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## Brother Bernie's designs now available

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By Pam Ferris-Olson

Contributing Writer

CENTERVILLE — Markers and a University of Dayton basketball game on the radio inspired Brother Bernard Hartman to create designs reminiscent of stained glass.

His enthusiasm for art prompted a neighbor to create a commercial line of wearable art and stationary to benefit the order Hartman has belonged to.

Hartman, who recently turned 70 and celebrated 50 years as a Marianist brother, originally wanted to be a doctor. When he joined the Marianist Society he was trained to be a high school science teacher, a role he fulfilled for 30 years.

Hartman said his interest in art began at an early age. The son of a steel worker, he recalled using wax to transfer cartoons to paper to tell his own stories. Since his retirement, Hartman has been involved in letter writing for the church. The blotter paper used to separate the cards used for bereavement notes rekindled Brother Bernie's interest in art.

Brother Bernie's designs are done by hand using colored markers and a geometric artist's tool.

"To me this is an adventure. It's like going overseas and learning the language," Brother Bernie said.

Irene Smallwood, who has worked in the fashion industry, lives across the street from Hartman.

She saw in Brother Bernie's designs his desire to spread joy through color, and realized the commercial potential of his work.

Smallwood has taken charge of the production and distribution of such products as ties, scarves, and T-shirts.

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