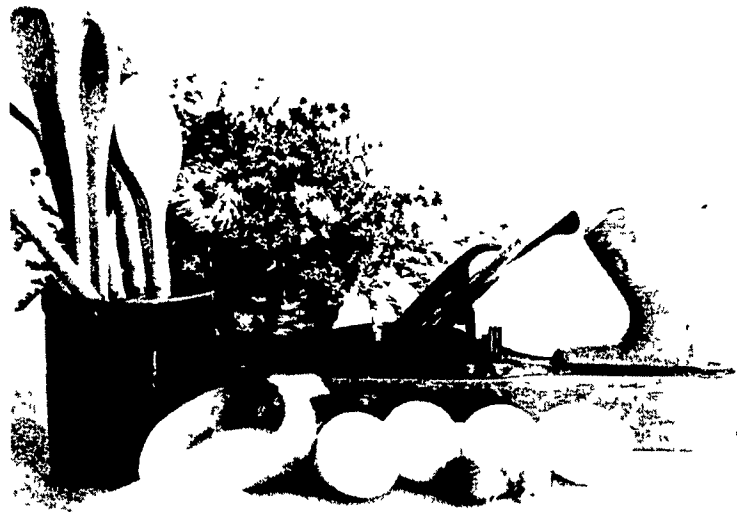


Homestead Notes

Pat Erway, Editor



Lettie Schadler . . .

Likes Busy, Hectic Schedule

By Sally Bair
Feature Writer

"I love my job. I find it very exciting." These two simple statements show clearly how Mrs. Alletta Schadler feels about her career as Lebanon County Extension home economist. As she talks about her job, one quickly sees that she means what she says.

"I receive great satisfaction in working with families—helping them think through their problems, reach a decision and be happy with the solution."

She adds, "I am very impressed in working with farm families to see the real partnership and teamwork. It is great to see the husband take time off to discuss problems which concern the home, and women are real team members. I really think this is a great kind of way to live."

"If anyone working in Extension is bored," Lettie says, "it's their own fault." She quickly adds that this is one job where one really doesn't know what the day will bring. "As soon as you think you have a free day to work on files, you find yourself telling how to get silly putty out of a closet lock, or what to do when your child throws a box of crayons in an electric dryer while it is operating."

Providing programs for homemakers, working with Lebanon County's 19 Farm Women Societies and making home visits are all part of Lettie's job, but she is often busy in activities not considered traditional for extension home economists.

"Being active in the community is a good way to spread the word of Extension and show its aim and accomplishments," Lettie says. "Working with a wide cross-section of people helps show that Extension is no longer strictly for farm people."

To back up her beliefs, Lettie is active in community development work, zoning education and working with the Farmers Home Administration in obtaining rural housing. She is also helping to establish a family planning agency for the county.

Her interest in zoning education began last year when she participated in the Kellogg Public Affairs Leadership program where there was emphasis on land use planning and public affairs in general.

She talks enthusiastically about her first zoning education project. "There were four townships in the northern part of the county which had done nothing in the way of passing zoning ordinances or planning for



Lettie holds a cookbook of favorite recipes published by the Lebanon County Home Economics Association. Lettie was co-editor.

future growth. These counties have been experiencing tremendous growth because of the proximity of Interstates 78 and 81 and the Penn National Race Track, and not all of it has been desirable."

One township wanted to tackle the problem so Lettie worked closely with a Township Supervisor who is also a Problems of Democracy teacher in setting up an educational program prior to actual zoning discussions. Students in the POD class became involved and hand-carried invitations to the initial meeting to every taxpayer in the township. As a result over 150 people attended the meeting and they asked questions for an hour after the panel discussion.

Lettie says, "It was tremendously exciting to see the response and to see that this approach to the problem worked." "Now," she says, "Two of the remaining three townships have decided to hold similar educational meetings for their citizens."

Lettie works closely with the Chamber of Commerce and is on the Lebanon Valley Safety Council. She is a special member of the Lebanon Valley Retailers Committee and works with them "in carrying out consumer education programs which are

offered to high schools, service clubs, women's clubs and are designed to increase understanding between the merchants and the consumers."

She serves on the board of Community Chest and is active in the Lebanon County Home Economics Association. Lettie served as co-editor of a cookbook of favorite recipes published by the Association.

Another success story Lettie likes to tell is about the urban 4-H program for Lebanon. She said, "About six years ago the County Commissioners grew concerned about the growing problem of juvenile delinquency in the city and felt it was a result of not enough activities for the young people. There was a play ground program, but the Commissioners felt it was not sufficiently meeting the need."

So the Commissioners made a grant to the Extension service to provide an urban 4-H program, and although it was small at first it reached 435 children in 1971 and 715 this year. The program is supervised by four Extension aides hired for the summer and by teen leaders from around the county.

Lettie says, "The aides have done a magnificent job, and it has helped give the rural teen leaders a chance to become aware of the

problems of the inner city. It also gives the teen leaders an opportunity to provide leadership skills."

"We have received recognition and support from the city council, the County Commissioners and the townspeople," Lettie says proudly.

Their big project this past summer was having each child plant a tomato in a recycled paper pot. The urban 4-H'ers first held a paper drive and collected over three tons of paper, which a local firm recycled into paper pots. "It became a real community effort," Lettie says, "A local greenhouse donated tomatoes, seven paint dealers donated paint for the pots, soil was given by the Fair Board, a farmer gave lathes, fertilizer was supplied by a chemical company and a trucking firm helped haul the soil from the fairgrounds."

She adds, "It was a very successful project. Unfortunately, the tomatoes were three weeks behind because of the disruption caused by Agnes, so they weren't ready for harvest until September."

The ten urban clubs also go in for the more traditional 4-H programs such as making crafts. They even made homemade ice cream for their final meeting. Field trips have included visits to horse farms, judging operations and the Hershey Chocolate Factory, all courtesy of a county-owned bus supplied by the County Commissioners.

"Ultimately," Lettie says, "We hope to develop urban children into teen leaders to assist with the city clubs and to recruit adult help."

Because she is relatively new in Extension—her third anniversary was in December—

Lettie feels she isn't qualified to talk about changes.

But as she looks to the future, she says, "Extension is making more of an effort to meet the needs of groups such as the elderly, young mothers and the special concerns of women and families. I see us as being more concerned with the stage of life cycle: for instance, meeting the specific needs of the elderly."

She feels Lebanon County is already focusing on this problem, having had an Office of the Aging and the Meals on Wheels program for several years. The county also has a foster home program for the elderly and several housing units.

Lettie said, "Extension will be doing more work with the disadvantaged and with young families, helping working mothers to utilize their limited time and energy to their best advantage."

Being a Lebanon County native is a big asset in her job, she said. She was born in Fredericksburg where she now resides, but was graduated from Bethel Township High School in Berks County.

Lettie is the daughter of State Senator Clarence Manbeck, and when asked if it is a help or a hindrance to have a well-known father, she said, "With a father like I've got it's never a disadvantage."

She added, "It's nice to have someone in touch with what's going on and someone to turn to." Since she works so closely with people, Lettie said, "It helps me have a better appreciation of his job. We often discuss people's problems. He does a good job of keeping in touch with his constituents."

Lettie was a Commercial Consumer Services major in the

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Lettie Schadler discusses a problem with one of the many homemakers who drop by the office for specific answers. She spends a lot of time answering telephone requests for assistance and information.