

FOCUS ON ... Laurel's Stitchery, Virginia USA

The dream that eventually became Laurel's Stitchery started in 1979 in Edmond, Oklahoma.

Laurel's mom, Sheri, has always done needlework, and she taught her counted cross stitch when she was a young girl of six. She also taught her stamped cross stitch, needlepoint, candlewicking and crocheting, but counted cross stitch was always her favorite.

Sheri and Laurel entered lots of projects in the Oklahoma State Fair and won lots of ribbons. One of Laurel's projects was selected as "Best" in the Junior Division and sent to Disney World for a special arts and crafts exhibition. Laurel was hooked on cross stitch for sure!

After high school, Laurel graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in Construction Science and went to work managing construction projects. All the while, she dreamed of owning her own cross stitch shop.

After marrying and moving to Fort Worth, Texas, Laurel's husband Nick encouraged her to make that dream a reality. Starting small, her first account was with Lizzie Kate, but the business grew quickly from there.

Laurel and Nick moved from Fort Worth to Houston and then on to Albuquerque, New Mexico.

As many of Laurel's customers know, Nick died suddenly and unexpectedly in 2005, and she seriously considered selling the business. But Laurel loved her customers so much, and she decided to try to keep the

business going by herself while continuing to work her construction job full-time.

It turned out to be a blessing in disguise, and the joy of serving her wonderful customers helped Laurel survive her crisis.

Fast forward to 2008, when she remarried, moved to Virginia, gave birth to her precious girl Alison, and Laurel's Stitchery became her full-time job (along with being Alison's mommy of course). Laurel says, "I can't think of anything I would rather be doing!"

"September 11, 2009 marks the seventh anniversary of Laurel's Stitchery, and the anniversary sale is going on now! The last seven years of this business has been so much fun for me, and I'm looking forward to so much

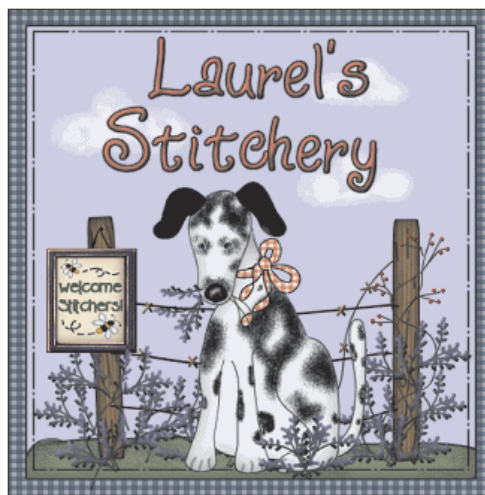
more!"

In the near future, Laurel planning to start some new customer incentives. In addition to the three year old Birthday Bonus Club, she intends to start a Customer Loyalty Program with more great discounts.

"And I would love to host a local "Stitch Night" one evening or afternoon each week to serve my Virginia customers and other vacationers in nearby Williamsburg, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach. I'm always looking for new ways to make my customers happy," says Laurel.

To find out more about Laurel's Stitchery, and to visit them on-line go to The Stitchers Village home page and click on the bottom lefthand bank of shops – **Laurels Stitchery is Shop 15.**

Laurel's Stitchery is our competition host for August ... see Page 5 for all the details.



HINTS, TIPS AND ADVICE by Jen Funk-Weber



Have you ever searched for needlework tips or advice on the web? There's a ton of information out there. Here's a tip I read recently (like Dave Barry, I am not making this

up): "Never moisten the end of your floss in your mouth prior to threading your needle. The color might run."

Geez-o-pete, to get the dye from a fiber to run you'd have to suck on your floss for minutes, not nanoseconds. Maybe even gargle with some soapy water while you're at it, thereby redefining "mouthwash." It's my opinion that if the dye is going to run after the fiber is moistened between your lips, you probably don't want to use it anyway, unless you live in the desert: the color will probably run in high humidity, too.

Okay, maybe it's not the best thing in the world to lick the ends of my floss before threading my needle. Who wants a saliva-coated pillow? That's why they make needle threaders, I suppose. I have one...somewhere.

