

# Classes In The Country Held In Summerhouse At Vista Grande Farm

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Lancaster Farming Staff  
FLEETWOOD (Berks Co.) —

The heart-shaped sign lettered with "Classes in the Country," on the lawn of Vista Grande Farm proclaims the most recent diversification of the family farm.

Vista Grande Farm owned by Phoebe and David Bitler, is the farm where Phoebe was born, where she lived when she became the 1973 Berks County Dairy Princess, the National Spokesperson for Agriculture, and the Berks County Extension home economist. It's the 164-acre farm where she and her husband and nine-year-old son milk 90 registered Holsteins and crop farm a total of 400 acres.

This new diversification doesn't mean that hands-on farming for Phoebe has come to a halt. Instead, it's another activity that Phoebe does in addition to daily feeding calves and heifers, racking hay in the summertime, and milking on weekends.

"I like to do lots of things. I like the farm, the animals, and making things with my hands — and I like to teach," Phoebe said.

Because she wanted a way to combine all her loves and remain at home, Phoebe recently adapted the summerhouse attached to the

spacious stone farmhouse for craft workshops called Classes in the Country.

"Here, in a relaxed farmhouse atmosphere on our operating dairy farm, amidst our spacious yards, flower, and herb gardens, small groups can gather to learn skills and create heirlooms," Phoebe said.

The one or two-session workshops enable participants to complete projects such as a braided wool rug, dried country wreath, eucalyptus swag, Christmas wreath, canvas floorcloth, needlepoint rug, appliqued wall hanging, patched tablecloth runner, appliqued Christmas stocking, paper angel, quilting, knotted wall-hanging, country jumper, Flopsy-Mopsey doll, and more.

Most of the classes are taught by Phoebe, who is a graduate of Albright College with a degree in home economics. She has plenty of experience teaching crafts with her background in teaching co-operative extension workshops and as a custom seamstress.

Phoebe said that her teaching experience plus her lifetime of Mennonite and Berks Country Dutch Heritage is reflected in her classes.

"My dream has always been to own something like this," Phoebe



Classes in the Country by Phoebe Bitler include workshops on making the dried flower wreath shown as a centerpiece and the quilted star table runner.

said. "I don't want a store. I want something that allows me time for the farm and that doesn't run me."

Classes are limited to eight people.

"I'm trying different things to see what people want," Phoebe said. In response to requests, Phoebe has scheduled several Saturday workshops.

Some of the sessions are called Lunch and Learn workshops, in which Phoebe provides the lunch in addition to the supplies and instruction for projects. Other workshops do not include lunch, but the workshops always include the materials needed to complete projects with the exception of sewing machine, scissors, glue guns,

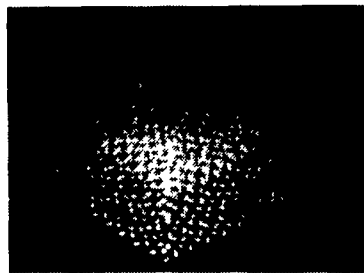
and other standard equipment owned by most seamstresses and do-it-yourselfers.

Most of the workshops offer participants color preference choices for their projects.

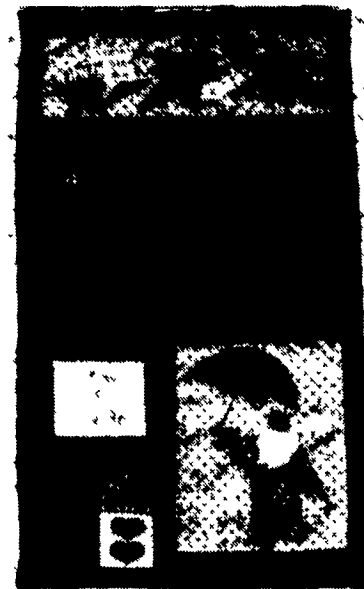
For a complete listing of scheduled classes, write to Phoebe at Classes in the Country, R.D. #4, Box 4176, Fleetwood, PA 19522 or call (215) 944-0541.



Welcome guests with this needlepoint rug or use as a wall hanging.



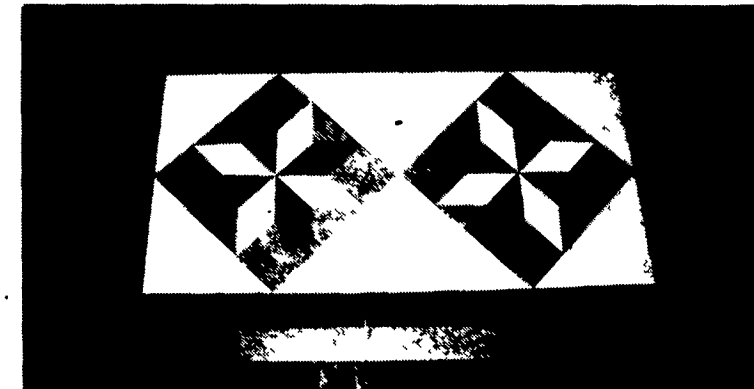
Pre-cut wool fabric strips and two classes with Phoebe make it easy to create hand braided rugs.



Participants at a Lunch and Learn workshop will make this 40 Days and 40 Nights Wallhanging.



Judy Kurtz, left, examines the Christmas tree sweatshirt, which Phoebe Bitler will teach to students in the classes she conducts in the summerhouse at Vista Grande Farm.



In a two-session workshop, participants paint a canvas floorcloth with a version of the popular Star of Bethlehem quilt pattern.



Workshops to make a welcome rug, a picnic in a suitcase, and a country jumper are a few of the classes offered at Vista Grande Farm.

## Results of Pork Low-Fat Technology

CHICAGO, Ill. — Members of the American Academy of Pediatrics and American Dietetic Association Ambassadors tasted first-hand the results of checkoff-funded research during their annual conventions.

More than 700 pediatricians enjoyed low-fat pork sausage, served up with nutritional analysis of the product at an October 11 breakfast sponsored by the Pork Industry Group.

Likewise, 75 media representatives for the American Dietetic Association sampled the product

supplied by the Pork Industry Group during a breakfast sponsored by Monsanto. The speaker at the breakfast sponsored by Monsanto. The speaker at the breakfast presented perspectives of the biotechnology issue.

The technology to make the low-fat pork sausage was the result of a Pork Industry Group research project funded by the checkoff. The end product is 46 percent lower in fat than traditional sausage.

A major marketer of the product, Fairbans Farms of Ashville,

N.Y., says it is selling the product in 1,000 supermarkets, including the states of New York, Alabama, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Georgia, Massachusetts and Tennessee.

The Pork Industry Group, a division of the National Live Stock and Meat Board, conducts demand-building information, education and research programs funded by the pork checkoff through the National Pork Board, and by voluntary contributions by packers and processors.