

OCC's Designing Woman--Margaret Puder

By Barbara Del Piano

A swatch of felt, a bit of string, a tub of paint and voila! Another original ornament from the creative mind and deft hands of Margaret Puder is ready to hang on the Outrigger's massive Christmas Tree.

Shortly after joining the Club in 1991, Puder recalls that Gerry DeBenedetti convinced her to join the Public Relations Committee where she was immediately put in charge of the Lobby Display Case. DeBenedetti became acquainted with Puder's talent several years earlier when she learned that Puder had created the fantastic fish cos-

tumes worn by a group of advocates from the Aquarium who were lobbying the legislators for the selection of the state fish.

Puder's wide-ranging talents soon expanded beyond the display case and she now decorates the entire Club for special holidays such as Christmas and Easter. For the past few years she has turned the Club into a tropical South Seas wonderland for the annual lu'au.

Each year Puder comes up with a different theme for the Club's Christmas decor. Ideas are garnered from a myriad of sources including magazines, fabric motifs, craft fairs, and greeting cards. When traveling, she always keeps an eye out for new ideas. The year that the Christmas designs featured red silk hibiscus, the idea blossomed when Puder was cutting some of the flowers in her own back yard.

Other themes have featured doll-house miniatures, paper mache fish, Hawaiian Santas, glittery stars, outrigger canoes, Christmas stockings and photos of Club families encased in felt ornaments.

Puder says that planning for the following Christmas begins when the current display comes down. Once the theme has been chosen, she works out the details and by June the overall design is ready for implementation and the next phase of the process begins.

Gathering materials and supplies now becomes the major focus. One year her ingenuity led her out to Campbell Industrial Park where

she located a company that could provide just the right type of foam for a special project. Puder recycles items from previous years, raids dumpsters, explores craft shops, scrounges from friends, and utilizes her own personal collection of "stuff". By September, everything is ready to go.

Some years the decorations are more time consuming than others. The year the decor featured "Outrigger Dolls", hours were spent hand stencilling the OCC logo onto fabric and assembling the dozens of dolls which adorned not only the tree, but garlands and wreaths as well.

Puder credits other talented Club members who help her throughout the year. Sue Moore often collaborates with Puder in both the creative process and the fabricating as well. Gay Austin and Jeanette Dolman are both dedicated and indispensable workers on whose support Puder depends.

Events such as the Club Lu'au require a large contingent of helpers and in addition to her own "crew", members of the Entertainment Committee eagerly turn out en masse early in the morning to work under her careful supervision. The enormous arrangements of lush tropical flowers, greenery, coconuts, shells, raffia hula skirts, fish nets, table decorations and other tropicana that immediately catch the eye of the guests as they enter the Club are the result of months of planning and preparation.



Margaret Puder

The hundreds of staples, bags of Plaster of Paris, rolls of brown paper, twine, and nails that are necessary to put it all together are deftly covered with coconut fiber, ti leaves and other natural materials.

Puder says that as far back as she can remember, her artistic ability and creativity have been an important part of her life. As a pre-school teacher, she had the opportunity to utilize her talents with youngsters and hopefully to instill a bit of the creative spirit in them. She still works with young children by helping out with some of her son Nainoa's class projects.

Puder also works with her husband David, a building contractor, assisting in home design and decor for various projects.

When asked about her own personal hobbies, Puder admits that arts and crafts, of course, are a major pastime. She has no particular specialty, always eager to try the latest idea or experiment with the latest in new products.

From all of us who enjoy this talented woman's creativity and industriousness, MAHALO Margaret!! We love your work and can't wait for this year's Lu'au and holiday decorations.

Fish decorated the hau trees on the Terrace.



Outrigger dolls



Floral arrangements add beauty to the Club lu'au each year.

