

FEATURED MEMBER RITA LEE



How long have you been quilting? I've been quilting for 10 years.

Who taught you how to quilt? This is a good question. I took my first class one spring in 2000. There were four in the class. The instructor was from New Orleans originally but was returning from California that year. We were eager. We sat down and said, "What do we do first?" Jackie had garbage bags of fabric. She placed them in front of us and said, "Begin." She was a scrappy quilt artist. We learned to just let our creativity grow. However, Cely Pedesceaux and Marion Ancar were seasoned quilters I met about two years later. They took me under their wings, and I have been gradually learning traditional quilting. By the way, it took me six months to complete that first quilt. It was titled "An Open Book" and it hangs today over the staircase in my home.

What are your favorite quilting techniques? I like crazy quilts, and I am beginning to like paper piecing.

What are your favorite colors to work with? Vibrant colors, jewel tones and rich earth tones.

What are your favorite fabrics to work with? I like cotton and flannel.

What is your favorite quilt shop? I like "Red Hen" or "Mother Hen" in Marietta. I can always find what I want there.

If you sew by machine, what kind(s) do you use? I have a Brother and Husqvarna.

What inspires you to make a particular quilt? Life.

What is your favorite quilting book or pattern? I don't really have a favorite. The quilting book I have used the most is the *Elm Creek Quilts*. I am a visual learner so I don't look to books or patterns usually. I create my own.

On average, how many quilts do you make in a year? It depends on the year. I guess you could say 2-3.

Do you quilt your own quilts or do you send them out? Both. I hope to learn to machine quilt soon.

What quilt-related item(s) are you working on right now? I make aromatherapy heating pads; I am working on Saints wall hangings; and I have a request for two quilts, one for Mother's Day and the other for "as soon as possible."

What other hobbies do you have? I love audio novels. I listen to them as I quilt. I love to cook and spend time with my children.

Tell about one way that quilting has changed your life. Quilting slows me down. Everywhere I look on a daily basis I see a quilt in nature ready to be made. Quilting makes me take time to smell the roses. As you can see, I am a fidgety, talkative person. It is soooooo hard for me to keep still. Quilting solves that problem for me.

Are you on any committees with the CRQG? I am the night librarian.

Feel free to tell us more about yourself and your family. I am the mother of three teenagers. My husband Steve and I have home schooled our children for the last 7 years. My youngest is 14 (Renaë); she has applied to Our Lady of Mercy High School for next year. She will be in 10th grade next year. I don't think she wants to be alone at home next year. Besides that, I really think Renaë is ready for something new in her life. Renaë loves horses, dogs and music. She will be the musician like Dad. My

middle son (Christopher) has cerebral palsy. He is 17 and attends Alexander High. He really enjoys school. It was a big step for us to place him in a public school this year. He is pulling together his own peer group and that is outstanding. My eldest (Stephen-Michael) is 18. He is a senior and is presently waiting for responses to his college applications. He is a remarkable young man (I'm not saying this because he is mine). He received his first acceptance letter from Loyola Catholic University in New Orleans. At this time, Stephen-Michael is finishing up his home school classes and taking courses at West Georgia Tech. We have a very active household. We are also caring for my mother-in-law who moved in about a year ago. She has stage four cancer. Last, but not least, my better half. We call each other our (PIC) Partners in Christ. We will have been married 20 years in June. My husband is a music therapist and a church musician. My family totally supports my quilting. They are always pushing me to do more things for myself. I am working on it. My husband and I are still fashioning in our minds and looking for a perfect space for our Retreat House/Quilt Store here in Douglasville. If it's for us in God's time, it will happen.