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### Local craftsman and musician likes to 'fiddle around'

By Diane DeHamer  
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Everyone enjoys the soft, lilting sounds of the violin or the toe tapping music of the fiddle, which ever you happen to call it, Carl Brehmer of Chino Valley not only plays this instrument, but also makes them.

"When I first became interested in playing, I couldn't afford to buy a good violin so I decided to make one," Brehmer said.

Since making his first violin he has made several, which he creates from an 18-inch-by-one-inch piece of lumber. He uses wood from Maple and Spruce trees.

"The old masters came up with this wood combination, because Maple resonates well, and Spruce is strong but light," he explained.

Brehmer carves and contours the top piece, hollows out the back and sands the pieces until they are only 1/8 of an inch thick. Then he carves out the neck, before gluing the pieces together, varnishing and polishing the wood to a beautiful golden hue, and finally adding the strings. Each instrument takes about three months to complete.

Brehmer notes that there are no two violins that sound the same as each piece of wood is unique and has different acoustical properties. He also builds guitars, banjos and mandolins.

"It gives me a significant feeling of satisfaction to complete something that sounds nice," he said.

Brehmer was born and raised in Landon, N.D., but has lived in Arizona since 1974. He and his wife Marcia, and two children moved to Chino Valley about 13 years ago. His son Anson attends Yavapai College, and his daughter Jessica is a student at Chino Valley High School.

Brehmer reveals that he comes from a very musical family.

"My mother plays the piano and we all sing. At our family get-togethers we always have a sing-a-long," he said smiling.

Brehmer is a self-taught musician, and plays fiddle, banjo, guitar and mandolin by ear. He has been performing with the local Celtic band "Wild Thyme" for the past five years. The band plays at various functions around the tri-city area.

Brehmer, who works as a nurse at the Veterans Administration hospital in Prescott, says he has sold some of his instruments, but that this is just a hobby for him.

"I do this for fun, and when I switch my focus to do it for money, it takes the fun out of it," he admitted.

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Vincent & Edith. Mom wanted you to have a copy of this article about Carl. Everything is going fine here.  
Jerry