

Stitchers Hideaway!

2006 Minnetonka, MN Fun Report with Ann & Liz of Brightneedle!

Oh, Wow! WHAT A FUN TIME WE HAD!!

The Minnetonka 2006 retreat started early for many of us as we gathered for a trip to [Stitchville](#) and then dinner at Famous Dave's Barbeque the night before the retreat began. Ann & Liz of [Brightneedle](#) joined us, thanks to Garry & Marianne.

You see, Ann & Liz had traveled from the east coast to Minnesota by train. Gary, husband of stitcher Marianne, drove his wife all the way from New York to attend the retreat. Gary has done this twice before for Marianne, earning him probably thousands of husband points! Not only that, but he and Marianne picked up Ann & Liz from the train station late at night and ushered them safely to their hotel. The next day they also took them to the Mall of America before meeting up with the rest of us for our trip to [Stitchville](#). Thank you, Garry!



Now I ask you. What would a Stitcher's Hideaway retreat be without me going through some kind of total humiliation?!? LOL!! Well, I didn't let you down, stitchers. Once again, I had an, um, *interesting* experience! Local stitcher Vicki picked me up at the airport on Wednesday before the retreat and we had a great time goofing around and eating fine food. Then Vicki brought me over to the hotel so I could check in and get settled. Well, that didn't work very well! I discovered I didn't have a reservation for that night. *Thud*. I must have screwed up but I'm not sure how. We drove to another hotel right nearby and discovered there was no room in that inn, either. Good grief. Here I am running the event and I'm homeless!!! Well, Vicki bailed me out and took me into her beautiful home for the evening. And we had such a great time! I met her son and he

grilled dinner for us. I hung out in Vicki's totally awesome stitching room that would make just about any stitcher totally swoon. It's a large, beautiful wood-paneled room with lots of natural lighting and a gas fireplace. There were comfy seats and lighting for stitching, along with a table and chairs. Now whenever I think of Vicki I'm going to be thinking of her stitching to her heart's content in that room! Well, Vicki -- thanks once again for all your help!

The afternoon before the retreat quite a number of us met for a run to [Stitchville](#), including Liz & Ann. I am always amazed at this shop. The local stitchers are SO fortunate! They have a huge selection of linens and

fibers displayed in a very user-friendly way. A group of stitchers meets weekly there just to hang out and stitch -- and, of course, buy more stash! LOL!! I'm serious, folks. The Minnesota stitchers are incredibly blessed to have such an amazing needlework shop.

After our stash enhancement, we had met many of the retreat attendees over dinner at Famous Dave's Barbeque. Oh, man. I had ribs and they were delicious. Sitting at my table were Connie and Rita who had traveled from Texas to attend the retreat. We also had stitchers from Maine, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and New York attend.



Let us in!

The morning of the retreat Deb from Stitchville, Liz, Ann, and I set up the classroom and got everything ready for class and shopping to begin. The stitchers began gathering outside the door, very eager to enter. Suddenly it was time and in they poured! Yay!!

Everyone found their name tags with little frog stickers on them, and then picked a spot in the classroom, where a Fun Pack filled with goodies awaited them. There was hot coffee ready along with some yummy goodies, too.

We had a lot of great stash to look at! In the Fun Packs alone we had wonderful items from A Whimsical Element, Brittercup Designs, Calico Crossroads, Cherished Stitches, Elizabeth's Designs, Finger Work, Interweave Press, It's Fine-ally Finished, Jeannette Douglas Designs, Knotted Tree NeedleArt, Kreinik, Lavender Wings, Legacy Designs, monsterbubbles, Rosewood Manor, Stitchy Kitty, Sue Hillis Designs, The Prairie Schooler, Weeks Dye Works, With My Needle, and Zweigart!



Ann & Liz brought a display of some of their designs with stitched models, private reserve charts and kits, handmade floss palettes and thread winders, beautiful handmade note cards, and a few kits from past classes that you can't buy in any needlework shop. I splurged on one myself! I wish you all could have seen the stitched models. They were so much fun to see. The amount of detail Ann & Liz put into each design is remarkable. They also displayed a stitched model of "A Most Noble Pursuit", which is a collaboration between 10 designers (see photo above) that was just recently released.



After a bit we settled down to begin our class time together. But first, the stitcher who traveled the farthest was revealed: Linda from Lewiston, Maine -- who happened to be my roomie! Linda received a little stuffed moose and a fantastic needlework kit. Then we learned that one stitcher had something unusual in her Fun Pack -- tissues covered with little frogs -- and she won a special gift. And then Kelly won a big stuffed frog that moves and sings "What a Wonderful World!" LOL!! He sang to us several times during the retreat. (Here's Kelly with a doorprize from [Praiseworthy Stitches](#) and the back of the singing frog!)

