

SEW GET-AWAY - 2007

This was by far, the BEST! I can't tell you WHY. Whether it was just the great group of ladies, the EXTRA day, or just the 'bonding' and sewing we had, the food, the extra help - WHATEVER it was, it was wonderful! Could even be because it's still so fresh in my mind and the past years are just blurs of happiness & fond memories.

The players were ASG members: Barbara B, Marilyn B, Rachel C, Barbara C, Becky E, Kat G, Carole H, Marion H, Carol J, Marilyn J, Lynn P, Cheryl S, Michelle S, Maria T, Debbie V, Darlene W, Carrie H, and BRAND new member, who actually walked in on Friday, and joined our chapter and retreat weekend (after a few emails during the week), Linda B, from Gualala. Now you'd THINK that was the furthest a member traveled to our retreat, but Rachel C, who lives in McKinleyville, takes that award with driving 4 plus hours.

We had all the supplies we needed; extensive lists are sent out with the 'don't forgets', even reminders that the towels & pillows are comparable to a Motel 6. As each lady arrived, scouted the area, picked a table, and unloaded her car, she was 'ready' & roaring to go. We each got our SSU lanyard with room key and meal card - the only things needed for the next few days. With the 3 meals a day we had to 'work' a little for them, with a casual stroll up to the cafeteria. Think about sharing meals with 17 others that ENJOY sewing and knowing we had chocolates, candies, and munchies keeping the sewing machines, sergers, & ironing board company. Oh, it was a grand time!

All sorts of projects were worked on - taking in pants, making pants, making muslins, pattern adjustments, making pillow purses, kids' quilts, baby clothes, appliqué work, MICRO quilting, slip covers. I think we covered it all, as well as Marilyn J getting her cover fitted for her Uniquely You® dress form.

The first evening, Carrie, Rachel, & I watched Connie Crawford's new Dressform dvd; the one with Carrie as the model. I had a case of the packing tape Connie recommends for the dress forms (U-line S-909). We had Connie's Sew News, August 2006, article on 'how to', along with the DVD, which we continued to pause, rewatch, and go step by step through the process of 'taping' Rachel who started out in bra & panties under a black garbage bag. What an experience. At the end, to cut Rachel out, the 'surgical scissors' just wouldn't cut through the 6 plus layers of tape, and I needed Rachel 'bent over' - which was impossible without help. It was definitely a FUN, silly moment (well, for us - I wonder how Rachel felt at THAT moment - 'stuck'?).



Once her dress form was 'off', it was taped more on the inside, and re-taped where she was cut out, then sat the rest of the weekend with a French scarf stuffed down the neck, very chic, for us to all admire.

Linda was so taken by it, that she got Marilyn B & Barbara B to tape her on Sunday. When it was almost dinnertime and they weren't nearly close to being done I helped so that NO ONE would miss a meal!

Linda's young grandson is still trying to figure out how she got out of it, 'cause there are no 'cut marks' showing the 'cut' down one side in the back! She's not tellin'; let him wonder on that one!

We had TWO days of instructional help with Ginny Winter and Ellen Sours. Ginny joined us for breakfast on Saturday morning. She was going to be helping Diane Ericson at the ASG convention, and showed the jacket she was working on (Diane's *Santa Cruz* pattern) and how it was inspired from Diane's workshop using magazine pictures & 'window frames'. Many of us got tips from Ginny throughout the morning on individual needs. The neat thing about this is that others learn from questions asked. I had issues with the hems of the tailored trousers I made in the JC menswear class. Ginny suggested, I add a 4" x 1" strip to the back inside hem to give extra support for wear. This is something that you'll find on 'finer' menswear.

An extra 'boost' of the day, we had the STARBUCK's run. Debbie did the door-to-door service with many of us running out to grab the coffees, mochas, and afternoon caffeine fix when she honked that she had

returned. Soon after, gosh, it was dinner! Time to think FOOD again?! Mind you, it's a buffet, so we could pick & choose. Each meal was loaded with salads, fruits, and donuts... SEEMED like they had a 'run' or 'special' on donuts.

Sunday was another full day with Ellen Sours, an instructor from the JC who had come to assist us. She also joined us for breakfast then did an Armani zipper application demonstration and helped on an individual basis. By that time I had a Louise Cutting jean jacket pattern (*By Popular Demand*) ready to 'paper fit'.

Rachel was working on some beautiful sand-colored linen (a 'JoAnns' purchase!) that she was making a 'set' - pants, jacket, and skirt - with a shell in a softer matching silk. She was able to get a few muslins fitted by both Ginny, and Ellen, as well as some pants tweaked.

We really felt that having the 'extra' day was such a bonus, as even some that had to depart on Sunday evening could stay as late as they wanted. In prior years, we'd have lunch on Sunday, and be gone. This time, we had thru Monday after lunch to depart.

I can't stress enough how much you can get done here, as well as getting such assistance from EACH OTHER. It's like working in your own sewing 'area', but having 17 other helpers, if needed. Or, oh darn, you don't have that piece of elastic, interfacing in black, zipper, or even stay tape. Someone there was bound to have it. We did have 'runners' heading to JoAnn's as well as Wal-Mart, so the cell phones were active. If you were sewing, alone, at home, you'd have to make that trip off to Joann's or set the item down, and start something else. NOT here; you got it done with the pattern 'on sale', and thread or whatever you needed delivered. How grand was that!?

There are all sorts of excuses for NOT coming – (*continued*)

- ✂ I've got a beautiful set up for sewing at home (not with 17 other ladies that SEW and can advise, assist, or, RUN OUT FOR COFFEE or supplies for you!)
- ✂ It's too expensive (not if you save a little each month)
- ✂ It's just too close a location to 'home' (well, darn, that makes it a lot easier to GO home for forgotten items!)
- ✂ I can sew at home (and answer your phone, door, and clean the house, cook dinners, make beds, etc).

Think of it as a mini-vacation. You won't realize how re-charged you will be when you do go home. It's great for the soul and for getting done some of those projects you just don't tackle on your own; and best of all you get to spend 24/3 with the fabulous ASG ladies! That truly is the BEST part!

JOIN US NEXT YEAR (we're hoping to switch to the 3rd weekend, as ASG convention is July 10-14 2008; AND cross your fingers, that SSU will continue to contract with small groups of under 30 attendees. What can I say? Give it a try; you'll like it? We sure do. Ask any of the ladies listed above. Hope to see you NEXT year! *Barbara*