

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Nebraska 4-H Clubs: Historical Materials and Publications

4-H Youth Development

---

1970

## Let's Create...Native Nebraska Products : Extension Circular 20-01-70

John Orr

Glenn Krohn

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/a4hhistory>

---

Orr, John and Krohn, Glenn, "Let's Create...Native Nebraska Products : Extension Circular 20-01-70" (1970). *Nebraska 4-H Clubs: Historical Materials and Publications*. 309.  
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/a4hhistory/309>

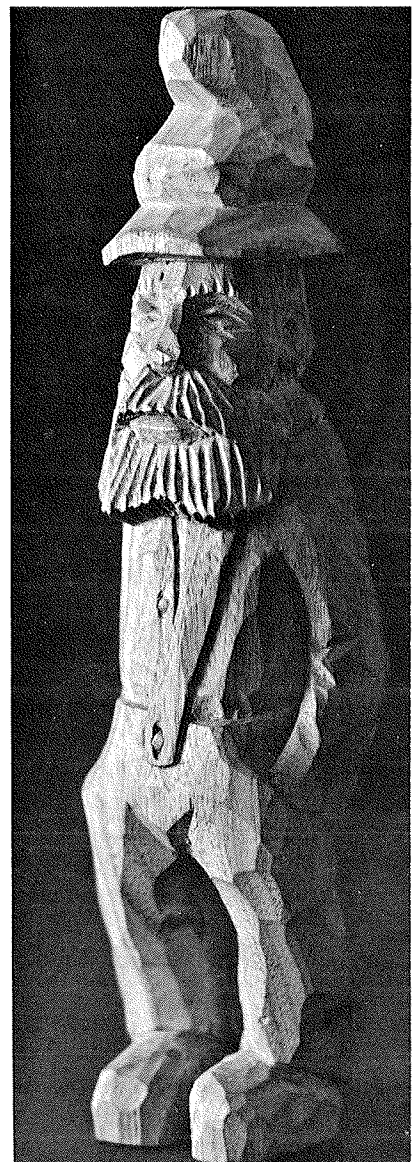
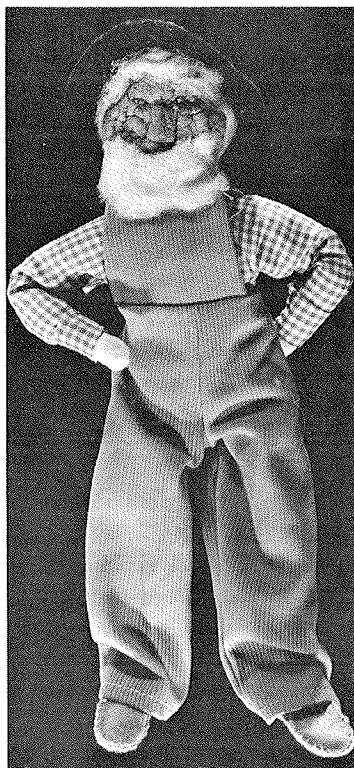
This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 4-H Youth Development at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Nebraska 4-H Clubs: Historical Materials and Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

E.C. 20 - 01 - 70

FEB 21 1973

# LET'S CREATE...

## Native Nebraska Products



Extension Service, University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture Cooperating with the  
U. S. Department of Agriculture and the College of Home Economics  
E. F. Frolik, Dean J. L. Adams, Director





# LET'S CREATE

## Native Nebraska Products

by John D. Orr  
Associate State Leader, 4-H and YMW  
Glen Krohn  
Assistant State Leader, 4-H and YMW

All products mentioned in this guide can be made from materials found in Nebraska. In fact, that's one of the main requirements for the project, "to create a product from raw materials found in our state."

### CREATIVE PEOPLE SERVE OUR NATION!

This project is designed:

- To develop your creative abilities through the use of native Nebraska products.
- To develop your abilities in the creative use of leisure time.
- To develop your awareness of the beauty and possibilities of natural resources found in Nebraska.
- To develop your appreciation for expanded use of native products to Nebraska.
- To develop the understanding of basic art principles while creating artistic craft items.
- To further develop your individual creativity.
- To increase your ability to function effectively in a group.
- To increase your appreciation and understanding of your Nebraska heritage.

You complete this project when you:

1. Complete one item.
2. Describe to someone else in your club how you completed your project.
3. Complete the record page.
4. Show others in your club how you would judge the workmanship.
5. Identify the project materials used and explain their importance in Nebraska.

You may enroll in this project as often as you wish. Each year you should choose a more challenging project and perhaps increase the number of projects to be completed. We encourage leaders to help members set realistic goals. A part of the value of this project is to plan your work and to complete it.

There are no advanced projects. It is felt that once 4-H members learn to appreciate the projects they will create in

themselves a desire to go into more advanced work. An example is leather. The beginner will do simple projects, the advanced may make a more complicated project such as a purse or saddle.

This project does *not* include the following popular hobbies: collections of stamps, money, matchbooks, cartoons and butterflies nor does it include kits such as airplanes, boats, cars, and furniture. Even though plastic is made in Nebraska it is not included among these "Native Nebraska Products." Aluminum, tin, and other metals are also excluded.

Exceptions are made for purchased items. You may purchase seeds, soap, and wood to get you started. Leather and reed may be in kit form when purchased. If kits are used, please indicate when exhibiting at club or county events.

4-H club work is much more than a single project. It involves meetings, camps, demonstrations, fairs, judging achievement programs and many other happy experiences.

### PROJECT INCLUDES

The following projects have been suggested:

**Wood:** Wood jewelry, wood carving, chip carving, wood burning, decoupage, and cloth pictures.

**Leather:** Belts, purses, coasters, billfolds.

**Weaving:** Basketry, weaving with straw.

**Nature projects:** Projects featuring feathers, nature plaques, seed mosaics, pebble people, rock collecting and polishing, apple dolls, and egg shell art.

**Corn shucks:** Preparation of cornhusks, braiding corn husks, corn husk dolls.

**Other projects:** Soap carving, wax candles, paper-mache, and other ideas.

Rope, woodworking, electricity, knitting, sewing, cooking, and many other 4-H projects utilize native Nebraska products, but are separate projects. You may wish to sign up for those projects as a part of your total 4-H club experience. Information is available on all 4-H projects at your County Extension office.

## WOOD PROJECT IDEAS

### Wood Jewelry

Endless fun and variety await the member who works with native wood. Letter openers, pins, necklaces, cuff links, bolo ties and tie clips are among the variety of products which can be made from wood. Local woods include: Chokecherry, Chinese Elm, Crab Apple, Plum, Willow, Cedar, Russian Olive, Boxelder, Walnut.

#### *Materials Needed*

Wood pieces designed for the project; wood sticks 1/2" x 3" with various grades of sandpaper (coarse to very fine) glued to half the stick, boiled linseed oil, pumice, rotten stone, glue, chains or clasps for pins, earrings, necklaces, etc.

#### *Procedure*

1. Select the limb you wish to use (air dried). Experiment with shape and quality of wood by cutting limb at different angles. For matching earrings use two pieces from the same branch. Cut the wood into rough shape desired and remove the bark.

2. Sand edges and face of the wooden shape. Use coarse sandpaper first and finish with fine sandpaper. Sanding flat surfaces to level on both sides of a necklace will give added beauty. Earrings, pins, and tie clasps can be sanded on only the front side since the backside is for mounting.

3. To test the quality of the sanding, rub into the wood a drop of boiled linseed oil with the palm of your hand. If scratches and marks show up, sand until perfect.

4. Add a drop of boiled linseed oil and rub into wood with your fingers. Repeat several times until a satin finish develops.

