

On February 17

Sample Brunch At Morning Meadows Farm

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MARIETTA (Lancaster Co.) —

"A farmer's wife learns to do everything — she has to," said Barbara Frey.

That's why Barbara has patched plaster, sanded, painted, papered, and turned Morning Meadows Farm into a showcase of a Bed and Breakfast.

Morning Meadows Farm is one of several bed and breakfast farms open for the public to tour during the Pennsylvania Dutch Food Festival, held February 15 to 20. Each day, a festival of events is held in various areas of Lancaster County. On Wednesday, February 17, Morning Meadows and three other bed and breakfast farms will be open to the public. For a \$3 ticket, guests may sample brunch foods at each of the locations.

A gracious, outgoing hostess, Barb said that she had always dreamed of having a bed and breakfast even though she had never been a guest in one before she opened her own seven years ago. At that time, Barb was working full time and continued to do so while she operated the bed and breakfast on a part-time basis. Two years ago, she quit her job to devote full time to the bed and breakfast.

Artistic flair is evident throughout the house, which Barb describes as Victorian-country style.

Barb does all the decorating and floral arrangements. She said that when she first opened her bed and breakfast, she was limited by money for decorating.

"So I did my own decorating, thinking that some day when I had enough money, I would go out and buy nice things," Barb said.

It's years later, but instead of buying new things, Barb continues using her own decorating skills because, she explains with a tinge of amazement in her voice, "People say they love my stuff."

Barb has had professional decorators as guests in her home. They tell her that they can't believe that she has never been trained professionally.

Color and design are evident in elaborate flower arrangements on walls, mantels, table centerpieces, and shelves in every nook and cranny of the house plus outside on the brick patio and the country



Harold and Barbara Frey operate a bed and breakfast on their Morning Meadows Farm in Marietta.

porches.

Sometimes guests request that Barb duplicate one of her arrangements for them. Because Barb enjoys floral design, she is happy to fill their requests and has mailed them as far away as Hawaii.

Many of her skills have been honed by necessity, according to Barb, who said that she needed to learn to make lemonade out of a lot of lemons that life had given her. Years ago, a divorce had left her with four small children to raise. Twelve years ago, she married Harold Frey and the two families combined include seven children. Now the children are adults and on their own, but the skills and endless energy needed during their growing up years have trained Barb to work efficiently and happily. Qualities that enable her to entertain guests with ease.

The Freys find that guests often choose their home because they want to visit a working farm. In fact, the Freys advertise that they have a small barnyard of petting animals for children to enjoy. A sheep, Dandelion, feeds on the green grass in front of the entrance



On the weekend of Valentine's Day, guests will sip hot chocolate by the fire in the parlor at Morning Meadows Farm.



Barb, left, daughter Bambl, and grandson Joshua sample brunch foods that will be served during the Pennsylvania Dutch Food Festival. For a \$3 ticket, you may sample brunch foods at four bed and breakfast inns on February 17 and tour several area food processing plants free of charge.

to their home.

While Barbara pampers the barnyard animals, Harold and his identical twin brother, Herbert, take care of the for-profit animals and the field work.

Harold had purchased the farm with its 240 acres in 1965. For many years, he had a laying hen operation, but in 1989, he converted the chicken houses to a swine operation.

"It's not nearly as time consuming as chickens," said Harold of the 2,000 pigs he fattens.

He also raises beef cattle and rents an additional 800 acres on which corn, soybeans, wheat, bar-

ley, and 100 acres of hull peas are raised. The peas are raised for Cope's Dried Corn, which takes care of mechanically harvesting the peas.

Harold and Herbert also operate Frey Brothers Trucking, transporting feed and grain.

As many farmers, Harold laments the rising prices of equipment, but he likes to tell of one occasion when inflation worked to his advantage.

"In 1955, I bought a tractor and plow for \$3,500. I used it for 12 years and then traded it in for \$5,000," he said.

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