

# Sisters Open Christmas Market

**GAIL STROCK**

**Mifflin Co. Correspondent  
BOALSBURG (Mifflin Co.)**—

Everyone loves a chance to shop early — especially for the holidays.

And what better place to find quality handcrafted country crafts, decorations and gifts made from fabric, wood, and beeswax than at a Christmas Market.

That's what sisters Denise Imbrogno and Dianne Hepler, along with their sisters-in-law Mary Jo Spangler and Donna Spangler, had in mind three years ago when they decided to bring all their crafts and artwork together for a Christmas open house in the country. The first Christmas Market took place in the original Spangler homestead in New Berlin, home to fourth generation Harmony Springs Dairy farm run by brothers Dan and Dennis Spangler — an 18th century two-story frame farmhouse with a huge fireplace and deep windowsills. This year's Christmas Market in New Berlin was held November 5 and 6, and will continue at Denise's home in Boalsburg, November 19 and 20.

When Denise opens her two-story gray colonial home in Boalsburg, located in the Kaywood Estate development, as a Christmas Market, shoppers can expect to be surrounded by all the sights, sounds, and smells of Christmas.

"We all had done some crafts on our own and they complimented each other," said Denise, who also said the idea of a Christmas Market began with an article they saw in Lancaster Farming.

Santas, snowmen, angels, toy soldiers, wreaths, ornaments, stenciling, fashion accessories, and Fraktur Folk Art — each person adds their own personal touch and trade secrets to make just what shoppers and decorators are looking for.

Denise paints most of the wooden ornaments, many done in barn or brick red with a Santa face, makes three-foot high fence post Santas, snowmen, and soldiers, paints wooden trees and gingerbread men, Santa bobbin spools, and Santas cow bells.

Dianne Hepler of Pitman creates gifts from fabric and paints fashion accessories. Her ornamental birdhouses are from boards from an old barn dated 1910, and she enjoys making wooden necklaces and pins. But her favorite is antiquing

material. Dianne uses her own secret product to antique muslin to make stuffed and stenciled welcome signs to hang on door knobs, and others country cloth items.

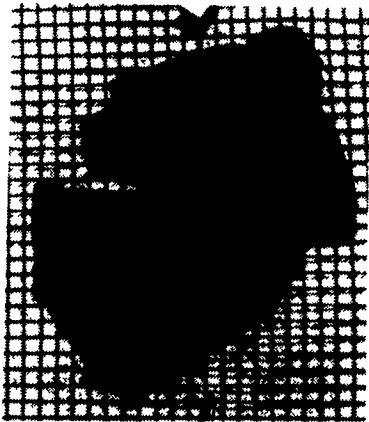
Mary Jo Spangler of New Berlin makes molded beeswax ornaments, paints them and finishes with an antique stain. She has collected all the Longenberger molds and forms bears, sheep, santas, angels, and the old fashioned St. Nick. The aroma from these is surely a welcome Christmas smell.

The Spangler's 18th Century farmhouse is home to Donna Spangler's Fraktur Art showroom and studio year round. Here, she takes the Pennsylvania German Folk Art and intertwines her own personal artistic style to create favorite sayings, family trees, wedding and birth announcements — all designed to become lasting family gifts from one generation to the next. Donna uses the Fraktur symbols — the dove, the stem of the vine, and the flowers for Christ, a heart for agape (the love of God), and the leaves for new-born believers — for her art. She is a jur-

ied member of the Pa. Guild of Craftsmen.

The Christmas Market in New Berlin and Boalsburg for next year is tentatively set for the first weekend in November, early enough for shoppers to find Christmas country crafts straight from country crafters.

For more information about the Christmas Market in Boalsburg November 19 and 20, call Denise Imbrogno at (814) 466-2260. For more Fraktur Folk Art details, call Donna Spangler at (717) 966-2624.



Dianne Hepler makes fashion accessories and cloth crafts for the Christmas Market.



Christmasy country crafts blend well in an 18th century stone farm house on Harmony Springs Farm in New Berlin. Fraktur Folk Art verses, painted Santa bricks, wooden Christmas tree cutouts, "Welcome Friends" brick door stop, stenciled gift bags, and stuffed and antiqued "Seasons Greetings" pillows line the long wall facing a huge fireplace.



Fence post soldiers, snowmen, and santas stand to welcome visitors to the Christmas Market in New Berlin.



What's a Christmas Market without Santa's. The Spangler homestead, Harmony Springs Farm in New Berlin, opens it's doors one November weekend each year for a Christmas Market of quality handcrafted country items.

**Homestead  
Notes**