5. After a satin finish has been developed, add a drop of boiled linseed oil and a small amount of pumice (ask for it at a hardware store). Rub article between hands and then wipe to remove pumice.

6. Add a drop of boiled linseed oil and a very small amount of rotten stone (for light colored pieces, use talcum powder instead of rotten stone). Rub between hands. Wipe article to remove rotten stone or talcum.

7. Add a drop of boiled linseed oil and rub. Repeat this step several times.

8. Rub the wooden item until it looks like a jewel.

9. You may purchase the jewelry fittings from a hobby store. This will be one of the exceptions to the Native Nebraska products requirements.



### *Judging Pointers*

1. Is the wood native to Nebraska?
2. Was the wood allowed to cure before the project was started?
3. Was a good job done in sawing, sanding, and finishing?
4. Was the design of the project balanced?

To get started you may wish to send for a catalog from Mr. & Mrs. Jack Schlasser, Kensal, North Dakota 58445. They are a farm couple who have built their hobby into a good business. If you ask them, they will send you all supplies needed for your first project. Don't stop there—Be Creative!

### **Wood Carving**

The first step in making a wood carving is to draw a simple outline of the figure on a piece of paper or find a paper pattern that you like. For beginning projects select woods that are softer and more easily carved—such as basswood.

#### *Materials Needed*

Soft wood, a design, coping saw, sharp knife, sandpaper, and paste wax.

#### *Procedure*

1. Cut out the paper design and place on a piece of soft wood. The grain of the wood should be parallel to the thinnest and weakest figure parts such as legs, ears, or tail. Draw a simple pencil line around the paper design.
2. Cut out the design with a coping saw. Hold your coping saw vertically straight, so that in cutting through the wood design, one side will perfectly match the other side.
3. Start whittling by rounding off the edges and shaping the figure to the desired shape and form. Use a sharp knife and always cut with the grain. Begin with smaller chips and increase to larger chips as you gain confidence. Let the chips fly only when you are sure that you are cutting in the right direction.
4. Do not try to carve out small and detailed features but simply aim at the big and general outline of the figure.
5. With different grades of sandpaper, smooth down the surface of your carving until the grain and the color of the wood come out in all their beauty. Begin with coarse grades of sandpaper and finish up with finer grades until the wood feels like polished bone or ivory.
6. To protect your carving, wax it with paste wax and polish with a soft rag.

You may wish to read a good book on wood carving. Beginners may wish to experiment by carving soap or soft wood (see soap carving instructions on page 16).

### *Judging Pointers*

1. Is the article balanced?
2. Is there evidence of originality?
3. Has workmanship been neat?
4. Has there been a protective coating applied?
5. Has wood been well chosen to compliment the project?

### **Chip Carving**

Chip carving is a simple form of wood carving. It does not require much skill other than precision. Patience is the key to success in this particular craft. Any piece of soft wood free from knots may be chip carved. An example might be basswood.

#### *Materials Needed*

Soft wood, chip carving knife, sandpaper, and paste wax.

#### *Procedure*

The process consists of a simple small pattern of cut or grooved triangles on the surface which is being decorated. Use graph paper to work out your pattern, shading in areas where cuts are to be made. Use a special chip carving knife to cut the grooves into the wood. You can make your own knife by wrapping adhesive or friction tape around one-half of a single edge razor blade.

To chip carve, divide the area to be carved into squares or rectangles. Then divide each square (or rectangle) into two triangles, see Figure 1. Take each triangle and divide it into three smaller triangles, see Figure 2.

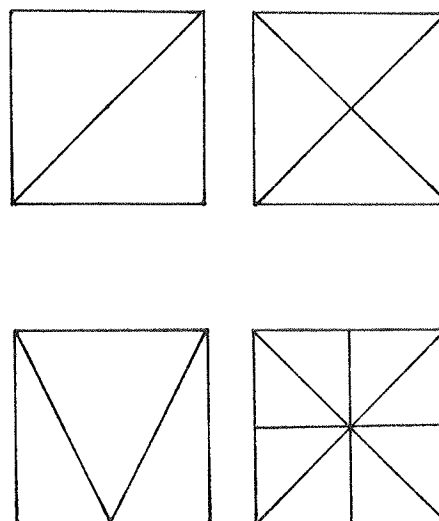


Figure 1

Now you are ready to begin chip carving. Put the point of the razor blade at Point A of the triangle (Figure 2) and cut along the dotted line towards the center of the triangle. Vary the depth so that the cut becomes deeper towards the center of the triangle.

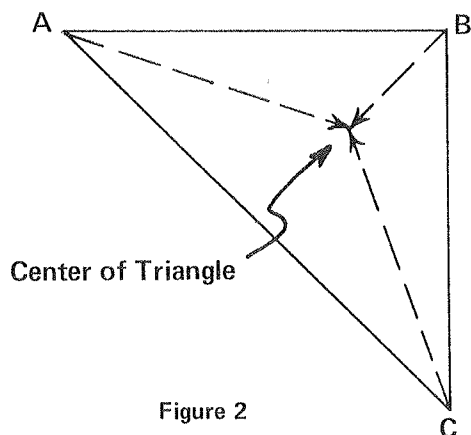


Figure 2

Repeat this process at Points B and C by putting the blade point first at B and cutting toward the center, and again at C. The three cuts will meet in the center. The outside lines of the triangle are the "chip carve cut" lines. For these cuts, the blade must be held at an angle, with the edge of the blade slanting towards the center of the triangle. Cut from Point A to Point B. This cut releases the first section of the triangle, a little upside-down pyramid chip, from which chip carving gets its name. Repeat this slanting cut between Points A and C and Points B and C, releasing the other two chips.

You will note that when the three chips have been removed, a sloping triangular hole is left in the wood. Repeat this slanting process with all other triangles on the surface to be decorated. The direction, size, depth and other variations in the carved out triangles form the patterns used in decorating such wooden articles as plaques, tiles, chests and bookends. As you master the basic cut you may want to try combinations of triangles leading from a single point or any other of your own ideas. Chip carving is usually finished as in its natural state by using a clear stain. Carefully erase all pencil lines and sand the uncarved surface with very fine sandpaper. For a protective coat, use paste wax, brushed on so that it will not lump or cake in the triangles.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. Clean cuts and good geometrical designs are graded high.
2. Natural finishes are considered best, dark finishes sometimes are graded down.
3. Variations in triangular cuts are desirable and should be graded up.
4. Check for excess of finish in "well" of cuts.
5. This project should be useful.

#### **Woodburning**

The electric burning needle offers the craftsman many possibilities. It may be used to decorate wood projects such as bread boards, trays, plates and bowls, jewelry boxes, etc.

#### *Materials Needed*

Electric needle, wood, steel wool and varnish.

#### *Procedure*

1. Sand all wood articles before burning.
2. Draw or trace the design on articles to be burned (use a regular pencil). If regular carbon paper is used to transfer the design, use a light touch. This prevents the drawing of broad, dark lines on the article.
3. Before plugging in the electric needle, select the point for the kind of work you will do (electric needle sets sometimes come with different tips).
4. Allow the electric needle to get hot before starting to burn your article. Test needle on a scrap piece of wood.
5. Hold the electric needle at the cork heat insulator as you would a pencil. Touch point lightly to the article and draw the line toward yourself. Move the point only as fast as necessary to get the desired burned lines. Keep moving the needle at a steady pace. Do not "stop and go" while the needle is still on the article. This type of jerky movement will result in darkened areas on the line. You may want to experiment with a scrap of wood.
6. If carbon paper was used to transfer the design, go over the design lightly with an art gum eraser to remove the carbon lines. Dust thoroughly, then apply a coat of clear varnish and let dry. After each coat, use a very fine steel wool to go over your article to remove roughness. If articles such as trays or bread boards are to be washed apply at least three coats of clear waterproof varnish. Steel wool between each coat. If you don't need to wash the article two coats of varnish will be satisfactory.

