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Artist applies quilts to any household surface.

Piecing Together Her Décor

BY MIKE DICICCO

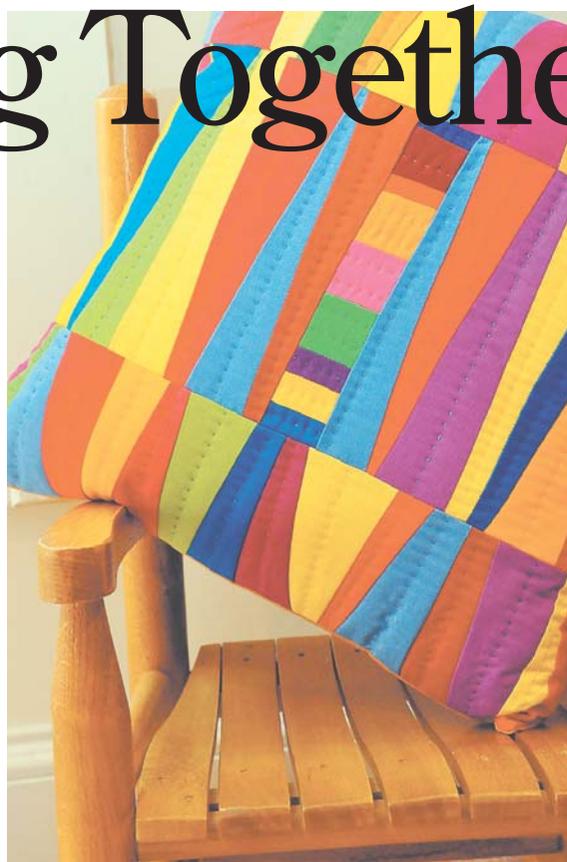
For Great Falls resident Cindy Grisdela, quilts are not just for the bedroom or snuggling on the sofa. “This is where we spend most of our time,” she said of her family room. “I like bright color, my family likes bright color, so fortunately, it works out.”

Adorning the walls are eight quilts of varying sizes and styles, hung the way most people hang paintings.

“People are used to thinking of quilts as just for beds. ... I think having quilts on the walls adds a lot of warmth to the room, makes it inviting somehow.”

She said she also found that the quilts mixed well with the paintings and other artwork she and her husband collected.

Her two cats sat on a couple of quilts draped over the backs of the family room couches, while quilted throw pillows rested



Quilted throw pillow.

along the arms. Carefully sized quilts covered the surfaces of coffee tables and end tables throughout the house. “Quilts on the walls, quilts on the table. I have a quilted shower curtain,” she laughed.

Although she has been quilting for about 25 years, it wasn’t until five or six years ago that she began getting adventurous with her designs and showing in art shows. With a background in art



Detail of 'Leap of Faith'

history, she was especially influenced by modern abstract painters like Wassily Kandinsky.

On most of the quilts, the intricate stitching patterns were radically different from the designs created by the cloth pieces, such as the squiggly stitchery that caused the surface of one quilt made with squares of uniform size to look like a jigsaw puzzle. “It adds dimension and texture and interest. I hope.”



'Summer Breeze'

On the walls of the upstairs hallway leading to her studio, small quilts mingled with her children’s artwork from grade school. The studio is modest, with the “bating” that is used to stuff quilts covering one wall. Fabric sticks to the bating, so Grisdela can arrange and rearrange patterns on it, right now a modern twist on the double wedding ring pattern.

“People say to me, ‘How do you have the patience to do this?’ ... It doesn’t take patience. It’s what makes me want to get up in the morning.”

“There’s still so many ideas to think about and explore and try to realize in fabric,” Grisdela said. *Grisdela’s will be one of 44 artists’ homes open to the public for the annual Great Falls Studios Tour Oct. 17 and 18.*



Cindy Grisdela



The Grisdela home in Great Falls



Independence surveys the scene from atop a quilt in the family room.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/CONNECTION

Vienna men's gourmet group enjoys haute cuisine, fine wine and old friendships.