Now I know many of you stitchers are shuddering at the thought of all the frogs!! It's been a long-standing joke that if *the frog* visits you it means you have made stitching mistakes and must now "rippit...rippit... rippit..." I've felt for some time that the poor frog has been getting a bad rap! Afterall, think of how much we all learn from our mistakes! So, throughout the retreat stitchers were encouraged to *Embrace their Inner Frog!*

Ann & Liz gave us an introduction to the Dreamkeeper Etui, our retreat project. Some chose to stitch their Dreamkeeper as a sampler and some as an etui. A little square stitched with our initial was designed to hold our dream, which was written on acid-free paper to stitch right into the square. It's so cute!



Front of the Dreamkeeper



Back of the Dreamkeeper



Dreamkeeper Accesories - Front



Dreamkeeper Accesories - Back

Suddenly it was lunch time, and boy was it yummy! We had a birthday girl among us -- Stacy from MN -- and we sang Happy Birthday to her at lunch -- and again at dinner, and again when she won door prizes, and again, and again! LOL!! I guess we'll all remember Stacy's birthday!!

After lunch and some time to shop among the items displayed by Stitchville, Brightneedle, and Stitcher's Hideaway, we hopped right back into our class time. We learned two different methods for over-one stitching and covered some other stitches, too. As we began working on our projects, we were entertained by this designing duo. It is amazing how well they complement each other and how all of their designs are a collaboration between them. Ann lives in NY, and Liz lives in VA, yet they manage to create each design by fax and email, and the occasional times they have together. They met when they both lived in NY and formed an instant and lasting friendship. It turns out they were born just a day apart. They frequently finished each other's sentences and shared each other's thoughts. It really was fun to just listen to them! Pictured above is Ann assisting Karen & Linda.



Whenever we took breaks and before and after meals we shopped and shopped. It was so cool to see all the stitched models that Ann & Liz brought with them!

We certainly had some delicious meals at this hotel. Mmmm. We looked forward to each one.



Connie, Rita, and Deb from Stitchville



Marianne with a door prize from
The Victoria Sampler



Vicki with a door prize from
Brittercup Designs

Did I mention door prizes? There were so many wonderful items from very generous designers: Brittercup Designs, Cherished Stitches, Earth Threads, Elizabeth's Designs, Finger Work, Glory Bee, Interweave Press, Jeannette Douglas Designs, Knotted Tree NeedleArt, Kreinik, monsterbubbles, Praiseworthy Stitches, Rosewood Manor, Stitchy Kitty, The Victoria Sampler, With My Needle, and, of course, Stitcher's Hideaway. Deb from Stitchville and Liz & Ann also gave us many gifties. Actually, we were spoiled rotten!

After another delicious meal and even more shopping, everyone gathered in the classroom to see the surprise I had for them. Heh-heh-heh. Here it is!!



The Someday Shop / JAR Over-dyed Floss donated floss for "Embrace Your Inner Frog". The names of the flosses were a riot. The green in the frog is stitched in Fiendish Frog Dark and Fiendish Frog Light, and the lips and hearts are stitched in Lovely Lips Medium! Seriously! I'm not kidding! LOL!! The purple is Laughing Lilacs Dark and the lightest green is Crunchy Celery Light. Now how could anyone ever fear such a gorgeous frog? LOL!!



Now here's a picture of Liz. I have no explanation for this. What is she doing?!? Conducting an orchestra? Demonstrating a new finishing technique?!? Waving hi to herself?!? You can make up your own caption!!



Kerry & Kathy



Linda the Maine-iac

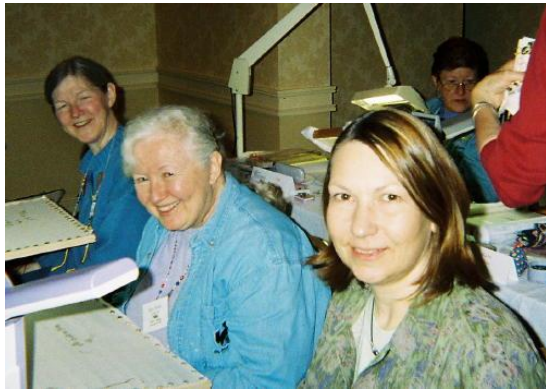


Kathy with a Victoria Sampler Door prize



Sisters-in-Law and Stitching Buddies - LuAnne & Janet

After a hearty breakfast the next morning we headed back to class to learn more of the stitches and techniques for creating our Dreamkeeper.



