

The Stitchers' Voice

VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 3
MARCH, 2010



SHOPPE
FOCUS ON
**Traditional
Stitches**

'CREATION'
The story
of a
masterpiece

**2010
Bookmark
Challenge
Contest!**



Folded Tote Back



Folded Tote Front

NEW!

'Retail Therapy' Tote

from The Cat's Whiskers

Design Studio

www.thecatwhiskers.net.au

**DUE FOR RELEASE
APRIL 1, 2010**

Retail Therapy - the very best kind of therapy to be in, now comes as a fold-away tote, ready to pop into your purse or handbag.

The pretty design uses whole cross stitches only and can be stitched in any colour thread, on any colour 32 count linen, to complement your chosen medium weight tote fabric. (*Now you can't get much more versatile than that can you?*)

The design chart and comprehensive instructions on how to make the tote and attach the stitched panel are included in the booklet.

The design is 113 stitches W by 186 stitches L, and requires three 5m skeins of 8 ply thread to complete. You will need 11" x 16" of 32 count linen, and a yard of medium weight designer fabric to complete the tote.

Available from all good needlework stores from April 1.

MARCH is craft month!

In case you *really needed* an excuse to stitch ... March is officially 'craft month' in the US, (and we're adopting it for the rest of the world) so you can celebrate by stitching to your heart's content for the next four weeks!

Why not spend some of March stitching up some bookmarks for the Needle and ThREAD: Stitching for Literacy 2010 Bookmark Challenge, the brainchild of Jen Funk Weber. The Stitches' Village has twinned with two libraries for this wonderful event which runs until May 6. You can find out more about this event and how you can participate (and win) on page 8 and page 10.

Thank you to all who bought the Doctor and Nurse Kitty charts for the TSV Haiti appeal. We raised just over \$400! Whilst Haiti is no longer considered top rating news, Jo and I hope and pray that the people affected by this disaster manage to recover and start to rebuild their lives. Your donations will certainly help in that effort.

Ever wondered what it would be like to 'Create Creation'? Deborah Dicks has shared with us her amazing story of stitching her masterpiece, inspired by the first few lines from the Book of Genesis ... without first charting and planning how the design would look! Turn to page 6 for some serious inspiration! Who knows, you might feel inspired to create a masterpiece of your own.

As the Northern Hemisphere starts to warm up and the Southern Hemisphere starts to cool down, those lovely temperate days and evenings hold such promise. I begin to feel more energetic and enthusiastic - and often find a new stitching project to celebrate the change of seasons. I hope that you have a wonderful month, and that you find some time to sit and stitch and 'smell the roses'.

Until next month, take care and happy stitching.

Janie Hubble
Editor

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These Village Shoppes have been busy changing their window displays ... why not head on over to see what they have in store!
Finely Finished - Shoppe 40
Stitcher's Workshop - Shoppe 29
3 Stitches - Shoppe 6

THE STITCHERS' VILLAGE
shoppe

Traditional Stitches

Traditional Stitches is a needlework shop located just outside of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. We asked Janice Spencer, owner of Traditional Stitches to tell us about her wonderful store ...



Our hand-dyed cottons wall ...

I am thrilled to tell you that the year 2010 marks our 10th Anniversary! We are very grateful to our loyal customers around the world – you help make Traditional Stitches interesting, inspirational and a lot of fun – thank you!

We've got amazing amounts of needlework supplies in our tiny space. Mail order and internet sales keep us busy and I firmly believe it is because our goal from the beginning has been to replicate, as closely as possible, the experience of visiting a needlework shop for our distance

customers. We are always happy to put together kits, change fabric counts, do thread conversions, make linen and thread suggestions and do calculations for you. We often answer “how to” or “what do you think” questions by email or telephone.

Please visit our web site at www.TraditionalStitches.com. You'll find that our shopping cart system is easy to use and very secure. All of the products that we carry are listed there. If you don't happen to find what you are looking for, we are always happy to help with special requests. We understand that not everyone is comfortable ordering on-line so we have a toll free telephone number that you are welcome to use 1-866-208-9650.

When you contact the shop, you'll often email or speak with Renee. She has done a wide range of cross stitch and has a really good eye for conversions and colour. Adele is our artist. She works in fibre, paper and watercolours and takes great care in packaging your orders. Charlotte is always busy stitching ornaments for her family and grandchildren and she also works diligently to ensure accuracy and careful packaging of your orders.



We stock lots of kits and designers including the new Blackbird Designs and Little House Needleworks series.