**Caution:** Remove plug from electric outlet whenever the pencil is not in use. Do not allow the point to touch other surfaces when hot.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. Ragged, broad lines and lines which are burned too deeply show poor technique. Lines should be even in texture.
2. Gradations of shading should be graded up.
3. Originality of designs may be given extra credit.
4. Article should be finished just as other wood articles.
5. Framing of certain wood burned articles is sometimes desirable.
6. Placement of design should be balanced.
7. Project should have some decorative value.



## Decoupage

Decoupage reflects several French words: *Dechirage*, to tear out; collage, to paste up; *montage*, a combination of flat surfaces; and *trompe l'oeil*, fools the eye. Forms of creative decoupage date back many centuries. This is only one of several methods used. You may wish to purchase your first project in kit form. However, if you exhibit at a fair or show it is preferred that you use materials you have made, especially the wood background.

### Materials Needed

Wooden surface, sealer, print, antique glaze or varnish, finish coat, thinner, white glue, soft cloth or paper towel, steel wool, roller and brushes. As you gain experience, you may use other products.

### Procedure

1. Select a dry piece of wood. Prepare the wooden surface and edges. . . sand, apply sealer of your choice or antiquing glaze onto surface following the grain of the wood. Allow to dry.

2. Prepare print. . . for an antique effect, actually tear slightly into the print. Make tears of varying sizes and shapes. Place print face down on an old surface and sandpaper around back of the edges of the print to make them thinner and more ragged. Select prints that have "character." Old newspaper clippings and magazine pictures of birds or animals work quite well.

3. Adhere the print. . . put white glue on the back of print. If necessary mix water into white glue to produce a smooth thin coat. Position print on the wood.

4. Roll print with a roller or rub with hands to remove air. Prick bubbles where necessary with a pin, allow air to escape, then roll again. Blot excess glue from around print with a damp cloth. Allow to dry.

5. Seal the print. Since some prints are not compatible with a decoupage finish, always test a scrap piece to see if the ink is stable. If the finish blurs or streaks the picture, seal the print by brushing a coat of white glue, which has been thinned by adding water, over the surface of the print. There are several commercial finishes available but we recommend a clear varnish for the beginner. Allow finish to dry until completely clear. You may wish to put additional coats of varnish on the projects. The more thin coats the better. . . up to 10 or more. Always remember to dry thoroughly and sand between coats.

6. If you wish your article to appear antique you may wish to strike the project with the edge of the blunt end of a hammer; beat it with a chain; dig into, scratch, or strike surface with screwdriver. *You should first practice with an article you are willing to see damaged.* This could be done

after you put on the first coat of sealer. The next coat gives the scarred areas an antique look.

### Judging Pointers

1. Are margins balanced?
2. Has varnish been applied evenly?
3. Have enough coats of varnish been applied to bury print?
4. Is print suitable for size of project?

## Cloth Pictures

Cloth pictures make interesting wall hangings and decorations. Interesting patterns and border prints can give rich illusions of oil paintings. Figures such as rabbits, horses, etc., can be featured in the pictures or simply interesting color images.

### Materials Needed

Fabric, one-half inch plywood board, tacks, and varnish.

### Procedure

1. Select the fabric and a one-half inch plywood board.
2. Cut the plywood to fit the picture. Be sure that the plywood is cut at square angles. If it is not square you will have trouble fitting the frame.

3. Stretch fabric over the plywood, using 1/4 inch tacks with heads. *Tacks should be placed in the edge of the plywood about two inches apart.* Drive the tacks in *just far enough* to hold the fabric. Do not drive the tacks in all the way since you may have to remove them later to stretch the fabric. All fabrics do not adhere to varnish in the same manner.

4. Place the fabric and plywood board on a flat surface. Cover the fabric with enough clear varnish to soak through the fabric and wet the plywood board underneath. If you see spots appearing that look like bubbles, the varnish did not go through to the plywood board. Apply more varnish to these spots and use a tube or an old rolling pin to roll the spots out. It will not mar the picture.

5. After applying three coats of varnish, your picture is finished and ready to be framed. This step is optional and care must be taken in selecting correct frames. Finish the frame as fitting for the picture.

### Judging Pointers

1. Is workmanship neat?
2. Is print appropriate to the project?
3. Has print been properly framed or matted?



## LEATHER

Leather is one of man's oldest natural resources, dating back to the days of cave men. Clothing, shelter, and other articles have been made from leather for centuries. Leather work is popular today. This project will give an introduction to working with leather.

A good leather project should be planned. Many different and useful articles can be made with leather including belts, purses, coasters and billfolds. Articles which can be tooled, laced, or both are recommended, but pre-stamped articles which require only simple lacing should not be used in this project. Leather kits can be purchased.

### *Materials Needed*

Leather, a set of leather tools, wooden mallet, sponge, water, leather finish, and paste wax.

### *Procedure*

Select a design adaptable to the article to be made. Limit the design to simple lines and patterns.

Leather must be damp to take an impression. Before transferring a design to leather, moisten the entire piece with a sponge, keeping the color even. After the leather is moistened, care must be taken not to leave impressions caused by fingernails, rings or other objects.

A design can be placed on leather by tooling or stamping or a combination of both. Carving or cutting a pattern in leather is another method. Tooling is less difficult than stamping for leather designs. Always practice with a piece of scrap leather before decorating an article by tooling or stamping. When working with leather always work on a hard smooth surface.

For tooling leather, lay the paper design on the moistened leather and hold in place with tape or fold the edge of the pattern over the leather. Transfer the design onto the dampened leather with the pointed end of a pencil, tracing tool or modeler. Use light pressure at first and then repeat using slightly increased pressure until lines are uniform and evenly depressed. Work all lines from the outer edge to the center of the leather piece to help prevent stretching. Leather must be damp yet dry enough to take a clear or shiny impression. If the leather looks dirty, black, or wrinkled it is probably too wet. If the leather is hard to impress, it is probably too dry.



A stamping set is needed for stamping leather. You can buy or borrow one, or make your own. To make your own stamps, use 16 or 20 penny nails or hardwood doweling and file, saw, or punch designs in one end of these objects. Use leather less moist than that used for tooling. If moisture appears while stamping, the leather is too moist. Leather that is too dry will not take on a good stamped impression. To stamp a design, hold the stamping tool vertically at the desired spot and hit with a wooden mallet. Strike the stamping tool hard enough to leave a good clear design but not hard enough to cut the surface.

After an article has been decorated, finish properly before lacing to bring out the natural beauty of the grain and to help preserve the leather. Saddle soap can be used to clean the leather. Apply paste wax to protect the leather finish or use a leather finisher.

Lace an article after decorating and finishing. There are a variety of lacings to choose from. You might want to consult a book or manual on lacing. A simple running lace or a whip stitch is desirable for a beginning project.

### *Judging Pointers*

1. Beginners should use a simple design—one that is in keeping with the size and shape of the article. Avoid the use of multi-colored designs. The minimum number of different stamps should be used when stamping a design.
2. Over-all lacing should be smooth and even. Both ends of lacing should be smooth, even and as inconspicuous as possible.
3. A neatly finished article is graded high.



## WEAVING

### Basketry

The weaving of baskets is an ancient activity. Various materials, such as stems, vines, pine needles, willow branches, straw, bark strips, and reeds have been used.

Figure 3 shows some of the basic weaves used in simple basketry.

