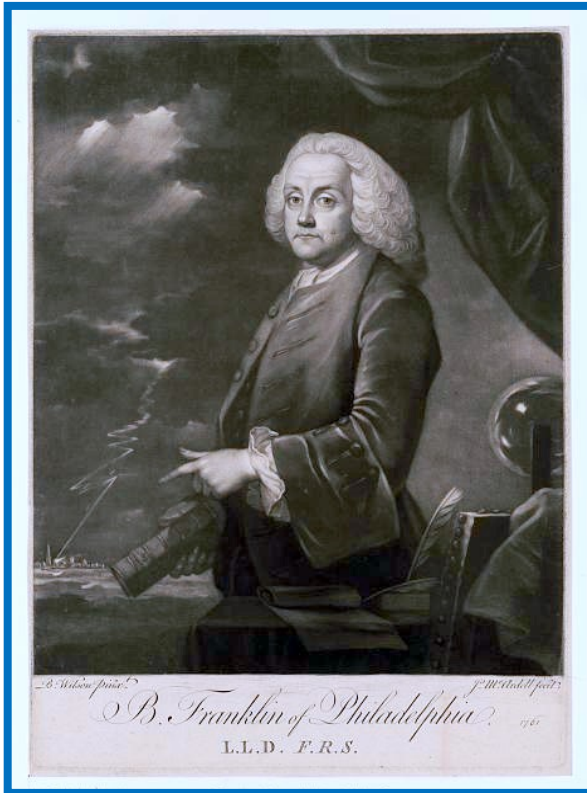
I included the John Adams letter to his daughter because it is one of the most powerfully patriotic pieces I have ever read. His description of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in Philadelphia in 1777 is remarkable and very moving. I love the fact that the captured Hessian prisoners played in the band! Try and imagine what that street we all know so well looked like that night. Then think about our Candlelight event in the country.

This month we are trying a new direction for the fall. Connie Hershey will be our speaker for the Fall Society meeting. She will be presenting a program on Victorian Christmas. But in this issue, she provides us with some insight you might not know about Ben Franklin. Whether he ever made it to the Farmstead is unknown, but his impact was undoubtedly felt there. Thanks to Connie and enjoy the read.

We are having yet another change. **THERE WILL NOT BE A SUMMER SOCIETY PICNIC.** While the County is hosting the Volunteer picnic on September 8, it was decided to try another avenue. We will be hosting our Fall Society meeting on October 18 at the Schwenkfelder Church as usual. **DIFFERENT THIS YEAR is dinner with no effort for any of us. The meal will be catered.** We will then hold our regular meeting and move on to the presentation.

There is a phrase that says "Embrace Change". We need to live by that phrase. Partly because change makes us better appreciate what went before. Partly because we have no choice! Enjoy the issue.





*(Mezzotint portrait by James McArdell of Franklin as the man who captured "electrical fire," based on a James Wilson portrait, 1760-1770. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.)*

## **BEN FRANKLIN: MAN OF THE FUTURE**

*by Constance Hershey*

Many writers about Benjamin Franklin emphasize his "American-ness." To them, his characteristics seem to resemble many of the ones that our society understands, appreciates, or even admires. Even his faults are easy for us to comprehend, and view with a chuckle, or at least a quiet nod.

Franklin was born one of the youngest members of a large and – one might say---apparently typical New England Protestant family. His father, a first-generation immigrant from England, was a chandler, a man literate and active in his community; his siblings had a healthy respect for the written word.

Apprenticed to the printing shop of his elder brother James, young Ben worked hard and read harder. The printing shop gave Ben experience in type-setting, deadlines, editing, and even political intrigue. In 1721, James commenced publication of a newspaper, *The Courant*, with Ben working beside him, and several of James' friends contributing to the paper. Ben, as shop-boy, wasn't admitted to that club, however. Writing privately, he submitted letters from "Silence Dogood," that were accepted and printed. Brother James was not thrilled to learn the identity of the contributor. After James was briefly imprisoned for "scandalous libel," Ben learned the dangers of falling afoul of the government. That brief taste of running the business while bro' was imprisoned made him eager for greater freedom.

Ben jumped ship. Hearing that a printer in New York wanted an assistant, he left Boston, breaking his indenture. When he learned there was no job waiting, the desperate young man sailed south, came ashore in Philadelphia, and stayed. It was the making of the man, and of the city.