We spent many happy hours together just learning, chatting, and stitching. We had lots of time for individual help, too, which was great. As we stitched Ann & Liz shared about their lives and designs. It's really great to be able to spend 2 days like this with instructors and get to know them!

I find that I always learn from other stitchers at each retreat. Someone always has a good tip or has a helpful needlework tool I've never tried. It's a great opportunity to learn and expand your needlework skills.

Sisters Kenne Jean and Mary, and friend Diane



During the afternoon some of us played in our new stash. Kelly picked up a punchneedle project and Janet was able to show her how to do it. Several of us were interested in learning how so we all gathered around for a demonstration. Thanks, Janet!



I brought a little project along with me that I showed to everyone. The designer is Teresa Layman of Teresa Layman Designs. Teresa started out making little miniature rugs out of French and Colonial knots for doll houses. Her designs are adorable and stitchers quickly became interested. I'm doing one called *The Bunny Run Around*. The knots are done on muslin that has the design stamped on it. You basically fill in between the lines with knots in the designated color. The French knots are only wrapped once for these designs, and because they are done on muslin you don't "lose" the knots in the fabric. Liz gave it a try with dubious results -- ha! Then Ann gave it a try and nailed it immediately. Afterwards I stitched their names with lines pointing to their knots on my muslin just for fun. Since the retreat Ann told me she fell in love with the design and is now doing it herself!



And so we had a cozy, lazy afternoon of stitching and chatting together.



Stacy



Mary

Interspersed throughout the retreat were doorprizes, doorprizes, and doorprizes!!! What fun!



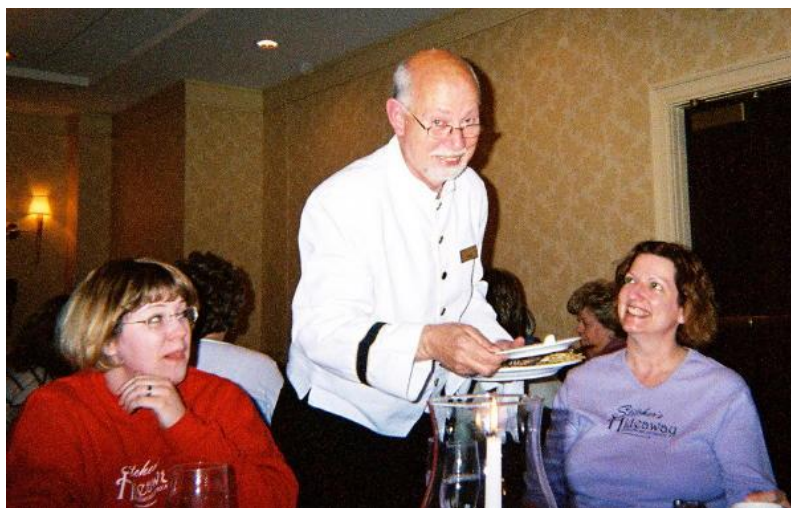
Connie with a door prize from Brittercup Designs



Karen with a door prize from Elizabeth's Designs

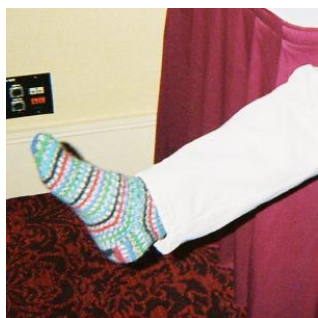
That evening, omigosh. We had a wonderful meal and were being totally pampered. A conversation began at one table about a subject which I can't totally divulge on this website in order to protect the, um, guilty! We had a wonderful waiter named John who was going about his business taking care of our dining needs. John overheard this certain conversation and finally could no longer contain himself. He said, "So *this* is what you ladies do at Stitcher's Hideaway!" LuAnne quipped back, "What happens at Stitcher's Hideaway, stays at

Stitcher's Hideaway." We began laughing pretty much out of control -- so loudly that a huge wedding reception in a ballroom next door could hear our wild laughter over their music!! Well, I think LuAnne is right and that some things just need to stay at Stitcher's Hideaway, because I'm sure not going to detail it here!!



Stacy the Birthday Girl, John the Waiter, LuAnne the Crazy

That evening we had Show 'n Tell! You just never know what you'll see at a Show 'n Tell since many of us also have other addictions to show off. This time, in among the fabulous stitching, were knitted socks and ceramics!



