

With quilting the rage, Bay woman opens retail store, gives instruction

If you are hooked on quilting, or if you would like to learn how to quilt, have I got a store for you.

Whitefish Bay resident Sarah Mast has opened a retail store called *Dovely Quilts and Fabrics* at 138 E. Capitol Drive in the shopping strip that houses *Outpost Natural Foods*.

Although Mast grew up in Indiana in Amish country, the granddaughter and great-granddaughter of quilters, she said she had no inclination toward sewing until she went to college. "I needed something to do when I wasn't studying," Mast said.

She made her first full quilt as a graduation gift for her boyfriend, Ben Hochstedler, who later became her husband.

I was curious about *Dovely* as the name of her new business. "The peace dove is a symbol in the Mennonite Church (in which she grew up)," Mast said. "I like to have something peaceful associated with every quilt, so I looked for a name to reflect a positive image. The name '*Dovely*' reflects part of me." Mast said she used to handquilt a dove into every quilt she made.

Mast sells many products: handmade quilts, blankets and dolls; books, patterns, buttons and zippers; quilted handbags and purses; acid-free storage and preservation supplies; and hun-

dreds of cotton fabrics, though she says, "I am not a fabric Nazi. You can bring what you have."

More than that, Mast offers services: quilting classes; workshops with guest speakers; birthday parties; and cleaning and restoration of older textiles, to name a few. In one of her classes, Mast said she helped a boy earn a Scouting badge.

Birthday parties? Yes, indeed. Mast teaches youngsters how to transfer photos onto pillows and even T-shirts. One soccer team brought in a team picture and Mast helped the girls transfer it onto a T-shirt for their coach.

Her customers range from teens to octogenarians, and *Dovely* serves, too, as a creative design shop for those who want to create a quilt, blanket or doll but don't have the time or skill to do it themselves.

But I save the best for last. Mast has designated Saturday, June 4, as "Adoption Quilt Day," not only to celebrate the grand opening of *Dovely* but also to celebrate the moment adopted children find homes.

She should know; Mast

and her husband have been foster parents.

Wednesday, May 25, will be a special day for them and their two children, as they welcome *Dejaquan* (D.J. for short), a former foster child, into their family.

"I wanted to do something to celebrate his adoption and adoption in general," Mast said. "We will celebrate children and families."

How so? Well, Mast asked friends, family, social workers and others to nominate about 10 newly adopted children. Then she went about finding clients eager to make quilts and sponsors eager to underwrite them. All the children will be presented with quilts at the same time on "Adoption Quilt Day" at *Dovely*. The celebration will take place from 4 to 5 p.m.

And yes, there will be refreshments and a prize drawing.

If you would like to learn more about *Dovely* or "Adoption Quilt Day," call Mast, (414) 967-9190, visit www.dovelyquilts.com or stop in and browse. You may wind up registering for a class or buying a "Purse by Joan," who is *Dovely's* featured artist through mid-May.

Eileen Gosman welcomes your comments and questions. Call her at (262) 317-8562 or write to her at egosman@jcpgroup.com.



**Eileen
Gosman**

Daze of Our Lives