True, I will take the time to comb my fiber strands so that they lay neatly side-by-side, and I rip imperfect stitches, but I draw the line at needle threaders. I prefer to travel light, not lug around heaps of stitching accoutrements — you know how heavy and bulky those needle threaders are.

Besides, by licking the fiber ends I'm keeping alive an ancient tradition, passed down from mother to daughter for generations. I know for a fact that my mother and grandmother put their needlework fibers in their mouths; that's where I learned to do it.

If you think a teeny bit of spit is going to make the piece dirty, you better be prepared to stitch with white gloves: hand oils are dirty, too, and there's far more touching going on than moistening thread ends. How clean do you think Laura Ingalls Wilder's hands were when she stitched? Do you think she used a needle threader?

My solution to fiber-licking, hand oils, and myriad other ill-advised techniques is to wash the needlework when it is finished. If I'm using

fibers that can't be washed, then I just do my best to keep the work clean and get on with it.

I do wash my hands before sitting down to stitch at home, but I don't hesitate to stitch with unwashed hands at a boring community council meeting. It depends on the project, too: if it's destined to be a family heirloom, I'll take more care, but if it's a bracelet or towel, I'm not going to sweat it. I promise, if the Royal School of Needlework calls me to come help with a commissioned piece for the Queen of England, I will not moisten my thread ends in my mouth! Until then.... reader beware!

Not all tips and advice are worth embracing. It's like my friend, Cathy, said when selecting a book about pregnancy from conflicting titles, "I'm looking for one that agrees with what I think." Advice is for listening to, not necessarily taking.

A SERIOUSLY GOOD TIP!

This month's tip was inspired by Carol's question in the READERS ASK section of Jen's website. Many Funk & Weber Designs patterns recommend 3 strands of floss for the cross stitches. Carol is used to "railroading" with 2 strands, but asked for suggestions for aligning 3 strands neatly.

First, for those of you not familiar with railroading, it is a simple technique that helps to keep 2 strands of floss untwisted and laying side-by-side on the ground fabric, which looks neat and tidy, and helps the thread cover the ground fabric more thoroughly.

To railroad, bring your needle up through the fabric as usual. Slip your needle tip between the 2 strands of floss anywhere along the threads between the fabric and the needle. Insert your needle back into the fabric and pull it to the back side. That's it!

This pulls the twist in your fibers to the loose ends, so let your needle dangle every now and then so the fibers can untwist.

Some stitchers complain that railroading takes longer, but I don't suppose you want me

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What's New In The World of Needlework!

or ... A Little Retail Therapy is Always Good For The Soul!

NEW! from GLENDON PLACE

for Halloween 2009

GP-161 Sleepy Hollow

Stitched on a brand new fabric called 'Haunted' from Picture This Plus, this spooking setting takes place in a graveyard on a full moon night! For those who love Glendon Place Halloween designs, this will be a must have!

The graveyard scene is accompanied by a creepy border of bats, skulls and pumpkins, and a moderate amount of Mill Hill Beads and Kreinik braid. Don't miss the spiderwebs in the corners! Lastly, the design is topped off with an eerie poem that reads:

*In a grave lies the horseman
His head is at his side
Be brave enough to take it
And again by night he will ride*

Additional Information

Stitch Area: 170w x 250h

Design Area: 12"w x 17 1/2"h

Fabric: 28ct Haunted Cashel Linen



*View more of Cheryl's wonderful designs in the Gallery.
Cheryl's designs are available for purchase from the Village shops.*

NEW CLASSES FROM CAROL TINSON!

One of our Village designers, Carol Tinson from Heirloom Embroideries, has created new classes that are now available in the School House. Over the past few months Carol has been making notes of what different stitching techniques members of the Village would like to learn and the new classes in the 'I Want to Make' and the 'I Want to Learn' series are the result.

Not only does Carol have these wonderful teaching pieces now available, but also due to requests from members, is conducting a Stitch-a-Long using 4 of the classes and she is offering a special package for all those who sign up for the Stitch-a-Long. Sign up for the 4 month Stitch-a-Long that will be conducted in The Tea Shoppe Forum and you will receive 4 designs for the price of 3.