THE STITCHERS' VILLAGE shoppe FOCUS

I love samplers and anything to do with historic needlework. I am a member of our local sampler guild as well as our national organization, the Embroiderer's Association of Canada. I take as many classes and workshops as I can – I feel that the more experiences I have, the better support I can offer to our customers. I also attend 3 trade shows in the US each year to keep on top of the newest products, latest trends and best in materials. I am just home from the Nashville Needlework Market – the best one yet!



And our hand-dyed silks wall!

We offer some really unique programs at Traditional Stitches. Our monthly Stash Enhancement Program is our favourite group. SEP members receive a surprise package of stash (usually an assortment of newly released thread, linen, charts, and stitching tools) in the mail each month. We've also got thread, linen, magazine and designer Collector Programs that are customizable to your current stash. Our most popular automatic programs are the Blackbird Designs Loose Feathers series and the Little House Needlework's Ornament of the Month. We have had successful on-line classes and Stitch-A-Longs and are working on exciting new ones for our 10th Anniversary year.



Samples of Society of Soie Surfine silks

Traditional Stitches is proud to be one of only 5 member shops of the Society of Soie Surfine. Soie Surfine is an amazing silk thread for work on 40 to 45 count and finer linens. Our exclusive silk colours have been hand dyed by Gloriana threads and Lakeside Linens has created the perfect linen exclusively for the Society of Soie Surfine!

Samplers are our focus, but we do carry supplies for other counted thread techniques including hardanger and canvaswork as well as goldwork and crewel embroidery. We publish a free email newsletter every 2 weeks or so. You'll find information about new products and needlework events both in the shop and around the world. Signing up is easy – please visit our web site at www.TraditionalStitches.com and click on the Subscribe button. We make every attempt to keep our postage rates reasonable while still shipping in a safe and timely manner. We keep open lines of communication about the status of orders. We enjoy our personal relationships, whether they are by email or telephone. It is a highlight of our day when Diane phones from Thailand or Leslie-Ann calls from South Africa. We aren't sure how they found our little shop...we are just happy that they did! Please send us a note...we look forward to hearing from you.

Traditional Stitches is our competition host for March ... turn to page 9 for a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate to spend at Traditional Stitches!

creating creation THE STORY OF A MASTERPIECE

by Deborah Dicks

You might remember in September of last year we included an article from Deborah Dicks, one of our members who lives who lives in northern Idaho, up in the mountains above a small town with the tiniest LNS ever!

Well ... Deborah has been extremely busy working on a masterpiece! It is a truly amazing piece of work and we are thrilled she is happy to share the story of how she created it ...

I have been asked me how I stitched Creation without first charting it. Here is the story.

One morning last February, I listened to a friend read the first few lines of the Book of Genesis in the Bible. Since I am a very visual person, when I hear something or read something on a page, most of the time a picture of that description pops into my mind. I really see it in my mind's eye. When she read the words "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the water" that word hovering struck me and I could see a glimmering mist hanging over a dark body of water, slowly undulating, shimmering in the absence of any other light. And then, for some reason, I thought, "I should stitch that!" The reason that is odd, is that I am a sampler person, not a stitched picture person.

So, I began.

I knew I wanted a dark, earthy color for the background. I had a full yard of Zweigart dirty linen, which is an unbleached, natural linen that is a light coffee shade. I tend to like this color anyway. I had no idea of the size this piece would be but did

know it needed to contain certain elements. The words of the text, a stormy sky, a representation of the eye of God, the Creator. The Spirit hovering over the water, and then Light. So, as one does when designing a poster or other illustration that includes words, I loosely sketched and sketched and sketched. Finally, being the somewhat impatient soul that I am, I hefted the yard of linen onto my lap, snapped a hoop (this was before my wonderful stitching stand was even an idea) and stitched "In" with the "I" from a very large and ornate antique alphabet.

I continued stitching the first few words until I realized if I kept going, this sampler would be 750 stitches wide - a bit much by anyone's standards. So.... I took a

break and went to bed. It was late on that first day of stitching. Very late and dark on that cold February here in north Idaho. And I dreamed and saw the clouds.

The clouds swirled and boiled in my dreams; the stormy blues, grey greens and rich cobalts, pale greens, teals, deep sea blue-greens rolled into golds and finally becoming ecru and white. They are sort of Van Gogh-ish in inspiration, but mostly mine. Think "Starry Night".

Next morning, I opened my boxes of flosses and pulled out all my favorite blues, greens, golds and I had no choice but to simply begin. I proceeded from the edge of the third line of text, which as it happens reaches about halfway across the pattern. I stitched the churning





clouds, planning that they would involve all those colors, representing the stormiest of storms to the glowing and peaceful finale that would include the eye of God, sending the fingers of light earthward. Those clouds took weeks.

