

## Family and friends profit

# Hobbyist carves for pleasure

By LYNN ORR

A brass antique bed warmer as a birthday present could scarcely be expected to thrill most women. But Nancy Bonser was delighted with husband Harvey's hand-crafted gift, especially since the bed warmer is only six inches long.

The Farmington Hills couple share an interest in miniature doll furniture — he makes it, she collects it — and they both are avid antique show devotees, always on the prowl for miniature items to accessorize Bonser's furniture.

"I have all this furniture now, and he's promised to build me a dollhouse for everthing," Mrs. Bonser says, with a confirming nod from her husband.

"Inspiration and before Christmas desperation" is what motivates Bonser to work for wife and grandchildren, and a Christmas many years ago inspired the beginning of the hobby.

"I decided to make a dollhouse for my daughter Joyce six weeks before Christmas, which was much too late,"

Bonser admits. He and his father worked until 4 a.m. Christmas morning to complete the house, but the end result was worth the effort.

"She abandoned everything for that dollhouse," he says with a smile, and he began crafting furniture to fill up the rooms.

**SINCE THAT TIME**, Bonser has made another dollhouse for his granddaughters and too many pieces of furniture to count, he says.

Unlike most hobbyists, Bonser doesn't belong to miniature wood crafters' groups or subscribe to magazines. "Making expensive kindling" is how he describes his projects.

But also he admits that he is a perfectionist and a stickler for detail. "It's no fun if it doesn't work," he says, which means that doors open on hinges, drawers pull out, and the roll-top part of a desk rolls up and down.

"I always learn something from each piece I make — you learn what you can do the next time," says Bonser, who's intrigued with challenges.

Currently, he's working on a miniature piano that will include a music

box, and his perfectionist eye extends to creating tiny accessories for the pieces.

An armoire contains tiny metal coat hangers; a school desk includes an ink well and tiny books; and a wooden kitchen cabinet boasts a marble pastry counter as well as a metal sifter that could handle about a thimbleful of flour.

**ALTHOUGH HE USUALLY FOLLOWS** a one-inch to one-foot scale, his prize piece is slightly larger than typical doll house furniture and holds a prominent place in the Bonser house.

From memory, he crafted a replica of his grandfather's sideboard, replacing carved dragon supports with the Bonser crest. After he completed the piece, he came across a photograph of the sideboard and was surprised at its accuracy. The foot-high piece displays tiny pewter pieces the Bonser family has collected over the years.

Although he is the fourth generation of Bonser to be handy with a lathe, only his grandfather used his talents as a vocation.

And Bonser finds little use for his hobby in the advertising business with the Shaw-Barton Co. But he does use his wood crafting talents to create spice racks, end tables, and other miscellaneous items for family and friends.

And he finds time to give his grandson, Danny, a helping hand in the construction of boats, although he's been working on his own ship replica for 12 years.

"That's when I really work out my aggressions," he maintains concerning the construction of a scale model of the Roger B. Taney revenue cutter.

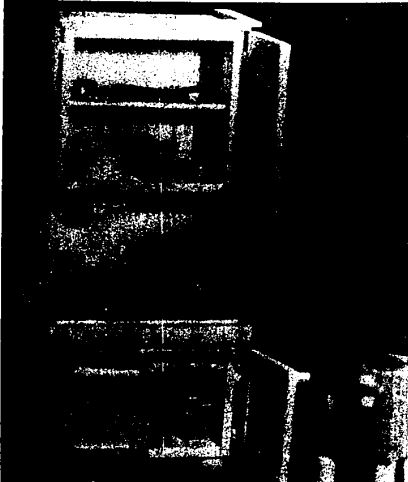
When he's not down in his carefully organized basement workshop, Bonser might be out setting up his latest birdhouse, or off contributing some ideas to the Farmington Elks as a member of the building committee.

And every once in a while, he turns his hand to painting, which is why his tiny books contain carefully painted sketches.

"You just use your imagination," Bonser says, and enjoying what you're doing has top priority.



In his basement workshop, Harvey Bonser adjusts the legs of a miniature piano.



This white wood kitchen cabinet stands about seven inches high and includes a real marble pastry counter as well as a flour bin. Mortar and pestle, flour sifter, and rolling pin are all stored in the cabinet. The butcher block table to the right has storage area for tiny knives for doll-like cooks.



Miniature bedroom furniture is normally housed in a grand-daughter's dollhouse, but the pieces haven't yet been returned since an exhibit at the downtown Farmington library. The rolltop desk in-

cludes working drawers and hardware created from jewelry, and the swivel chair pivots. A brass bed warmer, storage trunk and upholstered footstool all make the dolls feel right at home.

Staff  
photos by  
Harry  
Mauthe

*White on white...*



**OUR OWN BRAND DRESS SHIRTS IN SATINY WHITE PLAIDS ARE AN EXPRESSION OF SUBTLE ELEGANCE.**

Perfection itself with your finest suits. Quality is highly evident in single-needle tailoring and a seven button front. Advanced styling in the semi-spread collar. All in a cool blend of polyester/cotton that won't require ironing. Short sleeved, \$12; or long, \$14. White on white from Hudson's Dress Shirts, all stores.

**hudson's**

### CMU reveals fall honors

Ten Farmington area students have been named to the Central Michigan University honors list.

Among the top CMU students are: Janice Burke, of 32956 Hargrove, Farmington, a junior; Sophomore Linda Murphy, of 35801 Johnston, Farmington; Senior Lisa Clarke, of 34150 State, Farmington; and Junior Debra Jean Decorey, of 32770 Briar-

crest, Farmington. Included in the honors are: Sophomore Gina Gervasi, of 25544 Brookview, Farmington; Freshman Linda Goodman, 30244 Barwell, Farmington; Junior Gail Gruenwald, 36119 Congress Farmington and Sophomore Susan Bet Moore, of 26011 Westmeath, Farmington.

Among the honored students are: Senior Ju-

dith Otto, 22900 Manning, Farmington and Freshman Garret Vandenberg, 26057 Hidden Valley, Farmington Hills.

### Lochrie wins distinction

Karma Davey Lochrie of Farmington, a senior at DePauw University, has been named to the dean's list.

Honors students are chosen from the top 10 per cent of each academic class. They have completed at least 12 credit hours.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Lochrie Jr. of 34105 State.