

# What a Jewel!

## Young Artist Helps Feed the Poor by Selling Handmade Jewelry

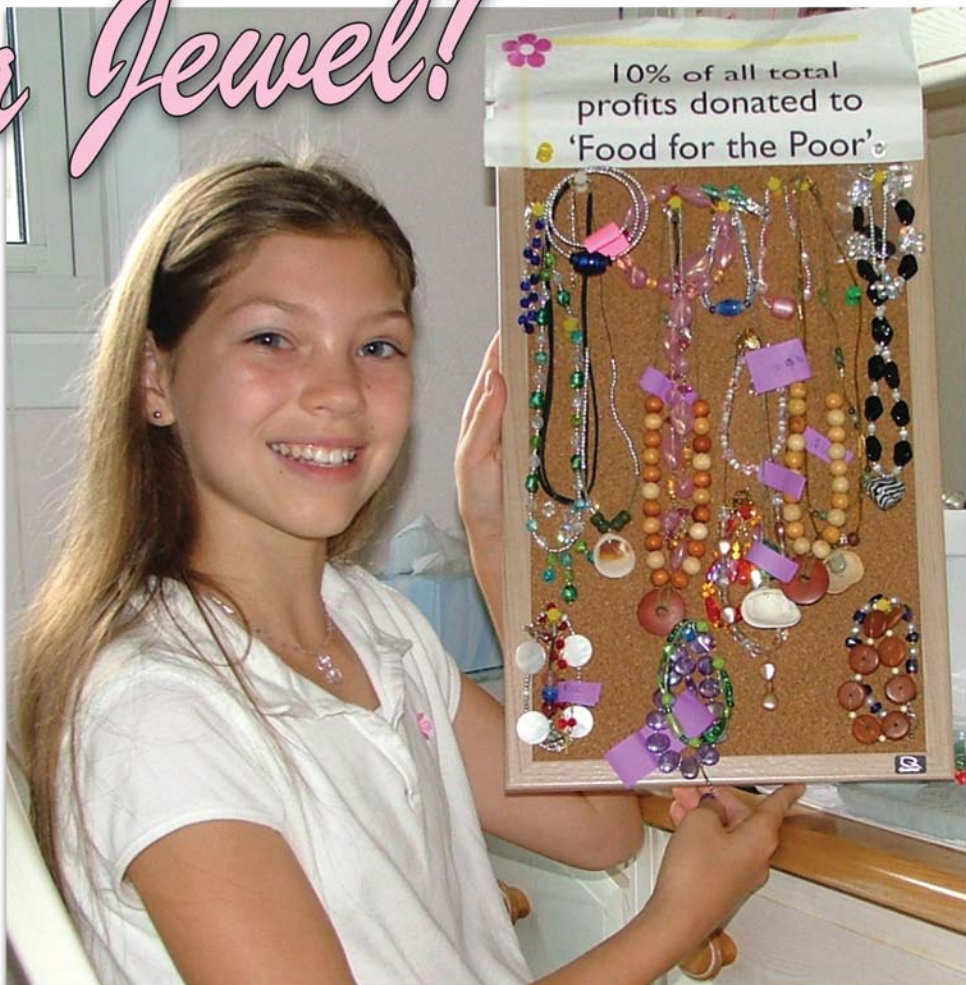
Stephanie Momot's summer vacation is not unlike that of any other busy 12-year-old. As a member of the Platteville Swim Team, this charming young Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative member spends a lot of time at the pool. She's eagerly awaiting the arrival of the final Harry Potter book this month. She plays piano and practices her flute to keep sharp until band resumes in August. Having taken dance lessons for the past seven years, she also practices ballet and hopes yet to fit a class in her summer schedule.

Oh, and she runs her own business. She's also raising money to feed the poor. That's where her summer differs a bit from that of most other young students.

As the creator of Smycken, which she named for the Swedish word for jewelry, Stephanie can be found every two weeks at the Platteville Farmers Market with a display of her handcrafted necklaces, bracelets, and earrings. She also creates and sells jewelry by special order. In doing so, she's exercising not just her artistic and entrepreneur skills, but her philanthropic spirit as well; Stephanie sets aside 10 percent of every sale to be donated to an organization called Food for the Poor, which she chose partly because 96 percent of this organization's budget goes directly to the poor instead of toward organizational costs.

"Well, they need it more than I do," Stephanie said about her decision to donate part of her profits. "The rest, I'm saving for my college education. Then I can help even more."

These may not sound like the words and actions of a typical soon-to-be seventh-grader, but Stephanie isn't exactly a typical student.



*Stephanie Momot holds a display of jewelry that she made herself to sell at the Platteville Farmers Market on Saturday mornings. She donates 10 percent of her profits to charity.*

## Swedish Inspiration

Stephanie has always enjoyed creating artwork. She undoubtedly inherited some of her artistic talents from her parents; her mother, Myra, is a veterinarian and an accomplished calligrapher. Her father, Michael, teaches mechanical engineering at UW-Platteville and also does some woodworking. Stephanie was introduced to jewelry making when her grandmother gave her a kit about a year ago, although she admits she didn't really know what to do with it at first.

"Over the years, I made some things, but I never did anything this elaborate," she said. "It was mostly little kid stuff with big beads. I started really making jewelry in January and I began selling it in March."

Stephanie's interest in jewelry making was sparked during the six months she spent in Sweden last year with her family while her father took a sabbatical to teach and do research in Jönköping, a city in southcentral Sweden.

