

Acrylic castings are one-of-a-kind art form

By Corinne Abett
staff writer

Imagine owning a business that had little, if any, competition. Enjoy it? Sure. That's exactly what Ben Shaw of Troy, president of B.N. Shaw Corp. of Rochester, does all the time.

Shaw and John Slocum of Rochester put their heads together about four years ago and formed the business in which they make a huge variety of items by casting in acrylic.

Acrylic is the generic term. Lucite and Plexiglas are both brand names for the same substance made by combining resin with methyl methacrylate.

When these two are combined and poured in a mold, they produce a product that can be cut, buffed and polished

to look like glass but is half the weight and more durable.

"Most people, when you tell them 'Lucite,' conjure up things made by fabricators such as soap dishes," said Shaw.

A visit to his showroom and plant in the Starr Batt Industrial Plex quickly eases any such thought.

SLOCUM, who works with Shaw on a consulting basis, is responsible for the designs and in many instances, the execution of works of art in acrylic. These are signed, one-of-a-kind, decorative items sold in art galleries, furniture and gift stores for up to \$1,200.

The company also designs and makes a wide variety of commission pieces for gifts — imbedding in an attractive clear, acrylic shape anything from a bird feather to a beer bottle. An oil

company wanted a variety of executive gifts with miniature gold oil derricks and other product paraphernalia preserved in plastic.

Young couples want their wedding announcements imbedded. Someone else may wish to preserve a butterfly specimen, a tennis trophy, a glass animal, a favorite photograph, a family memento, a coin or token. With the exception of organic material and certain types of printed material, anything can be imbedded.

Shaw and his wife, Belle, who is a sales rep for the company, find a good

share of their business comes from outside.

There's more casting done in this country than anywhere else," said Shaw. "It's still a fairly unknown craft, relatively speaking. The best Lucite casting is done in this country."

He explained that quality is determined by the clarity and optical properties and these in turn are determined by the quality of the material used. He added that different additives and methods of curing also determine quality to some extent and that each job has its own requirements.

INDUSTRIAL applications are also a part of the company's business. They did a project for the research lab at the GM Tech Center and are doing things for the bio-medical department at GM.

Belle Shaw said interior designers frequently commission one-of-a-kind pieces for room settings.

The molds, cardboard-covered, with foil, approximate the size and shape. The final shape is achieved by sanding, milling and buffing.

If something is to be imbedded in the acrylic, it must be put in at the right

moment. Those who have made plastic can understand the importance of timing.

When the acrylic is poured into the mold and begins to form, the conservator changes from water to slurry, trying to keep the acrylic from setting too fast at this last stage. Clients must know that if it's put in too early, it sinks to the bottom. So it is with acrylic.

Shaw said that from the very beginning of the venture, "One of the things that intrigued me the most was the complete lack of competition."

club circuit

MOONDUSTERS meet at 9 p.m. every Saturday for a dance party in Livonia Activities Center, 15118 Farmington Road. The events are open to all singles over the age of 40 from all surrounding communities.

Admission is \$3.50, at the door, which includes dancing to a live band and refreshments.

PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S EDUCATION ASSOCIATION hosts a "Cesarean Orientation" program at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 6, in Newburgh Methodist Church, 35500 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia. This is an introduction to the group's Cesarean preparation classes. Couples anticipating a Cesarean birth, as well as Lamaze prepared couples are welcome.

There is a \$1 per person charge at the door. Inquiries about all classes offered by the association are taken by calling 459-7477.

BETHANY, a group for separated and divorced Christians, meet at 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 10, in Our Lady of Sorrows Church, 23615 Power Road.

Program for the evening is called "Would Anyone Want Me If I Decided I Wanted to Take the Plunge Again," led by Bob and Chris Funaro. Inquiries will be taken by calling Dale Johnson, 474-4250.

WESTSIDE SINGLES meet for a dance party at 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 10, in Roma's of Livonia. Eddie Rogers from WMJC is disc jockey for the evening. Admission is \$4 at the door. Open to all singles over the age of 21.

WESTERN WAYNE PEACE CENTER meet at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 13 in Newman House, 17300 Haggerty Road, Livonia. Guest speaker for the evening is Brian Larkins from SANE. Inquiries taken by calling 464-7766.

All club news and announcements for this column are to be addressed to: Club Circuit, Farmington Observer, 23332 Farmington Road, Farmington 48024. The information must arrive before noon on the Monday before Thursday publication.



Looking for a
tailoring shop?

Wight watches or meticulous dressers, Lapham's has a complete alteration department ready to serve you. Personal fittings for both men and women. Lapels and cuffs narrowed.

LAPHAM'S
120 E. Main, Northville
348-3877
Open Thurs. & Fri. 9 to 6
Mon., Tues., Wed., Sat. 9 to 5



THE ONLY CANDIDATE...

A LIFELONG REPUBLICAN CIVIC SEARCHLIGHT RATING: "WELL QUALIFIED" ENDORSED BY COMMUNITY LEADERS, RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES INCLUDING BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP, FARMINGTON HILLS AND THE VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN.

