

Becky J Designs

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c**Crossing Threads with Becky J**

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Old Fashioned cross stitch the easy way

Volume 1, Issue 10

April 2008

Happy Spring

I decided to get back into action this year and attended two trade shows. The first one was in Tampa, Florida and the second was in Atlanta. These were "The Original Sewing and Quilt Expo". We had a wonderful time at both and met some great people. The end of March I attended The American Embroidery Conference in Marietta, GA. Dianne Pomeroy did a great job with this event and the classes went well. I did a "hands on" multi-hooping exercise so everyone could try my technique for multi-hoop designs.

I have two additional events planned for May. I will be at Creative Sewing in Knoxville, TN for a couple of days starting May 12, 2008. I will be doing a presentation of Pattern Maker at their embroidery club and then additional classes in the days following. If you are going to be in the area please get in touch with Becky Brown at Creative Sewing Center. It will be a great time to see old friends as well as new ones.

Jan Galbraith of Knoxville, TN is now traveling with me to shows and events. She used to teach Pattern Maker for Best Sewing and is a long time friend. She has even come out with her own new set of cross stitch quilt block designs available on my web site.

My other event for May is in my own backyard. It is sponsored by Tidewater Sew-Vac in association with Tidewater Home Sewing Educators. It will be a one day seminar with classes in Pattern Maker, Master Works, Pe Design, Photo Stitch, Quilting 101 and Computer questions. I will be teaching a total of three classes and they have seven class rooms. I am very excited to finally have some education in this area. If you are close you might want to consider a day trip. I understand that this is just the first of many to come.

I have also been busy creating new designs. The Embroidery Bedtime stories are coming along. I

have four almost finished with the story as well as the designs to go with them.

What's new with Hobbyware and Pattern Maker: There is a new maintenance release available, version 4.06. It adds quite a bit of new features. Be sure to check periodically to make sure you are running the latest version of the software. To check your version simply open Pattern Maker and go into the Help menu>Look for updates. Make sure your Pattern Maker CD is in your CD drive. (It has a file on it that the program will need to update and if the CD is in the drive it knows exactly where to find it) Pattern Maker will now go to the Hobbyware website and check your version of software with any new maintenance releases. If you need updating, it will download automatically and install. That's all there is to it.

Still waiting for the new sampler packs. Hopefully we will have them soon. I did get good news from Scott Horton, the programmer: Pattern Maker does work with the new Vista operating system.

My "**Pattern Maker Toolbox**" 2 CD-ROM set continues to be a popular tool for people using the Pattern Maker software. This tool addresses all of the new features in the software, incorporated into my classes but not included in the tutorial CDs.

Questions and Answers

1. Can you create a cross stitch design easily that has no outline? Absolutely. The easiest way to do this is to import the graphic and let Pattern Maker create a design for you at the size you wish. Normally I use a hoop size, such as 4 by 4". By doing this Pattern Maker will actually pick the best colors matching the graphic. Limit the colors to about 20 to give you a range to use. Import the graphic in again at the same size but this time bring the image in as an underlay or template. Go to the Windows menu and tile them horizontally. Click on your first pattern to select it, go to the Palette menu to "save palette as" and name it something that makes sense to you. Click on your template, go the Palette menu to "open palette" to find the colors for your design. Close your original pattern so only the template is showing. I normally add a bright color such as magenta or electric blue to the palette. Use this color to color in all of the outline of the graphic. After finishing the outlines use the flood fill tool to fill all areas of your graphic. Once complete simply right click on the outline color and select "delete". Fill any areas of white space and you have a design which was easily done with no outlines or back stitches. The free design for this month was created in this manner

2. How can I take a large design and make a small one to fit my hoop? Open your large pattern in Pattern Maker. Go to the View menu and select solid blocks of color. Turn off grid. Go to the Palette menu and save your palette and name it. Go to the File menu and

export your pattern as a graphic file. You want to increase the resolution to about 200 to 300 dpi and name it. Now import the jpeg you just created back into Pattern Maker using the importing wizard. When you get the menu asking what kind of thread, choose the second option, "Use the colors in this palette" and browse to find your palette file. Continue through the importing process picking the size based on how small you want your new pattern to be and import. Pattern Maker will create a new pattern based on your new parameters. Close the importing wizard and tile the two patterns side by side. Using your original pattern fine tune your new smaller pattern so it matches as close as you can get to your original. Save and name your new pattern and export to your embroidery format.

Teaching Schedule and Events

- 1. Creative Sewing Center, Knoxville, TN May 12-13, 2008**
- 2. Tidewater Home Sewing Educators Seminar, Virginia Beach, VA May 31, 2008**

More events will be added as scheduled