

Church women prepare crafts for Christmas bazaar



The five busy crafts people at this work session included from left: Carolyn Heck, Leesport; Oralee Luckenbill, Bernville; Sharon Gruber, Mohrsville; Cathy Phillips, Mohrsville; and Elaine Cammauf, Mohrsville.

BY ROBIN PHILLIPS
Staff Correspondent

MOHRSVILLE — Ingenious crafts made by a group of country women overflowed from a small table in Sharon Gruber's home last week. The five women were at their weekly craftwork session to prepare for the annual Christmas bazaar at Salem Belleman's Union Church in Mohrsville.

"You'd be surprised at what we make out of junk," said Elaine Cammauf, R1 Mohrsville. "We economize."

Elaine is a dairy farm wife who also teaches nursery class at Belleman's Church. Elaine, along with Cathy Phillips, another Mohrsville dairy farm wife, organized the nursery class mothers into a group to share ideas and costs for crafts that they donate to the annual church bazaar.

The bazaar is scheduled for Nov. 9 and 10 at the church fellowship

hall approximately three miles off Route 61 in Centre Township.

Each year, these women and members of other Sunday school classes and groups within the Union church make Christmas tree ornaments, pillows, wreaths, children's items, home items, and candles, in addition to homemade candies, cookies, and other food. All the items are sold at the two-day event and money is donated to a special fund. This year, the bazaar money will be used to pay for renovations to the church.

For Elaine and Cathy, the bazaar is a year-long project. Scraps of material, yarn and plastic items, plus craft items and ideas from magazines, books and stores are collected and saved for the work sessions.

This year, the women began making their crafts in July. "We started later this year," Elaine said of their work parties. Seventeen nursery class mothers volunteered to "help either financially or creatively," Cathy added.

Ideas are shared during Sunday school or at the work sessions and the cost of each craft is either donated by the particular sponsor of the idea or is shared between the 17 members. There are no requirements for coming to the work sessions, and each mother helps by attending the meeting, working on crafts at home or supplying materials.

Although the women began their crafts late this year, they have constructed an impressive array of items to choose from. They made pretzel wreath wall hangings, tin punch copper ornaments, padded, covered photo albums, appliqued baby bibs, tree sachets, ceramic ornaments, teddy bear stocking hangers, picture frames, star and fabric ball tree ornaments, quilted pillows, stationery and homemade potpourri.

They price the items according to the time and materials put into each craft. "When we start out, they're cheap," Cathy said, referring to the time when the women discuss the future price of the finished product. "Then we make them and it takes us hours

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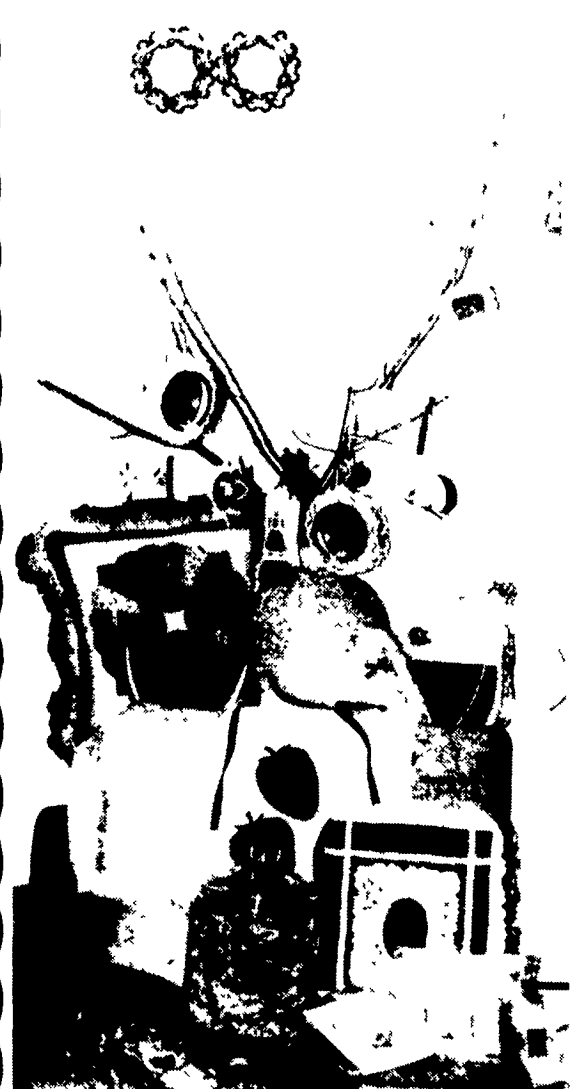
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The women displayed a wide variety of crafts all ready to be sold at the annual bazaar.