The classes Carol is going to work through with participants are, the 'Name Badge' beginning September 17th, the 'Counted Stitch Sampler - Autumn' beginning October 1st, the 'Pin Keep' beginning November 1st and the 'Bookmark' beginning December 1st. Sign up for the Stitch-a-Long and receive the Name Badge class for free. **Details can be found in the School House.**



HINTS, TIPS AND ADVICE (cont'd)

to reiterate my feelings on speed stitching. Truth is, if you want to do it, railroading will become a habit and you won't notice how fast or slow the process is. If it's fun and you like the result, do it!

Although railroading isn't so effective with 3 strands of floss, it's still possible to align the threads side-by-side. I use 2 techniques: combing the threads, and using a laying tool. After bringing the needle to the front, I "comb" my needle tip through the 3 strands to separate and align them if they are twisted. Then, I wrap the neatly aligned threads around my laying tool close to the fabric, and hold them there with a finger from my "free" hand.

My stitching hand inserts the needle into the fabric and pulls it to the back. When there is sufficient tension on the thread around the laying tool, I release the finger holding the thread and allow the tool to be pulled snug against the fabric as I continue pulling the thread. Then I ease the tool out and tighten the stitch.

Lots of doo-dads can serve as a laying tool: a toothpick, a skewer, a small knitting needle, a large tapestry needle, to name a few. Some laying tools are finely crafted

works of art, not unlike some needle threaders. Some have sharp tips for poking through dense fabric, and some slip onto your finger like a ring or thimble. The latter scare me. I'm afraid I'll mindlessly reach up to shove my hair back or scratch my face and accidentally poke my eye out. Needlework's fun till someone loses an eye. I have enough trouble with my needle and scissors drawing blood; I don't need sharp pokers on my fingertips.

My laying tool? Brace yourselves. I use the forefinger of my non-stitching hand as my laying tool, hand oils and all (see above for my thoughts on needlework and dirt). Why do I use my finger as a laying tool? Let me count the ways:

1 – It works.

2 – It's easy to keep track of (haven't lost it yet).

3 – It's useful for so many other things. I love multi-purpose tools.

Regardless of all the tips and tricks in the world, you ultimately need to find what works for you and makes you happy. If one tip doesn't appeal to you, look for another one. If it's a tip that agrees with what you think, embrace it.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE SHOPS IN THE VILLAGE

Shop 2 - HANGING BY A THREAD

Patrick's Woods Classes

June 12 and 13, 2010

Registrations now open for both of these classes. You can see the beautiful class pieces on display in our windows!

Shop 6 - THREE STITCHES

2010 Mystery themed Get-A-Way begins on April 9, 2010

The starting date for the next Mystery themed Get-A-Way at 3 Stitches was incorrect in the first issue of the newsletter last month ... **April 9, 2010** is the correct starting date. This is always very popular and usually booked out well in advance. Book your place through our website, via our shopfront on the homepage of the Village.

Shop 25 - EVERYTHING CROSS STITCH

NEW SHOP! Be sure to visit this month to welcome Mark to the Village, and to see what Everything Cross Stitch has to offer.

Shop 27 - CROSS STITCH TREASURES

Hosting **Patricia Ann Designs Trunk Show for the month of September.**

And our semi-annual camp ...

Camp Tangled Thread

October 23-25, 2010.

Registrations accepted until September 15. Hurry! Limited space so be quick!

Shop 32 - LAZY DAISY STITCHERY

Hosting **The Workbasket Trunk Show**

September 3-23, 2009

29 gorgeous models to be enjoyed if you happen to be in Long Island during September!

AUGUST COMPETITION WINNER!

Congratulations go to KATHY KALIN.

Kathy said ...

"I'd most like a Fat Quarter of 32-ct Twilight Blue Linen for my best friend, unemployed since December, to stitch Nora Corbett's "Winter Santa" on."

Kathy wins A Gift Certificate for goodies to be purchased at Three Stitches to the value of \$100.

