

Belleville woman turns hobby into line of hand-crafted jewelry

By GAVIN FLETCHER
Staff Reporter

There's a secret to success. And Anne Marie Bonneau has found it.

The 21-year-old Belleville native has enjoyed success creating and selling her line of hand-crafted jewelry — she calls it Bonne Oh! — and has no reason to believe she won't be even more successful in the future.

What started as a hobby for Bonneau has become a job. And although she shudders at the thought and, perhaps, the consequence of the word, Bonneau has a perfect way to deal with it. That's because she loves what she's doing; herein lies the secret to her success.

"It doesn't really seem like a job. I can work on it for hours at a time and I don't get sick of it."

Creating accessories has become her career, her future, and contrasts sharply with aspirations that led her to Queen's University's engineering program three years ago.

Less than a year later

however, Bonneau turned her back on a university education and began making jewelry — something she enjoyed and had always dreamed of doing.

The only reason she went to university, she says, was because she thought she should do something practical.

And making jewelry was not practical.

"I've always wanted to do something like this (make jewelry), but I didn't think it was very practical, so I tried something practical (university) and it was a disaster."

The "disaster" is now responsible for Bonneau's jewelry line, which is available at stores in Belleville, Kingston and Toronto.

It is also responsible for the up-beat attitude and confidence she has about her jewellery.

"I think I'm doing very well. I'm trying and am getting into more stores all the time. And I've weeded out the shows so I know which ones I want to go in."

The shows give Bonneau the opportunity to display her goods

to store owners with hope of getting orders for her jewellery.

She has already noticed the effects of recent store orders and has had to put in long hours getting her accessories ready.

Bonneau designs and creates her fashions — bracelets, broaches, necklaces and ear rings — at her home from different materials including clay, bronze, and wood.

"I get my designs from building on other ideas I've had before and I look at jewelry in magazines and what people are wearing.

"And sometimes I'll try something, and make a mistake and it'll turn out looking good."

Bonneau's hobby has come a long way since she began making small pieces of jewelry as a Grade 12 Nicholson Catholic College student.

And she's confident she'll go even further as a jewelry designer and creator.

"I'd like to see my jewelry all over the world. Canada, the Unites States and Europe, and see my name in lights" she says.

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