

Brantley's quilting queen

Mount's quilts bring statewide acclaim

By MICHAEL RODGERS
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When Delores Mount needs a little time alone, she pulls up a chair, grabs a needle and starts quilting.

For some people, quilting is a group activity, full of catching up on news and talking about local happenings, but not for Mount.

"You just get in your own little world when you start quilting," she said.

That's not to say that she doesn't occasionally have company.

Mount, who lives south of Brantley, has several grandchildren who have helped her make quilts over the years.

"My youngest granddaughter is 7 years old, and she's working on her quilt," Mount said.

Her oldest granddaughter is 16, and she also helped make a quilt.

"I've had three to help me," Mount said. "It's been lots and lots of fun."

Quilting is something that Mount picked up from her mother and her grandmother, and she said she's always loved to do it.

"I used to crochet a little bit, but I can't handle the little thread," she said.

Mount makes almost all of the decorations for the quilts by hand, cutting out and sewing flowers, butterflies and ladybugs.

"Since I make them all, it takes a long time," she said.

The results are worth the time and effort, and Mount has the awards to prove it.

ALFA and the Alabama Farmers Federation holds a quilting contest every year, and Mount has taken home first place in the state in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010. She placed second in 2012.

The first place winner cannot enter the contest the next year, which Mount said is fine.

She said it usually takes her about two years to finish a quilt.

"I quilt most every day," she said. "It just takes so long to do it, if you take too many days off you'll run out of time."

Mount gave the first state-winning quilt she made to her

granddaughter.

In order to be entered in the state competition, quilts can't have anything on the back of them, but afterward, Mount adds a panel to the back giving the history of the quilt.

It details who the quilt was made for and any special stories about the making of it.

While there are numerous quilt patterns available, Mount said she makes her own and decorates it as she goes.

"I usually start out with the basic pattern, but from there I don't really have any clue what it's going to look like," said Mount, who used one of her finished quilts as an example. "I fixed my flowers on the basket, then I decided that was too plain. I added a vine, but it was still too plain so I added a flower."

"I have a general idea, but it just goes and goes until I give out with it," she said.

Mount said she gets most of her materials from Walmart, though she will occasionally go to a quilt shop if there's something particular she needs.

"I mix and match things, and I usually buy more than I need," she said. "Sooner or later I'll use most of it."

Mount said she knows several other people that quilt, and sometimes when they decide to stop quilting, they'll give her all of their quilting materials.

She's also been involved in a quilting club in Brantley and also gone and given classes at Brantley High School.

"It's a wonderful pastime, and I taught a class for elementary girls in 2007," she said.

Mount said she also taught a class to high school students, but there are so many extracurricular activities available that there isn't much time for something like quilting.

"Some of them were interested, and I hope they pick it up later in life," she said.

The next state contest is coming up soon, and Mount is finishing up one quilt and planning for the next one.

"My oldest grandson loves to fish and hunt and ride four-wheelers, so I'm going to make him a manly quilt," she said. "I haven't seen a pattern I like, but I've started cutting out the



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Above: Delores Mount holds great-grandson Briar Morris and the quilt she made for him. Below: Details from several of Mount's quilts.

four-wheelers and the deer."

Mount said she has a quilt that was made by her grandmother and her great-aunt, and family is why she continues to quilt.

She only makes quilts for family, and because it takes two years to fully finish one, the time and love invested is part of the gift.

"After I'm gone, it can be passed down," she said. "I do thank God for his letting me have this ability to do this."



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years after that to see the continuing quality of the plant.

The hybridizer also has the right to name a new hybrid.

"You can name them anything as long as it's not obscene," Sikes said. "Sometimes it's descriptive of the plant, and sometimes it's not."

One variety, "Hush Little Baby," was registered in 1992, the year Sikes' son

was born.

Sarah also named "Gentleman Farmer" in honor of her husband.

Growing daylilies in Alabama is also a little easier than some other places, Sikes said.

"The biggest challenge is getting the weeds out of them," she laughed. "The weather is good, so we don't have problems like the northern hybridizers do.

Our biggest problem is rust, which is a fungus."

The Alabama-Mississippi region of the Hemerocallis Society has spring and fall conventions, and a daylily publication.

Sikes has won a district and national award for an article she had published in their magazine.

She also works as a master gardener,

which involves 50 hours of training and 50 hours of service to a non-business like a church, school or library.

"It's fun and I've learned a lot," Sikes said. "It's a constant learning thing, and I get to play outside every day. When I retire, this is what I'll do all the time."