

TAPESTRY PROJECT

by Judy Jeroy and Carol Dam

Composed of five panels, which have been drafted on canvas, the EGA tapestry, when completed, will represent the wildlife and natural beauty of America.

While visiting England in the early nineties, we were impressed by many beautiful tapestries worked by dedicated stitchers depicting their homeland. Returning home, we were inspired to create a tapestry that would depict the beauty of our own country's bounty in embroidery. A vision of a national tapestry stayed in the back of our consciences for many years before being brought to EGA for consideration. It was presented at the July 2002 national board meeting and met with approval.

The tapestry will be in five sections, each two feet wide by four feet high and each representing certain areas and indigenous objects, animals, birds, and plants. There will be a coordinator for the individual sections, each to be worked by a group of stitchers

(probably six to eight). The coordinators will report to the tapestry committee chairman, Carol Dam. Innovations or additions will be submitted to the committee chairman and the tapestry designer, Judy Jeroy, for review.

Design

Sky and clouds (with mountain tops when appropriate) flow across the top of each panel. Birds may be shown as well but should be fairly simple with little detail. Trees and rivers are pictured across the center and bottom of each panel, with the trees appropriate to the area pictured above. Fish and sea life are also shown. Phrases from the song, "America, the Beautiful," will be placed at appropriate places on the five tapestries. They will be embroidered in script and will serve to unify the project.

While it is not feasible to include every naturally occurring animal or plant, it is our hope to show representative wildlife in each section. Images of individual animals, birds, flowers, trees, mountains, plants, and others are being researched. Some space will be left to allow individuals to add an object appropriate to their locale.

Designer Judy Jeroy painted the canvases, using twenty different colors of acrylic paint, and delivered them to the project chairman, Carol Dam, in April 2003. This full-scale rendering of the five panels was presented at the November 2002 national board meeting in Hilton Head and approval was received for the work to begin.

Materials and Techniques

The background fabric is #18 white mono canvas, donated by Zweigart, and threads are being donated by Anchor/Coats & Clark.

Some images may be printed onto #23-24 count canvas directly from computer images,

while others may be stitched on tightly woven linen that has been printed with color images. These images will be applied to the background canvas. Casey Bradford will make machine-embroidered trees for all five panels.

No technique will be excluded. Any embroidery method of expressing the image will be welcomed. The important thing in all of this is to maintain an appropriate scale of any item to the others. Creative methods of applying the images will be explored.

Exhibition of Tapestry

The tapestry will be the property of the EGA Collection, and its permanent home will be at EGA headquarters in Louisville. The tapestry's five panels may be exhibited together or in as many sections as are requested.

Suggested exhibit venues are national and regional seminars, national and regional exhibits, corporate offices of those manufacturers and distributors who have contributed to its construction, or other exhibit venues as recommended. An exhibit schedule will be kept by EGA and published in *Needle Arts* magazine. We anticipate that the tapestry will travel extensively, thereby fulfilling our purpose of educating the public about embroidery. We will use appropriate containers to enable safe shipment.

The first step has been taken. The design has been accepted and the background canvas is ready for embroidery. Look for more pictures as the stitching progresses!

Tidewater Virginia Chapter member Judy Jeroy has contributed to EGA for many years; she is a past president and former editor of *Needle Arts*. Washington, D.C., Chapter member Carol Dam has just completed a term as Mid-Atlantic Region director and is chairman for this project.

