

Life in the Country
Talking Shop

With a move to rural Pennsylvania, an antiques-loving teacher trades chalk dust for hay bales.

meet Meg!

Meg Venio
welcomes visitors
to Willowbrook
Farm, where she
hosts vintage sales
in the property's
old stone barn.



The shoppable wares at Life's Patina typically include European linens and china, displayed here in a favorite vintage cabinet. "I love anything in pale blue," says Meg. "It's created a peaceful feeling for me since I was a kid."



The scent of woodsmoke from the first fires of fall and the honks of geese returning from their sojourns down south fill the air at Willowbrook Farm in Malvern, Pennsylvania. "September is one of my favorite times of year here," says Meg Veno, a former elementary schoolteacher who, along with her husband, Chris, and their five children, moved to the farm 16 years ago from a Philly suburb. "We searched for five years, and when we came across Willowbrook, I could instantly see the possibilities," says Meg. "The old stone bank barn was especially appealing; I imagined using it to start a business."

Meg's love of vintage and design comes from her parents—"Dad was always loading up our Wagoner with finds," she says—and she had the idea for a pop-up sale that would offer new goods, architectural salvage, and treasures found at antiques fairs and flea markets along the East Coast.

Following a two-year reno, Meg hosted her first barn sale in 2011 and her business, Life's Patina, took off. Willowbrook now hosts pop-up days, as well as four seasonally inspired sales a year, with the next running September 23-25 (follow along @lifes.patina). While they browse, visitors can sample food and beverages from local makers and enjoy live acoustic music. "The farm has been a great gathering spot for our family," Meg says. "We love sharing it and, with each event, we get to add another layer to its story."



ABOVE: Shopping displays are found around the 15-acre property, which also includes a greenhouse, horse stables, vegetable garden, and chicken coop. **RIGHT:** Part of the lower level of the main barn is still home to dairy stalls, where vintage finds, like industrial lighting and ironstone plates, mingle with vintage-inspired goods, such as Sugarboo & Co. canvas quote tarps.



OUTDOOR TABLE: BRENDA CARPENTER PHOTOGRAPHY.



WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS IT WORTH?
Unusually long at 13 feet, the circa-1868 old-growth pine farmhouse table in Meg's barn was built for the Soldiers' Orphan School in what is now nearby Historic Yellow Springs. Similar pieces run between \$5,000 and \$12,000.

Parts of the massive 6,000-square-foot, two-story barn date back to the late 1700s. Learn more about the farm's history, find dates for upcoming sales, and shop select pieces online at lifespatina.com.