Meantime, while alternately dreaming and stitching what I dreamed, I worked on a row of motifs and more text. I included some specialty stitches and finally got down to that hovering bit. At that point, I decided where the right side should end, and was able to trim the excess fabric. Thank goodness for that, because summer was nigh and wrangling a yard of hot linen in one's lap, with a 12" hoop is not a fun thing to do.

I stitched the borders on each side and the next dilemma was just how far to continue downward? Should I stitch more of Genesis or less? Consideration for the size of the final piece won out and I decided that simply ending with "And there was light" was sufficient. So there it was. I knew where the end would be, just not how it would appear in thread.

More dreams, more weeks, slight burn out. Let's be honest - major burn out.

Finally, finally, I "saw" the sun. Yes, there it was, reaching with glowing fingers, heavenward. One might think the sun would be in the

heavens, but in this case, the heavens were a lot further up than the sun - into eternity, I would say. So, now to stitch the sun - how many golds, yellows, ecrus, whites? Since I had no thought of ever charting, the idea that maybe a zillion colors might be a deterrent to another stitcher, I went wild. Well, not a zillion, but a lot.

I perused my many photos of sunsets. Here in the mountains we have wonderful sunsets that gild both winding river and hilltops. Sunsets here are rife with brilliant and unbelievable colors. I began with the ball of fire, and then rays reaching upward, outward - long, fiery, golden strands of color, twisting, twining, touching everything in creation, such as there was at that point. I tried several times to chart the sun, but it was no use. Not that I couldn't chart it. I couldn't stitch from the chart which was too complex, and I too anxious to see it on the fabric. Nothing worked as well as simply gathering all the colors, many needles threaded and at the ready, and simply going about it as my mind's eye dictated. At some point, I paused and looked at that flaming sun. I realized even the sun's rays can extend only so far and look balanced on the stitched piece. The entire right side at the bottom was open.

Again, I dreamed and then, searching my files of antique and copyright

free motifs, found a lovely old curling design that was reminiscent of ocean waves, or whatever one chooses to imagine. I alternated most all of the other blues, teals and golds as I worked from light, near the sun, to dark toward the furthest edge. By then, I had the work mounted on my stitching stand. What a relief to see more and a small circle. Also, the hoop left marks and crushed those pretty stitches, so the scroll frame was a wonderful help. By then, another winter had arrived. I added a central motif, slightly modified to fit. I entered initials and a date, an old one for fun, and sat back, satisfied.

Oh, what about that hovering bit? When doing that, of course, I dreamed it. Night after night, I dreamed, saw the colors and then in the morning, just sat and looked at the work, thinking how I could interpret those visions in stitches. Finally, I began and you see what resulted. The little picture above is a small section below the hovering row. There is a netting with seaweed entwined, a couple of starfish that I will have a bit of explaining on the chart instructions. It is sort of a combination of stitches with a twist of my own. Then there are some buttonhole wheel shells, and a curling (bullion stitch) snail although I realized later, he is upside down. Snails can crawl upside down, can't they? :-)

So there is the story, from February 17th, 2009 thru November 1, 2009. Creating Creation took a lot of time, but in the end, I think it was worthwhile.





March ... National Craft Month in the US!

by Jen Funk Weber

March is National Craft Month in the US. A month to celebrate crafting? You betcha! Why is crafting, specifically needlework, important? Let me count the ways.

1. It is physically relaxing. Embroidery has been shown to reduce blood pressure.

2. It is mentally relaxing. A focused mind is a quiet mind. Problems and annoyances take a back seat. At the same time, a quiet mind is great at contemplating and generating creative ideas.

3. It increases self-esteem. It's satisfying to complete a project, and we feel more confident in undertaking a new one. Self-esteem is often addressed in terms of children, but guess what: we all need a healthy dose.

4. It builds learning skills. Research shows that hands-on activities increase learning. Furthermore, what we learn in one craft can give us insights and abilities in other, unrelated, activities.

5. It's healthy and therapeutic. It builds motor skills and might help prevent arthritis. Physical therapists recommend stitching to some clients in recovery.

6. It provides quality time for friends and family. Crafting together offers opportunities to build relationships and lasting memories.

7. It connects us through time and space. People all over the world and throughout history embroider. We will all leave a legacy of needlework.

8. It gives us something constructive to do during otherwise boring or sedentary moments: sitting in waiting rooms, attending community council meetings, watching TV.

