



Holly puts the finishing touches on Santa Claus hats.

## Bedford Artist Makes Santa Claus Gourds

**LINDA WILLIAMS**

Bedford Co. Correspondent  
BEDFORD (Bedford Co.) —

Holly Coia is one of those lucky people who can combine the beauty of living in the country with her artistic skills.

Having tried many forms of artwork including painting, crafts, and designing her own greeting cards, she is constantly on the lookout for something new and different.

It came in an unexpected package when a fellow choir member dropped two huge gourds in her lap one night at practice and challenged her to "do something with them."

The choir member was Clearville farmer, Leon Sollenberger. He had accepted the challenge to grow gourds when his mother jokingly gave him a membership in the American Gourd Society as a Christmas present.

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Leon Sollenberger in a field full of gourds.



Drying the gourds can take up massive quantities of space. This is only a small portion of Holly's gourds which will be painted next year. She plans to do about 20 per week.

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