Over the course of a long and extraordinary lifetime, Franklin founded civic organizations, conducted a prosperous publishing business, formed local military units, conducted scientific experiments, effected major political changes, and made a great deal of money. Today the power of his name has obscured an essential aspect of Franklin's character that provides a key to linking many of his activities. He would be the first to say, like the former Beatles drummer, that he did it "with a little help from my friends."

Benjamin Franklin was a brilliant organizer and negotiator. He believed that more can be accomplished by suggestion and agreement among a group of individuals than by a single individual imposing his will on others. The end product might be what the single individual wanted in the first place (he never denied that), but the product would be put forth by a group, supported by many, and accepted more readily by a larger society. His business succeeded so well that he felt ready to retire at forty-two to devote himself to civic duties, philanthropy, and his new interest: "natural philosophy," or the sciences. He was far from being the only educated man of his generation to become enthralled by the world of scientific study. Scientific instruments were considered necessary accouterments of the gentleman's library; and scientific experimentation was a fashionable pastime.

Like everything he took up, however, Franklin pursued scientific study with a vengeance. His curiosity was unbounded: even as a young man, he'd observed the world around him, and filed his observations for possible use. Today he is best remembered for his experimentation with "electrical fire." It is sad that those studies, which gained him admission into England's Royal Society, and the granting of doctorates from Yale and Harvard, have been reduced to an amusing vignette of a man standing in the rain with a kite, getting zapped by lightning. The larger body of Franklin's experimentation helped establish the groundwork on which our present understanding of the nature and characteristics of electricity is based. Did you know that we owe the terms "battery", "positive", "negative", "charge", and "discharge", to him? He coined them, using them in letters he wrote in the 1750's to a London friend, Peter Collinson, in which he described the experiments he and some friends were conducting in Philadelphia. If there had been no American revolution, we'd still be studying Franklin, but we'd be studying him in Physics class.

Never able to stay out of public affairs, Franklin became a member of the Pennsylvania assembly. A Proprietary Colony, Pennsylvania belonged to the Penn family. As it had grown, many of its colonists had become frustrated by the restrictive relationship, since Penn's descendants viewed the colony differently than its founder had. It was not unlike Franklin's frustration at being governed by an elder brother whose vision

**BEN FRANKLIN: MAN OF THE FUTURE,** *continued*

was more limited than his. In 1757 the Assembly appointed Franklin their agent, and sent him to London in hope of obtaining an audience with the Penn's, and working with them on the colony's behalf.

Though his efforts were fruitless, he succeeded beyond anyone's imaginings in representing Pennsylvania and the colonists to London's political and intellectual worlds in which he moved. Dr. Franklin (given honorary degrees by Oxford and St. Andrews to match those given by Harvard and Yale) was the perfect representative of the North American colonists: intelligent though not formally educated; socially conscious though fondly respectful of his English heritage; philanthropic though a shrewd moneymaker. If anyone could have prevented the rift between England and the colonies from widening it would have been Franklin. But the crevasse expanded; and Franklin went home to Philadelphia in 1775 convinced that the colonies would have to fend for themselves. His motto from years earlier, "Join or Die," was the watchword. The Second Continental Congress gathered in Philadelphia with Franklin as their senior member. When a committee was formed to draft a declaration of the colonies' intent to leave their Mother, the printer, publisher and author sat on it. True to his style, Franklin didn't write the document. But he did edit it, giving us the final form of the line that, perhaps more than any other, speaks to Americans down the years: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."



("Join or Die," cartoon published in Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* on May 9, 1754. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.)



**ADAMS FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE,  
(CAMBRIDGE, 1963), II, 274-75**  
**Text of letter from John Adams to his daughter  
on July 5, 1777**

*Submitted by Constance V. Hershey*

My dear Daughter,

Yesterday, being the anniversary of American Independence, was celebrated here with a festivity and ceremony

I am too old to delight in pretty descriptions, if I had a talent for them, otherwise a picture might be drawn, which would please the fancy of a Whig, at least.

The thought of taking any notice of this day, was not conceived, until the second of this month and it was not mentioned until the third. It was too late to have a sermon, as everyone wished, so this must be deferred to another year.

Congress determined to adjourn over that day, and to dine together. The general officers and others in town were invited, after the President and Council, and Board of War of this state.

In the morning the Delaware frigate, several large galleys and other continental armed vessels, the Pennsylvania ship and row galleys and guard boats, were all hawled off in the river, and several of them beautifully dressed in the colours of all nations, displayed about on the masts, yards and rigging.