9. It makes us role models, demonstrating the value of creative endeavors and encouraging others to explore their own creativity.

10. It's fun!

Celebrate National Craft Month here in the Village by trying something new: take a class, visit the Tea Shoppe, stitch a bookmark for the Stitching for Literacy Bookmark Challenge--and enter the Village contest for a chance to win prizes!



feta and artichoke dip

from
allrecipes.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (13.75 ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained, coarsely chopped
- 1 (8 ounce) package crumbled feta
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 2 ounces pimientos, drained and diced
- 3 cloves garlic, diced
- 1 tomato, chopped
- 3 green onions, sliced

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease 9x9 inch baking dish. Combine the artichoke hearts, feta, mayonnaise, Parmesan cheese, pimientos, and garlic in a bowl; blend thoroughly. Spoon into prepared baking dish. Bake in preheated oven until top is lightly brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove and garnish with tomatoes and green onions.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:

Amount Per Serving Calories: 157 | Total Fat: 14.4g | Cholesterol: 21mg

the bookmark challenge at tsv

The Stitchers' Village has partnered with not one, but two libraries for the Needle and ThREAD: Stitching for Literacy 2010 Bookmark Challenge. At the beginning of the school year, thirty-three libraries wrote to Jen Funk Weber, asking if they might receive bookmarks during the 2010 Challenge. Participating shops and guilds usually contact their own local libraries, but these libraries want to be included, too. Because TSV is a global Web community, we've adopted two of these "orphan" libraries.

The librarians are grateful for needleworkers' support of literacy and are eager to share embroidery with their young patrons. Please help us provide beautiful hand-stitched bookmarks to our library partners, and encourage kids to read.

Of course, we're not just going to support a good cause; we're also going to have some fun! Join us in the Tea Shoppe as we explore color and make bookmarks. Jen will post a doodle pattern soon that we will use to test unique color combinations based on color theories. Then we'll turn our doodles into bookmarks for the Challenge. Post your bookmark images to the Stitching for Literacy Flickr Group. Now we can share images of the bookmarks we create for the Challenge! It's Jen's first venture into the Flickr system. She's always wanted to see images of donated bookmarks, so we hope you'll share. Once you post images to Flickr, you can also post them in the Tea Shoppe Bookmark Challenge photo thread.

This is a public Flickr group, and we've labeled it "safe," meaning appropriate for kids as well as adults. No R-rated bookmarks, please! Please reduce your images, making the longest dimension 400 pixels. Each person is limited to five uploads per week, and we'll see only the most recent 200 uploads. If the group proves active, we'll upgrade to unlimited storage and uploads. <http://www.flickr.com/groups/stitchingforliteracy>

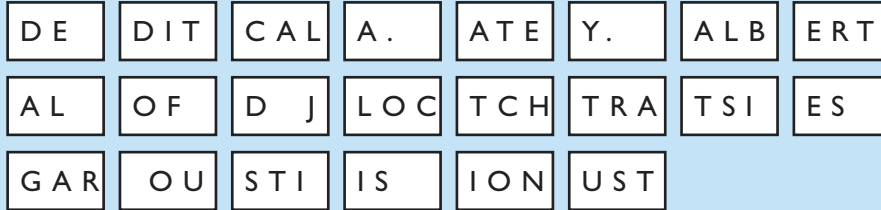
Every bookmark you donate to the TSV collection is an entry into the TSV Bookmark Challenge Contest. Send your bookmarks to: **The Stitchers' Village, 12819 Bedford Falls Drive, Cypress, TX 77429**. They must arrive by May 6, 2010. Every bookmark receives one entry into the contest. If you stitch and send ten bookmarks, your name will be entered ten times into the drawing. On May 7, 2010, winners will be randomly drawn from all entries. The Grand Prize winner will win a Complete Set of Dinky Dyes Silk Embroidery Thread in a Stitching for Literacy Zippered Tote. Five Runners Up will receive their choice of twenty-five (25) skeins of Dinky Dyes 6-strand embroidery silk, and a Cat's Whiskers Design Studio chart or kit.

Everyone who participates receives the joy and satisfaction of encouraging kids to read, introducing them to embroidery, and supporting a great cause. Please join the Bookmark Challenge thread in the Tea Shoppe, and let us know that you're stitching bookmarks. We are a substantial group, and if we all stitch just one bookmark, we can support more than the two libraries we are currently committed to. I'm still looking for partners for sixteen orphan libraries.

