



Joan Lucas . . .

The County Bids Farewell To A Friend

By Salley Bair
Feature Writer

Joan Lucas has been a bubbling, bright part of the Lancaster County Extension scene for two and one-half years, but she is leaving at the end of this month to become Mrs. Edward J. Gillis.

She characterizes her experiences as assistant Extension home economist as having been "quite rewarding, and a real challenge." Her love of people and enthusiasm for her work are clearly evident as she reminisces.

Joan came to Lancaster in the summer of 1970 as a new graduate of Mansfield State College. Her home is in West Chester, where she is the second of four children of Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Lucas, Jr.

It was in her senior year at Henderson Senior High School that she took an elective course in home economics, and that's what made her decide on her college major. She chose home economics education "because I thought it would also help me in general living."

Joan became interested in Extension work through her cooperating teacher in Lewisburg where she did her practice teaching. She said it appealed to her because of the "opportunities for educating people on an informal basis."

She says, "The big thing I've enjoyed is the experience of meeting people and working together with others - coordinating events and bringing in resource people to meet a need."

She said one of the most important things she learned as she

arrived on the job "green from college" is that "you don't need to know everything, but simply to know where to find the answer to questions or resource people who have experience in specific areas."

She added, "In working with people you see what they want and then provide that in the best acceptable way - if you feel competent you provide the answer; if you don't know it, say no, and find someone who does."

Joan's love has always been foods and nutrition. At one point she considered working in a test kitchen (she said she sent for applications from cereal boxes), but decided she liked the variety which Extension offered. She said her first thought when she came to the County is that the Farm and Home Center demonstration kitchen should be used more.

Stemming from her interest in foods, Joan has given many talks on proper nutrition and on techniques of food preparation. She gathered a group of resource people for a gourmet foods meeting, from which has come a full series on food preparation now being taught by Gray Sellers, director of administrative services at Millersville State College. This series is being offered for the first time, and a registration fee helps pay the instructor and for materials. Joan says, "It's been received very well, and the women have shown great interest."

Joan says, "Extension's role has changed. It is no longer geared just to rural people, but there are programs for everyone.



Joan arranges the refreshment table at the foods course.

We provide a well-rounded program and work with others to meet the needs of the total population."

Joan's work plans reflect this diversification.

"Another area that has always been of interest to me is the young mother. I have many friends who are mothers, and although experience teaches, I feel there could be a helping hand to make things easier," Joan says. She admits that the young mother is difficult to reach, but together with other Extension home economists in the southeastern part of the state, she has helped compile an eight-series newsletter directed to mothers of pre-schoolers. The newsletter answers questions and offers timely advice.

Joan says the newsletter is adapted to each county's specific needs. "From the interest in this grew our first Young Mother's day. For that we're providing educational activities in different areas relating to pre-schoolers." Subject areas include sewing and clothing selection for the pre-schooler, nutrition, creative play, decorating a child's room, behavior patterns and talking with your child.

"When you plan a program and really have people who are receptive and interested in knowing more about it it is so rewarding." This is how the response has been from the young mothers, Joan says. She laughed as she told of one mother who called her after reading her newsletter and asked what to do about her child's diarrhea, and another who called about her child who wouldn't eat. But she said many mothers gave her good ideas to use in the program for the pre-schooler.

An important part of Extension

is working with other agencies, Joan said. "As you get into things you realize there are other people working toward the same goal, so why not work together? Often we waste professional time and effectiveness by duplicating programs. I think by coordinating them and working together we can be far more effective."

One of the newest interests for Joan has been the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Commission, where Extension participates on the education committee. Joan has also provided some high school teachers with consumer information.

Joan worked with homemakers in the Welsh Mountain area in a "Pounds Away" program. Included was information on nutrition and low-calorie cooking, as well as instruction in yoga.

Joan was a 4-H'er in West Chester for two years, when she was twelve, and was president of

seeds for activities here in Lancaster."

Joan says she's already been asked to be a 4-H leader in Lewisburg where she'll be residing after her wedding on March 17. She said she'd like to work with a foods club there "after I get settled."

As far as working in the immediate future, Joan said, "Extension is very demanding of your time. I'd rather devote time to being a wife - and, eventually, a mother." She is, however, looking for a teaching position in that area, or may take courses at Bucknell University.

When asked what she enjoyed most about her work in the County, Joan said, "I think the satisfaction of working with people - communicating with people and informing them of something they were not aware of. I liked the personal contact."

She feels her work here has "matured" her and given her a



Richard Ezell, children's librarian at Lancaster County Library, talks about story time with Nancy Fasolt, (left) 2961 Kings Lane, Lancaster, and Joan. Mrs. Fasolt's children, Carrie (left) and Rebecca listen intently. The library display was part of the Young Mother's program.

her sewing club. But she says, "I didn't know the total 4-H program until I got to Lancaster County. I learned fast. The projects and the opportunities that are available to youth through 4-H are fantastic. There is so much to develop them as individuals."

Joan has been advisor to the 4-H County Council, a group which she feels serves a vital function in a county with such a large 4-H enrollment. She helped plan and traveled with two 4-H exchanges to other states. Her thoughts about that: "I think it's a great opportunity for a 4-H'er to live with other 4-H'ers, away from home and in another household. They get to see what other 4-H programs are compared with ours, and from this comes many

tremendous amount of invaluable experiences.

Joan said, "I really enjoyed living in Lancaster County. It's an area where in a short distance you can be out in the country or in the city. I like the markets and atmosphere and all that's provided here in Lancaster County."

But especially, Joan says, "I've enjoyed the people I've worked with."

The best wishes of all those Lancaster countians she's worked with go with Joan as she begins the happy responsibilities of her new career.



Joan measures water for participants in the foods preparation series being taught by Gray Sellers. Mr. Sellers is in the background.