



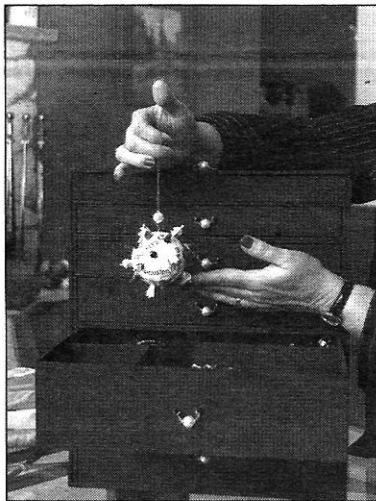
Member Spotlight

Living Celebrations

In high school, Sheryl Entwistle could have been dubbed “least artistic.” And yet, the LaGrange resident is now the founder of Living Celebrations, a company that creates fine art pieces chronicling people’s life stories.

“I am so inartistic that I feel like I’m going to break out in hives if I so much as go into a Michael’s store,” Entwistle said, explaining that the concept of creating museum quality art pieces with the help of professional artists was an epiphany.

Some of the pieces commissioned so far include a velvet chest of drawers bejeweled with Swarovski crystal drawer pulls. Because the recipient loved the holidays, the piece was crafted to look like a Christmas present and was filled with handcrafted ornaments including dolls resembling the “celebrants” five children, two of which had died and were adorned with angel wings; as well as lifelike models of her childhood bicycle and pony. A book composed of handcrafted paper, and calligraphy defined the milestones each of the ornaments represented in



the owner’s life. An earth decoration denoting all of the places she lived is another example of the product’s uniqueness. Another piece created for an extreme forward thinker was an ultra modern sleek silver briefcase with a flag book that captured the essence of the retiree’s history.

Creating Living Celebration’s artwork doesn’t happen overnight.

In fact, it can take months. A design team of six to eight freelance craftsmen and artisans fly in from around the country courtesy of Entwistle, and a local illustrator work closely with Entwistle to create a blueprint of the project. After a lengthy interview with the “celebrant,” the team sifts through hours of audio and visual recordings to accurately create a 3-D mockup of the highly personalized art piece for the person’s review.

With high-quality papers, materials and leathers, as well as using the services of sculptors, jewelry designers, leather-crafters, gold and silversmiths, the final cost is not cheap. “When people ask about the price, I say ‘It is about the price of a wedding,’” Entwistle said, explaining the common response is “But a wedding can cost \$25,000.”

To that, Entwistle replies, “Exactly.”

For more information on Living Celebrations, go to www.livingcelebrations.com.