



The artist's sculpture of a leprechaun takes shape.



photos by CAMILLE McCOY/staff photographer.



Sawdust flies as Kenneth Boshell applies his chain saw to a tree stump to form a sculpture.

His eyes, ears, nose and mouth well protected against sawdust a leprechaun for a Rochester homeowner with an Irish heritage.

1d wood chips, Kenneth Boshell transforms a tree stump into

Chainsaw sculptor frees leprechaun from tree stump

By Sharon Dargay
and Susan Steinmueller
staff writers

Kenneth Boshell stumped for inspiration?

The sculptor has taken chainsaw to tree trunks nationwide, creating fanciful figurines, totem poles and realistic carvings.

When the sawdust settled at Mary Ellen Gendich's house in Rochester last month, a leprechaun frolicked with woodland animals where an elm tree stump once stood.

A forest of Boshell's creations decorates Cele DiPlacido's Birmingham

backyard; a friendly owl greets youngsters at the Creative Corner Learning Center in Troy, and at St. Alexander Church in Farmington Hills, St. Francis of Assisi beckons to woodland creatures.

"It's a lost talent," said Boshell, who bills himself as Dr. Boshell, OB, "doctor of obste-tree-trix."

"It's something that the Indians used to do when the land was theirs. The only thing I've done to improve on the Indians is to use a more modern tool. It's nothing new really."

The former meat cutter traded steaks for stumps and trunks 17 years ago, turning a hobby into a career.

"The hobby lasted for maybe two weeks. I found so much enjoyment from it that I quit my job with all the security. It has meaning to me, and when I do a sculpture, I'm not doing it just for a dollar. It comes from my heart."

THE SELF-TAUGHT artist suspects that customers enjoy his sculptures because "the tree had history, and they can look at it in another form now."

DiPlacido likes the idea that Boshell combines artistry with nature. Her husband, Guy, commissioned two pieces — a Snoopy for his daughter and a cat for his wife — 10 years

ago, after seeing Boshell drive by in his stump-filled truck.

The family later added a St. Francis statue to the back yard, an abstract in the front yard and a seagull with a six-foot wingspan at a house in northern Michigan.

"He does it all by chainsaw. There's no finishing off with a chisel," DiPlacido said. "He doesn't work from sketches. He comes right on the job."

Kessie Kallsoulis got more than she bargained when she hired Boshell to create a friendly barn owl for her day care center in Troy.

He entertained youngsters with a puppet and gave them a first-hand view of his artistry by carving the piece at the site.

"They were fascinated," said Kallsoulis, whose company emblem includes an owl. "I was fascinated. One man stopped by and gave him a dollar for extra gas for the chainsaw."

Boshell, whose admirers include Chris Schenkel of "ABC's Wide World of Sports," carved stumps for the DiPlacidos in his garage at home and then transported the completed

projects to Birmingham. He carved on site at the Troy day care center and used an existing stump at the Gendich home.

The unusual carving process almost always guarantees a crowd of curious on-lookers.

"Every day women show up in cars with kids. Occasionally someone comes with a camera," said Mike Gendich, who commissioned Boshell to create a piece for his mother.

"It's really a delightful thing."

short takes

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a promotion or are planning a new venture or project — and there's a Farmington-area business angle — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news item with other Farmington Observer readers. Send items to: Short takes, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

NEW LOCKERS

Farmington High School soon will have new lockers and a renovated auditorium.

Bids were opened during the Nov. 4 meeting of the Farmington Board of Education and awarded later in the meeting. Only three bids were received for renovation of the girls locker room and improvements to the gymnasium.

Michigan School Services of Detroit — lone bidder for the project — will renovate the locker room for \$24,957.

According to information presented, the company holds the only franchise in Michigan for the type of lockers detailed on the bid proposal. Auditorium Specialists Co. of Farmington was awarded the low bid of \$12,500 for auditorium renovations. KLA Laboratories Inc. of Dearborn bid \$12,562 for the project.

Although the vote approving the bids was unanimous, Trustee James Abernethy said it bothered him that the district was accepting a lone bid for the locker room renovations.

"I'm troubled that there's no second bid for a \$25,000 item," he said.

Resident Steve Crittenden suggested that the board consider lockers and other items manufactured at Jackson State Prison.

