



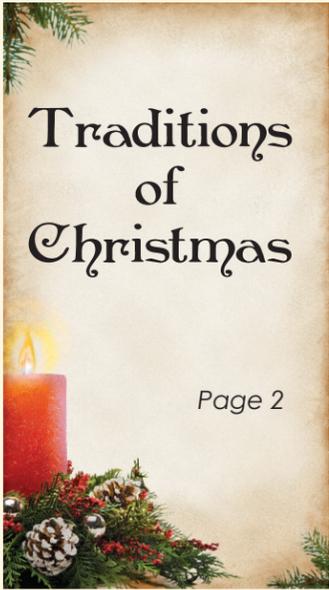
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MAQUOKETA SENTINEL-PRESS

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PUBLIC NOTICES

- Glatha M. Wild probate



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House knits warmth, love into hats

By KELLY GERLACH

Jerry House collects many things. Pocket watches are suspended from the entertainment center across the living room from his recliner. Die-cast trucks and other machines remind him of special events. And behind his recliner, a cabinet is filled with interesting shot glasses he's acquired over the years.

But a scrapbook holds what is probably the Delmar man's favorite collection - pictures, thank-you notes, and newspaper clippings. They are photos and letters from friends, family, acquaintances, and even people he doesn't know.

The reason for the photos and thank-yous?

Jerry knits hats and distributes them free of charge. To date, he estimates he's made more than 1,100 hats. The hats have traveled to all corners of the United States to people he knows and total strangers but always for a good cause.

Jerry grew up knitting. Well, to be honest, his mother knitted and he watched...sometimes.

"She tried to teach me, but as a boy I had no patience for that," he chuckled. His mother, Florence House, would knit hats and donate them to the local hospital. That sense of giving stayed with him.

When Jerry retired in 2004 after working 30 years at Nestle Purina in Clinton, he soon found he had time on his hands. His wife, Linda, - who knits, quilts, cross stitches, and em-



"Jerry's Corner," as his wife Linda calls it, is full of yarn, totes, looms, and bags heaping with hats he knits and gives away. To date, Jerry House said he's knitted more than 1,100 hats.

broiders - again tried teaching him how to use the two knitting needles to create something, anything.

"She tried teaching me but it just wasn't happening," he said.

"It's like he was all thumbs," Linda teased.

So instead of knitting needles, Linda bought knitting looms for her husband. Knitting looms have become popular with crafters in recent years as a somewhat faster way of hand-knitting for people who struggle with the needles.

The looms are typically plastic and usually come in packs of four, each a different size. The size of the loom determines the size of the finished project. Each loom has pegs sticking out, and it is by twining yarn around those pegs that an item is made, in this case hats.

Jerry generally uses one strand of four-ply yarn and one of the thinner baby-weight yarn for each hat. Two strands make the hat warmer and sturdier.

Jerry's corner of the living room

is littered with plastic tubs filled with yarns in various hues. Sometimes he purchases the yarn himself. He also has friends and family who donate yarn for his charitable projects. Some of his fellow retirees at Nestle Purina even collect money for Jerry to purchase yarn, and they donate their own unused yarn.

A do-it-yourselfer by nature, he modified one of the plastic containers to help untangle his yarn. He drilled four holes in the plastic lid and attached metal washers to the holes. He placed a divider in the plastic tub, threaded the yarn through the holes in the lid, and voila! He grabs the two strands of yarn he wants, and they remain tangle-free.

The loom and yarn transport easily, so it's not surprising to see Jerry knitting away at family gatherings. At just such a gathering, one of Jerry's sons-in-law bet Jerry that he couldn't make a hat in the few hours they'd be visiting. Jerry accepted the challenge and easily won.

His knitting speed increased so much that it only takes him about 30 minutes to make a hat for a premature baby. Granted, the hats are about as small as they can get, but it still requires dedicated time. He can knit at least 20 hats in two days when time allows.

Jerry began knitting those preemie hats one day after his daughter

■ HOUSE,
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AND
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