



Landrum Achieves Quilt Show Judge Certification

May 10, 2019, For immediate release — What elevates a quilt from ordinary to award-winner? Ask Mountain Home resident Darlene Landrum, who recently earned certification as a quilt show judge from the National Association of Certified Quilt Judges (NACQJ).

Certification is an arduous process similar to earning a graduate degree in college. Landrum started the process with a two-day class on how to become a certified quilt show judge. Then there's a research paper covering a comprehensive list of questions prepared by NACQJ and covering every aspect of quilt-making, including a wide variety of techniques. It took more than two years to complete the paper, Landrum said. After three certified judges accepted her paper, she spent six months preparing for oral examination by three certified judges who observed her judging abilities and asked comprehensive questions based on her paper.

During the 3-1/2 years it took to complete this work, she assisted certified judges at numerous quilt guild shows in Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi and Oklahoma as well as national quilt shows in Minnesota and Michigan. "Those experiences were valuable because I saw that, even though judges

have individual quilting styles, all certified judges were thorough in their evaluation of every quilt they judged,” Landrum said.

She recently completed her first engagement as a certified judge in Tyler, TX, and anticipates judging at least five shows this year. “I love looking at quilts,” she said of the experience. “Judging is physically and mentally demanding. We often judge more than 100 quilts in a day, and each one deserves our full attention. Each entrant deserves to have comments that encourage and assist her or him in making better quilts.”

Landrum’s quilting journey began when she learned basic sewing skills from her mother. She taught herself to make quilts by watching quilting shows on public television and reading books. “My skills really began to improve when I took a beginning quilting class offered through Hill ’N Hollow Quilters Guild.” Since that class, she has taken dozens of specific technique classes taught by members of Hill ’N Hollow and by instructors at national quilt shows.

Most of the quilts Landrum makes come from an idea or from her desire to experiment with design, techniques and color. Her favorite part of the process is design, “but I like to see my idea solidify into a plan and then see the plan become a finished piece,” she said. “For example, I wanted to see if I could make a quilt that gradually changed from bright yellow to dark red, so I made one. I enjoy machine piecing, but I recently learned hand and machine applique and hand piecing. I quilt my own quilts and and I am trying new quilting techniques. I enjoy them all.

“It seems that what I enjoy most about making a quilt is whatever I’m doing at the moment. Each piece is an experiment, and I normally try at least one technique that is new to me in every quilt.”

She also challenges herself each year to make a miniature quilt using a traditional pattern to hone her skills. Miniature quilts are scaled-down versions of a larger quilt design; individual blocks generally may not exceed 4” on a side. “When working in miniature, every mistake shows, so precision is important, she explained.

Landrum’s quilts have won many second- place, third-place and honorable mention ribbons at Hill ’N Hollow shows. One of her miniature quilts took first place in the Tyler, TX, show this year, and her quilt “Cosmic Wizard” won the “Best Use of Color” award at the Greater San Antonio (TX) Quilt Guild show in 2015. Cosmic Wizard is a watercolor quilt that uses small squares to give the illusion of colors gradually changing into one another.

You can see this fine quilter's work at the Hill 'N Hollow Quilters Guild's quilt show, Autumn in the Ozarks. The show will be open daily, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17-19, 2019, For more information about the show, see the guild's website at www.hillnhollowquilters.com or call Vicki Kauth at (870) 421-5369 and leave a message.