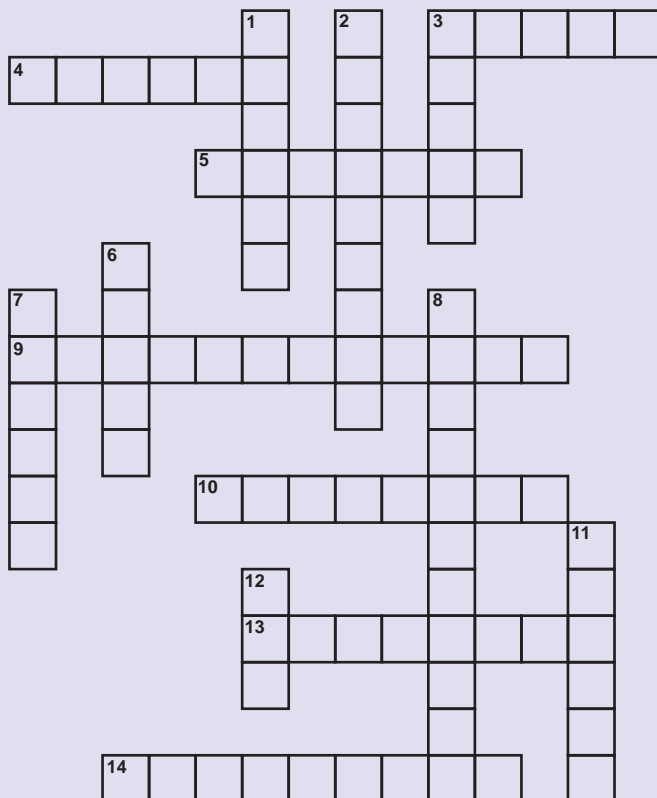
There were some really great entries in this competition - so thank you all who entered.

SEPTEMBER 2009 COMPETITION

Laurel's Stitchery from Norfolk, Virginia is sponsoring this month's competition.

For a chance to win a **\$100 Gift Certificate** from **Laurel's Stitchery**, complete the crossword puzzle below and email your answers to Janie on **editorTSV@stitchersvillage.com** by end of day on Tuesday September 29, 2009.

LAUREL'S STITCHERY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 3 What is Laurel's Mom's first name?
- 4 The first name of Laurel's daughter.
- 5 Laurel's Stitchery can be found at Shop #? in The Stitchers Village.
- 9 What kind of list can you sign up for to get news.
- 10 In which state does Laurel's Stitchery want to hold a local 'Stitch Night'?
- 13 Where did Laurel's Stitchery dream first begin?
- 14 Surname of the owner of Laurel's Stitchery.

DOWN

- 1 What type of needlework shop is Laurel's Stitchery.
- 2 Which month is anniversary month?
- 3 Which anniversary is Laurel's Stitchery celebrating.
- 6 Birthday ----- club.
- 7 First name of the owner of Laurel's Stitchery.
- 8 What are the two colours on the ribbon around the animal's neck in the logo? (3 words)
- 11 What kind of babies are for sale on the website?
- 12 What animal is on the logo of Laurel's Stitchery?

OCTOBER 2009 GT IN TEXAS

REMINDER ... Members of The Stitchers Village who are going to be in or near Texas in October are in for a special treat!

Jo Mason and the Texas members are organizing a GT (get-together) for the weekend of October 10 and 11, and would welcome anyone who can be or will be in Houston on that weekend to join in the fun.

Their plans are starting to take shape and it promises to be a great weekend.

You can find more information about this weekend in the GT Forum in Tea Shoppe.

And for those of you in other parts of the world - don't forget to check the GT forum to see if there's a group of members near you who might like to get together for a special event.

RETAIL THERAPY IN THE VILLAGE!

If you are looking for something special for a stitching friend or you need a little bit of retail therapy to help brighten your day, don't forget to pop into the Village shops to see what tempting and wonderful treats they have waiting for you!

Everything Cross Stitch has just moved into Shop 25 in The Village - so don't forget to pop in and say 'Hi' and have a bit of a browse around.

