



Marjorie Shiner adds a finishing touch to a holiday arrangement. The brass container on the floor holds several varieties of greens. The garland has fresh flowers inserted that will dry naturally.



Marjorie Shiner shows how elaborate garlands may be made by adding dried or fresh materials to an artificial evergreen garland.

Make 1994 A Holiday To Remember

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LEESPORT (Berks Co.) —
"Make 1994 A Holiday To Remember" was the theme of the Berks County Extension workshop held last week. Hundreds of participants packed the 4-H Community City to hear the day-long program that was repeated two days.

It was a workshop to remember packed with ideas for food, crafts, decorating, gifts, and lighting.

One of the crowd's favorites was a presentation by Frances Dietz. The home economist, an expert in food preparation, mixes her presentations with comic style. Her topic, "Holiday Before, Between, and After," focused on preparing foods ahead in advance and using leftovers.

Francie's recipes add pizzazz to ordinary foods. Intermingled with the food demonstrations, Francie offers tidbits of information on how to make food preparation easier, faster, and more fun. Here are a few of her hints:

- To get rid of the garlic smell on your hands, rub hands on a spoon under running water or cut a lemon in half and rub on hands.

- To cut up a green pepper, place stem end on cutting board, cut from the blossom end, slanting away from the center. Eliminates the need to seed and core the pepper.

- Apples may be sliced in advance and placed in a tight plastic bag. Apples will not turn brown.

- To chop vegetables, place on cutting board, take a large knife, keep point end down at all times, lift rear of knife in quick chopping motion.

- Cakes are more moist if frozen before frosted.

- Use parchment paper cake circles instead of greasing and flour-

ing a pan.

Here are a few of her recipes.

MOLDED CHEESE APPLE

Combine with fork:

- 3 ounces cream cheese
- 1½ teaspoons honey
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- ½ cup well-drained crushed pineapple

Chill mixture. Shape into a ball and insert slices of red apple into cheese to resemble a sectioned apple.

MASHED PINEAPPLE SWEETS

Beat together:

- ½ cup peeled cooked sweet potatoes
 - 2 teaspoons honey
- Beat in:
- Salt to taste
 - 2 tablespoons low-fat pineapple yogurt.

Heat if necessary. Makes one serving.

NEW LIGHTING

Nancy B. Wenrich, a home economist, showed new products to save energy and meet different needs for lighting within the home.

Lighting accounts for approximately 10 to 20 percent of the average residential electric bill. You can adjust that percentage by using one of the new compact fluorescent bulbs. The bulbs are made to fit in a standard lightbulb socket. An 18 watt fluorescent gives about the same amount of light as a regular 75 watt light bulb. But the fluorescent bulb will save \$67 in energy over the life of the bulb. Although the initial cost of the fluorescent bulb is more expensive, it will last 10,000 hours compared to 2,000 hours for an ordinary light bulb.

Security lighting can be placed outside that lights up automatically from motion sensors.

Beam and read lights are for those who do needlework or read. The light fits around the neck and provides light where needed. It runs on four AA batteries.

Bulb Boss is a light control that dims regular light bulbs from full to medium to night light brightness. Lights will automatically go off after 10 minutes.

DECORATING

Marjorie Shiner, a florist, demonstrated mantel decoration for country and Victorian styles.

For mantel greens, Shiner suggests using artificial greens as a base and attaching live greens, yarrow, pinecones, pepper grass, oat leaves, and other dried materials.

To do this, lay the artificial garland flat and spread out branches. Cut 8"-10" pieces of fresh greens or dried materials and wire to the garland. Overlap materials to hide the wire.

For a stunning Victorian garland, Shiner took an artificial evergreen garland. She inserted fresh flowers that dry naturally into the garland. Roses, heather clumps, statice, eucalyptus, boxwood, holly, and cedar were used. Shiner suggests doing this early as roses are \$8 a dozen early in the season. As the flowers dry, they gradually change colors but the arrangement maintains its loveliness.

For country decor, use baskets for containers, wooden spool candlesticks, and natural materials. Brass containers and candlesticks are used for Victorian decor. Gold spray may be used to color low-priced containers and dried materials.

If you collect your own dried materials for use, you must take

precautions to kill the insects that are often hidden within. Shiner suggests putting the dried materials into a garbage bag and spraying with insect spray. Tie shut and let the materials remain in the bag for one day before removing.

"Use a variety of greens. The different foliage add more interest," Shiner said.

In keeping with a glittering Christmas theme, Christenna Stamm showed the audience how to use mirrors, crystal, and lights. Mirror squares may be purchased economically and laid in a diamond shape on the dining table.

Stamm stressed the importance of using what you have rather than purchasing items for decorating. She likes to use items for uses other than what they were intended. For example, she turns a punch bowl upside down and places another on top. A wad of miniature lights are placed underneath the punch bowl. When turned on, the light reflecting on the mirror and punch bowl add a festive touch. The arrangement was accented with clear marbles and white crocheted angels.

A little pointer for those who use ivy — twist florist wire around the ivy and the ivy can then be formed to trail or twine around items.

Stamm also formed gold roses from foil ribbon to add to a garland of greens. Here are instructions for the roses.

RIBBON ROSES

7 pieces gold foil ribbon 7-9" long.

Small gold Christmas ball for center

24 gauge gold wire

Stem florist wire (green)

Loop foil pieces individually, fasten ball with wire and stick in middle while slightly overlapping each loop around the gold ball.

When all the loops are formed, crush the ends together, fold stem in half, tuck into wire and secure. Perk up each loop until shaped like a rose.

HOMEMADE JEWELRY

Judy Feick, a craft teacher, showed how to make several varieties of homemade jewelry for gifts. Here is one using paper you want to discard.

Jewelry made from recycled paper:

Almost any assortment of papers except newsprint may be used. The following is also needed:

- Bucket of water
- Cup for scooping
- Blender
- Old screen
- Rolling pin

Shred paper into one-inch pieces and put into bucket of water. Let the papers remain in the water until the paper breaks down.

Scoop 2 to 3 cups of the mixture into the blender. Mix until pulp forms. Pour pulp over screen that is placed on top of a bucket to catch the water. Use a rolling pin to squeeze out the water. Allow to dry. Most paper will be an off-white color. If preferred, paper may be tinted or dyed while in the bucket and before blender processing.

When dry, cut the paper into desired shapes. Experiment with different sizes. The paper may be folded into different shapes and sprayed with acrylic to seal or use Modge-Podge as a hardener to retain shape.

WREATH MAKING

Doris Fister, floral designer, demonstrated how to make wreaths. Here are directions for one.

(Turn to Page B17)