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## **. . . And Prepare The Pretty Paper** **By Laura B. Withers** **The Winchester Star**

Rubber paint rollers and bins of red and green paint were the artistic tools of choice Saturday at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum on the Loudoun Street Mall.

Three-year-old Nicolas Wagner couldn't get enough of the texturized rubber rollers that left a trail of stars on his blue wrapping paper. Then he discovered the stamps that fit so well on the end of his finger.

The kid-friendly art project was one of the crafty Christmas events the museum offers during the holiday season.

With festive music playing on a radio nearby, children crowded around short tables stocked with stamp pads, construction paper, and paint.

In addition to making customized wrapping paper, they created holiday cards using sponge cutouts of Christmas trees and stars. But the most popular craft required Styrofoam cut from an egg carton, a paint roller, and some paint.

Using a pencil, children carved their favorite holiday scene into the Styrofoam. Rolling some paint over the carving and pressing that on a piece of paper revealed a neat print.

The craft project's overseer, Sarah McKee, gasped as Nicolas' 5-year-old sister, Bettina, pulled up her Styrofoam stamp.

"Wow!" McKee exclaimed. "That's cool!"

After they had tired of stamps and paint, and their masterpieces were secured on the drying rack, Bettina and friend Natalia Demirtas moved on to something more difficult: origami.

Some people decorate their Christmas trees with origami figures, such as stars, cranes, and boxes.

Using a book of origami designs, McKee led the two girls through a series of steps to make a paper crane.

But the project required more concentration than they were willing to give, and Mom had to step in from the sidelines.

Anchi Wagner said she brought her children to the Old Town museum because they enjoy drawing and delving into craft projects at home.

But this time, she didn't have to clean up the mess.



Hayley Schwasta, 3, of Frederick County, smiles Saturday as she makes an origami Christmas tree decoration with her mother, Susan Schwasta, at the Discovery Museum in Winchester. (Photo by Rick Foster)



Hannah Horn, 7, prints her own Christmas wrapping paper Saturday at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum with the help of visiting artists Sarah McKee and Jon Gemmell. (Photo by Rick Foster)