

# 4-H leader says

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rolling her eyes accentuated her point.

Another time, she was able to get a local florist to come in and give a demonstration in flower arranging.

"What I do," says Donna, "is allow the girls to pick and choose what they would enjoy doing, and then I go out and find the various resource people to teach the sessions."

Some of the programs she has run through the Winter include Bicentennial crafts,

quilling, quilting, rug hooking, foods, etc.

For most individuals, finding the resource persons, alone, for this job would be a monumental task, but Donna explains it right away, saying, "I know really great people. They volunteer their services - I get all this free."

Donna's proud of the fact that she has never had a fund raising drive in her years as organizational leader of the club.

"I charge \$2 per family per year," she says, "And, with 100 girls, you can see

how much that brings in. We own 10 of our own sewing machines."

Those 10 dewing machines are kept in the Scout Hall where the girls have free access to them in the Summertime.

"During school, we hold the meeting, and then the various groups can elect to meet on their own until their certain project is completed, but, in the Summer when the community groups don't use the Scout Hall, we get to sew."

The organization of 92 budding seamstresses is no easy job, but Donna has it down pat.

"It takes quite a bit of scheduling, as you might imagine," she says. "Some sew on Tuesday morning and some that afternoon, and so on," she explains.

A fair amount of Donna's members stay with her throughout the levels of advancement in the Summer program, although, she says, "You have to be realistic and be aware they're going to become involved in other activities, such as school sports and clubs."

Now, after she's been involved with the club for several years, her two daughters Valerie, 13 and Virginia (Ginny) 11, are taking part.

"The first year I was the organizational leader, someone just came to me and said, 'We need an organizational leader or there won't be a club next year.' So, I took it on, but my own two children were too young to participate."

Prior to Donna's organizational efforts, the club had only existed for one year and had only provided sewing facilities during the Summer. So, she is satisfied with the progress the club has made.

While she is organizational leader, she does give lots of

the credit to the project leaders.

"One thing, though," she says, holding her finger outright to make a point, "I hand-pick all my leaders. I don't run an ad in the paper saying the Harley Hill Stitchers needs leaders - I want women with the right attitude and the right personality. After all, they will have an influence on these girls."

While her involvement in the Harleys Hill stitchers is quite keen, her responsibilities to 4-H do not end there.

For six years she has been on the 4-H cabinet of Montgomery County, which serves as a liaison between the clubs and the local Extension Office. In her years of service to that group she has served as secretary and vice chairman.

And, just last month she served as the chairman of the Montgomery County 4-H fair - an awesome task. Along with that, she was also responsible for the Wednesday evening open ceremonies, and the Friday night program - a tradition in the Montgomery County area. For that program, she wrote a skit in which all the grand champion winners could participate.

That brings the story around to another one of Donna's abilities - writing. She writes poems, and at her church, is a work area chairman, and does publicity for the women's society.

She's also a volunteer for Meals on Wheels, is a Questor, was a charter member of a neighborhood organization called Country Neighbors, which does community service. Although she doesn't actually help with the Scout Troup in the neighborhood, she has designed a backpack that the girls sew every

year, and when they do, Donna is right there to give assistance.

Her list of activities and volunteer work doesn't end at this, either. Right now, she is a volunteer to the Peter Wentz Home, where Washington stayed to plan the battle of Germantown. Then too, she is the junior director of the Harleysville Branch of the Needlecraft Guild of America, which is evident from the works of art in her home.

Donna enjoys all forms of needlework. She does needlepoint, crewel - "the whole bit," she says, and also as she puts it, "It's


easier to tell what I don't do when it comes to crafts than to say what I actually do."

But one type of handwork that is of definite interest is the 18th clothing she makes for her family. The Armstrongs belong to the Goschenhoppen Historians, a group of individuals interested in preserving the heritage of the Pennsylvania Dutch Culture. Each year the historians have a folk festival, and for 10 out of 11 years, the Armstrongs have been there to lend a hand.

"For five years I was the 'funnel cake lady,'" Donna laughs. And, now for three

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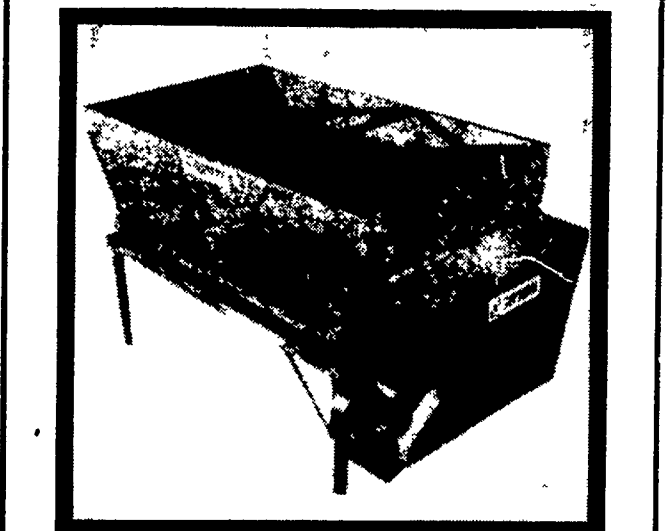
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