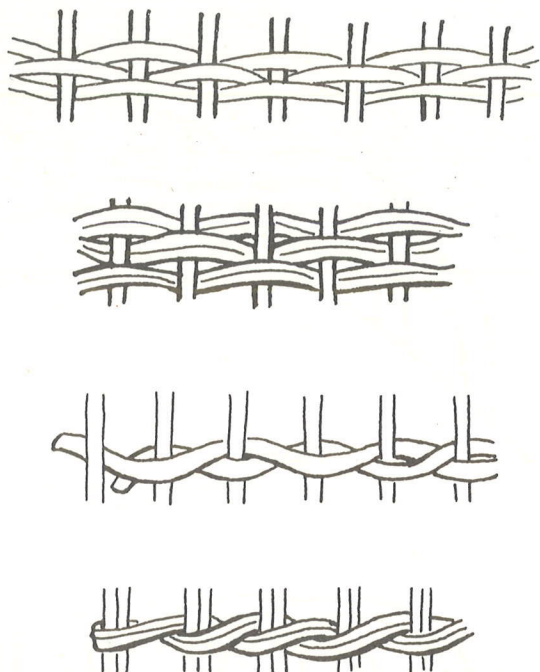


Figure 3

Since one of the best materials for the beginner to use is reed, the discussion which follows will be limited to the use of reed. Once you learn the technique you should progress to use of straw and other more native materials.

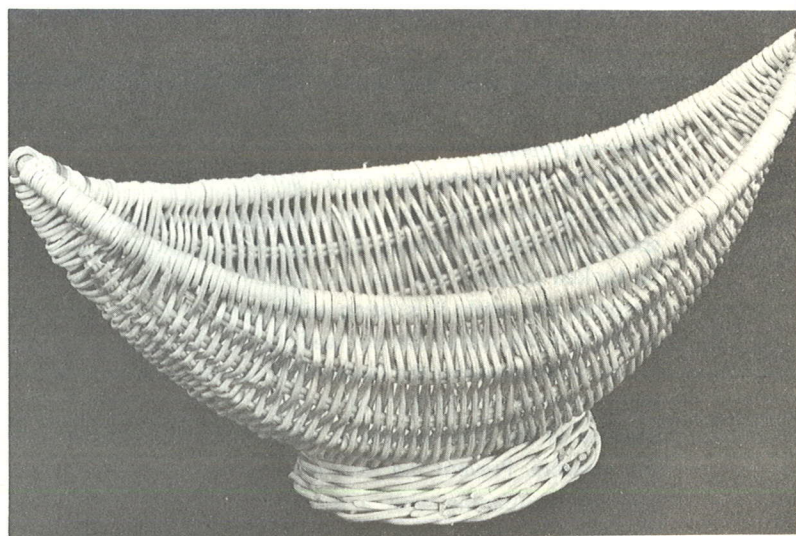
Reed can be purchased from hobby stores and use of purchased reeds is acceptable for this project. Reed is usually sold by the pound. The one exception is No. 4 reed, which is a popular size. It can be purchased in 1/2 pound bundles.

Reed varies in quality. Be sure to select a firm, smooth reed. Articles other than baskets, which can be made are place mats and purses.

For beginners, basketry is a good project. A kit can be purchased from a hobby shop, but do not use metal if it is included.

### Materials Needed

Reed, plywood, water and varnish.



### Procedure

1. Soak a No. 4 reed bundle and a No. 2 reed bundle in water for 20 minutes. Warm water may be used, but avoid using hot water since this will cause the reed to become rough textured and brittle. When pulling the reed from the bundle that is soaking, pull one strand at a time so as to prevent tangling.
2. Use a plywood base 4 inches in diameter and 1/4 inch thick. Sand the wooden base while reed is soaking (sand with the grain of the wood).
3. Cut the reed bundle into pieces 12 inches long for the spokes or uprights (add additional length for a latticed border). Cut one spoke or upright for each hole appearing in the wooden base (Figure 4).

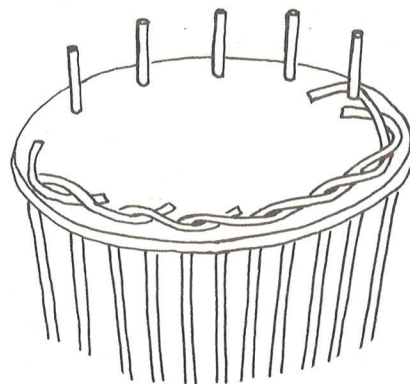


Figure 4

4. Insert spokes into the holes of the base so that they extend 1-1 1/2 inches through the base (Figure 4).

Beginning with any spoke, bend the short end of the spoke out and to the right so that it is flat against the wood base and passes on outside of the spoke to its right. Next, bend the end of the first spoke so that it locks behind the second spoke to its right. Continue this process until all the spokes are fastened down. The last short spoke will have to be tucked beneath the first one which was bent. If the reed becomes dry while it is being used, dampen it with a sponge or dip it in the water. Do not wet the wood base.

5. Start weaving the basket by inserting a weaver (No. 2 reed), behind one spoke and in front of the next. You may use any of the basic weaves to finish this basket. Do not cut the weavers. Prevent the weaver from becoming dry during use by dampening with a sponge or dipping into water. Continue to weave until you have woven to a height of 4 - 5 inches. To splice, lay the end of the new weaver on top of the end of the one that you have just completed weaving around the basket (Figure 5). How you shape the project as you weave will determine final shape.

6. Weave the border. You can use a closed or latticed type border.

A. Closed Border: You can use the same weave as shown in past diagram or you can carry each spoke end in front of the spoke to its right and then behind the second spoke to its right (Figure 6). Pull the border ends tightly and clip off spoke ends leaving enough to hold each end in place.

B. Latticed Border: Bend the spoke end inside and past the next two spokes to the right press it down along the side of the third spoke (Figure 7). Continue this process until all spokes have been woven into the border.

NOTE: To make the latticed border, (not necessary) add three more inches to the length of the spokes. If a spoke is too short, cut it off even with the last row of weaving. Use an ice pick or piece of wire to open a space and force the end of a new spoke down along the old, cut spoke. Insert the new spoke at least 1-1 1/2 inches downward beside the old spoke. Be sure that the reed is sufficiently damp before bending.

To finish, dampen by dipping the reed portion of the basket in water then quickly pass it through a flame of a candle or match to singe off the small fuzzy fibers. Allow to dry completely. Next, apply a clear varnish to both the reed and wood base. The varnish will seal the reed and prevent it from becoming brittle as it ages. One coat of varnish is sufficient; however, two coats would be better.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. The basket should flair and be well-balanced.
2. Baskets should be finished with clear varnish.
3. No loose ends should show.
4. Finishing braid should be even and in keeping with the size and shape of the basket.
5. Broken reed and excess fuzz should be graded down.

