



HERALD HEIRLOOMS created as fund-raiser by Velma Shaw (at right above) and Verla Romagnoli bring joy to their corner of world.



Church Bazaar Glitters, Thanks to Crafty Sisters

By Joli A. Shaw of Batavia, Illinois

MAKING SPIRITS—and other symbols of the season—bright has been a long-lasting holiday tradition for Illinois sisters Velma Shaw and Verla Romagnoli.

"We're busy crafting them from August right on through December," Velma reports from her Taylorville home. Poised in flight, glimmering angels alight on tables beside other Christmas figures the sisters turn out each year to raise funds for their church.

"When our minister's wife suggested that Verla and I make angels to sell at our annual bazaar, we had no idea how far it would go," Velma continues. "Before long, church members asked if we could make Nativities, too."

The eventual outcome? For last year's bazaar, the duo produced over 200 pieces, including the Holy Family, three kings bearing gifts and shepherds in various sizes. "Upon request," Verla chimes in, "we've even designed camels, sheep and donkeys."

Finishing the handmade angels is by no means a wing-footed feat either. "First," Velma explains, "we make a cone-shaped cardboard base, attach wire arms and drape the molding in layers of white muslin. Next, we wrap a Styrofoam egg 'head' in cloth, affix it to the body and paint everything with fabric stiffener—halo to wing tips.

"To give each angel its own personality, we add accents like jewelry and

lace. For special orders, we sometimes use sentimental pieces of fabrics as well. We've fashioned gowns from a grandmother's doilies, and embroidered aprons and wings from baby dresses, bridal veils and fancy tatted hankies."

The final phase for Velma and Verla's figures is a gilded one—spray-painting them gold.

Those resulting glowing rows of wise men, cherubs and dromedaries draw their share of attention when they're set outside to dry in the sunshine. Needless to add, they attract a lot of notice at the church bazaar besides.

There, there's been a heartwarming 30-year-plus tradition that will see another inspiring installment in 1995: In the case of these dedicated sisters, all that glitters is *sold!*

