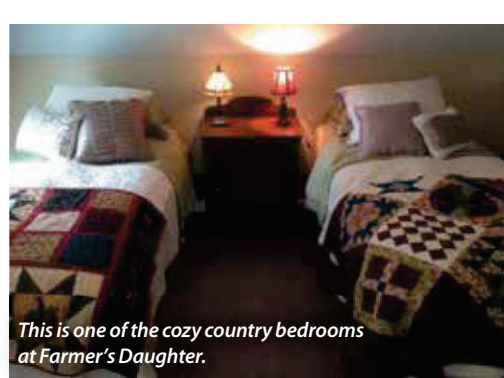




Heidi Vanderkloet of Farmer's Daughter is in "her happy place" with a display of quilts and fabric.



The Farmer's Daughter Country Retreat is a quiet space to "get away from it all" and become engaged in special crafting activities.



This is one of the cozy country bedrooms at Farmer's Daughter.



A quilting display at a local fair reveals the amazing talent and interest for quilting in our area.



FARMER'S DAUGHTER

A Country Retreat

By Sally Smid

In our fast paced and intense world, what could be more refreshing than a quiet rural house, on a peaceful country road, surrounded by farm fields? Farmer's Daughter Country Retreat is just that. Located at 294 Scott Rd., north of Athens.

Heidi Vanderkloet describes her enterprise as "a place to relax with friends and work on favourite projects" in a peaceful country setting. The chance to have a weekend escape to create and socialize with friends is a very special opportunity! "Farmer's Daughter Retreat" has 2 workrooms, an equipped kitchen and attractive dining area with "comfy seating". There are also 5 cozy bedrooms and 2 full bathrooms and has accessibility. The house is equipped with many items to accommodate crafting. This is not Heidi's first business venture, as she formerly operated Farmer's Daughter Boutique in Sunderland before coming to help operate the family farm with her husband Dale and two sons.

The retreat house has been the site of a variety of workshops and retreat weekends, including scrap booking, crocheting, and sewing, but most importantly quilting, which is Heidi's passion. Quilting has a long history in Canada and is a very quickly growing past time. The many local quilting groups and shows that take place are evidence of that.

While the warmth and comfort that quilts supply, especially through this past winter, are much appreciated, at Farmer's Daughter it is clear that today's quilts are both functional and decorative. The house is filled with such creations, which adds to its cozy atmosphere. Quilting categories include those that are traditional, contemporary, wall and miniature. Colour arrangements and quilting designs can widely vary. Modern sewing machines and equipment have certainly changed the art from that of only hand stitching and old-fashioned quilting bees, to piecework, patchwork, appliqué, collage, embellishment and fusing are some of the new techniques employed today.

"I love to work with quilters who love fabric as much as I do!" Heidi remarks. Her excitement about materials and design, as well as her expertise, make crafting events a positive and rewarding experience. Completed projects make very special family keepsakes and very special gifts. It is interesting to see how different designs look with varied colour choices. Meredith

Mantel, of Smiths Falls has visited the house on several occasions and comments, "It is a peaceful place to learn about quilting and Heidi is very supportive!" Kathy Doile expressed her pleasure in being able to quickly create a quilt top. The Retreat House has also been the site for kids' workshops in past months. Youngsters have been thrilled to be able to take home their creations, a more enriching experience it would seem, than the usual "screen time".

Farmer's Daughter has wonderful potential, as many from more urban areas are seeking a rural setting such as this, and would have great satisfaction in being involved in the vintage art of quilting. Guests bring their own groceries and rates are reasonable with a minimum of a 2-night stay.

There are also possibilities of exploring more of what is available in the rural surroundings. It is, with no doubt, that visitors to the Farmer's Daughter Retreat House will leave with a renewed perspective and sense of fulfillment' LH

To learn more, go to retreatatfarmersdaughter.vistaprintdigital.com or visit our Facebook page.

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