

Stitchers Hideaway!

2005 Kissimmee, FL Fun Report

with
Jeannette Douglas of Jeannette Douglas Designs



While Hurricane Wilma tried to crash our party uninvited, instructor Jeannette Douglas and her husband Dale, and my husband Michael and I all arrived in Kissimmee safe and sound 3 days before the retreat began. We were all probably overdue for some rest and relaxation and were eager to get started. Before the retreat even began we were out having fun!

We had meals at nice restaurants, went on an airboat ride and saw alligators and many exotic birds, went to Old Town Amusement Park, went shopping, and just enjoyed each other's company. Jeannette and I, of course, were as excited as all the stitchers who were beginning to arrive ahead of the hurricane. We had adjoining hotel rooms and had fun going back and forth into each other's room to chat.

The night before the retreat began, I had a little, um, adventure. Well, okay, it was a totally humiliating experience. Now what would a Stitcher's Hideaway retreat be without me embarrassing myself?!? Sigh. You see, the night before the retreat began, I was working in the classroom to get things ready for the next morning. I was tired, but I swear that had nothing to do with it!! And I swear I hadn't had any *virgin* or otherwise Pina Coladas, either!!

What happened was I got on the elevator and pressed 7 for the 7th floor -- longing to climb into bed in room 709. As the elevator went up, I was engrossed in my thoughts. I got off the elevator and headed for the room. For some reason my key card wouldn't work. I figured the magnetic strip went dead on me for some reason, but wasn't concerned because my husband was in the room. So, I gently knocked on the door -- it was 11:30 p.m. and I didn't want to wake anyone else. There was no response, so I knocked a bit louder, then a bit louder. I thought, he must be asleep and can't hear me. So, I called, quietly at first, "Michael...Michael..." No response! Oh, I was so tired. Oh, I could hear the bed calling me.

"Michael! I'm locked out!" I said yet louder. Suddenly, I heard a sleepy male voice from within reply, "Can...can I help you?" It

wasn't Michael!! With horror my eyes shot to the room number and I saw that I wasn't at room 709, but room 209!!! When the elevator had stopped, I assumed it was at my destination floor! OMIGOSH!!! "Oh, I am SO, so sorry....I have the wrong room!" Then I bolted for the safety and covering of the elevator, zipped to room 709, and, gee, whattayaknow, the key card worked, and I slipped into my room with my face still bright red!!!

Oh, why, oh why do these things keep happening to me?!?! (blush)

Finally, the day of the retreat arrived. Excited stitchers waited impatiently in the hallway outside of the classroom for the fun to begin! They burst into the classroom to find Flip Flop design Fun Packs with fun Flip Flop items inside along with stash from A Whimsical Element, Brightneedle, Brittercup Designs, [Elizabeth's Designs](#), Finger Work, [It's Fine-ally Finished](#), [Jeannette Douglas Designs](#), [Just Cross Stitch](#), [Just Nan](#), Knotted Tree NeedleArt, [Kreinik](#), M Designs, [Olde Colonial Designs](#), Piecework Magazine, [Praiseworthy Stitches](#), [Rosewood Manor](#), Sue Hillis Designs, [The Prairie Schooler](#), [The Victoria Sampler](#), [Udder Cream](#), [Weeks Dye Works](#), [With My Needle](#) and, of course, Stitcher's Hideaway. Some dove right into their Fun Packs, while others started a stash enhancement frenzy as they dove right into all the great items brought in by Jan & Pam of [The Someday Shop](#), and Linda from Needlecraft World.

And as if that weren't enough, designer Brenda Lowry of "A Whimsical Element" set up a fantastic trunk show for us. We all enjoyed meeting Brenda and seeing all of her stitched models. I wish you all could have seen them! Brenda is working on developing a website, but until then many of her designs can be viewed and purchased at [Picture This Plus](#).



The stitchers were from FL, IN, ME, MN, and OH. It was hard determining who traveled the farthest this time because 3 stitchers from MN lived within about 80 miles of each other!! Thanks to Mapquest, I found that Sherry traveled the farthest and so received many special gifts. The other two MN stitchers received hilarious feathery flamingo pens!

Like any addicted stitchers, we were all very eager to begin our beautiful class project, the Sunshine State Sampler, which captured so much of sunny Florida. What a beauty! As always, seeing the model is far more incredible than seeing it scanned onto a webpage. The colors were so bright and beautiful, and the packaging Jeannette created for our kits was adorable!! The fabric and accessories were in beautiful bags with little flip flops attached. It was such a treat to even *look* at the kits!



Stitchers Betty & Joyce with Jeannette and stitched model of Sunshine State Sampler

Jeannette's designs are amazing. Her ability to creatively use stitches to convey the beauty of nature is really intriguing. I keep wondering how she thinks to use this or that stitch to so perfectly capture the essence of what we see around us. She just really has a gift! And we learned so much from her! She not only taught us how to do each stitch used in her sampler, she also shared stitching tips in general. We were definitely enriched by our time with her. She was so patient and sweet with us, providing special guidance to those of us who were new to stitching on linen, too. We made great progress during our time together.



