

News Release

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Calender Information:

What: 3rd Annual Patchwork Fabric Festival

Where: Jackson County Recreation Center in Cullowhee

Date & Time: June 7th, 9am until 5pm

Description: 25 local crafters in Traditional Dress typical of the heritage of Western North Carolina demonstrating & selling works of the hand passed-down from yesteryear.

Kindred Spirits of Yesterday Linger Still

At the 3rd Annual Patchwork Fabric Festival

June 7th, 9am - 5pm

The old time tradition of gathering together to do spinning and carding brought about a sense of community here in the mountains. Stories linger still of how mothers and grandmothers used to have carding parties all the time, the ladies getting together like quilting bees.

"We'd borrow chairs from all the neighbors," Lillie Ammons Owen (80), Tuckasegee native says, "and sit around in a circle. We'd have cookies and lemonade, then do the carding. Later, at night, my mother and grandmother would do our spinning. That's when I'd get to help. I still have Mother's spinning wheel." The traditions of spinning, weaving, quilting, sewing and other hand stitchery has survived in the Appalachian culture through the generations, kept alive by the hands of those who value these skills passed down to them. At the Patchwork Fabric Festival presented at the Jackson County Recreation Center in Cullowhee on June 7th, these skills are showcased and honored, demonstrated and shared through the products produced to sell. Presented by Catch the Spirit of Appalachia, Inc (CSA), the Appalachian Homestead Farm & Preserve and the Jackson County Parks & Recreational Department, this inside fabric festival (with homemade food) has drawn crafters (in traditional dress) from the region to showcase these old time traditions. This 3rd year of the festival holds excitement in it's exhibits, it's depth and demonstrations.

"Seizing the Moment" Book Signing

With a new twist, two women with years of experience in the art of cross-stitch and knowledge of the great outdoors have teamed together to share their expertise in a most unique way. Etheree Burkett Chancellor has hiked throughout North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia with an intense desire to "seize the moment" she views through the lens of her camera. Jean Sutton Mincey, following her mother's legacy of the love of botany and her own homespun talent of cross-stitch, has created designs of Etheree's wildflower photos, thus stitching in time the brilliant colors and shapes from the mountainsides of Appalachia. The book showcases 28 wildflowers, captured with the camera, and designed so you can cross-stitch your own wildflower garden. A public book signing for the book will take place at the Patchwork Fabric Festival. Also on hand will be a quilt top, as well as other items, made from the designs in the book,

Old-Fashioned Bed Turning

A "Bed Turning" is a way of introducing quilters and non-quilters to the beauty of antique or unique quilts in an interesting and different way. Quilts will be placed on a demonstration bed, and as each quilt is turned and held up for the audience, the quilt will be described and it's story told to the audience. Dogwood Crafters Cooperative of Dillsboro will host this crowd pleaser.

Spinning and Dying

An example of one whose ancestors did not teach her the art skills, but she, herself, went out of her way to learn them, is Frances Moore, Media Specialist at South Macon Elementary School in Franklin. Here is her story of why she learned to spin and dye at John Campbell Folk School.

"I bought a lamb at our county fair one year; we raised her like a very large dog. Rosy, our lamb, lived in a large dog house, wandered in the yard and slept on the front porch. Each year when the 4-H agent sheared the lambs, he would ask if I wanted the wool. I decided I needed to learn to spin and dye. I enrolled at folk school and had a great time. I have taken several more classes at the folk school and now own four spinning wheels. All of my dyes are natural, (made from plants, roots, stems). My favorite item to make from my yarn is socks. I currently do not have any sheep, but when I retire from the school system, I want to buy two or three sheep as pets. I have learned so much from this hobby."

Fabric for Quilters

Mrs. S Fabrics of Sylva makes her debut with the festival this year, as she brings small cuts of fabric in cloth-covered storage bins for purchase by our many quilters of the region.

Children's Corner

To encourage our young ones to learn to appreciate the crafts of old, this year the festival will have a special corner for young upcoming stitchers! On display will be examples of their handiwork, and they will experience some hands-on crafts at times during the day.

The Patchwork Fabric Festival, sponsored by Catch the Spirit of Appalachia, Jackson County Parks & Recreation, and the Appalachian Homestead Farm & Preserve, will also feature demonstrations by the heritage hands of Annie Lee Bryson (crocheting), Susan Leveille (loom weaving), Ruth Moore Pruitt (quilting), Nan Smith (crocheting), Patricia Purdy (Red Sock animals), Smoky Mountain Quilters Guild's "Quilts of Valor" team (quilting), Elly Davey (folk figures) and so many more demonstrating their expertise.

So, the kindred spirits of yesterday lingers still as the Patchwork Fabric Festival brings together friends and neighbors, sitting around in a circle in traditional dress, still creating a sense of community. Come out and visit the crafters on Saturday, June 7th, from 9am until 5pm. For more information, call CSA at 828-631-4587 or the Jackson County Recreation Center at 828-293-3053.

Captions:

(higher dpi photos available)

- 1) Frances Moore
- 2) Seizing the Moment



Seizing the Moment



*Wildflower Photography
with
Cross-Stitch Designs*

Jean Sutton Mincey
and
Etheree Burkett Chancellor