



Judith Niland, of Astoria, uses her ventilated garage as a space to create acrylic sun discs.

A look toward the sun

Astoria woman turns pandemic into artistic opportunity

BY KATHERINE LACAZE

Last spring, Judith Niland found herself unexpectedly cut off from theater and other social activities that typically filled her time. Meanwhile, a pre-existing health

condition made it necessary for her to stay mostly quarantined, to avoid contracting the coronavirus.

"Once the pandemic hit, I wasn't going anywhere," she said.

The initial impact of the shutdown last

March was severely felt by Niland, who lives in Astoria and likes to stay busy. She was getting ready to open the annual "Real Lewis and Clark Story" at the Astor Street Opry Company. When it became clear that postponing the production would evolve into canceling the show altogether, she fell back on another art form: creating acrylic

sun discs.

"All the things I did were broken, the normal chain," she said. "I turned it around in my own head, because I do think everything happens for a reason ... I decided it was the universe giving me the opportu-

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