Our Village shops are open 24 hours a day, and you don't have to dress up to visit - come as you are. Our shop owners will be thrilled to see you and happy to help you find just the right gift for your friend or yourself.

**NOW
OPEN!**



Members Needlework Gallery

WE LOVE SHOW-OFFS!

We have completed the new Members Gallery especially for members to show off their completed stitching projects.

You will find the Members Gallery behind the Library building, and next to the School House.

Each member will have the opportunity to have their very own 'named gallery' with five 'picture frames' in place to exhibit their work. Pictures can be changed at any time, and there is no charge to own one of these gallery rooms.

So start sorting through your latest project pictures, click on the Members Gallery building, follow the prompts and become a real 'show-off' here at The Stitchers' Village!

SPEND halloween with us!

The gift basket of goodies is getting bigger every day, the competition is being devised, the stitching projects are being photographed, the graveyard is getting spruced up, the witches are having their best black dresses drycleaned, the ghosts have bleached their favorite sheets ready for the big day (or should that be night?) and the whole of October is going to be a great deal of fun ... Sneek peaks of the stitching projects will be available in the mid-September newsletter!



BUSHFIRE CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT COMPETITION

Hello my name is Denise. I am a 40 year old working mum of 3 beautiful kids and wife to an amazing husband.

By now the Australian Bushfires of February 2009 are well known all over the world but for me it is a little more personal as I witnessed firsthand the devastation they caused.

I live about a 20 minute drive from where the fires were finally brought under control. I have family in that town whose home was damaged. However it was a little further up the road that was of most concern to me.

In a little town called Glenburn, my 68 year-old Aunt lives on a 75 acre property on her own. Her husband was away at the time and Auntie was left to fend for herself and take care of business. She did not receive warning the fire was coming until it was too late to leave. Trees covered the only road out, so she was stuck. We lost communication with her around 8pm and knew nothing of her welfare for several days. It was a week before we could get to her and what we saw was devastating. The houses on either side of her were destroyed. I do not know how she managed to save her home.

Feeling useless while waiting to know if she was alive or dead, I decided to do what I knew I could do and keep busy. I started making Christmas ornaments (a favourite pastime of mine) thinking people in the fire areas who had lost their homes and their possessions and would be in need of support from the likes of me.

I mentioned my plan on the 123 message board and the project has flowed from there. It seems many people treasure their ornaments and the memories that they hold. So far I have received more than two hundred ornaments, including more than seventy from Marni, an 80 year old vision impaired woman who stitches on perforated paper because she can feel the holes. What an inspiration.

The ornaments we are making will not replace all those small personal items that have been lost but they will help start a new set of

memories. Perhaps more importantly, they will show those who have lost so much that they have remained in the thoughts of others even though the news headlines and original swell of support has faded.

The local Salvation Army branch has agreed to distribute the Ornaments at a special Christmas dinner they are having in December for those affected by the fire.

T h e m e – the ornaments can be any size, shape or theme.

Closing date for all finished ornaments is 3rd November, 2009.

Ornaments must be received by this date so please allow two weeks if posting from outside Australia.



Some of the wonderful ornaments received in August

Mailing address for finished ornaments:

**Denise Mazzan,
4 Akron Street,
FernTree Gully, Victoria 3156
Australia**

If you love stitching ornaments but would prefer not to finish them ...

Mailing address for ornaments that require finishing must be posted by Sept 30, 2009

**Terry Louise,
Unit 5, 20 Pine Street,
West Hobart, Tasmania 7000
Australia**

We recently had a small contest to remind people about this project and keep up the momentum. As a result we were contacted by Jo Mason from Dinky Dyes who has generously offered two 'prizes' as an encouragement to those stitching for the project. After the closing date two names will be drawn from the names of every person who has contributed one or more ornaments during the year.

First prize: \$100 of Dinky Dyes silks of the winner's choice

Second prize: \$50 of Dinky Dyes silks of the winner's choice

Pictures of many of the donated ornaments can be viewed here:

<http://s727.photobucket.com/albums/ww280/AustralianBushfireProjects/>