Mary Bowman & Dr. George Bowman
Harriet and Sid Hiller
Nick and Mary Tescaria
Sue and Bruce Wilson
Annetta and Al Evans
Rita and David Kerr
Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Hampson
Jean and Calvin Brown
Dr. Sheldon and Jesse Stern
Carol Klein
Neil and Phillip Price
Hilda Ettenheimer

Elect Republican Candidate VIRGINIA DEBENHAM RODGERS County Commission 15th District

...WHO HAS SERVED AS A LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL!
Six years as Trustee, Franklin Village. "After many years of community involvement, I was honored to be elected and then appointed by the Mayor as President Pro-tem for two terms and finished my third term as President of the Village!"

...WHO HAS EXPERIENCE IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT!
"Having served for four years as the Director of Cultural Affairs in the office of the County Executive, I have become familiar with all departments and services of the County, understand its budgets and procedures, and with this background of knowledge and experience can better serve my constituents of the 15th District."

...WHO CAN SERVE WITH A FULL-TIME COMMITMENT!
"The duties of a commissioner require 20-30 hours a week. My chief responsibility will be to serve my district fully!"

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Westcott
Dr. and Mrs. Robert R. Johnson
Mrs. Edward J. Green
Charlotte and Bill Ellison
Karen and Stewart Katz
Janet and Gary Bloom
Dorothy and Max Shaye
Ruth and Paul Robertson
Ann and Dick Irwin
Dr. and Mrs. Lylo F. Jacobson
Mr. and Mrs. George P. Martin

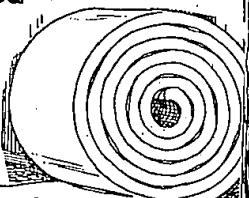
Jo Schmidt
Marilyn and Peter Green
Mr. and Mrs. William Garth II
Elapheth and David Boler
Carol and Dick Ranger
Marion and Dick Teague
Marion and Conrad Lam
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Schmidt
Dr. and Mrs. Enrique Sabbagh
Mrs. Shirley Sloane
Dr. and Mrs. T. Manford McGee
Harold A. Furlong, M.D.

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Virginia D. Rodgers, 20040 Washington, Franklin, Michigan 48025

CLOSE-OUT-CLOSE-OUT Check these UNBEATABLE-VALUES

3 1/2" x 15" Kraft-Faced
Fiberglass
Insulation

• R11 VALUE
\$11.88 ROLL
88 SQ. FT. REG. 14.98



3/8" x 4' x 8'
Drywall

\$3.00 ea.

2" x 4" x 8' STUD GRADE
99¢ ea.

HOLLOW CORE DOORS

BIRCH from
LAUAN from

\$17⁹⁹ ea. Reg. \$27³⁰
\$13⁹⁹ ea. Reg. \$20⁰⁰

WHITE PINE MOULDINGS

10° L.F.
6' & Shorter

Rough Sawn Pine Boards

CASH
CARRY 25° L.F.

Reg. 40°
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

FARMINGTON LUMBER
32800 GRAND RIVER
DAILY 8-5:30 4 Bks. E. of Farmington Road
SAT. 8-4
474-4016

Westland's August Special Events

PUPPET WORKSHOP

A vacation "how to" workshop for kids, conducted by Puppeteer, Dick Waskin. Each child will make a puppet and participate in a Puppet Show. The 4-day workshop is Monday through Thursday, Aug 13 - 16, with a Puppet Presentation on Friday, Aug 17. In the evening. There will be two sessions available. One session is from 11 am to 12 noon and the other is from 1 pm to 2 pm each day. The classes will be held in Meeting Room B, located in the Emporium. Each child will be asked to bring some supplies. The workshop is free but prior registration is necessary, and the class size is limited. Call and sign up now, 425-5001. August 13 - 17, Room B, located in the Emporium.

BACK TO SCHOOL FASHION SHOW

Kids of all ages will model fashions from Westland that will make them look and feel their best when they start back to school this fall. Our models will be winners from the Auditions held in July. Wed, August 15, 11 am & 7 pm. Central Court.

BACK TO SCHOOL CIRCUS

That age old excitement, the glitter, the daring, the laughter, the fun - all will be in Westland's Central Court during the Inside Back to School Circus. See balancing, tumbling, feats on the high trapeze, clowns and poodles, and more. August 20 - 25, Central Court. Show times are: Mon - Thur, 2 pm & 8 pm. Fri & Sat, 11 am, 2 pm & 8 pm.

OUTDOOR COOKING SEMINAR

This month's Lifestyle Seminar features Outdoor Cooking with guest speaker, Larry Janos. A continental breakfast will be served. The seminar is free, but reservations are necessary. Call 425-5001. Tue, August 21, 10 am - 11 am. Auditorium, located in the Emporium.

SNEAK PREVIEW OF SEPTEMBER EVENTS

1 & 2 Michigan Dahlia Show
7 - 9 New Horizons in Green
12 Fall Fashion Show
13-16 Antique Show
18 Lifestyle Seminar
29 & 30 Detroit Rose Society

WESTLAND CENTER

WAYNE & WARREN ROADS, WESTLAND

