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Robert and Sylvia Herr lick their lips as they look at their gingerbread house

Looking for a new twist in your baking? Robert and Sylvia Herr "build" a gingerbread house

Robert and Sylvia Herr of Maytown made this New Year's holiday very special for their children and their friends. They created a large, edible gingerbread house to be used as a centerpiece for their annual New Year's Eve Party.

"I wanted to do something special for the children this year," Mrs. Herr told us. "We planned to have the children help make the house, but it takes quite a bit of patience, and in the end my husband and I did most of the work."

The four Herr children—Jason, 12, Stephen, 11, Sabrena, 10 and Faith, 5—did get to taste some of the gingerbread before it was a completed house. Mrs. Herr made extra animals and

trees so that the children would have something to munch on. "I knew if I didn't that they would just beg to eat the house right away. After all the work that was put into it, I wanted it to last at least one day!"

Mrs. Herr got the idea of the house from several magazines, but the design and pattern of her house is unique. "We added where we thought we should. I didn't follow a set pattern for the house."

In addition to gingerbread, the house is decorated with M&Ms, hard candies, a Vanilla Wafer roof, a caramel chimney and even hard candies used as stained-glass windows. "I did the mortar work on the chimney," Mr. Herr tells

us. The Herr's planned to eat their house on New Year's Eve. "Faith wants to save it for show and tell at Kindergarten, but I don't think it will last long enough," Mrs. Herr laughs.

Each New Year's Eve the Herr family and their guests gather up musical instruments and noise makers and go into the street in front of their home at midnight. "It's sort of a tradition."

Will the gingerbread house become a tradition as well. "We'll see about that," Mrs. Herr says.

For anyone interested in attempting to make a similar house, Mrs. Herr was good enough to give us her recipe for the gingerbread and the icing that holds the whole

thing together. They follow.

Gingerbread Dough
4 cups sifted flour
2 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons ginger
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
pinch salt
1 cup syrup
½ cup butter
¼ cup milk
Combine first six ingredients in a large bowl. On stove, bring to boil syrup and butter, then add milk. Add this mixture to the dry ingredients and stir until smooth. Wrap in aluminum foil and chill overnight.

Snow Frosting
3 egg whites (at room temperature)
1 pound confectioners sugar
½ teaspoon cream of tartar

Friendship Force to offer Lancaster exchange; visit or host someone from another country

A public meeting for all persons in the county interested in taking part in an exchange program between Lancaster and an unnamed foreign city will be held at 2 pm Saturday, January 12, at the Good N' Plenty Restaurant, Smoke-town.

Friendship Force, a non-profit, non-government organization which has become the largest exchange program in the world, is sponsoring the meeting.

Anyone considering either going to another country or serving as host here will have the opportunity to hear about the exchange and fill out an application. No

applications have yet been accepted, so that all those received at the meeting will have equal consideration.

A total of 254 persons from Lancaster County will board a plane at Harrisburg International Airport in May, travel to a foreign land and remain there eight days. The same plane will bring an equal number of citizens from that country to Lancaster County for a similar visit. The first four days of the stay will be spent with a host family; the last four may be spent with another host family, or be used for travel. The entire trip will occupy ten days, two being reserved for plane

travel.

The January 12 meeting will be a no-food-served session for information and sign-up, with no money changing hands until applications are accepted. A meeting for "ambassadors" and hosts will be held in February.

Eugene R. Witmer is Lancaster exchange director for Friendship Force. He has established an office at 170 East Brook Road, Smoketown, on the second floor of Mill Stream Motor Lodge. Information is available there or by phone at 291-9763.

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