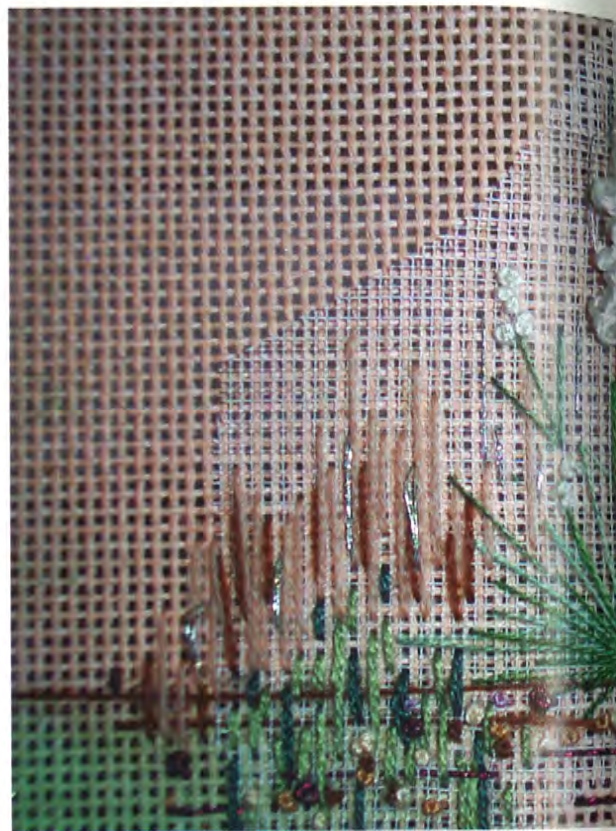




EGA



by Carolyn Standing Webb

Kathie Zobell, Wasatch Chapter, stitched the bighorn sheep. This hoofed mammal lives in the Rocky Mountains and in certain desert areas.

Yuccas are found in the higher elevations of many North American deserts. Yuccas are pollinated by female yucca moths. Carole Rinard, Pajarito Chapter, provided the yucca motif.

The fourth section of the tapestry covers, for the most part, the section of our country that makes up the Rocky Mountain area. The western border of the area runs from Missoula, Montana, to Tucson, Arizona. The rugged mountains on the north are balanced by the vast desert areas located in the southern area of the panel. The words for this section of the tapestry are “for purple mountain’s majesty,” and it is fitting that the mountains that inspired the words are part of this panel. It was while on a trip to Colorado in 1893 that the wonder and beauty of the vast plains and majestic mountains of this country gave Katherine Lee Bates the idea to write about America. When she got to the top of Pike’s Peak, she said, “All the wonder of America seemed displayed there, with the sea-like expanse.” The view

was so beautiful that it inspired her to write the song *America the Beautiful*, considered by some of us to be the country’s unofficial national anthem.

The far-flung borders of the western United States make travel between the various groups in the panel four area a difficult task. As a result, we also shipped the tapestry between groups. The tapestry panel has, for the most part, stayed in Salt Lake City and been worked on in guild meetings.

Panel four went to region seminar in Grand Junction, Colorado, where it was put up in the exhibit room. It created a lot of interest. Several members worked on it for hours during class time, and lots of stitchers dropped in and added a few stitches. Kay Haley spent a number of hours working to blend the yucca plant that Carole Rinard had

national tapestry



stitched on a silk gauze slip with the bargello desert that was already on the panel. The bighorn sheep was stitched by Kathie Zobell, an enthusiastic knitter, who loves sheep in any form. We know that if a sheep appears, it is usually Kathy's work. When slips were handed out, the members were encouraged to use any technique that they wanted. I have always felt that the tapestry was to be a showcase for the creative talents of the guilds and have encouraged the stitchers to use their imagination to come up with stitches that express the feel of the plants, animals, and geography. Alice Rathofer, an avid birder, stitched an owl that looks like it has feathers. Thread artist Sue Dawson took the panel to the Utah state fair and displayed it in the Home Arts building, while members worked on it as part of the demonstrations at the fair.

PANEL FOUR OF THE PROJECT



Bobcats, distinguished by their short tails tipped with white, are found in many habitats, especially in mountains and desert areas. This species ranges through the four deserts of the American Southwest, but favors rocky, brushy hillsides on which to live and hunt. Barbara Ing, Desert West Chapter, created panel four's bobcat.



She stitched some textured mountains in one section. Karen Chidester provided us with two machine-embroidered birds. The quail and an owl will be at home in the stitched branches of the trees. Barbara Ing, of Colorado's bobcat country, demonstrates how a furry, spotted cat can be stitched.

Progress has not been as fast for panel four as it has on some of the other panels. We had to wait for the remainder of the slips to come in so that they could be placed on the tapestry and then stitched down. Casey Bradford has machine stitched the trees for all of the panels. After looking at a number of species of western trees, we settled on the Colorado blue spruce since it is the state tree for both Colorado and Utah. Another evergreen that we picked was the Douglas fir. The river banks in the arid west are lined with cottonwood trees, which is the state tree of Wyoming. A spot of color was added when the quaking aspen trees were stitched in their bright yellow fall foliage. Casey also had the challenge of creating a cactus for us.

It has been quite an experience to start with a color-washed area of canvas and see what stitches and textures develop. The vivid red rock areas of the West surround and tower over the pale green riverbank and blue river in one part of the panel. Now that the slips of plants and animals that are finished are in place, we can study the panel and add a few more to highlight native residents. Then we will need to finish stitching the rest of the areas to represent the colorful western geography. It will be a challenge, but we are working on finishing the panel by the deadline at the end of this year so it will be ready to join its companion panels at EGA headquarters.



Carolyn Standing Webb, current director for EGA's Rocky Mountain Region, resides in Salt Lake City. She chairs panel four of the national tapestry project. Sewing and embroidery have been part of her life since her youth. Carolyn is a master craftsman in counted thread; her website is www.carolynstandingwebb.com.

"Red Rock" is common in the West. New Mexico, Arizona, and California have Red Rock state parks, and there are several similarly named places in these and other states. In Nevada there are at least three Red Rock Canyons. The tapestry's red rocks were stitched by Rocky Mountain Region Director Carolyn Standing Webb.



Alice Ratbofer is a member of Wasatch Chapter. She chose the Barn Owl, found in all four of the southwestern deserts. It has long, feathered legs and makes a loud, rasping hiss, rather than the hoot associated with other owls.

The California Quail is common in the West. It was stitched by Karen Chidester of the Wasatch Chapter. This species prefers open woodlands, bushy foothills, valleys with streams, as well as suburban areas.

