

Crafts

Handcraft a pocketbook worth over 100 dollars

By JOANNE SPAHR
LANCASTER — Vivian Warfel knows the secret to life's happiness. She doesn't have to tell you, you can just see it.

"Part of the joy in life," she says with a smile, "is not what you keep — it's what you share."

And, she follows this philosophy in many ways, especially with her crafts.

Physically slowed down in the past few years by serious health problems, Mrs. Warfel hasn't let her spirit be daunted. Instead, she takes what could be idle time and puts it to good use by

creating lovely, delicate handmade items.

As a result, her home is delightfully accented with dried flower arrangements, hooked rugs, wall plaques, pictures, knick knock holders, and other dainty ornaments, all of which she created herself. And, her friends and family have also been blessed on many occasions with gifts she has made for them.

"You know," she mentions, quoting an old adage, "they say that you should always give away only the things you like." And, that is often times what she does.

However, she has one collection of eight handmade pocketbooks that she keeps and uses for her own pleasure.

Made of a type of decoupage called decoupage with repousse, the handbags are wooden, not leather or cloth, and have gorgeous raised designs and scenes on them. For instance, one of her favorites has a nature setting with two- or three-inch lifelike birds standing out in a 3-D pattern. Another has raised flowers, a third has a raised owl, and still another has luscious red strawberries that look real

enough to eat popping off the top of the purse. These are only four of her large collection.

Not only is the collection pretty, it is also extremely valuable. Probably one of the characteristics about the pocketbooks which attracted Mrs. Warfel the most besides their beauty is that in Palm Beach where one of her closest friends lives, the women pay up to \$150 or more for these purses.

"I could hardly believe it," she says incredulously, "especially with the way our economy is today. And, what's worse, some of those

down there are mass produced and really aren't done all that nicely."

It is only natural that she would notice the last characteristic, because, although she claims she's not a perfectionist, she does get "mad" at herself when she "could have done better." Her meticulousness shows in her work.

To look at the purses, it is baffling to figure out how the craft is done. How do the designs stand out, and what are they made of?

Actually, the answer to the puzzle is really very simple. The designs and scenes on the purses are decoupage onto the box and are cut out of gift wrapping paper, cards, wallpaper, and

notecards. The raised parts of the designs have been "stuffed" from underneath with a type of dough that hardens when it dries and painted over with acrylics to blend in the stuffing and design, and to make it look real. It's relatively easy to do, but it takes a lot of time and patience.

"It's like any hand craft such as embroidery or knitting," says Mrs. Warfel. "But, you can't count the hours on something that gives you enjoyment."

For those who wish to try the challenge, Mrs. Warfel has set down her process in 15 easy steps which she assures Lancaster Farming

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Mrs. Warfel poses with two of her favorite purses. The bird designs on the right were cut out from note cards and the flowers on the left were from wrapping paper.

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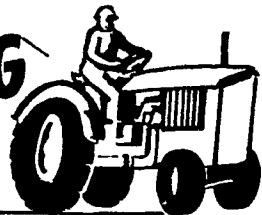


ENTERTAINMENT NIGHTLY

MONDAY, AUGUST 9 - 7:00 P.M.

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 10 - GARDEN TRACTOR PULL — 7:00 P.M.
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THE RIVERBOAT CREW 8:30 & 9:45 P.M.

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 12 - CHICKEN BAR-B-Q 2:00-8:00 P.M.
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