

Business

Decorating show returns with new features

By **KATE GILDERDALE**
Correspondent

Christmas and country decor go hand-in-hand at this fall's Country Decorating and Collectibles Show and Sale at Markham Fairgrounds, providing a wealth of inspiration for visitors.

More than 150 exhibitors, several of them local artisans, will be featured at the 10th anniversary show, which is co-produced by Debra Grose-Russell and Ian Russell of Claremont. "This year we have re-juried many of our old exhibitors to keep our high-quality standards, plus added some fantastic, never seen before exhibitors from all over southwestern Ontario," said Grose-Russell.

Among the latter are Catherine Collection's Blanketwear, featuring jackets, pullovers and blanket coats designed from decorative afghans; Collectible Santas of Mississauga; Mother Nature's Cupboard, a treasure trove of Mennonite quilts by Mariea Wiles; Brighton-Street Studio's nostalgic watercolor originals and hand-sewn mohair teddy bears by Karen Hughston.

Local participants include John Lennox's Unionville Gourmet Foods in Stouffville and two Uxbridge artisans - Santa's Cupboard and Creations by Louise. The show will also offer more than 5,000 Christmas gift ideas for the seriously stressed shopper.

Suggestions for men's gifts include a pine book shelf, hand-carved decoys, a fishing lure alarm clock and a personalized golf towel. And there is no shortage of ideas for unique women's gifts at the show - among them sterling silver button covers, antique bobbin candle holders, framed floral arrangements and fabulous pot pourri.

Cuddly bears, folk-art carrying baskets for cassette tapes, hand-painted wall plaques featuring The Three Bears and a hand-made wooden miniature tool-box are just a few suggestions for the children on your list.

Hand-crafted quilts are a country tradition in Canada and exhibitor Heather Zinkewich of Country Loft in St. Jacob's offers some wonderful examples. "Besides their

traditional use as a bed covering, quilts make a stunning wall hanging, sometimes covering an entire wall with a highly dramatic effect," she noted.

Mariea Wiles of Mother Nature's Cupboard comes from a family with a rich quilting heritage and her hand-stitched quilts are available in a wide variety of designs including log cabin, double wedding ring and Irish chain.

"Country decorating is more popular than ever," said Grose-Rus-

sell. "I've never seen a style go to people's hearts and sustain a longevity the way country has. It's warm, friendly, comfortable, easy to live with and allows for lots of personal expression." The Country Decorating and Collectibles Show and Sale takes place Nov.

15, 16 and 17 at the Markham Fairgrounds. Hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is \$8 for adults and \$2 for children 12 and under. Parking is free and door prizes will be given away every hour.

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