

# Farm Couple

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because her mother raised two acres of sugar peas to sell. "I was out in the patch since I was 5-years-old and loved it," Melissa said.

She also has relatives who operate a large grocery chain that evolved from a roadside stand.

"It's really neat that my brothers and my dad have a business together and now my sister and I are developing a business together," said Melissa.

But starting a business was far from the Herts mind when they first began the venture. One of the priorities that Melissa and Eric had decided before marriage was that Melissa would quit her job as an office manager to be a stay-at-

home mother when children came.

She did. Their daughter Janae is now 2 years old.

"I love being a stay-at-home mom. This garden stuff sort of evolved by chance but fits in well with being a stay-at-home mom," Melissa said.

Although Janae is only a toddler, she fits right into the farming lifestyle.

"When I work in the garden, Janae is perfectly content to sit and play in the dirt. She loves going to the barn. She's a true farm girl and we are delighted that she's growing up on a farm just like we did," Melissa said.

In addition to inheriting a passion for farming when Melissa

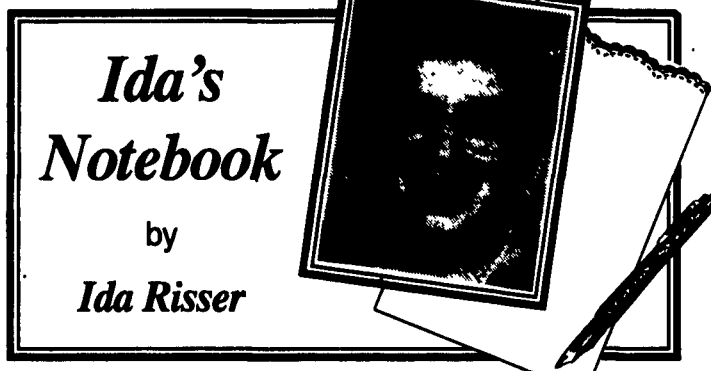
married Eric, she also became intertwined in the West Lampeter Fair where Eric is vice president of the board.

"My dad was on the board ever since I remember and served as president, so I fell right into it," Eric said.

"There's not a better way to be involved in the community," said Melissa, who serves on several fair committees and is in charge of the baby parade.

The Herts are in charge of purchasing all the food for the food committee to serve and for the barbecue fundraiser held in the summer.

Melissa is active in the women's ministry and in charge of nursery



## Ida's Notebook

by

Ida Risser

The rush of Christmas is over and we hope to settle down to a more peaceful time.

The 14 kinds of cookies have been packed into boxes and delivered to the neighbors. I'll let the decorations up for a while longer. Even the tree may stand inside the bay window on a chest unless it drops its needles.

Sometimes, on television, they show a Christmas tree falling and everyone laughs at the mishap. Well, this year after I spent two hours putting on the lights and balls, and special handmade decorations, it crashed to the floor from the top of the chest.

scheduling at the Lancaster Christian Missionary Alliance Church, which she and Eric attend.

Melissa summed up the couple's belief by saying, "Farming requires sacrifices, but at this point in our lives, we wouldn't want to change it. God has truly blessed us more than we deserve. We have nothing to complain about."

I was too shocked to say a word. Unbelievable! But, only two balls broke as almost everything flew off the tree to the floor. We bought a big tree and sawed off three feet. I guess the chest was not wide enough for the tree.

We're lucky that a snow storm hit our area early in the week instead of over the weekend when we had an open house. Our daughter flew from Texas with her husband and baby. Other children came from Virginia and New Jersey.

Now I hope to have time to finish embroidering some pillowcases. The instructions ask for different stitches than I am accustomed to making. I want it to be a relaxing job and not have to think too much.

For wedding gifts, many years ago, I received several beautiful hand-crafted pillow cases. They were almost too pretty to use—one pair I wore out and the other pair is still in its box. Which was the wisest choice?



In the tobacco stripping room, three generations work side by side. In the background, Eric works with his dad Don, and brother Jason while daughter, Janae, watches.

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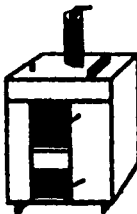
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