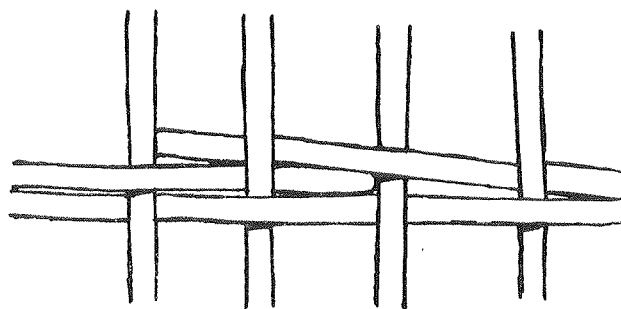


Figure 5

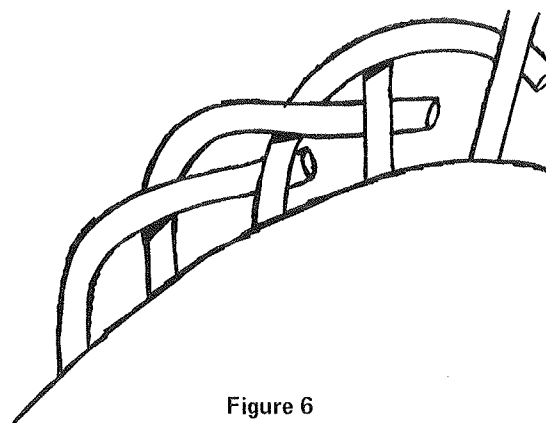


Figure 6

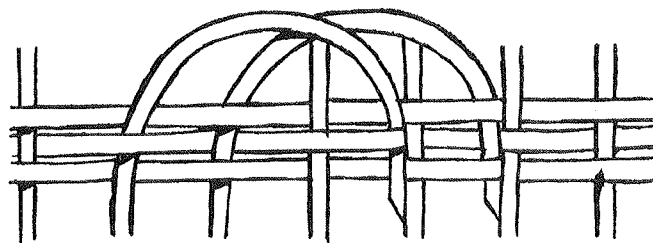
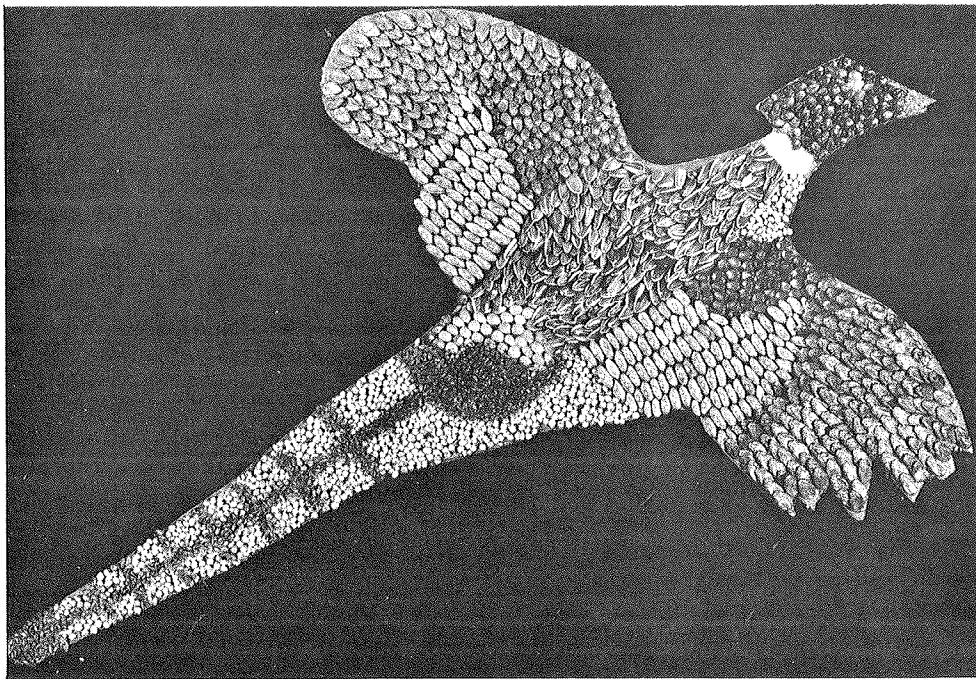


Figure 7

#### **Weaving With Straw**

Wheat and other straw are excellent materials for weaving. The items should be gathered at harvest time before the crop has been combined. Cut with scissors or a knife near the ground. Lay the straw in a dry place for a few days.

Remove the head of the grain with scissors, then cut above and below the joints and slip off the grassy leaves. To make a weaver long enough, join several lengths of straw by slipping one piece into the end of another until the desired length is made. You may wish to locate a book on weaving from a hobby store or library.



## CREATIVE NATURE PROJECTS

### Projects Featuring Feathers

Pheasants, ducks and pigeons have attractive feathers. Perhaps the most popular project using feathers is hat making but this is a more advanced project.

Attractive pictures are made by using feathers much like an "impressionistic" painter might use broad paint strokes. You certainly will wish to choose your picture carefully to work out combinations of colors. You might consider experimenting first using one-fourth inch plywood as your base.

### Nature Plaques

A nature plaque allows the creation of a pleasing arrangement of foliage, dried flowers, seeds, driftwood, grasses, cones and other items. Nature plaques are decorative and can be arranged singly or in groups on the walls of the home.

#### *Materials Needed*

Shingles or plywood for the background; household cement; lacquer or spray plastic. Native materials often used are: nuts and cones of all kinds and sizes, dried foliage, dried branches, dried flowers, cat tails, dried grasses, driftwood, mosses, seeds including beans, corn, grain, peas, sunflowers, vegetables, and fruits. Cross-sections of pine, hemlock, and spruce, as well as seed pods make interesting designs.

### *Procedure*

The basic design for the completed arrangement should assume a recognizable form. These designs may be oval, crescent, V-shaped, L-shaped, or in the shape of a triangle, fan, diagonal or S. Lay out the materials on a sheet of paper or cardboard of the same size as the background board to be used. Glue in place using white glue then finish with lacquer or varnish. The heavier parts of the plaque should be towards the bottom or sides, and the lighter, more airy parts toward the top.

### *Judging Pointers*

1. Keep in mind the balance and proportion of the finished plaque.
2. Beware of using too much cement.
3. If artificial color is used make certain it does not destroy the natural look.
4. Simple designs are most effective.
5. The finish should be even and not too obvious.
6. There should be a basic design rather than hodge-podge effect.
7. Has attention been paid to the borders and artistic arrangement?
8. Are there too many items to be pleasing?
9. Can you identify five items in the plaque?



## Seed Mosaics

Just as an artist paints with an eye toward the use of shading and brush technique so we do in creating a seed mosaic.

Members will have an opportunity to study the different kinds of seeds found in Nebraska and to combine these seeds into an interesting seed picture.

### *Materials Needed*

A variety of seeds: milo, corn, oats, wheat, barley, vetch, millet, flax, beans, etc.; white glue, a piece of plywood or hardboard for the background; sealer; and spray fixative.

### *Procedure*

1. Try experimenting with a design or picture of the way you want your seed mosaics to look on a piece of plain paper. Sometimes scribbling will help you make an interesting design. Laying out a long piece of string in interesting patterns is another method. Sometimes cutting out various shapes of paper—large and small, round and square, oblong and triangle, etc., and putting these together makes a pretty picture. You may wish to look at coloring books to get ideas such as circus clowns, ducks, etc.

2. Seal wood used for background using a commercial sealer. Draw your design on the sealed background material and outline it with a magic marker. Then take your time to visualize the items you wish to use.

3. Start painting the smallest part of the design with glue. Glue only one part at a time.

4. As soon as you have glued one area, sprinkle it with seeds. Then pat seeds down gently and pour off excess. Fill in empty glued area with seeds. Larger seeds should be placed one at a time to achieve special color and depth.

5. Continue gluing one area at a time and sprinkling it with seeds until you have completed your design.

6. Spray entire seed mosaic with spray fixative. Let stand several hours to dry.

More advanced projects will need experience and creative ability to blend and balance the project. Strive to be original and design your own project.

### *Judging Pointers*

1. Is the design original?
2. Does the design fit the project?
3. Is the workmanship neat, especially the use of glue?
4. Does the project look balanced?
5. Are margins adequate?
6. Can members identify at least five of the seeds used?

## Pebble People Project

Here is a leisure time activity that you will enjoy all year around. Pebble people make great paperweights, decorations, centerpieces, bookends, and decorative objects for your room.