There, Stephanie spent the fall semester in a Swedish school where she honed her language skills to the point where she could eventually abandon her English and converse freely in the classroom with her Swedish friends and teachers. Stephanie was also introduced to Swedish glasswork, an artform for which the country is known. Her family visited a glass-making factory in the city of Nybro, and Stephanie checked out lots of special art stores that sold the glasswork.

“They have a lot of glass beads there,” Stephanie said. “They had some awesome bead stores with really different kinds of beads that you could buy just one at a time. They were really creative.”

They were also, unfortunately, really expensive (“I don’t have an allowance yet,” she explained), so instead of stocking up on beads to take home, Stephanie stocked up on ideas. By the time her family was ready to return to the United States in January, she was motivated to start making more sophisticated jewelry, and her mind was whirring with ideas for her business.

“I was really psyched when I got home,” she said. “I had it all planned out in my head.”

### Starting up Smycken

Once home, Stephanie started searching arts and crafts stores for beads and teaching herself new jewelry-

*Below: Using a small set of pliers, Stephanie bends a wire into an earring. Center: Stephanie likes making bracelets best, and she makes earrings “to match just about everything.” Far right: Stephanie made rosary bracelets like this one for students taking their first communion at St. Mary’s.*



making techniques from magazines. It now takes her just a few moments to bend and twist a little piece of metal with a small set of pliers into an earring. However, the mechanics of the jewelry’s hardware is just one small part of making jewelry.

“You can put beads together easily, but whether or not it will look all right is another thing,” Stephanie pointed out, adding that she sometimes takes apart a piece of jewelry and starts over if she isn’t satisfied with her first result. “I’ve gotten a lot better.”

Stephanie works with different kinds of beads, but her favorite are glass, like those she saw in Sweden. She also enjoys experimenting with different colors and styles, following only the patterns inside her own head.

“I make everything a little different,” she said. “None of my jewelry is the same.”

In fact, Stephanie usually runs out of beads long before she runs out of ideas. Among her sales projects were rosary bracelets she made for students taking their first communion this past spring at St. Mary’s School in Platteville, which Stephanie attends with her younger siblings, Renee and Vince. Stephanie is also creating butterfly jewelry for Platteville’s 2007 Butterflyville, a celebration of the arts held annually in July.

And she prepares for her twice monthly Farmers Market visits. On the Saturdays she’s able to attend,

Stephanie packs up everything she’s made for the past two weeks and heads to City Park in downtown Platteville to take her place among the other vendors. As the morning comes to a close, she dutifully pulls out 10 percent of her profits and sets it aside to be donated.

Although the Platteville Farmers Market continues through October, Stephanie will probably have to close up shop there in September when school begins again and homework leaves her less time for making jewelry. In that way, she’s very much a typical student; she’s just doing some atypical things.—*Mary Erickson* ■

# SREC Partners with Focus on Energy

Our members have spoken and we have heard your voices. Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative is announcing our partnership with Focus on Energy effective July 1, 2007.

## What is Focus on Energy?

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Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation — a private nonprofit — is responsible for administering three Focus on Energy programs:

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information — including the toll-free call center, fact sheets and case studies — on all types of technologies and projects that a resident, farm, or business may be considering.

For more information on the program, log on to the web site [www.focusonenergy.com](http://www.focusonenergy.com) or call Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative at 608-723-2121 ext. 105. *Please note effective July 1, 2007, the incentive program will change so the web site is not 100 percent accurate to the benefits Scenic Rivers Energy members will be receiving.*

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# Mother of Nolan Boys Starts ATV Safety Program

Crawford County 4-H recently received a \$5,600 grant to help launch an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety program. 4-H leader Carrie Nolan, whose sons Austin and Justin were killed in an ATV accident in August 2005 (see the April 2007 *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* for a full story), started the 4-H Community ATV Program and applied for the grant through the National 4-H Council. Funds will help the group purchase educational materials such as safety gear, flyers, brochures, displays, videos, and helmets, which will be given away as part of the program's emphasis on the importance of wearing helmets while riding ATVs.

Prairie Motor Sports, Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital, and Crawford County Farm Safety Council are teaming up with the 4-H program to help spread the word of ATV dangers, inform parents and children of the risks involved with ATVs, and educate children and parents about the laws and safety issues regarding ATV use. The group also thanks The Specialty Vehicle Institute of America (SVIA) and the ATV Safety Institute (ASI) for supporting the 4-H Community ATV Program.

Activities of the ATV safety program include bringing safety displays to fairs, libraries, parades, and schools in the surrounding area. Local 4-H students Caleb and Jake Rohde are making a DVD presentation of Austin and Justin's story to include with the safety display.

This month, the ATV safety group will participate in the Eastman Fourth of July parade with a float and brochures to pass out along the parade route.

At the program's first event at the Crawford County Safety Day Camp in Gays Mills in May, 140 fifth-grade students from Crawford County Schools attended.

"This was a very difficult thing for me to talk to the



Left to right: Youth 4-H leaders Elizabeth Dennis and Drew Achenbach, 4-H leader Carrie Nolan, youth 4-H leader Anna Granzow, and 4-H Agent Amy Mitchell.

kids about our sons' accident, as many of the kids were Austin's age," Carrie said, "but I could tell that the children were really listening and hopefully this will remind them to be safe if they are around ATVs."

For more information, please contact Carrie Nolan, (608) 326-2998 or [cjnolan@mhmc.net](mailto:cjnolan@mhmc.net), or 4-H agent Amy Mitchell, (608) 326-0224. ■

## Lafayette County Fair

June 27–July 1, 2007

Darlington, Wisconsin

For more information, contact the Lafayette County Fair Office, (608) 776-4828

## Crawford County Fair

July 19–21, 2007

Gays Mills, Wisconsin

For more information, call 608-326-0224.





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