



Flaunting Frugality

Hobby Farm Home editor's notebook for September-October 2009

By Karen Keb Acevedo

Whenever I sit down to write my "Editor's Note" for an issue, I usually try to tell a story about one or two articles that I relate to in a special way. For this issue, believe it or not, it's the "Hands On: Refinish a Table" article by Rhoda Peacher on page 80. Why?

Ever since I can remember, I've had this unquenchable desire to find a bargain—a good deal at a flea market or yard sale—and, literally, turn trash to treasure. When I say a bargain, I mean a bargain.

My dining room table, which has been in use in my home for about 12 years, was purchased at the Long Beach Antiques Market in Southern California for \$45. It was an old, school-library table, 6 feet long, with an unattached top.

I sawed off the bottom rails, painted the base black, and refinished and stained the top. It's sturdy, attractive and, in my opinion, an heirloom for anyone who inherits it after me. I can't tell you how many times this table has been featured in food (and other) photographs in the pages of Hobby Farm Home and Hobby Farms magazines over the years. Every time someone admires my table or comments on it, I proudly tell its origin and how I transformed it (annoying, I know).

The reason I'm so attached to this idea of turning trash to treasure is probably my frugal upbringing. Honestly, we didn't have much money, and it became a game of skill for me to locate quality goods (or at least those that could pass for quality) at a low price.

I've always been the poster girl for "champagne taste on a beer budget." I'd look at home magazines or fashion magazines for inspiration, then devise a plan for how I could attain that look for pennies on the dollar. I still operate this way, and it gives me immense pleasure—a sense of pride, really.

In my heart of hearts, I truly believe we can all have the good things in life without spending armloads of cash. It's just a matter of devising a plan and keeping your eyes peeled.

So, 'tis the season for fabulous antique shows and yard and barn sales. In the current economy, I'm sure you'll have plenty of competition for that \$45 diamond-in-the-rough, but I'm confident you'll find it, and when you do, I'll be proud!

Send your ideas and photos of your transformed treasures to me at hobbyfarms@bowtieinc.com. We'll post the best ones on our website.

If you're a social networker, follow me on Twitter or friend me on facebook at Karen Acevedo.