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Volume 1, Issue 3

Reflections Framing & Stitching

Summer is on her way!

With the warmer temps arriving, our thoughts naturally turn to Spring and Summertime activities. For some this means more gardening and less stitching and for others it's time to finalize their projects for the upcoming County and State Fair Season. For more information on the Fair please read my editorial on page two of this newsletter.

Mention the movie referenced in this month's newsletter and receive 10% off your purchase during the month of April. Only one 10% discount per person.

Please Note: There is a possibility the shop might be closed on Saturday, May 7th. Please call before you before you make the trip! I'm sorry for any inconvenience this might cause you.

*7314 Harrison St
Ralston NE 68128*

Phone: 402-331-1740

Email: julie@reflections-framing.com

The State Fair

The Fair

Let me begin by saying the views posted in this editorial are mine and mine alone. I do not mean to offend anyone in any way. I care about our shared hobby and I am trying to do what I can to make sure Counted Cross Stitch continues to exist so that future generations are able to enjoy it. I hope you will read this article to the bitter end and seriously consider participating.

One of the ways I feel we have let our industry down is a lack of entries at the State Fair. A few years ago, while speaking with a customer, the conversation turned to the State Fair and the sad fact that the previous year there were only 12 entries in the Counted Cross Stitch division. TWELVE. I was shocked! It never occurred to me that people weren't entering, myself included.

My justification for never entering included a myriad of excuses. My stitching wasn't good enough to enter the State Fair, I would never win anything. I thought one must enter one's local fair first and I had heard unflattering things about the conditions at my local County Fair. No way was I going to put my precious stitching in the hands of a stranger that knew nothing about the number of hours spent stitching the piece(s) and the amount of money spent on the supplies and the framing. OMG the framing!! What if they dinged up my frame? Broke the glass? Got dirt on my stitching??? What if the judges said my stitching was awful? Could my fragile ego handle that? I'm pretty sure every thought or concern possible went through my head at one time or another. But when I heard there were only twelve entries it was like a light bulb going off. To me it seemed obvious that we as stitcher's had let ourselves and our hobby down. How can we possibly expect others to respect and learn this craft if we aren't proud enough of it to show it off to the public? No wonder people were surprised when I said I was a cross stitcher. No wonder they would say they didn't know people still cross stitched or I would hear they used to stitch but with the lack of local stores they switched to quilting. And no wonder there is a general feeling in the Needleart Industry that Cross Stitching is the ugly step-child! We have only ourselves to blame. We dropped the ball.

After my conversation with the customer I was all fired up and ready to enter my pieces in the fair, and then that little voice in the back of my head started talking again. You aren't good enough to enter the fair. You won't win anything. They'll ruin it, it's too far a drive to take my entries there etc...I listened to that voice and I didn't enter the fair and I felt very guilty for not following through.

Not long after, several things came to my attention, I did not have to enter my local fair. I didn't have to drive the pieces all the way to Grand Island, instead, I could drop them off in Seward and volunteers would take them the rest of the way. And the best thing I discovered was that one of the ladies that attends our retreat (Laurie) works the Fair in the Needleart area and would be the one handling and overseeing the handling of my pieces. Which left the hardest excuse to overcome. "I'm not a good enough stitcher to enter the fair." That's a tough one. It may not seem like it but my feelings get hurt easily. I wasn't sure I could handle the criticism. But I made up my mind that I wasn't entering the fair to win a prize or receive an atta girl from some person I've never met who may or may not know what they are talking about. I was entering because I was proud of my work, I was proud of my hobby and I wanted to let people know that Cross Stitcher's do exist and our Needleart is just as beautiful and worthwhile as any other form of Needleart. So I convinced my friend Connie that she needed to enter also, because of course misery loves company, and off to Seward our pieces went and when they returned they were in the same condition as when they left. Whew! That was a relief! Last year we entered again and I convinced yet another friend to enter and decided that this year I should attend the fair so I would have first hand knowledge on how everything was displayed since that seemed to be a concern for some I had spoken with.

On a hot, late August day, Dan and I made the drive to Grand Island and attended the fair. I was a wee bit shocked to find...okay, I was a lot shocked to find that most of the framed pieces were hung on peg board stands and then covered with a sheet of plastic so it was nearly impossible to see them. And I was saddened to find that we were stuck far away in a corner by the model planes and trains, where few would see them. I was further saddened to see that while there were more than twelve entries it was still far less than I was hoping for. So I made a vow then and there to do everything I could to improve the situation. I started by voicing my concerns to Laurie on how things were displayed. I explained that I couldn't possibly in good conscience ask others to enter their stitching only to have it hidden behind foggy plastic. I also told her I would do my best to encourage more stitcher's to enter if changes were made in that area. She passed my comments on to the Superintendent and I have recently been told that they are making some positive changes in that area.

The State Fair

Con't

I have also been told we have lost some classes due to low interest but if there are more entries they would have to reinstate them. To that end, I intend to beg or bully as the case may be, the wonderful stitcher's that frequent this shop and read this newsletter into entering one or two pieces in the Fair this year. We'll begin with the begging part, the bullying will come later as time goes on. Please, please consider entering this year. Not because you want to win a ribbon but because you love this hobby and want to keep it out there in the public eye. Can I guarantee nothing will happen to your Needleart? No. Can I guarantee that the judges will judge your stitching fairly and not let personal preference sway them? No. Can I guarantee your ego won't suffer a wee bit? No. But I can guarantee that you will be helping our favorite hobby stay viable in the future. Perhaps, with your help, our Needleart won't be stuck in the corner like Baby from Dirty Dancing, but displayed proudly for everyone to see and enjoy.

