

Homestead Notes

Pat Erway, Editor

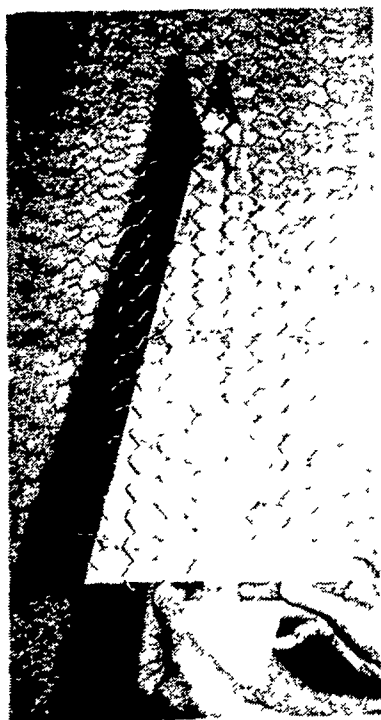


By Sally Bair
Feature Writer

Nothing can help you express the warm spirit of the Christmas season like hand-crafted decorations fashioned from greens.

Here's a door decoration or wall hanging that is simple and inexpensive to make and that will add cheer to your home throughout the holiday season. It's a plywood Christmas tree covered with greens.

The supplies you will need include 1/4 inch plywood, 1 inch chicken wire, wire cutters, masking tape, heavy duty stapler, small square of green felt, white glue, any kinds of greens you choose and bows or other decorations as you desire to complete your tree.



The first step in the process after the tree is cut is to bend the chicken wire around the tree, leaving some slack so that the greens can be inserted. Be sure to align the bottom of the wire with the bottom of the tree.



Just a few simple supplies will allow you to create a lovely tree for your wall or door. Plywood, chicken wire, stapler, masking tape, glue, felt and greens are all you need.

According to Mrs. Christ Greider, Mount Joy RD2, who taught members of Farm Women Society 18 to make the decoration, the dimensions of the plywood tree are 24 inch from the tip of the tree to the bottom of the stand. More specifically, the bottom of the tree measures 9 inch across, and the point of the tree is 20 inch above that line, making the stand or base 4 inch deep. These dimensions can, of course, be altered, depending upon the size of finished decoration you wish to have. Drill

a hole toward the top of the tree for easier hanging.

You will need a 13 inch x 24 inch piece of the chicken wire, again changing the dimensions if you change the size of the tree.

The first step is to cover the front of the plywood tree with the chicken wire, aligning the bottom of the wire with the bottom of the tree. The wire must be folded to the back of the tree, leaving some slack so that the greens can be inserted easily. Cut off the excess wire with wire cutters and staple the wire in place on the back side.

Next cover the ends of the wire with masking tape so that it won't scratch the door or wall against which it will be hanging when finished.

The stand of the tree must then be covered with the felt. Cut the felt the desired size with enough overlap to fold to the back side, and glue in place with white glue.

Those are the simple basic steps to construct the tree, and now you're ready to insert the greens. Almost any type of greens you have available will do - arborvitae, boxwood, holly, etc - Mrs. Greider suggests saving the greens when you prune your shrubbery. She adds that it is important to condition the greens before using them by soaking them overnight in water so they're full. The Farm Women were also reminded that the speaker at the Extension homemakers program suggested adding two tablespoons of brown sugar to warm water for the conditioning process.

Mrs. Greider says its best to start inserting the greens at the bottom of the tree and then outline the sides to the basic size and shape of the tree. Then fill it until you have the tree just the way you want it. Be sure you've covered the wire completely with greens.

When you've inserted the greens to your satisfaction, finish off your holiday decoration by adding a red velvet bow, fruit, nuts, birds, flowers, lights, balls, or just about anything that strikes your fancy.

The basic supplies cost about 50 cents, so with a little time and creativity you've made a lovely addition to your holiday decorations or a welcome gift for someone on your list.



Inserting arborvitae in the chicken wire. Any kind of greens may be used successfully.



A finished product, created by using American holly. Velvet bows and a ribbon highlight the tree.