



RETIREMENT UNVEILS ARTISTIC TALENTS TO THE WOODWORKER'S SURPRISE

Forty years after his wife, Irene, asked him to pursue his love of wood carving somewhere other than in their small kitchen, Broadmead resident Larry Schneider found the time, and another location, to renew a hobby that had lain dormant for years. At the age of 70, Schneider discovered he had a talent as an artist and has since had his work accepted in juried gallery competitions and has been invited to lecture to the Frederick County Art Association in October.

An aeronautic engineer and systems manager by trade, Larry is enjoying an overwhelmingly positive response to his foray into the art world. He carves abstract sculptures incorporating delicate unbroken ribbons of wood or bronze. Larry displayed his first work, 'Mother and Child,' at Broadmead in 2004. He says, "When I first moved here and was asked to display my early wood carvings, several residents encouraged me to pursue art more seriously. Without that encouragement, I would not be making sculptures today."

Each sculpture takes about three months to complete. The polished wood sculptures are carved directly from large blocks using both hand and power tools. Bronze sculptures, which are cast

using the lost wax process, start as full size maquettes that Larry sculpts from composite materials. The entire process is both financially and physically demanding (he visits the fitness center three times a week to maintain the strength necessary to manipulate the wood), not to mention the large amounts of time required to make the models and carefully carve the mahogany, cherry or maple blocks of wood. Larry explains, "I was repeatedly encouraged to pursue this talent after 'Mother and Child' was displayed at Broadmead. Many of the painters and other artists who live in the community were telling me I had a real talent for sculpting and that my work was good enough for showing in a gallery." Realizing that he was beginning to develop a very expensive hobby, he started to think seriously about how he could sell his art. He has since created a body of work to display in competitions and is now putting the pieces together for a start-up business.

Now at age 72, Larry is taking on an endeavor that never occurred to him in his younger years, and which he is pursuing with great passion. To the joy of those who see this work, this self-trained artist is dedicated full time to an art career creating beautiful sculptures and loving every minute of it.