And for those of you in other states that might not have a Laurie on the inside, and you live close to where your fair is held, volunteer! Contact the superintendent and voice your concerns, educate them if you need to but don't sit back and wait for someone else to step up, cuz that hasn't accomplished anything!

If you made it clear through to the end of my little speech, thank you so much. I appreciate you taking the time to read it and hopefully you will think seriously about everything I have said and decide to do your part to breath new life into our beloved hobby!

A Side Note

I had an idea regarding the State Fair that I'm going to throw out here to see if there is any interest since I have this blank space that needs filling!

I was thinking to rent a bus and take a group of us to the Fair to see our entries live and in person. I'm assuming of course that a whole bunch of you are going to participate and enter and would want to see them on display. I think it could be a fun outing for everyone and for those that don't get around easily but would like to go they do have scooters and wheelchairs that can be rented to help with that or there is a tram that also takes people around.

Think about it and send me an email with your thoughts. julie@reflections-framing.com

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Saturday, April 9th:

Second Saturday Stitch

11a.m.—4p.m.

Saturday, April 23rd:

Replacement Date for
Last Saturday Stitch

11a.m.-4p.m.

Saturday, April 30th:

Last Saturday Stitch

CANCELLED!!

**Thursday, May 5th
through Sunday May
8th:**

Spring Retreat

May 9th—28th:

Summer House Stitches
Works Trunk Show

Saturday, May 14th:

Second Saturday Stitch

11a.m.— 4p.m.

Saturday, May 28th:

Last Saturday Stitch

11a.m.— 4p.m.

New Policies

Our three month anniversary has come and gone and I must say it has passed in a blink of an eye! These months have been a huge learning experience for me and I thank all of you for your patience and understanding while I figure out the ins and outs of owning your own business.

After evaluating the process of ordering special requests for our customers I feel I need to tweak how we do things just a bit. Beginning today, special requests must be paid for within two weeks of the date I show the customer has been notified their order is in. You will receive a reminder notification ten days after the first notification. At fourteen days your order will be put into regular stock and any further special requests will require a deposit. I am sorry that this has become necessary but unfortunately, there are too many orders that are not being picked up in a timely fashion.

The second policy change is a direct result of the high fees being charged by credit card processing companies. There is now a \$5.00 minimum pre-tax purchase required when using a debit or credit card. The fees being charged are outrageous and I simply cannot afford it.

Finally, while this is not a policy change, I feel this is as good a place to mention it as any other. Please keep in mind the high fees being charged to all businesses when using your debit and credit cards. For many small businesses this is a big hit each month. ***Your payment of cash or check is greatly appreciated.*** Thank You for your understanding.

Market Open House

Our Market Open House was a huge success! We had a wonderful turn out and it seemed most were able to find a few items they couldn't live without! Thanks to everyone that came out made the day so great!



The Market goodies waiting for the eager shoppers to arrive!



Left: Waiting for the door to open! Right: Shopping!!



Shopping and visiting!

Registration Closed

Spring 2016 Retreat

Registration for Spring Retreat is now closed.

Retreat will be held May 5th through May 8th. There will still be a swap table, a show and tell table and Sherry Stoll has volunteered to make ort containers for everyone. Thank you Sherry!! Laura will once again be providing massages for those interested on Saturday the 7th. I hope those participating in the ornament or pin pillow exchange are busy working on their project! Retreat will be here before we know it!! Mine is about half finished. I hope whoever draws it will like it!

Retreat must be paid in full no later than Saturday, April 9th 2016. *I am once again asking everyone to pay for retreat via cash or check only.* No credit card payments will be accepted.

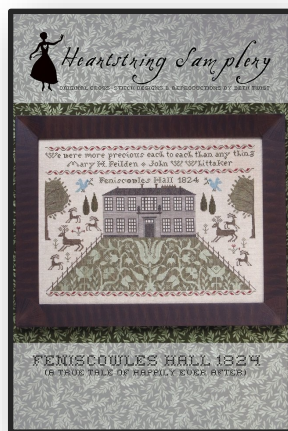
My friend Kim will be covering the shop for me while we are at Retreat. There is a possibility that she will not be able to cover the shop on Saturday the 7th so Please call first before you stop in that day! Check our Facebook page for further updates.



New New New!!

In Stock Favorites from Market

Here's a sampling of some our favorite things from Nashville that are in stock and available now!



Feniscowles Hall 1824. Love love love the grass on this one!



Spotted Pig Pinkeep from Stacy Nash. Who doesn't love a spotted pig!! Too cute!

Jeans & Weenies...
Nuff said!! LOL!

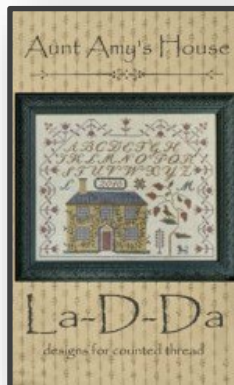


Ink Circles Tapestry. The colors are stunning and the design is amazing!



Don't you just love the vines on the front of the house!

Aunt Amy's House. La-D-aDa



We have many more new items in stock that we don't have room to show so please stop in and check them out!

Keep your needle singing and we'll catch you next month!!