### *Materials Needed*

Pebbles, white glue, tempera, paint and varnish.

### *Procedure*

1. You will need an exploratory mood. Go hunting for flat rocks (small), round rocks, thin rocks, fat rocks, and pretty rocks. Choose small rocks and pebbles. Identify if possible. Sorry, only Nebraska rocks for the Nebraska project.

2. You will need a creative mood. Imagine how your rocks could be put together to make pebble creatures (turtles, birds, people, etc.).

3. Clean your rocks. Soap, water and brush plus lots of rubbing will get them clean.

4. You may want to put your pebble people together before you start to put on your design (white glue works for most projects). This will allow the glue to set and keep your design in balance with your total project.

5. Dazzling colors on the painted stones are harmonized to bring out your design. Tempera paint works fine. Regular artist paints are also used. Varnish the finished product so stones can be handled later. It is possible to decoupage prints of flowers, etc., onto small rocks to give a decorative finish. Printed slogans can also be added.

### *Judging Pointers*

1. Make sure it is a Nebraska rock.
2. Keep balance in mind.
3. Workmanship should be neat and clean.
4. You should be able to identify the rocks used.

## Rock Collections and Polishing

Several Nebraska 4-H clubs are organized with rock collecting and polishing as their main project. These projects fit well into the native Nebraska project if the rocks have been found in Nebraska and are displayed appropriately either in a display case or fastened to a show card.

Your first project will probably be to become familiar with Nebraska rocks and geology. Your next step might be to polish Nebraska rocks. People interested in rocks might want to do the following things:

1. Collect and identify at least 12 different Nebraska specimens. Display them in a suitable case or box.
2. Learn to recognize: a. Metamorphic rocks; b. Igneous rocks; c. Sedimentary rocks; d. Fossils.

3. Interview or talk to a "rock-hound" to see possibilities for learning to polish Nebraska rocks for future projects.

Since you'll want to refer to your collection as new specimens are added and show it to others (part of the fun!) you'll want to keep your rocks in neat order. Paste a number, typed or printed in ink, on each rock.

In each compartment, along with the numbered specimen, put a neatly lettered or typed label on a small white card, about 1 1/2 inches by 2 1/2 inches. This will give enough space to put on a specimen number, date, and locality.

Members will wish to increase the size of their collection and learn to cut and polish rocks. Advanced projects will be self-determined as to requirements, etc.

Be creative: Don't stop with a little knowledge, take part in field trips to museums, to the University of Nebraska and to rock shows. The opportunities for practical careers in Geology are numerous.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. Are these rocks found in Nebraska?
2. Is the collection neat?
3. Are the rocks correctly identified?
4. Does the project show initiative and challenge for a 4-Header of the age of the member?
5. Polished rocks show workmanship skills?

#### **Apple Dolls**

The art of making apple dolls dates back almost 100 years. Our Nebraska ancestors used simple materials, in this case the apple, to create an interesting and fascinating doll.

#### *Materials Needed*

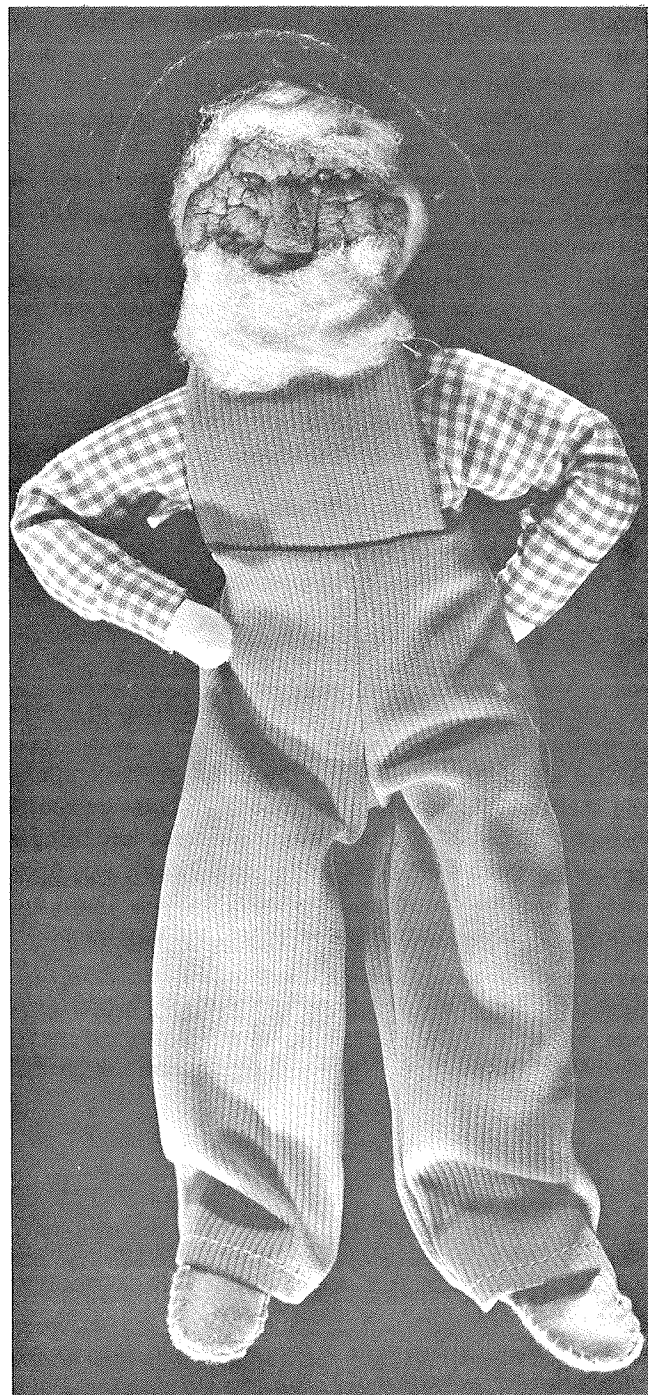
Apple, knife, wire, cotton cloth stripping, tape, water colors, dull varnish and materials to make hair, teeth, and costumes.

#### *Procedure*

Choose an apple that is ripe, firm, and well-shaped. Peel the apple as smoothly as possible. Ream out the stem and the blossom end, leaving the center part of the apple core.

2. Carve the face of the doll using a very sharp knife. Slit an upside-down V in the center of the apple to locate the nose. Cut a brow line on either side of the nose. Carve in around the nose and out over each cheek. Hollow out a slit for each eye about 1/2" below the brow line and in toward the nose bridge. Remove enough material below the nose to form the chin and mouth. Carve the mouth by cutting very thin slits, which will dry to a perfect shape.

3. Dry the apple in a dry hot place for about 8 to 10 days. Shape the head from time to time by forming it with your fingers much like you would putty.



4. After the drying process is completed, begin the body. Bend 20 inches of No. 10 steel wire into a hairpin shape, about 10 inches long after being bent. Run this wire through the apple head starting at the top of the head down through the core. The two strands of wire are then twisted together to form the neck. With each strand of wire outline an arm, part of the trunk, and a leg.

Twist wires putting the trunk together and repeat this process for wires forming arms and legs. You should have what looks like a stick man.

5. Now fill with plaster of paris to hold the wire in place. Let stand until hard.

6. Starting at the neck, wrap cotton cloth stripping (about 2" wide) around wire body and arms until you achieve the shape desired and then fasten cotton ends down with tape.

7. You can achieve skin color using water colors followed by dull varnish.

8. Hair can be made from cotton, yarn, thread, or real hair. Teeth are made from beads and buttons or anything you may choose.

