



HOLIDAY COUNTDOWN

WHAT TO BUY LOVERS OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

So....you have peeps on your list who are artsy and crafty, meaning they can take buttons, bows, and blister wrap and create something to make Pinterest fans swoon. And then there are others on your gift list: your Aunt Bertha who makes beer in her basement; brother-in-law Bob who has discovered the delights of birdwatching; your nephew the woodworker; your niece the candlestick maker....Sigh...how many shopping days do we have left? Not enough, not enough. So, some ideas, some ideas.

— By Janet Romaker
Blade Staff Writer



▲ On Comet...for those young astronomers, think crafts with space themes. Pull together a package of planetary delights for youngsters to create solar systems: star stickers, glitter, glue, foam balls, string, sheets of colorful cardboard, pipe cleaners. **Bonus gift: add in one of those "Old Enough to Remember When Pluto Was a Planet" T-shirts (online for about 20 bucks).** Or if you want to buy/ wrap just one thing, select from a variety of **Kids Science Kits, such as Moon Rocket. Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores. Price varies, starting at about \$20.**



◀ Frosty and frothy...Making beer is indeed a craft and for those on your list who know what, er, ails, them, give a gift box with items such as brewing, kegging, and bottling kits or beer-making ingredients including malt extract, syrups, and brewing yeast. Or, **Cornelius kegs, perfectly for five-gallon batches of home brew, are available at Titgemeier's Feed & Garden Store for \$35. For the CO2 keg system to go with the keg, \$164, also at Titgemeier's where, by the way, shelves are stocked with reindeer food, such as for the most famous red-nosed, sleigh-puller of all...**



▲ Speaking of Rudolph.... Don't shoot! For shed hunters, those who have legally found deer antlers, the Christmas gift-giving season can be a good time to transform those woody finds into handmade, one-of-a-kind gifts, such as hat or coat racks, cribbage boards, belt buckles, or jewelry. Ho ho hurry and check out **directions on ehow.com**, and then head to **Home Depot or Michaels** for the necessary hardware. **Price varies, depending on your project, but a good range would be \$35 to \$75.**



▲ And Dashers...dart, dash, run. Or walk briskly even to the **Silver Lining Gallery in Waterville**, featuring the works of dozens of area artists. Here, gift ideas gleam and beckon bright. Among our faves: **hand-blown glass ornaments, glass sun catchers, and any of a variety of fused glass items and glass vessels.** Gallery also offers pottery, paintings, prints, and framed photographs, felt hats, whimsical metal art, jewelry, and much more. **Prices vary, ranging from \$5 to \$500.**



▲ For Dancers...For artists in your life who hear the music and do something about it: an assortment of **fancy frames** to show off photos of their star performances. **Add in accents, such as rhinestone pins spelling out "TAP" or "JAZZ" or "BALLET,"** and perhaps some slick dance-themed stickers. **Hobby Lobby, price varies, starting at about \$15-\$25.** If you are the crafty one, make a personalized dance bag or knit a pair of leg warmers to give the gift an extra kick.

▲ And Prancers...Something crafty for people who consider their pets as part of the family: **paw prints on ornament kit makes a clay "mess-free" impression of your pet's paw print.** At **Bed Bath & Beyond** for \$9.99. Or a kit to make tasty homemade treats: a **15-piece electric doggie biscuit kit, featuring a nonstick cooking surface, several biscuit cutters, and recipes for all-natural dog biscuits that can be frosted and personalized with the dog's name (decorating tips included).** At **Bed Bath & Beyond** for \$29.99.



▲ And Vixen...be crafty and playful when you customize a **reindeer-prancing iPhone case** featuring a flirty Vixen with Christmas baubles bedecking her antlers. At **zazzle.com** for \$39.95.



▲ Aw, Cupid...oh, sweet goodness, it's chocolate. For culinary crafters, **package together bags of melting wafers in hues of pink, red, and white plus some dark chocolate wafers as well; heart-shaped candy molds (Valentine's Day is just around the corner, you know), and a trio of plastic squirt bottles (handy to fill molds with melted chocolate).** Add in some heart-adorned cellophane bags (card with a hint to share...optional). **Kay's Cake & Candy Crafts in Maumee.** **Price dependent on your selection of items, but plan on about \$25.**



▲ Look over Donder, ah, yes, we do mean Yonder... this gift idea truly is for the birds, and it is the gift that keeps on giving: **a some-assembly-required bird box, such as a wren bird house, \$11.99 to \$17.50, or a bluebird house, \$18.99, or collegiate bird feeder kits (OSU or Michigan, of course), \$30.99 at area Wild Birds Unlimited stores.** Tuck in a birdwatcher's guide as an extra tweet, ah, yes, we do mean treat.



▲ Glitzen and Blitzen...For artists on your list, consider a **gift pack from the Art Supply Depot on South St. Clair in downtown Toledo**, a shop that also offers art supplies and educational classes. Drawing kits for beginners; kits to make watercolor postcard sets, and kits for pen and ink card making are among the gift packs. Artwork by local artists, such as pottery, handmade books, and handmade pencil holders, are available at the store and would make "Oh, my, I love it" gifts as well. **Gifts at various prices, many in the \$5.50 to \$65 range. Gift certificates available as well.**

*Prices subject to change.