Peppered throughout the retreat were doorprizes, doorprizes, and more doorprizes!! It was so much fun!! The prizes were donated by Brittercup Designs, Calico Crossroads, Earth Threads, Finger Work, Glory Bee, Jeannette Douglas Designs, Kreinik, monsterbubbles, Nordic Needle, Praiseworthy Stitches, Rosewood Manor, Stitcher's Hideaway, Stitchy Kitty, The MonkeyWorks, and With My Needle. We all love surprises!!



And speaking of surprises, I finally revealed the surprise I had for them -- a little keepsake of the retreat, which I called *Flip Flop Fun!* Weeks Dye Works and Olde Willow Stitchery so generously supplied the threads for this project! Thank you, thank you!



It was fun to get to know the other stitchers! Some great friendships have begun that probably never would have happened except at a Stitcher's Hideaway. Debby from Maine and Mary from Minnesota (below) met at the retreat and had such fun together! Now Mary is trying to lure Debby to the Minnetonka, MN retreat being held next April! Will Debby weaken?!? We'll see!! LOL!!



By the way, Debby had signed up for the Sturbridge 2005 retreat but out of necessity had to cancel. She was so upset to miss a retreat that she then registered for both Kissimmee 2005 and Mystic 2005!! Now that's an addicted stitcher!!



Wise guys Brenda & Marge in the back row....



I don't know what could be more fun for any stitcher then to gather with other stitchers for two days straight, work on a fantastic project, meet and learn from an excellent instructor, get free stash, have a trunk show and two shops set up for personal stash enhancement, and just stitch, stitch, and stitch!! Ah....paradise!!

Here's Jeannette providing assistance to Diane. Jeannette went about making sure we all knew what we were doing. She talked about her life as a designer and some on-the-road adventures she's had. Let me tell you, stitchers -- she has this adorable Canadian accent and is just so sweet you can't help but love her to pieces!!

"Thanks again for a wonderful fun filled and educational retreat with such a patient teacher, never felt as if I had to hurry to finish something. No stress YIPPEE. Since I am so new, I do get anxious as we learn new things and try to apply it. Jeannette was terrific in keeping pace for the whole class, letting the faster ones go ahead and do their thing and the newbies take their time and enjoy it. I finally had time to read Jeannette's comments on Florida for each row. What a nice addition. Hope to do this again. ~ Judy"

"Thanks for a great weekend!!! Loved every minute of it!" ~ Michele





Jeannette and me -- silly as usual.

"I really enjoyed the Kissimmee retreat and am looking forward to another one next year. It was wonderful meeting you and Jeannette. I've been working on my sampler but have a long way to go to finish it. Thanks for a great experience." ~ Betty



Jennifer and Debby...unable to resist the beautiful Stitcher's Hideaway t-shirts! Heh-heh-heh!!



"If I could just untangle my fingers...."



Such a studious Group...

We certainly had a lovely time together! On Saturday evening we had Show 'n Tell and got to see each other's work, and shared many giggles. The time just flew by!! Suddenly it was time to say goodbye until the next retreat!

That night Jeannette and I went to bed and slept hard -- but not for long!! Our husbands had us up and at 'em first thing in the morning because we were headed for a vacation at Disney World!!! One of the stitchers, Diane from Minnesota, joined us for several days of fun. We spent the first day playing at the Magic Kingdom until it began to cloud over. We made it back to our lodging in time for the hurricane to arrive. I have to say that I had no problem with that!! Oh, I needed some sleep in the worst way. So, we hunkered down for the evening without setting an alarm clock for once. We knew that the parks wouldn't be open in the morning. After a much needed sleep, we woke up on Monday and found that the resorts were running back-to-back Disney movies to keep us all entertained during the storm. Then suddenly the storm lifted around noon, the parks opened up, and off we ran for Epcot! The rest of our days were filled with Disney magic, and we pretty much forgot that the rest of the world existed!!



Some of the strangest things can happen to you at Disney World!!

We saw an outstanding firework display at Cinderella's Castle at the Magic Kingdom. WOW!!! It was GREAT!! And I just wish you could have all seen Diane dancing to music up Main Street USA!! (How did that go, Diane?--- "shimmering...glimmering...." LOL!) And Jeannette bravely went on the Tower of Terror at MGM, shrieked with terror and delight, and later returned to ride it TWO MORE TIMES!!



Here's Michael and I with our friend Tink!

Yes, we freely admit we were all out of control there, but oh, it was wonderful and so needed. Right after our little break, Jeannette headed to Ontario to teach and I had less than a week to finish preparing for two back-to-back retreats in Mystic, CT!

To the Kissimmee stitchers Jeannette and I send a big hug and thank you for a wonderful time together! And Jeannette thanks you for all the Good 'n Plenty, ladies!! Let's see how long it takes her to go through that stash!! LOL!!!

Love from Sue

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