

CHOOSE BRUNSWICK OVER CALIFORNIA

# Boehme's Like Having Four Distinct Seasons

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and she enrolled in the tole class.  
For years Al sold heavy equipment and Edna reared their family; later he was given an International Harvester heavy equipment dealership in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., the two operated until their retirement.

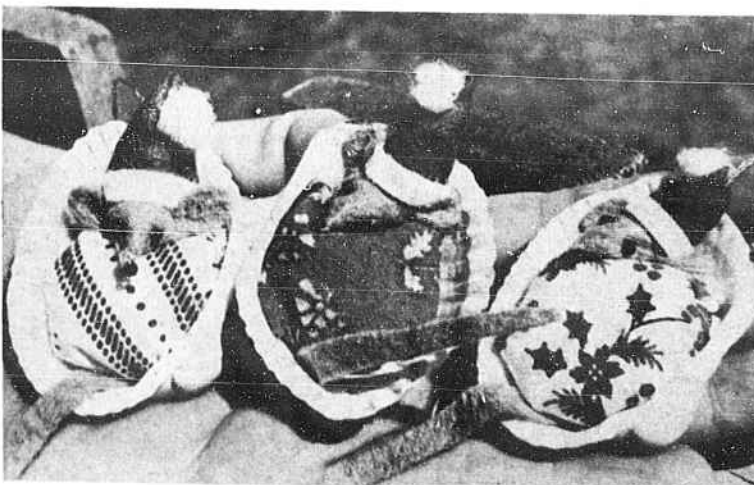
The Boehmes' first leisure home was in the north, where the lake froze and they were snowbound in winter.

Al began thinking in terms of the 34th parallel and La Jolla, Calif., but the Boehmes wanted to enjoy four distinct seasons of the year as well as the water. Temperate coastal North Carolina seemed ideal, lying halfway between Florida and back home. And the 34th parallel happened to cross North Carolina just below Wilmington.

A friend in Edna's tole painting class heard they were considering North Carolina and insisted they check out Brunswick County—and more specifically, Holden Beach. Family members had made a home there, she told Edna, and loved it.

One long weekend in December 1980, Edna and Al did just that; a driving rainstorm failed to dampen their expectations.

The two retired Navy veterans seemed meant to settle at Holden Beach, quickly finding a house for sale in Heritage Harbor. In they moved two months later, in February 1981.



THESE SNUGLY MICE make cute Christmas ornaments and are fun to make for the Holden Beach Festival by the Sea.

Heart trouble has since slowed Al's pace, but not enough to keep him away from the water. He walks on the beach and fishes with friends,

always welcome on board with his knowledge of diesel engines. "I don't have a boat, but I don't need one," he elaborated. "Down

here, you don't meet people, you meet folks."

He also tends the family garden. And in winter he helps Edna with her

tole-painting, eggs and handling cheese boxes for her tole art.

Edna gives away much of her handiwork to friends and family. But the annual Holden Beach Festival By The Sea each October provides a popular sales outlet for the "extras" she and other neighborhood crafters make, working sometimes together, sometimes alone. Getting ready for their booths at the weekend festival sounds like almost as much fun as the event itself.

"There are several of us who like to do crafts. We get together and exchange ideas. We have a great time," said Edna.

Some of her most popular small items made for the fair include hand-painted ribbons for little and not-so-little girls, slate roof tiles decorated with a brown pelican or the great blue heron that frequents their canal; Christmas mice smuggled in seashells created in collaboration with Norma Ausley, a friend and neighbor; and dressed-up mouse "ladies" designed to cover up an extra roll of tissue.

Those aren't the only mice in the Boehme house. In the kitchen, for instance, a wooden "mouse" cutting board hides on the counter, other tiny mice peek from a catch-all on the wall and from a nearby shadow box.

"We've got too many mice to have any cats," observed Edna, merry-eyed and smiling.

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