9. For costumes use small prints for dresses and skirts and solid colors for trousers. Making the costume is half the fun.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. Is the costume well made with details in miniature?
2. Was the apple allowed to dry for a sufficient length of time?
3. Does the doll assume a personality?
4. Does the workmanship show evidence of practice?

#### **Egg Shell Art**

The legendary practice of egg shell art is believed to have started in Germany hundreds of years ago, when hand painted egg shells were used as Christmas tree decorations. Egg shell art has served as an interesting, creative means through the years. Many new ideas have come into being in developing this artistic craft. Some ideas include: egg trees, jewel boxes, manger scene, madonnas, baskets, clown and bunnies, egg cups or baskets, medallions, and tray favors.

#### *Materials Needed*

Eggs, needle, long pin or ice pick, decorations, and synthetic cement.

#### *Procedure*

Choose large well-shaped eggs. Hen eggs are most generally used. Goose, duck, banty or pheasant eggs also may be used. Goose eggs are ideal but often difficult to come by.

Wipe shells clean with a damp cloth to remove any surface dirt (do not wash).

Puncture a small hole at each end of the shell with a needle or other small sharp instrument. Hold your finger over the first hole while the other is being made. Enlarge each hole slightly with a long pin or an ice pick. Be sure to break the egg yolk as the long pin is run into the egg.

Pour the contents of the egg into a bowl by blowing gently into the large end of the egg. Rinse inside the shell with water. If whole egg shells are not desired, tap a small hole in one side of the egg to remove yolk and white.

Refrigerate the yolk and white for cooking purposes. If eggs are to be dyed, dip shells in hot water before placing in all purpose dye (cold shells color unevenly).

Wipe egg shells, dyed or undyed, with a moist cloth. Sketch on a design (bunny, clown, etc.) with opaque paints, crayon or pen. Paper hats, ruffles, ears and whiskers may be added.

Egg shells can be cut into a shape using razor blades. If a whole egg shell is not desired, fingernail scissors can be used for cutting the shell. Chipped places, scars or cuts in the edges of the egg shells should be covered with a synthetic cement.

For jewel box with hinged lid, divide the egg shell in two parts with a razor blade. Cut out a space for a small hinge of tape or other material, in the middle of the shell rim. Glue the hinge in place on each piece of shell. After the hinge is secure and dry, paint egg inside with enamel or other paint to strengthen. After the paint is thoroughly dry, the egg is ready to decorate. Narrow braid may be used around the upper and lower open edge. Designs can be made from glitter, braid, gold cord or sets from old jewelry. Work out your own ideas and designs.

The inside of the half shell may be made into a miniature shrine, a manger scene, an Easter scene, plus many other projects. One difficulty in doing egg shell art is finding miniature figures for the egg interiors.

Shells may be painted inside with a food dye. Suspended baskets can be made from portions of egg shells. Use beads, gold cord, braid, or narrow velvet ribbon for hanging. Large ends of egg shells make attractive canopies and medallions.

Whole egg shells can be colored with glitter in the design of a cross, or stars can be made from long beads (small) blue, red or green. A wire suspended from the top fastened to a bead or button within the shell will make it secure for hanging.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. Have the designs been kept simple and in keeping with size?
2. Does the project reflect originality?
3. Does the workmanship reflect age of individual and evidence of practice?
4. Are the outer lines of the project sharp and distant?

## CORN SHUCKS

Perhaps the most adaptable native material is the corn plant. Parts from the corn plant can be used in a variety of ways. For example: Indian corn kernels can be used to develop a small mosaic picture. The Corn Palace in Mitchell, South Dakota uses sections of ear corn to create large murals. Early Nebraska settlers used the corn plant for mattress fillers, chair and stool bottoms, door mats, hot pads, twisted ropes for bed cords, horse and mule collars, dolls for children, and hats for women and girls.

### *Materials Needed*

Stalk, cob, husks, commercial dye, and grain.

### *Preparation of the Cornhusks*

Cornhusks may be gathered green or dry. Remove the coarse outer husks and use the soft textured ones. If the husks are green, dry them indoors if a soft green color is desired. Both green and sunbleached husks are useful in patterns. Dampen husks in warm water before using.

If you wish to dye the cornhusks use a commercial all-purpose dye. Boil the husks for five minutes in the dye. Remove husks and rinse in cold water. Dry in the shade. Experiment with different dyes.

### *Braiding Cornhusks*

For braiding, tear husks into narrow strips. Dampen them by dipping the strips into a pan of water for a few minutes. Tie three or more strips together by the stem ends and hook them over a nail or pin them to a board to hold them firmly at the knot. Keep the strips flat and fold them over carefully to make a flat braid. For a round braid, the strands are twisted as they are platted. Wider strips make heavier braids. Whole husks may be braided.

Since the strips are relatively short it is necessary to add new pieces for length. Additional strips can be added by slipping the stem end of a new strip behind the ending strip for an inch or more. The new strip should be caught behind the folds of a braid to make it secure. Care should be taken to add length to only one strand at a time so that the braid will not become bulky.

Mats, hotpads, baskets, etc., can be made from braided cornhusks. Heavy braided cornhusk mats may be stitched together for doormats and recreation room rugs. Foot scraper mats may be made by sewing together damp strips tied with binder twine. Once the braiding is mastered you may even wish to make a hat.



### **Cornhusk Dolls**

Long ago, Indian children played with cornhusk dolls and later, the daughters of pioneers picked up the tradition. The cornplant furnishes most of the needed materials. However, you will also need pipe cleaners, a tin can, some cotton and possibly dyes.

### *Procedure*

1. Before the corn is ripe, gather corn silk for the hair—about five or six ears per “head” of doll hair. For shiny, manageable “hair” rinse the corn silk in a “creme conditioner.” The hair should be sewed on when the body is completed.

2. Gather completely dry cornhusks. Soak husks in hot water to make them flexible and dry in the shape you want



them to retain. Husks may be tied over a tin can to form a shape.

3. Choose a corn cob that is slim and straight. The shank portion of the cob forms the upper part of the doll. Attach pipe cleaners to corn cob for arms and cover with husks.

4. Tie husks on the corn cob to shape the head, neck, waist, and skirt. Cotton placed under the husks can be used for padding.

5. For variety in costumes the husks may be dyed. Ordinary cloth dye works fine. Don't boil the husks but use hot water. Dolls may be given personality by adding a broom, churn, purse, bonnet, flowers, etc.

6. Face features may be put on with lead pencil, crayons, or ink.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. Is the costume well made?
2. Were the cornhusks prepared properly and allowed time to dry?
3. Does the doll assume a personality?
4. Is the workmanship neat and clean? Does it show practice?

## OTHER PROJECTS

### **Soap Carving**

Inexpensive, practical, and fun are words used to describe soap carving. You can always use the soap if the project doesn't turn out right.

#### *Materials Needed*

A paring knife and other tools for carving such as paper clips, bobby pins, sucker sticks or toothpicks, soap and pattern.

#### *Procedure*

Draw a pattern of what you want to carve on the soap. Make the pattern flat on the bottom so the carving will stand up. Trace the pattern on the soap bar. Add an outside guide line about one quarter inch from the main outline.

Slowly cut small bits or your knife will chip into the main outline. Round out the main bold shape of your object first. If you cut a curve in one side, match it on the other side. Keep looking at your carving from all directions. Add details last. Polish the surface by rubbing with your fingertips or a soft cloth. If you want to have the project last for a long time spray or paint with lacquer.

#### *Judging Pointers*

1. Does the project stand correctly?
2. Does the project look the same on both sides?
3. Are the details recognizable?
4. Does the project reflect the age of the individual?
5. Are the features proportioned correctly? Example, is the head the right size, etc.?
6. If ornaments are attached or color added, do these ornaments detract from carving?

