

# Artist dreams up unique forms of stained glass

BY MEGAN RAPHAEL

Special to the Record-Eagle

Brilliant colors, gorgeous flowers, glass sparkling in the sun.

Using a technique of her own making, Diana Nickerson creates stained glass vases and luminaries that grab the eye and capture the light.

"People are drawn to them especially when the sunlight hits," said Nickerson, owner of Glass Tapestry in Kingsley.

Nickerson has done stained glass for 20 years. Many of her custom-designed creations have been featured in regional and national magazines.

One day eight years ago, the beautiful color of a purple onion skin and the sunlight bouncing off shards of glass from a broken window inspired her. At that moment her creativity, her love of flowers and her experience in mosaic came together to create a new design.

"I dream new ideas," she said.

Since then, she has perfected a method of pressing

a wide variety of flowers and maintaining their bright colors in vases and luminaries of all sizes. She gathers all the flowers herself.

Her work is in demand at the art fairs she attends throughout Michigan, and she continues to develop new ideas for her technique. Her goal is to expand her business to include using wedding or other special flowers for people.

"It's a great way to preserve memories and have a keepsake to hand down," she said.

In addition to using special flowers in her vases and luminaries, she etches names and dates and other information into the glass.

Nickerson started doing stained glass work in high school and continued her artwork while raising her daughter as a single mother and making a living as a waitress.

Ten years ago she decided to "wean away from waitressing to do art" and started doing her glass work full-time.

"This is my gift and I am trying to honor it," she said.

Her portfolio bulges with pictures of her custom-designed stained glass.

She prides herself on "taking what someone desires and coming up with something they want" to create doors, windows, cabinets, lamps and luminaries.

Originally from Gaylord, Nickerson has lived in many places including the Pacific Northwest and Hawaii. She and her husband, Don, have spent the past three years building a new house in the Kingsley area.

The home is set on acreage that has been in Don's family for years and they did all the work themselves. Included in the house is a new studio with ventilation, along with windows overlooking expansive fields and woods.

"It's made all the difference in the world to my art," she said.



Record-Eagle/Douglas Tesner

Artist Diane Nickerson creates many forms of stain glass, including windows, vases and luminaries. She uses a wide variety of pressed flowers to give color to her artwork.

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