

Marie Steinmetz Rises To The Occasion

BY LOU ANN GOOD
KLEINFELTERSVILLE
 (Lebanon) — The new Lebanon County Farm Women's president, Marie Steinmetz, lives in a small town that boasts the longest single post office name in the United States. Kleinfeltersville was named after Marie's great-great grandfather who was deeded the family farm by William Penn in the early 1700's.

Marie is proud of the family farm, proud of her circuit-riding, evangelical great-great grandfather who founded the town and proud of Lebanon Farm Women

members.

Marie said that the 396 members that make up the 21 groups in her county are a very cooperative group of ladies. She added, "Our group is not a gossip session like some groups tend to become. We're too busy for that."

Few are probably more active than their president Marie. Although retired from her former full-time job since 1983, Marie's schedule brims with volunteer work, church and community activities and her part-time career as a professional seamstress.

She shakes her head as she

exclaims, "I don't know how I ever worked full time, I'm so busy. There's oodles to do." All in the same breath, she adds, "I can't see anyone retiring and twiddling their thumbs."

Twiddling thumbs is certainly not something Marie has ever done. Since age 5, Marie has been nimble with a needle. Through six decades she has supplemented the family income by carrying on a thriving dressmaking business. "I've never bought myself a dress," she said. "I've always made my own. I even sew most of my coats."



Angel food cakes are Marie's specialty.

She has exhibited her sewing projects in the state farm show since 1936 and has garnered ribbons galore. She has taught sewing classes for the Singer company and the YWCA in Lebanon. From ages 9 to 50, Marie was active in 4-H. Mostly, she served as a local sewing and cooking leader. She credits her sewing success to experience and courses taken through the extension services.

Marie refers to the government's accusation that extension services are teaching hobbies when they hold classes in sewing and cooking as appalling. "Both sewing and cooking are so basic. They are not hobbies. You can

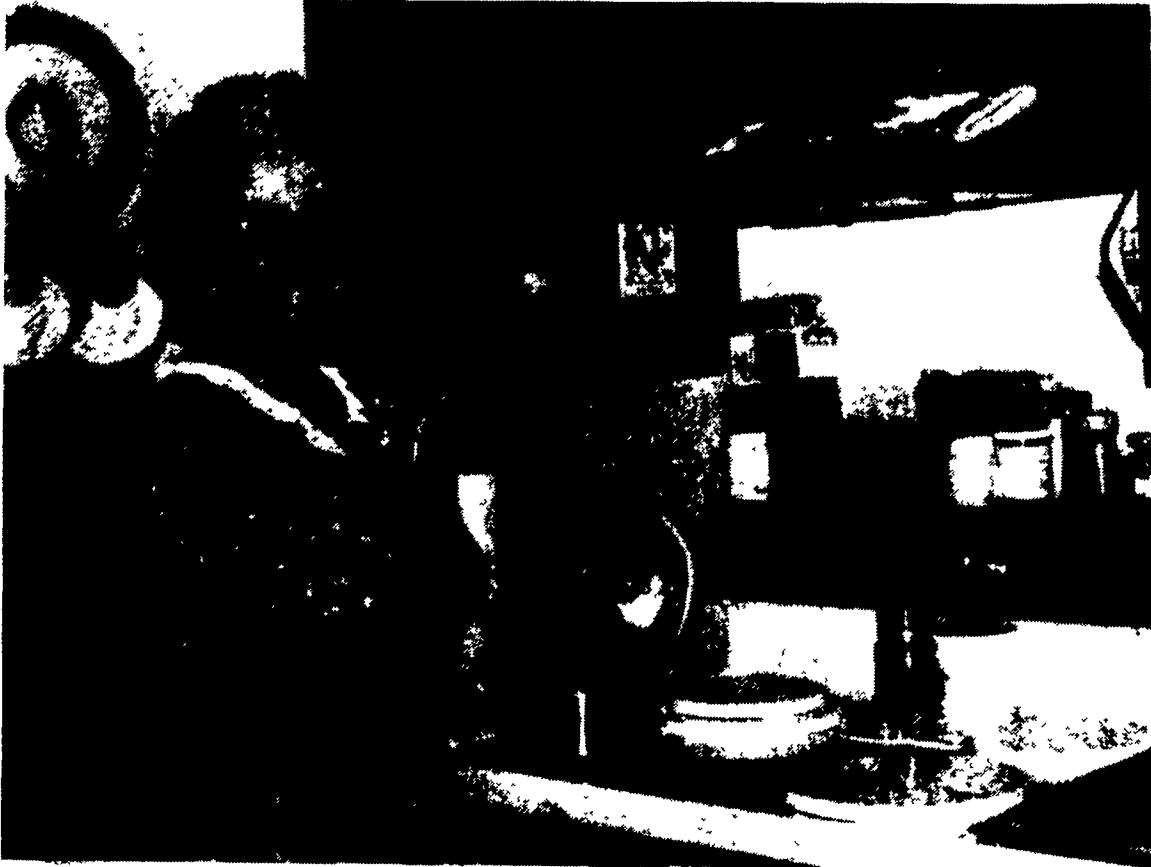
save so much money by cooking from scratch and sewing your own clothes."

Marie is adamant when she says people can't get along without those skills. "Many people have money problems because they don't make the effort to do things from scratch."

She paused, then added in a rush, "I'll tell you what I think is happening—the government is listening too much to the unions." She points out that non-profit organizations' budgets are being cut and each person must do more or it does not get done.

Marie has never been one to

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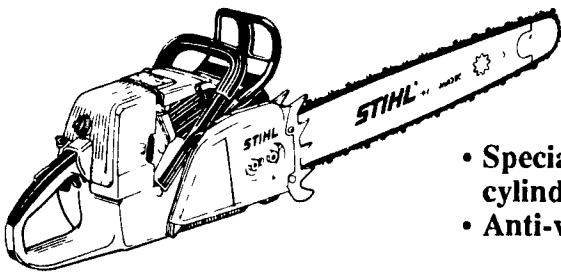


As a people person, Marie greets visitors with a happy smile and puts the kettle on for a cup of tea.

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