

Former Farm Wife Sells Christmas Trees for 12 Years

"O Christmas tree,
O Christmas tree,
O evergreen unchanging,
A symbol of good will and love."

By Mrs. Charles McSparran
Farm Feature Writer

This German carol fills the air just now. The Christmas tree has been celebrated in song and legend since the time of its first adoption as a Christmas symbol in the days of Luther.

To one lady in Lancaster County it means jostling four to eight feet Christmas trees from place to place so each customer might select the tree best suited to his or her fancy.

She is Mrs. Lloyd (Laura) Lefever of 120 E. State Street, Quarryville. She has the Scotch pine, Austrian pine, White spruce and a sampling of White pine for a few customers who prefer them.

This year the White pines are not as rich a green as the other varieties she has.

By and large evergreen trees are exceptionally green and extra thick this year due to abundant rains all year.

She does not stock blue spruce and Douglas fir as they are too expensive for most of her customers. They are slow growers which necessarily makes them cost more to produce. Mrs. Lefever, herself, prefers the long needled Austrian pine. However, the Scotch pine is the biggest seller.

Mrs. Lefever has sold Christmas trees for about 12 years. She buys all her trees from a local grower and they are cut and brought right in to her. She says the price is about the same as last year. The prices range from \$2.75 to \$4.50, with a few small ones for \$2.50. Most of them are four feet to six feet but she has some seven or eight feet tall.

She has them at her home, in the downtown section of town. There is just a path through the middle of the trees in her back yard and they are lined up along the side of her house and in the front. She also has oodles of branches for decorating. Also Wiley Howett handles some for her at the bus station downtown where he sells candy, soft drinks, cigarettes, cigars, etc. She used to make sprays but she says, "It was too much for me to do."

She recommends cutting a little off the base of the Christmas trees and putting them in water immediately to keep them fresh.

Mrs. Lefever, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Lindcamp, Unicorn, grew up on the farm and her husband and she farmed for Clarence Girvin, Abram Herr and Mrs. Emma Stively, Colerain Township. Laura worked outside as



Mrs. Laura L. Lefever, Quarryville, exhibits one of her beautiful white spruce Christmas trees. A few of her Scotch pines can be seen in the background.

Lefevers moved to Park Avenue, Quarryville, American Legion Auxiliary. She always had chickens and a garden and did lots of canning there for 32 years. She said, "I missed my chickens when I moved to Quarryville."

After leaving the farm Mr. Lefever ran a milk route for 15 or 16 years, gathering up milk from farms and delivering it to Penn Dairies in Lancaster. Later he worked for the fertilizer plant and at Stoners Inc. Co. in Quarryville and at Armstrong Cork Co. in Lancaster. He also was in the junk business.

Mrs. Lefever has two sons, Donald and John, both living in Quarryville. She belongs to Wesley United Methodist Church of the Mount Hope Circuit. She was formerly more active than now and served as president of the Woman's Society of Christian Service, taught a Sunday School class of nine and ten year old girls and for eight years was in charge of their Children's Day and Christmas programs.

She has been a member of the Quarryville Fire Company Auxiliary and donated and helped at some of their suppers. She also was a former member of the

Quarryville American Legion Auxiliary.

One of her favorite past-times is attending auction sales. Through the years she accumulated many antique dishes and pieces of furniture, also little china dogs. She had a sale of some of her furniture and china last fall.

She has a black poodle-colie dog which keeps her well entertained and beneath her Austrian pine Christmas tree is a stocking filled with goodies for Tinker.

Mrs. Lefever has a number of house plants, including African violets, Thanksgiving cactus, Amayllis lilies and geraniums. Other years she grew zinnias, marigolds, scarlet sage, asters and snapdragons which she exhibited at the Southern Lancaster Co. Community Fair. She also exhibited yellow tomatoes, rhubarb, baked goods and fancy work. Her fancy work includes crocheted doilies and edgings, embroidered scarves and some tatting. She has collected 150 prize ribbons since the fair organized in 1950.

A couple of Mrs. Lefever's favorite recipes are rhubarb

custard pie and a sponge cake which won prizes at the fair.

SPONGE CAKE

5 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 cup flour
1 scant teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon lemon extract

Separate eggs and beat. Fold beaten yolks into beaten egg whites. Fold sugar in. Fold in flour and baking powder. Add flavoring. Bake in a slow oven (about 300 degrees) for one hour.

RHUBARB CUSTARD PIE

1 cup cut-up raw rhubarb (piled up)
Scald rhubarb and let drain while you prepare the following ingredients:
2 beaten eggs
1 cup sugar
1 tablespoon butter
2 tablespoons flour

Mix flour and sugar, add beaten eggs, then melted butter. Stir rhubarb in last. Pour into unbaked crust. Bake at 450 degrees for 15 minutes and lower temperature to 325 degrees until custard is set. Makes a 9 inch pie.



Mrs. Lefever is seated beside one of her china closets of dishes and little knickknacks.

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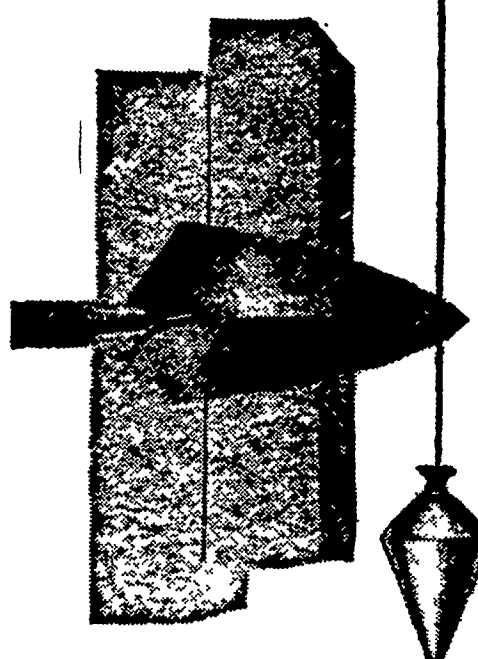
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