Stirring Up Fun and Food

DONNA MANZ

When Frank Sturgeon's wife suggested 10 years ago that he learn to cook, she did not envision a neighborhood men's cooking club. Now, entering its 10th year, the Hill Road Thyme Gourmet Group celebrates good food, fine wine and friendship with monthly themed dinners, all courses prepared, cooked and served by neighborhood buddies.

"I thought, 'why would I learn to cook by myself?'" said Sturgeon. "I called my neighbors and suggested we all learn together. This is more than just learning to cook for two people. It's

cooking for fun and cooking for eight."

The eight current members, six of whom are part of the original seven, take cuisine and wine seriously, but not themselves. The dinners are noted for their camaraderie and mutual frames of reference.

The participants started out as neighbors, although a couple of them moved a block or two away now. Most are retired military officers and global travelers.

The Hill Road Thyme Gourmet Group elected to focus on French cuisine this year, from October through mid-June, paying homage to the work of Julia Child.

They meet monthly on a Sunday evening, the year's theme and schedule laid out prior to the beginning of their next gourmet

season. Each dinner is hosted and directed by a "head chef" with the help of two assistants. Themes have gone from regional – Mediterranean to the American South – to motif, such as the Julia Child dedication.

"She didn't have many appetizers or salads in her book, so I looked online for French regional specialties," said Gordon Ettenson, October host and head chef. The result of the first Julia Child foray was spectacular. Butter, cream, puff pastry, bacon and Calvados ... they're all there.

After a two-month summer hiatus, the men's gourmet club kicked off the new season on Oct. 4 with a selection of pâté and terrine, Brie and filled puff pastry. From there, they segued to cream of mushroom soup, coquilles St. Jacques, boeuf Bourguignon, salad, cheese and an apple tart,



The Hill Road Thyme Gourmet Group: Peter Roberts, Jim Stevens, Frank Sturgeon, Gordon Ettenson, Charles Stringfellow, Steve McDanel and Larry Mangin. Missing from the photo and dinner is group member Graeme Bradford

each course accompanied by an enhancing wine. The chefs stayed faithful to the traditional rich, buttery, creamy French recipes.

"Nobody has had a heart attack," said Ettenson. "It's the red wine."

Sturgeon prepared the boeuf Bourguignon and provided an array of French cheeses and a

quince paste. The quince paste, Sturgeon said, is a "little thing to enhance your palate."

The menu, in the colors of the French flag, was printed in French for an authentic feel. Champagne flowed.

None of the members practices the recipes prior to the dinner

event. Chef Steve McDanel said they have never had a bad meal. Chef Jim Stevens takes his friends out instead of hosting a dinner.

Appetizers and champagne lay spread out on a massive granite



Chef Franque checks on his creation of Boeuf Bourguignon au dessus les nouilles du beurre for the main course.



"Nobody has had a heart attack. It's the red wine."

— Gordon Ettenson,

countertop in the kitchen with a professional Viking gas six-burner cooktop. Dinner, however, is served in the dining room.

The Hill Road Thyme Gourmet Group is really about friends getting together to eat well, drink well, and laugh. "We get the opportunity to remember we live in the neighborhood, to see our buddies more than just when we're walking our dog," said Ettenson.



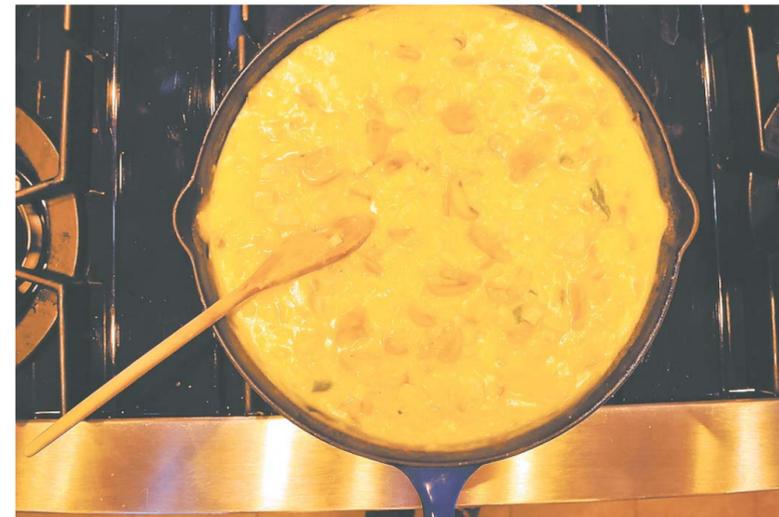
Chefs Gordon Ettenson and Steve McDanel



Chef Pierre Roberts uncorks the evening's first bottle of champagne.



