

The Treasured Child: Selling Toys for All Ages **Kentucky Toy Store Operated by Young at Heart**

A retired Air Force pilot, Rick Garlock took a job with the United Nations to help displaced war refugees. Running convoys and managing refugee camps in Turkey, Yugoslavia, Africa and other hot spots, Rick and his wife, Trish, constantly dealt with crisis as they assisted people who owned hardly more than the clothes on their backs. Still, nothing prepared the couple for retail.

"It was a whole new education," said Trish, who opened the Treasured Child toyshop with her husband upon returning to the States. "But indoor plumbing is wonderful!"

That sense of humor aptly characterizes the Garlocks' business philosophy. "We're a couple of old hippies. We've seen enough death, and we have enough money that we don't want for anything," Rick told **TDmonthly Magazine**. "Our goal is just to have fun."

Since 1997, the Treasured Child has nestled on a quaint main street in a historic district of La Grange, Ky. Customers from as far away as Cincinnati drive up to three hours to shop at the homey venue, decorated with sepia prints of the Garlocks' grandparents.

The store's hands-on service also includes a rental library where customers rent games at \$5 for three days rather than spending far more for something they might not enjoy. Such popular games as Blokus, **Cogno** and Dread Pirate run between \$32 and \$60, Trish said, but game companies happily send free demos ... and customers almost always end up buying the games.

"People call me and say, 'apply the \$5 toward my purchase and let me give you my credit card number to cover the rest.'"

The Garlocks take pains to "reinvent" their presentation and inventory. This year they're planning to hang curtains over their mezzanine to create a sort of stage for the puppets they sell. Trish strives to stock variety so that a grandmother can buy something for her grandchild, her child, her husband and herself in one trip.

"I wanted a store that would appeal to everybody because everybody should get toys, regardless of their age. How sad if you don't still enjoy playing."