



LaVonne Weaver's quilted wall hanging must be seen in color to appreciate the subtle changing colors achieved through pickling the fabric. During Ag Progress Days held Aug. 13-15, LaVonne will display and hand out information on the fabric pickling process. Look for the display booth of Centre Pieces in the craft display building.

Farm Wife Pickles Fabrics

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff
CENTRE HALL (Centre Co.)

— This is the season for pickling pickles, watermelon rinds, cantaloupe, zucchini, and other relishes. And at least one farm wife pickles fabrics.

Pickled fabric isn't for eating but is used to make wall hangings, quilts, and other fabric crafts.

The subtle shade differences, from light to dark, achieved through the pickling process adds depth and interest to completed fabric crafts.

LaVonne Weaver, whose husband combines teaching with farming in Centre Hall, finds most of the supplies needed for the pickling process in farm supply stores.

LaVonne read about the pickling process several years ago in a quilting magazine. After experimenting, she simplified the process.

"From one batch, I get 24 colors in all shades, which produces a nice texture. It sounds a little complicated, but it is fun to do," LaVonne said.

"If you purchase the pickled fabric at a craft show, you will pay a fortune," LaVonne said. By doing it herself, she estimates that it costs her about \$1 to do a piece of fabric that quilters refer to as a fat quarter of fabric, which is 1/2 yard material split in half.

Here are directions for pickling fabrics that LaVonne has adapted from reading an article by Vimila McClure of Willow Springs, Mo., which appeared in "American Quilter," in the Fall of 1995.

For those who attend Ag Progress Days held Aug. 13-15, look up LaVonne, who will have a display of pickled fabrics and a hand-out on the process. She will be at the Centre Pieces booth in the craft display building. LaVonne will only be at the display booth on Tuesday, but other people from Centre Pieces will be able to answer any questions on the other days.

Before beginning the pickling process, order the following supplies from a dye house or farm supply store. A mail-order dye house, which LaVonne recommends, is Pro Chemical & Dye, P.O. Box 14, Somerset, MA 02728. For orders only call 1-800-2-BUY-DYE.

- 3 cups urea granules
- 4 ounces each Procion dyes
Red MX8B (fuchsia)
Yellow MX8G
Turquoise MXG
- 1 pint Synthrapol soap or orvus soap
- 1 1/2 cups dye activator or soda ash

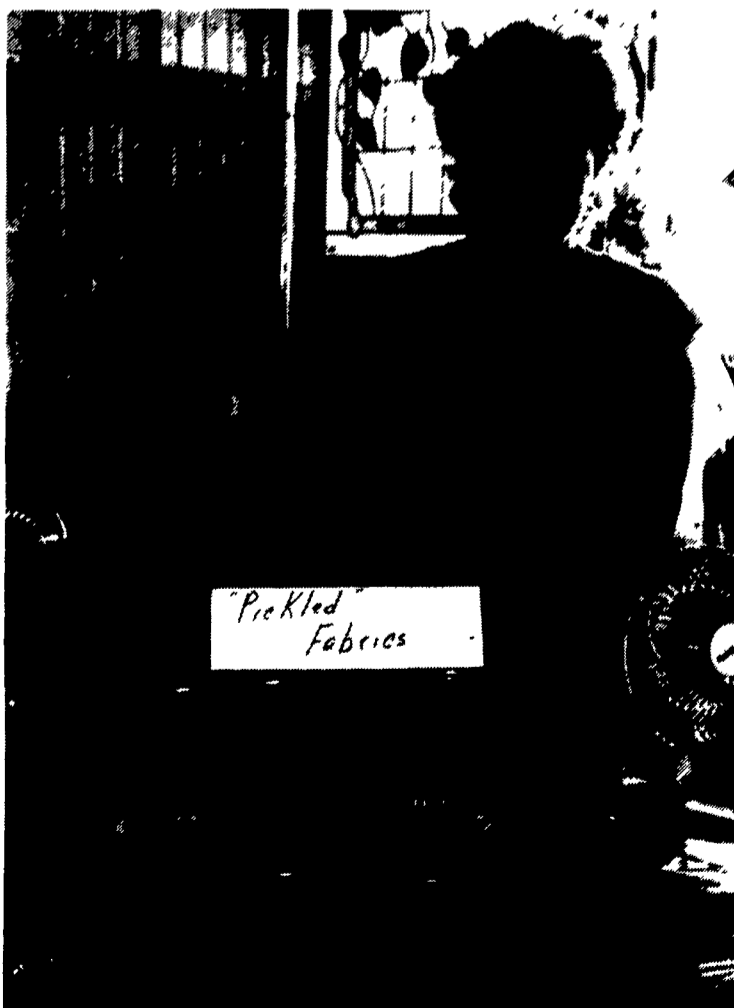
LaVonne said that each orvus soap is available in farm stores and is used for washing show animals. The soap is used to wash fabric after dyeing and is also sold in quilting shops or catalogs.

Urea granules used in dyeing are also sold in farm stores as fertilizer. Soda ash is sold at swimming pool supply stores as well as through dye product supply stores. LaVonne uses canning pickling salt to set the dye after the process.

If you have questions about pickling fabrics, LaVonne will be happy to answer questions if you write or call her at R.D.1, Box 132, Centre Hall, PA 16828. Phone (814) 466-7152.

- Pickled Fabric Recipe**
- 6 yards of unbleached or bleached muslin or other 100 percent cotton fabric for each 24-step batch.
 - 1 gallon container
 - 3 quart containers
 - Measuring spoons
 - 3 chopsticks of long spoons for stirring
 - Rubber gloves
 - Apron
 - 2 dozen 8-ounce jelly jars with lids (keep the boxes with jar separators).
 - 2 or 3 plastic tubs for transporting dyed fabrics to washing machine
 - 2-cup measuring cup
 - Paper towels for cleanup
 - Dust mask (available from a dye house or farm supply store)
 - Calgon water softener
 - 2 1/2 cups pickling salt
 - Sink with running water that will hold at least 3 gallons.

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These jars contain pickled fabrics that LaVonne Weaver makes by using supplies from farm stores. Pickling fabrics is a favorite hobby for this farm wife from Centre Hall.

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