

# How To Be Well-Dressed For Less

**LOU ANN GOOD**

Lancaster Farming Staff  
LEESPORT (Berks Co.) —

When Nancy Dibbs walked out on stage flouncing her Liz Claiborne dress, she was greeted with both ohh's and groans from the audience at the Berks County Extension Spring Awareness Day.

The "awes" were in admiration of her ability to buy a brand name dress for a quarter. The groans were from the crowd that missed the bargain.

But with the secrets Nancy revealed, every woman present now knows how to fill her closet with clothes she can afford and even be in style.

"Clothes are not an investment, they are disposable and you should not pay much for them," this 50 plus housewife said. As the mother of five children whose ages range from 16 to 30, Nancy insisted that everyone can look wonderful for every occasion with a little imagination and a little money.

Nancy thrift shops at Goodwill, Salvation Army, and garage sales.

She put on a fashion show of her finds to convince the audience that clothes can be matched with accessories purchased separately while thrift shopping.

Every outfit she modeled was fully accessorized with matching shoes, purse, jacket, scarf, earrings, necklace, and even under garments.

While the average price for a fully-lined jacket is usually \$6.50, Nancy has managed to find a new one with its \$109 price tag still attached that cost her only \$3. From a leather purse, purchased for 50 cents, Nancy pulled out a designer swimming suits purchased for \$3.

When her daughter married, Nancy pulled together a mother-of-the-bride outfit that cost less than \$35. The outfit included a silk dress, dyed shoes to match and embellished with crystal clip earrings, a matching sequin evening bag, and jewelry.

With humor and gestures, Nancy entertained the audience with stories of digging in rummage piles and coming up with treasures. When Nancy thrift shops, she doesn't stick to clothing but shops for appliances, antique glassware, and every conceivable object needed to furnish a home and dress a family.

Here are some hints from Nancy's collection:

## THINGS YOUR MOTHER TOLD YOU, BUT YOU FORGOT

• Presentation is everything! Even meatloaf looks wonderful with a little parsley around it.

• Keep yourself up.  
• When you look good, you do good.

• No one ever needed to apologize for looking good.

• Don't bring attention to your faults. The next time that person sees you that's all he or she will look at.

• For instant beauty: Smile, stand up straight, suck in your tummy or hang around with homely people!

• Cheap, all around exercise: walking.

• Don't be ashamed to weave secondhand clothing, only be ashamed if you've stolen it.

• Remember clothes are not an investment, they are disposable so don't spend too much on them. Last years "WOWZA" outfit is only so-so this year.

• Don't buy clothes too small, we rarely ever get smaller.

• High heels make you appear thinner.

• Hide flaws, veins, and scars with gray pantyhose.

• Taupe shoes and hose will go with any outfit.

• Polish off any outfit with off-white or off-black pantyhose.

• Cream shoes and hose can be worn all summer.

• Put pantyhose in a mesh bag and launder in the washing machine.

• Support pantyhose lasts much longer and you won't jiggle.

• Remove scuff marks on light colored shoes with an eraser.

• White-out scuff marks on white shoes.

• Colored markers work well to cover scuff marks on colored shoes.

• You can dye fabric shoes with food coloring diluted with water.

• Wash your face in cold water.

• Fuchsia lipstick makes your teeth look whiter.

• Line your lips, the lipstick will stay put and your lips will look fuller. A small line upward in the corners of your mouth makes you look happy. As we age our mouths turn downward.

• Peroxide and baking soda will bleach the teeth.

• Hand wash items in shampoo, it's the best grease remover and it smells nice.

• Cortisone cream on ears and earring backs will comfort sensitive ears.

• Oil of Olay will take away the pain of a curling iron burn. Apply twice.

• Baby powder on oily hair will let you go an extra day between shampoos. It smells nice too.

• Deodorant stones, sold in drug stores, are mineral salts, non-allergenic, won't stain clothing and lasts about a year.

• A cheap, light scarf around the head will preserve your hairdo and keep makeup intact when changing clothes. Tuck one into your purse before clothes shopping.

• Only take short warm baths, hot water is too drying. Using a sponge to get more suds is also less drying.

• You can dye white underwear to a beige color in brewed tea.

• You can dye items to a bright yellow-gold in boiled onion skins.

• Beige underwear is invisible under white clothing.

• Need a camisole? Cut off a full slip at hip level and hem.



A fashion show by Nancy Dibbs demonstrates the possibility of dressing in style for less when clothing is purchased second hand.

• Slip riding up? Turn it inside out.

• Many dry clean only items can be washed in cold water. Check fabric content.

• Ignore sizes on secondhand items. There is a great disparity in size ranges. Dibbs wears items marked 6 to 16.

• Wearing clothes too small will make you look fat.

• Dilute shampoo one half with water (beauty shops do). Hair will be much shinier. Shampoo is too detergent and strips the oils.

• Secondhand items can be freshened and fold marks removed in the dryer.

• Candles stored in the freezer will burn much slower.

• Upright? Eat celery, it relaxes you.

• Cold tea bags refresh the eyes. After morning tea, put them in the freezer, later, when you take a nap, put the bags on your bags.

• Insomnia? Maybe you're too tired. A 20 minute nap in the afternoon helps.

• Sleeping on a small silky pillow will preserve your hairdo. It's better for your face too.

• Don't dry underwear in the dryer, it's bad for the elastic.

• Launder black items, jeans, etc., inside out. They will wear better and fade less.

• You get the most mileage from neutrals, tans, creams, black, white, and navy.

• Every woman should own a plain black dress. It goes anywhere. Jackets, collars, scarfs, belts, sequined jackets, vests, and necklaces can completely change the look. The best investment is a middleweight fabric with elbow length sleeves.

## Herb Faire

LANDIS VALLEY (Lancaster Co.) — Herb Faire Springtime celebration of historic plants and folklore will be held on Saturday, May 7, at the Landis Valley Museum. The Faire includes a large plant sale with dozens of vendors from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Landis Valley Museum is located at Rt. 272, Oregon Pike, 2 miles north of Lancaster, an exit marked on both Rt. 30 and Rt. 222. Admission free to Faire. For more information, call (717) 569-0401.

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A dress for a quarter? That's what Nancy Dibbs paid for this Liz Claiborne special.