



"There's so many things that makes my mother special," Karen Hoffer said, Her mother Ruth Keller, left, is lap quilting a log cabin quilt for Karen, who is wearing one of the tailored suits her mother has made her.

Mother And Daughter Best Friends

Mother's Day Tribute

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff
LITITZ (Lancaster Co.) — When Karen Hoffer, Lititz, celebrated her 10th wedding anniversary with her husband Dave on Thursday, she thought of her mother.

That's because Karen took another peek at her wedding gown that her mother had made for the occasion.

And that reminded her of all the other things her mother has done for her over the years.

Karen, who works in Lancaster Farming's classified ad department, said, "There's so many things that makes my mother special. She'd do anything for me."

Her mother, Ruth Keller, admits that some people say she spoils her only daughter, but for this busy mother, love is spelled by doing.

An accomplished seamstress, Ruth sews a wardrobe of clothes for her career-busy daughter.

Karen and her husband live in an apartment within several miles from her parents' Lititz home. Weekly, Ruth shares fresh vegetables, baked goods, and homemade soups with the couple.

Mother and daughter find this arrangement brings fringe benefits. "It makes sure we get together to visit every week," Karen said.

And from their viewpoint, time spent together strengthens their relationship with each other.

Karen said, "She's my best friend."

"I think if you get involved with your daughter and find common interests, you always have a close relationship," Ruth said.

That relationship made the teenage years smooth sailing. Karen recalls, "My parents did so much for me that I didn't want to disappoint them."

As a child, Karen recalls that she and her two brothers had the most fun at home. The Kellers owned a 200-acre Lititz farm where they raised chickens, cows, tobacco, hay, and grains.

Growing up in a family of 10, had taught Ruth self-sufficiency and she said, "I wasn't afraid of hard work." When she got married, she worked along with her husband, Charles on their dairy farm. When they sold the farm, Ruth missed the farm work but she never became bored.

"That's when I had more time to

take up sewing," she said.

She not only sews clothing but also makes draperies, tablecloths, curtains, and many different crafts for others.

"But I mostly like to make clothing for Karen," Ruth said. "When I sew for pay, it isn't fun any more — it's too much like production."

As a parent, Ruth believes it is important to treat each child equally. She said, "What I do for one child, I do for the other — not the same thing, but something of similar value. She enjoys sewing for her grandchildren and making crafts for them."

The Keller's oldest son, Lynn, who was a Tioga County game

protector, died of leukemia in 1978. Another son Dennis is a Lt. Colonel stationed in the U.S. Army in Bolivia with his wife and two children. The distance requires sending packages through the mail and sometimes the family flies home for extended visits in the Keller's home.

"You'll notice my mother doesn't act as old as she is," Karen said.

Her mother broke into a jolly laugh and noted that when people her age gather together usually the first topic of conversation is health.

"I'm not a doctor person," Ruth said. Once she had a broken foot on

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Karen, right, celebrates her 10th wedding anniversary and Mother's Day all in the same week. She examines her wedding gown that was made by her mother, Ruth Keller, left.

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