### **Wax Candles**

The wax candle dates back to a period in early historical times. Bees were an important source of food and wax in early Nebraska as they are today. Ask parents and neighbors for ideas for candles. Observe commercial candles. Paraffin wax may be used since it can be made with basic products from Nebraska.

Beeswax candles can be made by dipping the wick into a tall can or a container of warm wax. Do not overheat or the wax will change to a dark color.

A flat stick, with small holes drilled in it will allow several wicks to be hung and dipped at the same time. Dip until desired size and smoothness is obtained.

## Paper-Mache

Paper-mache can be interesting and fun. A variety of articles can be made: animal figures, ash trays, masks, and even a relief map of Nebraska.

### Materials Needed

Newspaper, patching plaster, and waterproof glue.

### Procedure

1. Tear the newspaper into small strips or bits and soak it in water overnight.

2. Squeeze out the excess water and mix with one tablespoon glue. Add water until the mixture is like clay. Form into whatever shape you like. Let it dry and paint it.

A relief map of Nebraska is fun to do, especially since the state has so many interesting rivers, lakes and hills.

### Materials Needed

Celotex (plaster board or equivalent), 16 x 24 inches,

heavy cardboard, outline of Nebraska map, Paper-mache, tempera or water colors and masking tape.

### Procedure

1. Trace outline of map on the cardboard. Cut out the map shape and glue it in place on the Celotex or plaster board. Cover the cardboard map with paper-mache. Build up the hills and other high places. Let them dry completely.

2. Draw in outlines or details. Paint details and entire background as desired. For example, rivers and lakes may be blues and greens. Letter areas or details if desired. The border and edge may be formed with strips of 1 1/2 inch masking tape.

### Other Ideas

Other ideas to consider in a "Let's Create" project are: drawing, painting, sculpture, carving, casting, leaf rubbing, vegetable prints, puppetry, tie dying, wool weaving and creative stitchery.

## SOME DESIGN TERMS DEFINED

### DESIGN

Design is the selection and arrangement of material with two aims—order and beauty.

### LINE

Lines may be straight or curved. A line has direction.

### SHAPE

A series of lines of different directions defines a shape or pattern—triangular, round and so forth.

### SIZE

Lines and shapes, and the space intervals between them may differ in size or measure.

### UNITY

Unity means oneness—the feeling of belonging together. It is achieved when all parts are joined together by one or more elements in common.

### BALANCE

Balance is the feeling of equilibrium. *Formal balance* is the balance on opposite sides of an axis of one or more elements by identical or very similar elements. *Informal balance* is the balancing on opposite sides of an axis of one or more dissimilar or contrasting elements.

### EMPHASIS

Emphasis means outstanding or of great importance or "center of interest."

### TEXTURE

A line or shape has texture—rough, smooth and so forth. A line or pattern may have color—red, blue, yellow and so forth.

## CONTRAST

Contrast is the principle by which we achieve emphasis. It is the relation of unlike elements set together to create an effect by emphasizing differences.

## RHYTHM

Rhythm is contrast and unity working together. Rhythm can be defined as the "flow" or movement of the design—or visual direction that is pleasing and purposeful.

## PROPORTION

Proportion means ratio or relationship of measurements. It refers to relationship of height to length and width of individual pieces. A rule used by artists is that the smaller parts should bear the same relation to the larger part that the larger part in turn bears to the whole.

## HARMONY

Harmony is the result of pleasing combinations of line, form, color, value, space and texture.

## WHERE TO GET HELP

### Publications

From the National Recreation Association, 8 West 8th Street, New York 11, New York.

*Adventures in Making: The Romance of Crafts Around the World*, Seon Manley, 180 pp. illus. \$4.95

*Art Activities Almanac*, Art Education Alumni Association, Wayne State University, Eds. 88 projects, \$2.50

*Art from Scrap*, Carl Reed and Joseph Orze, illustrated 89 pp. \$3.95

*Arts and Crafts Series*, Frank A. Staples, Project Outline and Accompanying Workbook, Set \$3.00

*How to Do It—Arts and Crafts Projects for the Recreation Program*, 29 pp. Paper \$1.00

*The Book of Arts and Crafts*, Marguerite Ickis and Raba Selden Esh, 275 pp. \$4.95

*The Candle Book*, Carli Laklan, 190 pp., \$3.94

*Children Can Make It*, Experiences in the World of Materials, No. 28, Illustrated, 56 pp. Paper \$.75

*Crafts for Fun*, Evadna Kraus Perry, Illustrations 278 pp., \$4.00

*Creative Arts and Crafts Activities*, Arthur S. Green, 96 pp., \$4.95

*Decorating with Seed Mosaics, Chipped Glass, and Plant Materials*, Eleanor Van Renselaer, 214 pp., illus. \$5.95

*Folk Arts and Crafts*, Marguerite Ickis, illus., 269 pp., \$5.95

*Fun with Shapes in Space*, Toni Hughes, illus., 225 pp., \$5.95

*Handcrafts Simplified*, Martha Ruth Amon and Ruth Rawson, 210 pp., Illustrated, Paper \$2.80

*Jewelry Making for Fun and Profit*, Helen Clegg and Mary Larom, Illustrated 162 pp., \$3.25

*Silk Screen Printing*, James Eisenberg, illus., 55 pp., Paper \$1.60

*The Beginner's Book of Pottery Series*, Harold Powell, Illustrated. Part 1: Coil and Slab Pottery, 64 pp., \$2.50

*Mosaics: Hobby and Art*, Edwin Hendrickson, 111 pp., \$3.50

### Catalogs Available

No companies have been left off this list on purpose nor do we endorse any of those listed. These companies may change addresses.

American Handicrafts, 84441 West Center Road, Omaha, Nebraska 68124

Magnus Craft Materials, Inc., 109 Lafayette Street, Cor. Walker Street, New York, N.Y. 10013

Tandy Leather, 8441 West Center Road, Omaha, Nebraska 68124

The Handicrafters, Waupun, Wisconsin 53963

Economy Crafts, 47-11 Francis Lewis Blvd., Flushing, N.Y. 11361

National Art Craft Supply Co., Cleveland 6, Ohio

O-P Craft Co. Inc., Sandusky, Ohio

Gaugers Handicraft, 1024 Nicollet Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55403

Bergen Arts and Crafts, Box 689, Salem, Massachusetts 01970



## CAREER POTENTIALS

This project should help you to learn about the career possibilities in a number of fields of job opportunities. Here are a few.

**Teaching:** This project will offer practical art and creative experiences that can help prepare the individual for all levels of education, including grade school, high school, college and adult education. Geography, history, design, agriculture, and anthropology are also related to projects covered.

**Store Managers:** Every city over 50,000 population will have one or more stores that sell products to the individual interested in "creative" projects.

**Parks and Recreation Supervisors:** Nearly every city over 20,000 has a year-round parks and recreation program. This offers part-time work for many and full time work for some in each location. Nearly every city recreation program offers classes in fine arts and hand-work.

**Resource Development Specialists:** Many areas in Nebraska employ men whose job it is to help people work together to use native resources more fully. Learning about Nebraska might be the first step in this career.

**Geologists:** Several projects, especially the rock project, may lead the individual into a deeper interest in Nebraska soils and rocks.

**Human Development and the Family:** Individuals will want to continue in this project until they have sufficient skill to teach others. This may inspire them to acquire additional training in the area of human development and the family.

**History:** As the individual studies about his heritage, he may wish to continue to learn about all the history of the state, nation, and the world.

**Design:** Interior design, clothing, home furnishings, and textile are future possibilities for the creative individual.