

# Enjoy A Stroll Through Herb And Flower Gardens

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HAMBURG (Berks Co.) — Tucked away in the heart of Berks County is the 200-year-old Leatherman farmstead surrounded by picturesque hills and valleys dotted with grazing cattle. The virgin beauty of the landscape is enhanced by the green-thumb expertise of Clarinda Leatherman, former Pennsylvania Alternate

Dairy Princess.

Flowers, herbs, and shrubbery line the house and farm buildings. Because friends and relatives often remark about how much they admire the flowers and greenery that grow there, Clarinda is planning a garden party for all who'd like to come.

A bit of an entrepreneur, Clarinda has dabbled in several enterprises since her dairy princess reign in 1987. She's worked for a garden center, held Christmas craft open houses, and become a sales person for Longeberger Baskets. And, during all this time, she hasn't forgotten how much she enjoyed meeting people during dairy promotions.



This Garden Lady with a bouquet of flowers in a potpourri basket welcomes guests to the Longeberger Basket Garden Party.



Herbs painted on pieces of barn-slate are the perfect accent for those who love gardening.



A touch of French adds class to the slate-painted garden scene.

Now, Clarinda's combined a little bit of all these activities to launch her latest venture — a Basket Garden Party.

It's a day for guests to stroll through the colorful herb and flower gardens that surround the stone

farmhouse. It's also a day to ask Clarinda questions you might have about planting perennials and herbs. And, it's a day to purchase plants, baskets, and garden-related crafts.

Known for her creativity and ingenuity of decorating houses inside and out, Clarinda likes to share her expertise with others. She likes to help others organize their gardens.

"It's important to know the growth patterns of the plants when you place them in the garden," she said. "Keep taller plants to the back. Flowering gardens look best if planted in steps of heights. It's good to have different textures such as spikes or rounded plants."

Clarinda said, "A lot of people don't realize that many early-blooming plants will bloom again if the fall if they are cut back early

in the season."

Guests may sit at the round tables covered with flowered cloths and enjoy mint tea punch and herb-flavored pretzels while enjoying the landscape.

In addition to the Longeberger baskets, crafts such as garden benches, tea-dyed bunnies, dolls, garden spool babies, potpourri bags, herb sachets, garden hats, herb dryers, Shepherd's crook and herb-painted slates will be sold.

All are invited to the Basket Garden Party on May 17, from 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and May 18, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Directions to the Leatherman farm: Route 61 and 662 at Shoemakersville light go south on Route 662 to first left Drieblebis Mill Road (bear right) and follow signs. For more information, call (215) 562-4161.



More than 140 varieties of perennials surround the Leatherman farm in Hamburg. Notice the cows that graze in the background.



Clarinda offers assistance to those who would like to set up herb and perennial gardens. It's important she said to know the growth patterns of plants so that the garden looks good year-around.



Clarinda shows off the Garden Spool Babies she made to decorate a basket.



If you wonder what to do with steep slopes, Clarinda will be able to help you. The Leatherman's pasture and yard are separated by a steep incline.