



Times photo by Steve Voit

Dave and Jane Meyer received the traveling goat, Billy, when they celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary in June.

Kidding around is family tradition

'Traveling Anniversary Goat' making the rounds with brother

SAUK CENTRE — A lot of families get a kick out of playing practical jokes. But when the Meyer brothers start to kid around, they really kid around.

Dave Meyer of Sauk Centre and his six brothers are using a goat named Billy for their latest practical joke. It all started when Bernard Meyer of Parkers Prairie obtained the brown-and-black goat as an anniversary gift for another brother, Arnold, and his wife, Mary Ann.

Because Billy — dubbed the "Love Goat" — was such an outlandish anniversary present, he has now become a "Traveling Anniversary Goat." Plans are for all the Meyer brothers to get custody of Billy on their wedding anniversaries.

Why a goat?

"It's just a family thing," Bernard said last week. "We wanted to find

something that was different. A donkey would have worked, too, but I couldn't find one."

Bernard, the youngest brother, got the goat from a neighbor. "It was free, so the price was right," he chuckled.

He also got his hands on a trailer, which he painted white and garnished with tiny red hearts and the words "Traveling Anniversary Goat." To make the package completely embarrassing to the recipients, Bernard adorned the top of the trailer with an old toilet stool.

To keep Billy from ending up as a goat burger on one of his brothers' dinner tables, Bernard sends along adoption papers which say that if Billy is misplaced, the person responsible must replace him.

That, Dave said, was good thinking. "My brother, Leo, says that when he



Along the way

MIKE NISTLER
Times Staff Writer

gets it he's gonna mount it up on wheels."

The goat, Dave said, is by far the most unusual gift the brothers have ever swapped. Billy has not posed much of a problem so far, except when it comes to eating.

"That goat eats anything. Anything but grass," said Dave, who got the goat when he and his wife, Jane, celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary in June.

Billy also has a tendency to chew through his rope. "He runs away every now and then," Dave said.

But Billy can't wander too far without being caught and returned to the Meyers. "Word has gotten around town about the goat," Dave said.

Word has also gotten around to brothers. "They know he (Billy) is coming," Dave said.

The next recipient of the Love Goat will be Al Meyer of Sauk Centre, whose anniversary is in late July. Only one brother may escape Billy's visit. Brother Poly lives in Washington state.

"I don't know how we'll get him there," Dave said.