

# Pysanky Expert

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about to be turned into a work of art. The beeswax is removed by heating the egg near the candle flame and wiping off the wax with clean tissues.

After the wax is removed, finish the shell with shellac or varnish. This protects the dyes. (Note: If the egg is hollowed after it is dyed, varnish must be applied before piercing the shell and expelling the insides.) Because a candle is used, along with hot wax, children are under constant supervision during classes.

The intricate patterns vary from egg to egg. Many of the symbols have Christian meanings, but in pre-Christian times the symbols had more agricultural interpretations. For instance, the symbol of wheat signified the life's work of the Ukrainian peasant. Prosperity and wealth are symbolized by animals. Pysanky with these designs were believed to have a positive effect on farm animals and their

good health. The unique history of pysanky shows people who respected nature and who worked hard to survive.

In the past the dyes used on these eggs were all natural dyes. Anne uses chemical dyes because they are readily available through a supplier and are easy to prepare for the large numbers in the classes she teaches.

A class, taught at St. Casimir Church in Johnstown, is open to anyone who has a willingness to learn this art form. Fifty people attended a multi-generational session and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves. Because of the large crowd, there are two other instructors, Ron Wanko, who has been doing pysanky for more than 20 years and creates masterpieces, and Paul Yackulich.

The fourth annual Ukrainian Pysanky Festival will be held at the S.S. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church on St. Clair Rd., Johnstown, on Saturday April 8, from 1



p.m. to 5 p.m.

Egg demonstrations, a contest, pysanky sales, and baked goods

and refreshments are available.

Children ages 6-11 may decorate their own eggs.

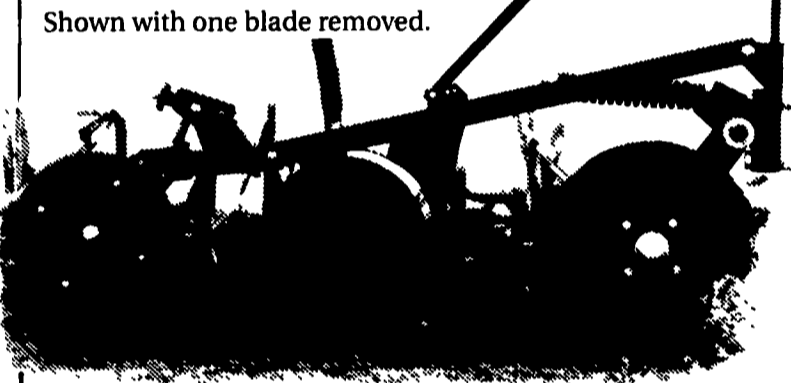
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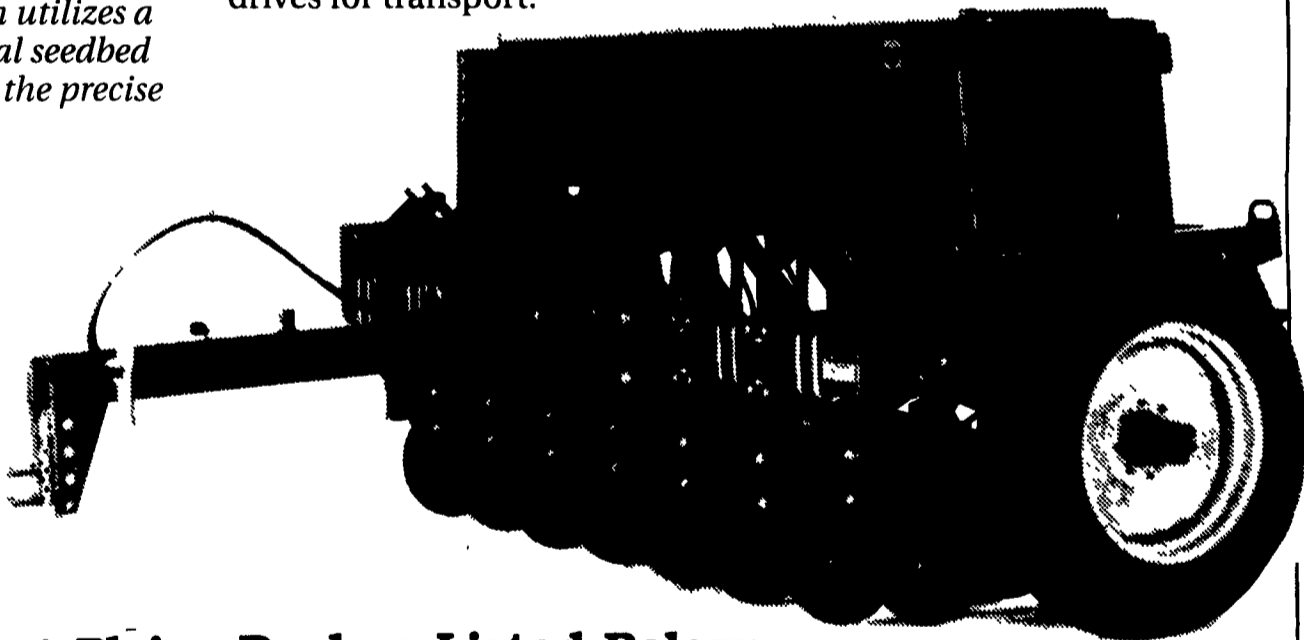


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