At one o'clock these ships were all manned, that is, the men all ordered aloft, and arranged upon the tops, yards, and shrouds, making a striking appearance of companies of men drawn up in order, in the air.

Then I went on board the Delaware, with the President and several gentlemen of the Marine Committee, soon after which we were saluted with a discharge of thirteen guns, which was followed by thirteen other, from each other armed vessel in the river, the galleys followed the fire, and after them were the guard boats. Then the President and company returned in the barge to the shore, and were saluted with three cheers from every ship, galley and boat in the river. The wharves and shores were lined with a vast concourse of people, all shouting and hugging, in a manner which gave great joy to every friend of this country, and the utmost terror and dismay to every lurking tory.

At three we went to dinner, and were very agreeably entertained with excellent company, good cheer, fine music from the band of Hessians taken at Trenton, and continued volleys between every toast, from a company of soldiers drawn up in Second Street before the city tavern, where we dined. The toasts were in honour of our country, and the heroes who have fallen in their pious efforts to defend her. After this, two troops of light-horse, raised in Maryland, accidentally here in their way to camp, were paraded through Second-street, after them a train of artillery, and then a thousand infantry, now in this city on their march to camp, from North Carolina. All these marched into the common, where they went through their firing and manoeuvres; but I did not follow them. In the evening, I was walking about the streets for a little fresh air and exercise, and I was surprised to find the whole city lighting up their candles in their windows. I walked most of the evening, and I think it was the most splendid illumination I ever saw; a few surly houses were dark; but the lights were very universal. Considering the lateness of the design and the suddenness of the execution, I was amazed at the universal joy and alacrity that was discovered, and at the brilliancy and splendour of every part of this joyful exhibition. I had forgot the ringing of bells all day and evening, and the bonfire in the streets, and the

**ADAMS FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE, *continued***

fireworks played off.

Had General Howe been here in disguise, or his master, this show would have given them the heart-ache.

I am your affectionate father  
J. Adams

*(With thanks to the Newsletter of the Decorative Arts Trust )*

**PETER WENTZ COOKS**

*(from Kathy Yost)*

The famous Peter Wentz Cooks cookbook was published in 2004. Recently we have had several requests to update and reprint the book. While we are not doing so at this time, we thought we would share four fall recipes from some of our most famous cooks. We are assuming that good cooking does not change, although you are free to adjust ingredients as your current diet dictates! Please let us know if you would be interested in having us reprint this gem.

**CUBAN BLACK BEAN SOUP**...sent in by Pat McDonnell

1 lb. black beans  
2 Tbsp. salt  
1 ½ c. cooked long grain rice  
7 Tbsp. white vinegar, divided  
5 cloves garlic  
1 ½ tsp. dried oregano  
½ lb. green peppers, seeded and diced  
2 qt. water  
½ c. finely chopped onions  
10 Tbsp. olive oil, divided  
1 ½ tsp. ground cumin  
½ lb. onions, diced

Soak beans overnight in a large Dutch oven. Add salt; boil beans for 2 hours until soft. Drain and reserve water. Marinate rice and chopped onions in 5 tablespoons oil and 5 tablespoons vinegar. Crush garlic, cumin, oregano,

and 2 tablespoons vinegar in a mortar. Heat remaining 5 tablespoons oil in large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onions and peppers and cook until onions are tender. Add crushed ingredients. Add beans and enough reserved bean-water to achieve desired consistency. Cook slowly until ready to serve.

To serve, spoon ¼ cup of rice into each bowl of soup. Pour hot soup into each bowl and serve. Makes 6 servings.

**HARVEST NIGHT SUPPER**....sent in by Dianne Cram

1 lb. smoked sausage  
3 to 4 sweet potatoes  
1 to 2 onions  
3 to 4 apples  
½ c. apple cider  
Pinch of thyme  
Pinch of sage  
Salt and Pepper

Slice sausage, potatoes, onions and apples. Layer in a crock pot with the apples on top. Put the thyme, sage, salt and pepper on the potato and onion layers. Add apple cider. Cook on HIGH with lid on for approximately 4 to 6 hours. This is a good recipe for covered dish suppers.

