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Embroidered in embroidery

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Written by Phyllis Levine | For the Press Banner | Friday, 25 January 2008

Retiree keeps craft alive, continues volunteering

There's no end to Georgann Lane-Guyer's interest in the ancient, intricate craft of embroidery.

She has studied traditional Japanese embroidery with a master from Japan who opened a school in Atlanta. She won the top award for her work at a meeting at Georgia's Callaway Gardens. After studying embroidery judging, she became a national certified embroidery judge.

One day in 1982, Guyer, a Boulder Creek resident, went into a Scotts Valley shop called Nimble Fingers, where a chapter of the Embroiderers Guild of America was getting started. The purpose was to keep alive all forms of embroidery, not just the popular pre-printed variety.

Her participation since then has run deep. She has been an officer in the Greater Pacific Branch seminar chairwoman and will be the 2010 exhibit chairwoman when the national guild meets in San Francisco.

"There are so many types. It is always interesting to explore them," she said. "It is creative and beautiful and useful pieces with many different stitches."

Even before she retired late last year, "it was a relaxing way to relieve stress from my job in work," she said. "It has provided me with the opportunity to meet artistic people from all over the country."

Guyer, 61, is a native of Honolulu. She moved with her parents to Pensacola, Fla., and attended State University for a degree in social welfare. After working for a year in Florida, she moved to Washington to earn a master's degree in social work from the University of Washington.

Friends in San Francisco lured her to California, where she found a job in San Jose. She has lived in Boulder Creek since 1975 and recently retired from the Santa Clara County Department of Family Children's Services after 37 years.

She met her husband, Tom, on a Sierra Club hike. He is retired from Soquel Creek Water Dis...

Besides her passion for embroidery, Guyer has always liked to explore cemeteries. Twelve years ago she saw a plea for volunteer docents at Evergreen Historical Cemetery in Santa Cruz. She offered her services and has participated ever since.

She is also a member of the Boulder Creek Historical Society, which operates the San Lorenzo Valley Museum. She wants to work with



Georgann Lane of Boulder Creek, a master embroideress nationwide, stands next to one of her creations. Photo by Szewczyk/Press-Banner



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the society to offer historical tours of the small Independent Order of Oddfellows cemetery.

Lucjan Szewczyk/Press-Banner

"I have only been retired for five weeks, and I want to do meaningful things," she said. "I like to garden, I go to hatha yoga twice a week and I am taking up scrapbooking."


Her goal is simple: to "continue the volunteer work I love and to do more stitching." Asked to describe a highlight of her life, she hesitated only momentarily.

"I have a pilot's license, and I flew my parents up to the Nut Tree (in Vacaville) for lunch," she related. "I had total control and was totally responsible for their safety."

"We had a really nice day and got along well, which, that wasn't always the case. My parents were very impressed."

She said her philosophy is like a "Blondie and Dagwood" cartoon, where he is late and crashes out the door. To her, it means, "Take time to smell the roses, but don't miss the bus."

Scotts Valley writer Phyllis Levine, a retired college professor and public radio host, writes about her valley neighbors. She can be contacted at phyllis831@aol.com.

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A horizontal banner advertisement with a dark green background. On the left, there is a small logo for 'DAVID LYING REAL ESTATE'. The main text is in yellow and white, highlighting the agent's reputation as 'The Nicest Guy in Luxury Real Estate' and 'at the #1 Residential Real Estate Firm in Santa Cruz County'. The phone number '477-2504' is prominently displayed in white. On the right side, there is a small portrait of Peter Verbica, a man in a suit and tie. A small disclaimer in white text is located at the bottom left of the banner.