

# Student makes signs for high school

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spots for advertisements were sold, Garrett would make the signs.

Garrett designed three additional large signs during that summer employment.

Garrett designs the signs at a shop adjacent to his grandfather's home in Harrisburg, which is the same shop where Garrett first began "messaging around" with a professional sign-making program introduced to him by his grandfather.

Garrett says his grandfather suffers from emphysema, and a scare in December 2010, left him hospitalized for a month. Frequent visits to Harrisburg thereafter to see his grandfather with his family, as well as the sign-making venture unexpectedly strengthened their relationship.

Before his grandfather's health scare, Garrett says, the trips to Harrisburg weren't as frequent.

"He asked me if I wanted to learn a few things," Garrett says, reflecting back.

Garrett's grandfather showed him Flexipert 8, a sign program that Garrett says is very complex and very expensive.

"He showed it to me once, and I just got up there and started messing around on it. I got really good with it, I was a fast learner."

Garrett says computers are his specialty.

After experimenting with the software, Garrett created small designs for a while, like decals for himself.

Garrett says his grandfather is always there to assist him, even now.

Every Sunday, Tuesday and



Garrett Clark places signs he created for the principal and vice principal's offices at Juniata High School.

*Sentinel photos by BUFFIE BOYER*

Thursday, Garrett travels to Harrisburg to work. Initially, Garrett restricted the business to designing signs only, but his mother, Angela Clark, suggested adding more.

"As I opened up on more things I can do, I have more variety of what people want now," Garrett says. The business provides services for signs, names or quotes, license plates, decals, banners and larger signs.

Garrett says his mother has helped the most with advertising the business and transportation, even though he has a driver's license. Garrett's mother travels to Harrisburg to take his sister to cheerleading practice and he rides to work at the shop at his grandfather's house.

At first, business was pretty slow.

"I'd be lucky to have one job per week, if I go down."

Now, he says he has plenty of jobs to keep him occupied.

Word has also gotten around school that Garrett designs signs, which has contributed to a boost in his self-confidence.

"I wasn't the most popular

person at school, ... and before, I cared too much about what other people thought about me," Garrett says.

Now, Garrett says, he's sort of popular as word has spread that he owns his own business. He says he doesn't really care about what people think because he already has a career lined up for himself. And that's why he is striving to keep his straight As rolling next marking period.

"Last year I was just an average student," he says.

But Garrett wants options for attending college so has received all As this marking period.

Garrett's plans after high school graduation include obtaining a bachelor's degree and maintaining his business instead of becoming an architect, which he aspires to be.

"I was kinda thinking about it the other day. A part of me wants the business to kinda be a side thing, yet, the other part of me wants it to get big and become really successful," he adds.

Garrett admits a big successful sign-making business would

soak up much of his time and wouldn't leave much time for him to enjoy some of his hobbies.

"I'd like to have some spare time, I like to hunt and fish," he says.

People Garrett knows who

own big, successful business don't have any spare time, he says.

Just recently, Garrett has created vinyl signs for Tuscarora Junior High School. The principal got in touch with his

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