



VANESSA LENZ Palmyra-Eagle Enterprise

Katie Ledwell of East Troy (right,) helps her dad, Guy, of Whitewater, haul their tree from the lot at Evergreen Acres Christmas farm on Saturday.

Keeping a Christmas tradition going

By Chris Bennett
CORRESPONDENT

Don't let anyone tell you different — a tree farm is a fantastic wedding present for a new bride.

"At the time we were young and had lots of energy and were newlyweds," said Ann Feucht of Evergreen Acres in the Town of LaGrange. "You can do anything. We dug our heels in and away we went."

That was in December of 1975. By the time Bob and Ann Feucht married later that month they knew quite well the rigors of running a tree farm.

Both institutions — the Feuchts' marriage and Evergreen Acres — are still going strong.

The Feuchts have been on Evergreen Acres for 35 years. Miller and Katie Lindskog — the previous owners — turned the property into a tree farm at some point, according to Ann. The Lindskogs also farmed corn on the property.

The Lindskogs sold the farm to George and Betty Kau, who in turn agreed to sell it to the Feuchts. The Lindskogs wanted to sell to the Kaus and the Kaus wanted to sell to the Feuchts.

As a new bride helping taking over a Christmas tree farm Ann did not immediately concern herself with the condition of the trees or the state of the land. Ann said she told Bob that as long as he agreed to eventually build a new house all would be well.

"It was a hard sell, but it

worked out, though," Bob said. "She liked the land but she did not like the house."

"Well, my Dad told me once you own land you'll always be fine," added Ann.

After 13 years on Evergreen Acres Bob built Ann and, by that time, their three children, that new house.

As is the case with any business — especially farming, whether cows, hogs, poultry or trees — not every step of the process is greeted with a fun tale and a chuckle.

When Ann and Bob first assumed control of the farm, they spent a lot of time shearing and pruning trees, which, in the business of Christmas trees, is crucial.

"The trees to the north had not been sheared every year," Ann said. "We were pruning them and cutting them back so they fill out, or they look like they do in a state forest. We were trying to turn the farm over into younger stock."

Ann and Bob also allowed people to cut their own Christmas trees. They then cleared the stumps and replanted as a preservative and business measure.

The two did reach a time when the efforts of their past and future didn't exactly dovetail.

"We did get to a point where our young stock wasn't ready and the old ones were too big," Ann said, estimating this occurred after 15 or 20 years on the farm. "We were just trying to get all the trees turned over."

Consider everything the Feuchts dealt with through the course of their careers as tree farmers, which is not yet close to being done. Now consider they also both worked outside of the home and farm.

Ann taught music for years in the East Troy and Waterford School Districts. Bob managed an egg farm for Sentry Foods in Palmyra and also worked as an equipment operator. Both are college educated.

"We both worked off the farm and ran the farm and raised three kids," Ann said. "We juggled it all."

Both Ann and Bob would like to see Evergreen Acres continue for generations to come.

"We'd love to see it stay as a tree farm," Ann said. "We put our blood sweat and tears into it."

This is the Feuchts most wonderful time of the year. Trees are for sale and smiles abound. Ann recommends driving out to the farm and getting a Fraser fir.

"It has such a wonderful aroma after it's cut and has such excellent needle retention," Ann said.

Buying a tree from Evergreen Acres will make your Christmas living room and the Feuchts' day.

"With all the people you meet it's a wonderful time of the year to be dealing with the general public," Ann said.

Evergreen Acres is located at N9171 Nelson Road and can be reached at (262) 495-4502.

People-
Feucht, Bob +
Ann

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