

# Craft store aids county's handicapped

By KATHLEEN MORAN

Walk into the new Michigan Handicrafters store in Troy and you'll see walls and shelves tastefully decorated with one-of-a-kind pictures, macramé and woven wall hangings, pottery and children's toys. When you walk away from the store, you'll have a sense of the craftsman's laboring from a wheelchair. But you might feel the hopefulness.

The store, located at 338 Buchanan Road in the Troy area, is the result of at least 60 Oakland County residents who have learned new skills through the state's vocational rehabilitation program after suffering strokes or other disabling illnesses.

The craftsman and women, most of whom labored for months or years to acquire new skills, will sell their finest work at competitive prices and, hopefully, support themselves from their earnings.

The store, run through volunteer help, is the first in the state and the hopes of handicapped persons in Michigan are pinned on its success.

are—and not with sympathy, she said. In spite of a mental or physical disability, the craftsman are graduates of a vocational program provided by the state. Many of them were trained through the program themselves, visit the person in his or her home and teach the skill using state-provided equipment.

Once the individual has mastered the trade, he can join Michigan Handicrafters Inc. for a \$10 membership fee and sell goods through the Troy store.

"Before we had the store," says people don't have an outlet for their crafts," says Mr. Wilbur. "It was discouraging for them and us. They lost interest when they couldn't market their goods."

Until the store opened last week, the craftsman depended on booths in shopping malls to sell items or they sent some goods to a state-operated store in Lansing.

DANN KELLY, a 38-year-old Royal Oak resident who is handicapped from tubular

sclerosis, typifies the store's contributors. Working closely with her mother, she helps staff Ragley Ann dolls for sale in the store.

"She turns and stuffs them," says her mother, Roseanne Kelly. "It makes her feel like she does them all herself."

"If it weren't for the program, she'd just be sitting around doing nothing."

Anthony Radall of Clawson suffered a serious back injury and has had several operations. Still unable to stand for any length of time, Radall has turned his attention to producing wooden doll cradles, trains, table and chair sets for children and other items.

Other crafts people range in age from 18 to 60 and range in skill from Frank Varndrum's leaded glass lamps to Sheila Carney's copper tooling. Robert Vogel of Rochester provides woven wall hangings and Edwin Keel of Holly produces needlepoint pictures.

CUSTOMERS have a wide range of hand-made quilts to choose from as well as unusual items like a clock made by Eric Berry whose specialty is lapidary.

The craftsman have a vested interest in the store beyond the selling of their goods. Each contributed in some way toward forming the corporation that owns and operates the store independently of the state or any agency.

The corporate officers include Don Gotach of Bloomfield Hills, chairman of the board; Gerald Phalen, treasurer; Everett Bacheler, bookkeeper; and Ruth Melby, recording secretary.

Although the store has a \$1,000 one-year grant to get started, it is expected to become self-supporting. Each contributor will also spend a day or two each month running the store so that it can be operated on an entirely volunteer basis.

As news of the store spreads, Mrs. Wil-

bur hopes customers will stop by and chat with the volunteers as well as shop. Craftsman will occasionally give demonstrations.

"We're really excited about this," said Mrs. Wilbur. "We've been waiting for it for two years. And if we're successful you can expect to see other stores of this type started throughout the state."

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## Servicemen get new assignments

Four area servicemen recently were given changes of status.

Cadet James A. Young, son of Mr. and Mrs. James H. Young, of 20235 Roseland, Southfield, completed a U.S. Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corp field training assignment at Charleston AFB, S.C.

During the assignment, cadets receive survival and small arms training and aircraft and aircraft maintenance. They also have the opportunity to observe careers in which they might wish to serve as Air Force officers.

Young is a student at Embury-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Fla.

Airman Paul M. Conderme, son of Mr. and Mrs. John M. Conderme, of 25381 Orchard Grove, Southfield, has been selected for technical training at Sheppard, Tex., in the Air Force aircraft maintenance field.

Conderme recently completed basic training at Lackland AFB, Tex., and studied the Air Force mission, organization and customs and received special instruction in human relations.

Conderme is a 1974 graduate of Southfield High School.

Marine Pfc. Denton K. Walker, son of Mr. and Mrs. Rose Walker, 3888 W. McNeil, Southfield, has been meritoriously promoted to his present rank upon graduation from recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, Calif.

He received the early promotion for his superior performance during all phases of the 11-week training cycle, which emphasized physical conditioning, self-discipline and teamwork.

A former student of Southfield High School, he joined the Marine Corps in April, 1975.

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