

Candle Crafting Makes 'Scents' For Garden Treasures

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— When Kathy Phoenix of McVeytown, Mifflin County, gets up in the morning, she plugs in four crockpots. No, she's not expecting a crowd for dinner. She's melting scented wax to make candles.

Kathy's candles caught the attention of shoppers at Country Memories Day in McVeytown this past summer. So she made Christmasy versions for the "Christmas in the Park" craft show last month at the Mifflin County Youth Park in Reedsville.

"This is the easy way," Kathy says of using crockpots. "You have to be careful of fire when melting wax in a double boiler."

But what makes Kathy's candles unique? Herbs and evergreens.

"I mold a candle, then dip some herbs, evergreens or berries in wax and stick them around the outside of the candle. Then I redip until they're covered. The ones with arborvitae greens, trailing pine, barberries and holly look nice for Christmas."

Kathy makes another kind with decorated harder wax on the outside and a softer wax and wick in the inside. When the inner candle wax burns away leaving a hollow core, Kathy tells customers to insert a votive candle.

Kathy also pours wax into decorative painted flower pots. As the wax hardens, she pushes into the wax to remove any hollow areas. She refills again and again throughout the day until the wax stays level with the top of the flower pot. It's a five-hour process, but Kathy doesn't sit around waiting for wax to harden. She and her husband Frank are busy preparing for the spring opening

of "Garden Treasures."

Kathy and Frank have built a 24x44-foot garden and gift shop with an 8-foot porch along the length of it. It sits near their house on their 50-acre Hereford farm called Twin Ponds. The farm is located back a long lane off the Ferguson Valley Road near McVeytown. They plan to fill their garden and gift shop with unique garden decorating ideas, crafts, and possibly plants.

"I've always loved gardening," reflects this Clinton County native. "We've built the shop ourselves except for the electrical work."

With her husband's woodworking skills, he and Kathy will spend the winter finishing the inside of the building and making wooden garden gift ideas for the grand opening. They plan to make everything themselves for the first year or two. They've even built a workshop on the end of the building.

Kathy often clips ideas from magazines, shows them to Frank, then he creates their own version from wood. He makes wooden toolboxes, birdhouses, birdhouse planters, Christmas trees and wheelbarrows. Kathy then finishes them with a worn country look, adds a flower here and there, or tole paints them.

"My mother took a tole painting class, then taught me. I started painting the flower pots through last winter. My mother sews too. She makes doll santas, bears, and lambs in linen dresses."

Kathy also makes living wreaths. She wires two wire wreaths together, fills them with soil then wraps them in sphagnum moss. Then she plants pansies or pink or white alyssum plants inside. If watered every day, they

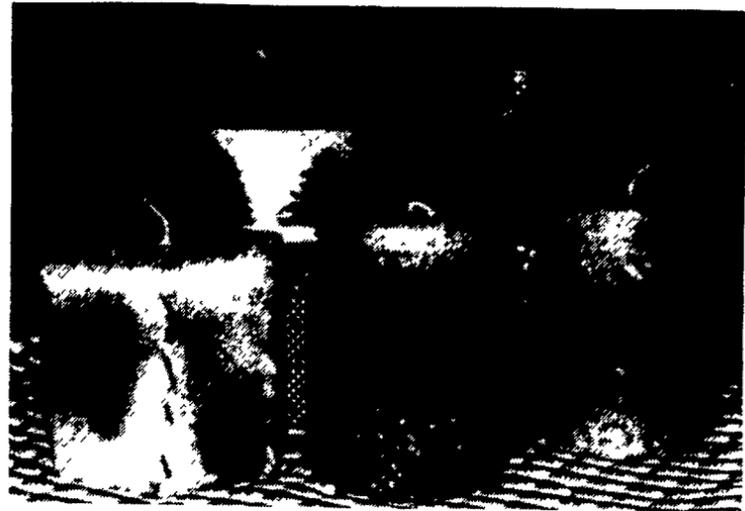


Frank and Kathy Phoenix built a garden and gift shop on their 50-acre Twin Ponds Hereford farm in McVeytown, Mifflin County. The couples' handiwork includes molded candles, wooden garden gifts, and living wreaths.

grow full and beautiful. Someday, she'd like customers to enjoy a cutting garden too.

So when the snow drifts their lane shut this winter, preventing Frank and Kathy from attending to the businesses they own in Lewisport, they'll keep busy preparing for the opening of their garden and gift shop, stopping every once in a while to refill an aromatic candle or two.

For more information about candles or garden treasures, call Kathy at (717) 899-7787.



Poured flower pot candles and candles with cinnamon sticks make a great aromatic gifts for any home.



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H A P P E N I N G S

4-H Tractor Safety Club

The Lebanon County 4-H Tractor Club is once again gearing up for this year's program.

Del Voight, Lebanon County agent, alerts interested individuals to the start date of Tuesday, Jan. 6, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lebanon Valley Agricultural Center.

At the meeting, 4-H'ers will be filling out necessary forms and breaking into separate units. All are invited to attend. The 4-H Tractor Program gives youth an opportunity to "learn by doing."

The course, beneficial to youth operating agricultural equipment as well as lawn and garden implements, will meet on consecutive Tuesday nights from 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Instructions start Jan. 20.

At the meeting you will learn that better and safe tractor care results in longer tractor life, more power, and lower operating costs. When you learn how to do many small but important tractor maintenance jobs, you will gain better production from farm units and you will cut down on costly breakdowns.

Older members will learn machinery maintenance and repair.

While you are learning how to care for your tractor, you should also learn how to be a safe operator. Another important goal of this program is to help you form good safety habits so you can think and act safely, at all times. Equally important with learning tractor care and safety is the 4-H goal of helping you to become a sound thinking citizen. The training you receive in your 4-H program will be beneficial to you throughout your lifetime.

May you or someone you know is interested in working on a farm this summer. If so, it's important that you become a certified tractor operator. One segment of the 4-H program, the occupational hazard course, offers 13-15 year-olds the training required to be certified to operate farm machinery. This is the only time the course and examination will be offered, so tell your friends and neighbors. The course is operated by screened volunteers and it is a sacrifice of their time and would

be helpful for them to have more members to train and give their knowledge to.

For more information, call Del Voight at (717)270-4391.

Kelly Pike Wins 4-H Clover Award

Kelly Pike, Quakertown, won the 4-H Clover Award the the Bucks County 4-H Achievement Night dinner held recently at the Lenape Valley Presbyterian Church. Kelly is the daughter of Jack and Shirley Pike. The Bucks County 4-H Clover Award is presented to 4-H'ers who have outstanding citizenship, leadership, and personal development records. Kelly excels in these areas while being very active in 4-H, school and community activities.

Kelly is 16 years old and a 10th grade student at Quakertown Community Senior High School. This is her eighth year as a 4-H member. She is president of the sheep club and a member of the Bucks County 4-H Voices and Action Team. She has also attended regional and state 4-H events such as Capitol Days in Harrisburg.

Kelly is also very active in her school. She is involved in student government, Executive Committee for the Class of 2000, SADD, German Club, and the Debate Team. She is also the treasurer of FBLA. Her high school guidance counselor calls her "a natural born leader who is willing to make Quakertown High School a better place to be."