Chef Steve McDanel



Les Vols au Vent simmers on the range as the puff pastries rise in the oven.



Group Founder Frank Sturgeon



Chef Gordon Ettenson says goodbye to his wife Donna for the evening as he finishes preparations for 'La Grande Soiree.'



Nancy M. Sween works in Stoneware and porcelain. <http://web.mac.com/nsween>



Arlington photographer Amy Joseph holds one of her images from Maine, the old custom house. Joseph also creates portraits and photographs events. www.amyjoseph.com



Adrienne Berry, a mixed media artist born in Arlington, holds one of her portraits. Berry takes commissions also do portraits in mixed media. <http://acreativeforce.blogspot.com>



Ceramic artist Andrea Gettings holds a raku vase that she recently created. The pottery "is characterized by low firing temperatures and the removal of the piece from the kiln while the glaze is still molten and the piece is a glowing red-hot 1800 degrees."



Gettings produces decorative vases and plates. Because of the porous nature of raku, the finished pieces are not considered reliable containers of liquid. For more information visit www.andreagettings.com



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RAVEL: Piano Concerto in G

GINASTERA: *Estancia*

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Great Falls

- ❖ 10500 Springvale Forest Ct (a 5 BR, 6 FB, 2 HB detached home on 1.75 acres) in Springvale Forest sold for \$1,955,000 on Aug. 25, 2009.
- ❖ 800 Leigh Mill Rd (a 6 BR, 4 FB, 2 HB detached home on 3.37 Forestville sold for \$1,795,000 on Aug. 31, 2009.
- ❖ 11144 Rich Meadow Dr (a 6 BR, 7 FB, 1 HB detached home on 1.74 acres) in Richland Meadows sold for \$1,600,000 on Aug. 03, 2009.
- ❖ 939 Seneca Rd (a 6 BR, 6 FB, 1 HB detached home on 1.00 acres) in Seneca Hills sold for \$1,529,000 on Aug. 21, 2009.
- ❖ 311 Club View Dr (a 4 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB detached home on 1.82 acres) in Shafer Estates sold for \$1,375,000 on Aug. 15, 2009.
- ❖ 10713 Falls Pointe Dr (a 6 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB detached home on 1.77 acres) in Falls Pointe sold for \$1,350,000 on Aug. 18, 2009.
- ❖ 1017 Cheska Ct (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB detached home on 0.89 acres) in Estates At Longwood sold for \$1,350,000 on Aug. 12, 2009.
- ❖ 821 Seneca Rd (a 4 BR, 5 FB, 1 HB detached home on 2.58 Valley Stream sold for \$1,210,000 on Aug. 27, 2009.
- ❖ 1114 Towlston Rd (a 5 BR, 5 FB, 1 HB detached home on 2.33 Carrie Knolls sold for \$1,189,900 on Aug. 07, 2009.
- ❖ 1208 Stone Falls Way (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 2 HB detached home on 0.83 acres) in Colvin Mill Run sold for \$1,100,000 on Aug. 28, 2009.
- ❖ 511 Arnon Lake Dr (a 4 BR, 2 FB, 1 HB detached home on 2.00 Arnon Lake sold for \$1,000,000 on Aug. 24, 2009.



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/CONNECTION

1017 Cheska Ct (a 5 BR, 4 FB, 1 HB detached home on 0.89 acres) in Estates At Longwood sold for \$1,350,000 on Aug. 12, 2009.



7001 Benjamin St (a 6 BR, 5 FB, 1 HB detached home on 0.95 acres) in Langley Forest sold for \$2,585,000 on Aug. 31, 2009.

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