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# POCONO RECORD

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Sandy Claypool of Pocono Pines works on a quilt that will be donated to a needy child as part of the Needlework on Display IV show in Mountainhome.

DAVID KIDWELL/Pocono Record

## Needlework on Parade adds carefully made 'babies' to annual craft show

**Helen Yanulus**

**Pocono Life Writer**

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Vivian Smith's "babies" are so real that you may want to pick them up and cuddle them.

And they'll feel just as real, too.

This Canadensis doll artist makes dolls that are commonly referred to as "reborns," which is a trend to remove the paint and other fake-looking elements of manufactured baby dolls and recreate realistic-looking dolls. Smith uses kits instead of dolls to achieve this appearance.

"I like to see the expressions on people's faces. They say, 'Oh! that's a doll, not a baby!'" said Smith, who made porcelain dolls for 18 years before trying this method six months ago.

Her dolls, with complete outfits and pacifiers, will be featured along with many other dolls during the biennial Needlework on Parade IV this weekend at Mountainhome United Methodist Church.

The dolls are lifeless vinyl body parts until Smith begins a painting-and-baking process that takes four stages to complete in order to achieve realistic-looking skin. In between paintings, the form must bake in a 260 degree oven for eight minutes, no more, or it will be overbaked and worthless.

The hair, as well as eyelashes, is applied strand by strand with super-tiny needles with barbs, which takes about 14 hours for a head of hair. The body is filled with beads and stuffing, and the head is attached in a loose-feeling manner to imitate a newborn.

The entire process takes about four full days.

"The dolls remind me of my kids when they were little as well as my grandchildren. It's so much fun," Smith said.

Other dolls at the show will include work by the Minis of Northeastern Pennsylvania; four generations of dolls, circa 1890 to 1980, from the family of Laurel Holland Pritchard of Effort; and books, dolls and bears by teddy bear artists of the Pocono Doll Club.

And a doll appraisal hour with "Dr. Lori" will be held 1 p.m. Saturday.

Jacqueline Magann, chairwoman of the show, said having dolls will be an added attraction to the needlework exhibits. Visitors can take a look at dolls of all eras, harkening back to examples that they might never have seen to those that bring back childhood memories.

The exhibition will feature many stitches of needlework in the 122 items on display, including embroidery, hooked rug, knitting, needlepoint, quilting, wedding gowns and more.

"We do this on Mother's Day weekend to hope mothers and daughters will come together," Magann said. "It's a collection of anything worked with a needle."

The idea is to display the artistry of the handiwork that dates back to when women embellished the home with decorative linens, quilts and throws as well as to educate the public about needlework skills that were once handed down from mother to daughter.

Tatting, hardinger, appliqué and other techniques will be preserved by this simple act.

Expect to see a Baltimore Album quilt top, inspired by the pattern that first appeared in homes in the mid-19th century; a quilt that celebrates a police officer's 55 years on the force; and a redwork quilt with a centerpiece dramatizing a show-and-tell event at a guild meeting.

The show will also include work made by participants' grandmothers and great-grandmothers. Many items will be situated in vignettes, including the moment a young bride-to-be prepares to dress in her velvet wedding gown.

Sandy Malamed of Birchrunville, who incorporates color and whimsy into her small primitive quilts, will demonstrate her techniques during the show.

"I want the younger generation to know that needlework doesn't have to be done by the older generation," Magann said. "I have a love of needlework, and I want to share it. I want other people to be as excited as I am about anything you can do with needles. It's catching."