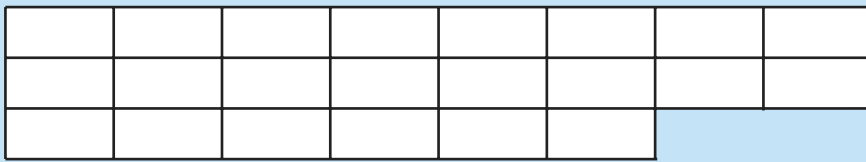
MARCH 2010 COMPETITION

Unscramble the tiles below to discover the mystery sentence (the answer can be found in the Traditional Stitches article). Email your unscrambled sentence to Janie on: editortsv@stitchersvillage.com by end of day on Sunday March 28, 2010 for a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate to spend at Traditional Stitches.

Note: You must be a member of TSV to enter.



Unscramble the tiles to discover the mystery sentence.



NEW 'FINISHING' STORE OPENS IN THE STITCHERS' VILLAGE

Been looking for someone to 'finish' all those wonderful stitched projects that are sitting in the back of your craft cupboard? Don't have time to complete them yourself? Well, now we have our very own 'finisher' in The Stitchers' Village, eager to help those projects see the light of day.

Karen Dekker, the proprietor of 'Finely Finished' has moved into Shoppe 40.

Karen has been stitching for over twenty years but it wasn't until she started blogging and joining exchanges that she learned there were so many ways to finish a stitching project. Karen took some finishing classes and found that she really enjoyed it.

"It's fun to play with fabric and ribbons and pins to create a new look for a



Karen Dekker and her husband Doug.

FEBRUARY

competition WINNER!

Congratulations go to **Cathlyn Backs** - our February competition winner. Cathlyn wins a \$100 gift certificate from The Stitcher's Workshop - the perfect place for a little retail therapy!

And the mystery answer was 'Stitchers Workshop'

stitched piece," said Karen. "In 2009 I started Finely Finished thanks to the encouragement and support of my family and friends."

"A lot of stitchers enjoy stitching but not the process of turning their beautiful stitching into a final project."

Hand-sewing scissor fobs, floss tags, little pillows and biscornus are 'no-sew' cubes and pinkeeps are just a few finishes Karen enjoys doing.

So, pop into Shoppe 40 to see if Karen can help you with any of your finishing needs.

what's happening | at the village shoppes?

We are very excited to announce that **The Stitchers Village Travel Agency** is now **OPEN FOR BUSINESS!**

You will find the Travel Agency in the blue building with the bright red door located next door to the Newspaper Office ... and when you click on the door you will be directed to the Customer Destination Board (just like at the airport).

This is where you will find information about classes, events and happenings being held all over the world.

So ... from now on, if you want to know what's happening at The Village Shoppes, or are looking for a special stitching weekend away pop into The

Travel Agency and be inspired!

You will never again be like our gorgeous little old lady ... all packed up with nowhere to go!



THE STITCHERS' VILLAGE

2010 Bookmark Challenge Contest

The Stitchers' Village has accepted the Needle and ThREAD: Stitching for Literacy 2010 Bookmark Challenge, and now we need your help.

The **Needle and ThREAD: Stitching for Literacy** program seeks to encourage and reward kids for reading—and introduce them to embroidery at the same time. Bookmark Challenge participants (like us) collect hand-stitched bookmarks and donate them to libraries and schools during Children's Book Week, where they are awarded to kids for reading accomplishments.

Will you help us put hand-stitched bookmarks into kids' hands and books by stitching a bookmark?

Naturally, we at The Stitchers' Village want to turn this into a contest, complete with prizes ...

The contest rules are simple:

1. Stitch a bookmark. Any pattern, technique, fabric, fiber, embellishments, etc. Every bookmark counts.
2. Send it to **The Stitchers' Village,**
12819 Bedford Falls Drive,
Cypress, TX 77429

between now and **May 6, 2010** for a chance to win a prize. Every bookmark receives one entry into the contest. If you stitch and send ten bookmarks, your name will be entered ten times into the drawing.

On May 7, 2010, winners will be randomly drawn from all entries. The Grand Prize winner will win a **Complete Set of Dinky Dyes Silk Embroidery Thread in a Stitching for Literacy Zippered Tote.** Five Runners Up will receive their choice of **twenty-five (25) skeins of Dinky Dyes 6-strand embroidery silk, and a Cat's Whiskers Design Studio chart or kit.**

Please help us promote literacy and share the joy of needlework.
As Jen Funk Weber, the Stitching for Literacy founder, says,

“Reading and stitching make the world a better place.”