**BEEHIVE OVEN APRICOT BREAD**...sent in by Eleanor H Bittle

2 c. dried apricots  
1 c. boiling water  
4 Tbsp. butter  
1 ½ c. sugar  
2 eggs, lightly beaten  
3 c. flour  
¼ tsp. salt  
1 c. pecans, chopped

Cut dried apricots into pieces with scissors. Cover with boiling water and let stand for one hour. Cream butter and sugar, then add eggs and apricots with water in which they were soaked. Sift together flour, baking soda and salt. Blend dry ingredients into batter. Add nutmeats. Pour into buttered pans- 1 large or 2 small. Bake in slow oven (325) for 1 hour or until tests done.

**ASPARAGUS WITH SESAME DRESSING**...sent in by Adrienne Hiser

1 ½ lb. asparagus  
2 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. dark sesame oil  
1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. rice wine vinegar  
1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. soy sauce  
1 tsp. sugar  
1 Tbsp. toasted sesame seeds

Cook asparagus in a steamer until crisp tender. Plunge into cold water and drain well. Mix everything for the dressing together except sesame seeds. Pour dressing over asparagus. Place asparagus with dressing on a platter to serve. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.



## SUMMER CAMPS---ANOTHER YEAR COMPLETED!

by Kimberly Boice

One of the hardest, yet most rewarding parts of my job as Museum Educator at the Farmstead is planning and then implementing the various summer camp programs we offer. Ever since I began directing Colonial Camp back in 2004, it has been a real labor of love to develop some new lessons and engage all of the kids (campers and counselors alike) in exciting ways. I enjoy the challenge and believe that everyone has benefited from the extra bit of thought and preparation. Below are some highlights from the THREE summer camp programs we currently offer, including our most popular guest teachers---Sam & Peg!

*Want to help? Have ideas for new lessons? Please contact us to share your thoughts.*

**COLONIAL CAMP** – 24 campers entering 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades  
This year we welcomed some new teachers to the program. You may remember Ruth Ann Williams from the past two years at Sheep Shearing Day where she highlighted her skill in various textile arts. During camp she had the campers paint silhouettes of various farm animals and frame one as part of her lesson. Marc Brier, a new guide & experienced Revolutionary War reenactor, taught the kids about the daily life of a Common Soldier (see picture) and even managed to teach some of them how to do an Oblique March---impressive! Patrick Peters drove all the way from New Jersey to share his knowledge of Revolutionary War medical practices, including a [fake] blood-stained rag. Dianne showed the kids the historic paint decoration of the Wentz house as inspiration for producing artwork on canvas. Deborah Peterson returned for various lessons, including a hand-stamped cotton kerchief (see picture). With some new activities and the returning favorites, we know the kids had a great week of learning.

**MITTE CAMP**- 21 campers entering 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grades  
In an effort to bring some new ideas to the program, the campers were inspired by Pennsylvania German painted trunks (see picture) to make their own front-piece. Although not exactly duplicates of museum pieces, many of the campers took the project very seriously and spent time thinking about their designs before putting brush to paint to wood. Of course, the kids did an amazing job with the tour of the outbuildings, garden, Nature Trail, and farm area (see picture).

**WENTZ WONDER KIDS CAMP**- 10 kids ages 4 + 5 years

We welcomed back Mrs. McMillan as the co-director of this popular program, which guarantees success when we need to alter plans quickly. We also had the continued assistance of Ms. Anya and a few new helpers with Ms. Ella and Ms. Emma. The campers always have a lot of things they help make and then get to take home and this year was no exception. This year's lessons included a painted/stamped reusable tote bag to hold all of their things and a clay art project that helped them work on improving hand-eye coordination. We also enjoyed being silly when wearing our colonial outfits and being careful when meeting Sam and Peg (see picture).



# KIDS' FUN PAGE

## WHY CHICKENS ARE AWESOME!

### FUN FACTS ABOUT CHICKENS

The chicken came before the egg.

Chickens have a great memory. They can distinguish over 100 different faces of people and animals.

There are over 25 BILLION chickens in the world.

Chickens see in full color.

Chickens can feel pain or distress.

Mother hens talk to their chicks while they are still in the egg.

Chickens love to play.

The largest chicken egg weighed almost 3/4 of a pound.

The oldest chicken, as far as we know, is 22 years old.

Chickens dream while they sleep.

The record flight time for chickens is 13 seconds.

Boredom is an enemy for chickens much as for teenagers... another human quality!

Hi, my name is Chirpy. I am a hen, and I lay yummy eggs. You can color me first and then cut the pieces on the lines to make a neat puzzle. My friends and I love to play and I hope you will have fun playing with my puzzle.

