

Christmas gift creating is a Brenneman family affair

H
O
M
E
S
T
E
A
D



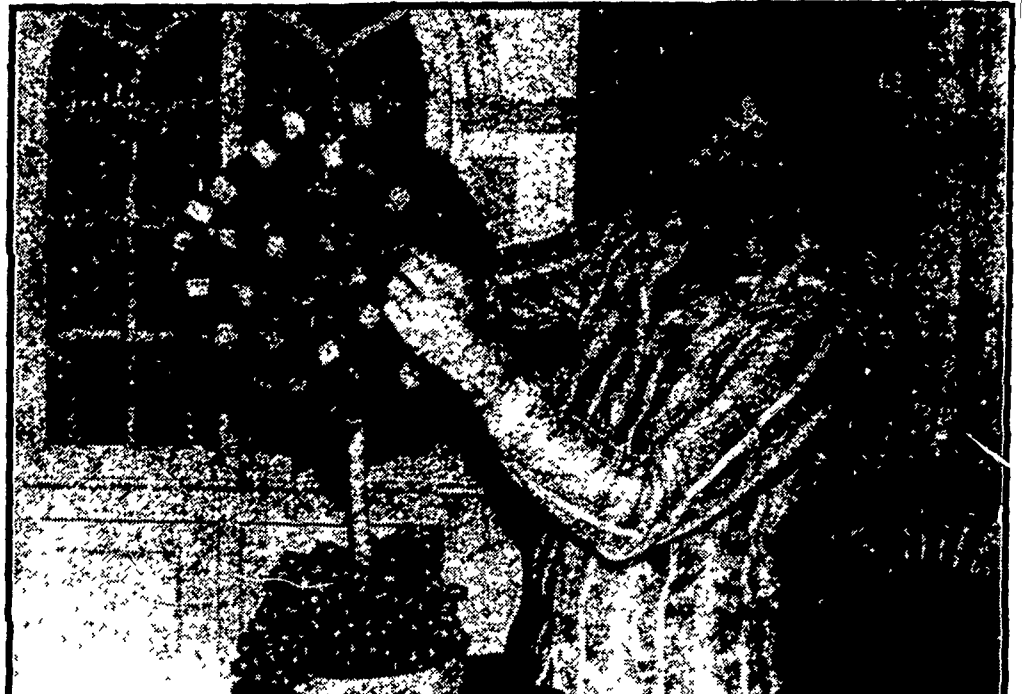
N
O
T
E
S

Marian (right) works with her children as they gather the material to make the tree decorations.

Roger is flanked by his sisters, LuAnn (left) and JoAnn.



Marian and Elvin go over some of the records for their 135 acre dairy operation on Donegal Springs Road.



A fruit tree makes an unusual way to serve appetizers. This "tree" is a dowel positioned in a clay flower pot with a styrofoam ball which is covered with parsley.

By SALLY BAIR
Staff correspondent

MOUNT JOY—Marian Brenneman's house is beginning to look a lot like Christmas - there are small piles of cord and ribbon which are being used to make tree decorations, and there's several braided calico wreaths in various stages of completion.

Marian, who lives on Donegal Springs Road, Mount Joy, with her husband Elvin and their three children, prepares for the holidays just as she does for all her many activities - completely.

Marian enjoys being busy but makes it clear that her family is most important to her. "Without your family what do you have?" she asks. Because she enjoys her family, she says, "I like going into details with things. I get self-satisfaction from that." That attitude explains all the creative ideas she's making for her tree and for gifts for friends - lucky friends.

Decorations for the tree are a family affair with the Brennemens' three children - LuAnn, 16, JoAnn, 14, and Roger, 8 - all contributing to the work. This year there will be clusters of "lollipops" which the family is creating from yards of rope cord and velvet ribbon. They wind the two together, pasting as they go, then stitch on a part of a drinking straw as a stick. A tiny velvet bow adds a finishing touch.

For gifts this year, Marian is making braided wreaths from calico strips to be placed around a hurricane globe and candle. She has many wreaths begun and purchased the hurricane lamps on a recent trip to Williamsburg pottery.

This writer was fortunate enough to be at Marian's home the day before Thanksgiving, and touches of Marian's creativity were in evidence for the big day. The most eye-catching - and palate pleasing - was a huge roast turkey which was to be used as an edible centerpiece. The



As an employee at Donegal Mills Plantation, Marian is responsible for making bread, an art she loves.

breast pieces had been uniformly sliced, and olives, shrimp, parsley and celery stalks were added. At the base of the bird was a lace trim in which red beet eggs nested. This is sure to be a crowd pleaser for any holiday activity.

As appetizers for her family dinner, Marian had just completed a "fruit tree" with pineapple chunks and cherries. The "tree" was a dowel rod firmly implanted in a clay flower pot with a styrofoam ball at the top. The pot was filled with real grapes, and the ball was covered completely with parsley. The fruit was added on toothpicks. Marian mentioned that the same idea can be used with raw vegetables on toothpicks to be eaten with a dip. She said she will sprinkle her parsley ball with water and keep it in a cool room so she can use it for the Christmas and New Year festivities.

Marian readily admits that all her ideas for decorating and for crafts come from friends.

"I pick up ideas from someone, and then I like to get together with friends to make crafts. It is fun to get together with other girls, and we will often have a pot luck supper. It's really fun making things for Christmas," she declares.

As an understatement, Marian adds, "Friends are really important to me."

Marian is very involved in the community around her. In fact, if you've ever been to an event sponsored by the Lancaster County Farmers Association, chances are you've met her. Or perhaps you've eaten at Betty Groff's Farm Restaurant and Marian has served you. If you have visited Donegal Mills Plantation, you may have seen her baking bread. Or you may know her as a 4-H leader.

She has completed two years as chairman of the women's committee of the Lancaster County Farmers Association and says she really liked the experience.

(Continued on Page 46)