NEW MEMBER

Gerald Hoffman of Farmington Hills is a new member of the National Association of Enrolled Agents.

Hoffman joins 6,000 other Enrolled Agents as NAEA members.

After completing a two-day examination administered by the Internal Revenue Service, Hoffman received the designation of Enrolled Agent. Generally, only 25-30 percent of those who participate actually pass the exam.

Enrolled Agents are granted the right to practice before the IRS at all administrative levels. This includes all matters connected with presentation to the IRS relating to clients' rights, privileges and liabilities under laws or regulations administered by the IRS.

The NAEA requires 30 hours of continuing professional education each year in addition to strict adherence to a Code of Professional Ethics. The association also works actively with government regulatory agencies and Congress on tax-related matters.

MOVING UP

Farmington resident Richard Fisher was named an associate at Albert Kahn Associates Inc., Architects and Engineers. A registered engineer, he joined AKA's Field Service Department in 1982. He then was assigned to the firm's project for the University of Michigan — the new \$210 million University Hospital.

In May, he was named chief mechanical field representative.

COMPLETES TRAINING

Ronald Achtenberg of Farmington has successfully completed the Fraternal Field Managers Association fraternal sales training program.

As a result, he was awarded the designation of Fraternal Insurance Counselor.

Achtenberg is a district representative for Aid Association for Lutherans.

To earn the designation, Achtenberg completed three examinations under the supervision of the Research & Review Service of America, Indianapolis, Ind. The courses included studies of life insurance fundamentals, contract provisions, and their application to family financial problems.

AAL, the nation's largest fraternal benefit society, provides 1.4 million members in 6,600 nationwide branches with insurance and other financial services.

THANKSGIVING FEASTS

For the second year, 2,100 K mart Good News Committees, groups of employee volunteers, are preparing Thanksgiving feasts for 42,000 needy families nationwide.

The main ingredients for a traditional Thanksgiving meal — 504,000 pounds of turkey, 346,000 pounds of potatoes, 168,000 loaves of bread and 42,000 pumpkin pies — will be distributed to needy families across America during the program. The K mart food baskets will also contain vegetables, stuffing mix and other items collected by each K mart store.

According to K mart's chairman, Bernard Fauber, the positive response to last year's food basket pro-

gram prompted K mart stores to sponsor the program again.

"Food basket recipients and other community members told us just how pleased they were with last year's program," Fauber said. "They welcomed our community involvement."

Locally, each K mart store will provide at least 20 needy families with food baskets. Other area businesses and community organizations can donate food to sponsor additional families. A local organization will help identify needy families in each area. K mart has stores in both Farmington and Farmington Hills.

SHE'S PROMOTED

Casey Communications Management Inc. has promoted five of its account professionals as part of the firm's expansion in client activities and services.

Jack Casey, president of the Southfield-based public relations firm, announced that Mari Raver of Farmington advanced from account coordinator to an account representative.

As account representative, she is primarily responsible for day-to-day activities for the Michigan Coalition for Safety Belt Use as well as assisting on several other accounts. She has been with Casey Communications Management since August 1985.

Farmington Observer

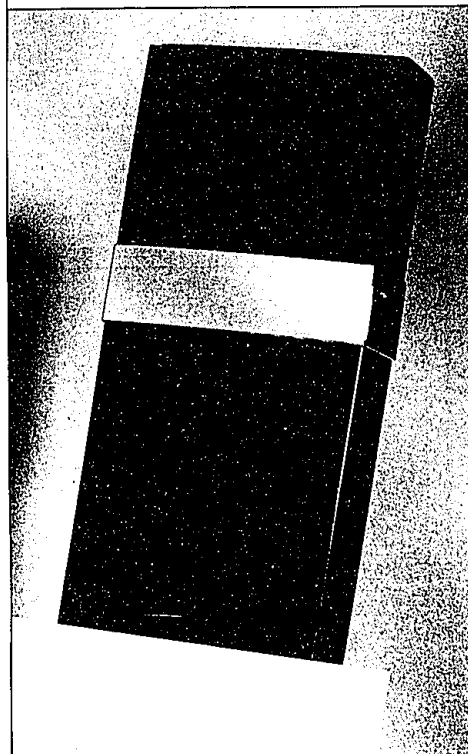
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