

Students Operate Greenhouse

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, April 8, 1995-B9

LORETTA GOLDEN
Cambria Co. Correspondent
EBENSBURG (Cambria Co.)—Spring is a busy season for any greenhouse or floral business and this is no exception at Admiral Peary Vocational-Technical School in Ebensburg. The horti-

culture classes here are in the midst of their Easter project, preparing spring bedding plants, and getting ready for Mother's Day (their busiest day of the year). Currently there are thousands of plants in the greenhouse.

Under the direction of instruc-

tor Clay Shriver, students learn theory and have "hands-on" instruction in floral design, greenhouse, and landscaping. The school day is designed as one half day at the "home" school and one half day at the Vo-Tech. There are currently 35 students from seven

"sending" school districts as well as a few full-time adult students enrolled in the horticulture program. The adult students are there through a program known as TRA which allows for retraining of workers who have lost their jobs due to foreign imports. Two of these students are former workers in the garment industry.

Admiral Peary has recently undergone extensive renovations, some of which have benefitted the horticulture department. Greenhouse space was approximately doubled, and new retail and work area was added.

The Easter plant project was begun in October. Bulbs for hyacinths, tulips, daffodils, and other plants were potted and placed into cold storage. Lilies were planted right after Christmas. All of the work is done by the students.

During the next week, some of the Easter plants will be repotted and "dressed-up" with foil and bows. All of the marketing is done

by the students with advertising being primarily by "word-of-mouth." The intent is not to compete with local florists but to give the students concrete experience in all aspects of the business. All proceeds from the sales of the Easter plants are put back into the "business."

Shriver pointed out that there is total automation of watering in the greenhouse but this is primarily only used on weekends. The reason for this is so that each student understands the proper method of hand watering. Fertilization methods are also taught.

Adult student Caroline Vasas of Mundys Corner enjoys the course. She explains that she has had a small greenhouse at home for many years but even at her age there is always something new to learn. She's learned about different fertilization and watering methods, "pinching" plants, different techniques for making cut-

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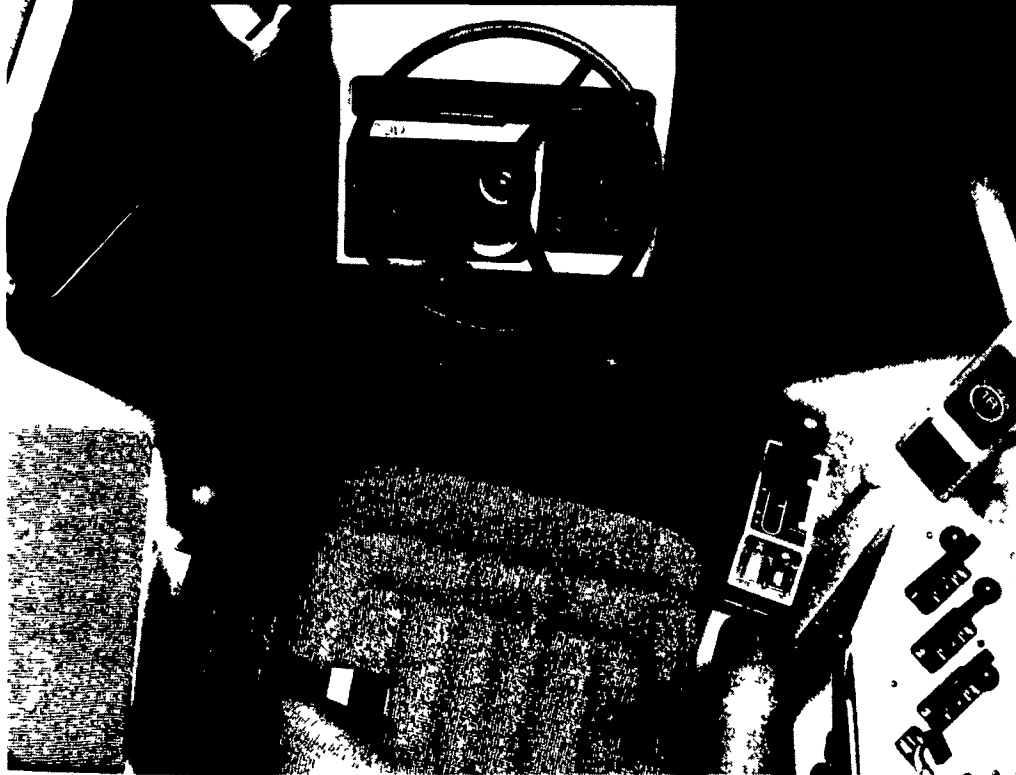


Trishia Bair, grade 11, in the retail flower shop.



Lori Rygel, and Dawn Horner working on a "special order." They are using dried and silk flowers.

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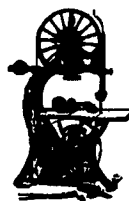
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