Mary's colorful knitted socks



Vicki won a ribbon for her work



“Thanks again for the wonderful retreat!! It was definitely worth traveling from Maine to attend this retreat and I even won an awesome gift for coming the furthest!!! It was also nice to take a class again with Ann and Liz! They are both so nice and fun to be with. It was great to meet new stitchers and also to see old faces again! The trip to Stitchville was totally awesome! I wish I lived a little closer but then again, I'd probably be broke all the time because I'd always be there shopping. Famous Dave's was just yummy and so was the General Store!! As usual, the retreat meals were great! Thanks Sue for all of the hard work you put into these retreats....it is truly appreciated!” ~

Linda



Linda with a door prize from Earth Threads

“First and foremost, thank you for putting on such a wonderful event! I can't even begin to imagine the balls you have to juggle to pull off a retreat like this; but I can assure you I appreciate your hard work!

Kudos to Ann and Liz of Brightneedle for teaching us such a beautiful project. I, for one, can't thank them enough for modifying their etui to a sampler over two for we, the over one-challenged. They are so talented and it was touching to hear the story of how they met and to share with us their extraordinary friendship!

And Deb from Stitchville? Class act all the way around. Her store was a stitcher's dream; but what can you say about having your stash enhancement experience delivered right to your door! Thanks, Deb, for all your efforts.

The people of Minnesota were kind and generous. Thanks, Linda, for carting us to Stitchville and Famous Dave's! The Marriott staff were fabulous and, if it would've fit in my suitcase, I would've taken that bed home with me!



I can't end this note without special thanks to John, our evening waiter, for being such a good sport and providing us so much laughter on our last night there. I don't know what was more fun...watching John or watching Sue turn beet red with laughter. Thanks again.” ~ Michelle

“Hi Sue - Well, it was a blast! However, those Minnesota girls are wild! Saturday night dinner with "John" was too fun, I haven't laughed that hard in a long time! Thanks for a great time!” ~ Debby



Rita the Texan loves her ice tea!!



Connie and Mary

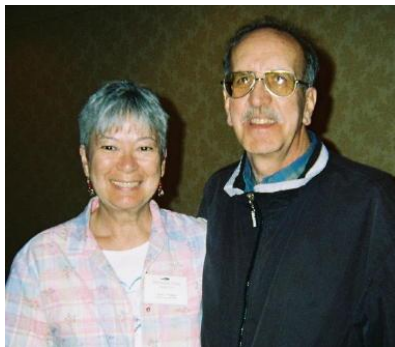
"I had another great time at the Hideaway. Number five was another new and entertaining experience. I love the project and met some new local stitchers as well as meeting some from other states. I wish I could go to a Stitchers Hideaway once a month. We laughed a lot, we ate well and we spent money on more new projects. Liz and Ann were great and they have a wonderful working friendship. Their designs are terrific and I just want to go home and stitch. I can't wait until the next Hideaway." ~ Diane



"Thank you so very much for inviting us to teach at the Minnetonka retreat. It was such great fun – and we hope the stitchers enjoyed themselves as well. Everything was lovely – we felt totally pampered. The food was yum, and we especially loved all your thought retreat "extras." It was all wonderful! And it was awfully nice to see you again! Thanks again, Sue!" ~ Liz & Ann



"Just a quick note to thank you for putting together such a wonderful retreat in Minnesota. You really have an eye for detail – right down to the frog stickers on our name tags. I really appreciate and notice all those special little touches. It takes a lot of thought and you put together a fabulous event. I'm just sorry it wasn't twice as long! See you next year!" ~ Stacy H.



"Sue, I registered for the Minnetonka 2006 retreat as soon as registration opened and now it's over! How I looked forward to another class with Ann and Liz, and I was not disappointed. Such talented, humble designers at a wonderfully organized retreat. Stash is my favorite word: I look at my treasures from the retreat and have wonderful memories. Although I will not finish all the stash I received, I'll always have great memories of the two days I spent at the Minnetonka retreat with some really neat stitching "sisters". My only concern: too much great food! Garry and I had a wonderful time driving to and from Minnesota as well as a great visit to the MOA and Dave's Barbecue. Thank you for bringing this all together." ~ Marianne

Marianne & Garry, who earned 5,000 Husband Points for Driving Marianne from NY to MN for the retreat!



Mary with With My Needle Door prize



Michelle with Stitchy Kitty Door prize



Rita & Connie posing with the singing Frog!



The Birthday Girl!



Sherry



Pig Pile on Liz!!!



Kenne Jean at Show 'n Tell

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