

Early Spring 2009

n e w s l e t t e r

Vol XXXIII



®

Bonnie's Bundles Dolls

THE SUBJECT



Everything about our Kate is exceptional: her will, her humor, her intelligence, her energy, her versatility, her dedication, her originality, but mostly her smile - she smiles all over her face. She is many things: a daughter, a wife, a sister, an aunt, a worker, a listener, a writer, a photographer, a singer, a seamstress, an artist, a friend to many and a lover of everything in nature. She loved playing outside.

THE ASK

It began a year ago with a request for a doll for her birthday. She is not 5, 9 or even 13. On April 9 at 38, our firstborn daughter Kate would get her dream doll. It would be my pleasure.

THE INSPIRATION

Lew photographed her lovely watercolor of the agave, the century plant, which hangs in our dining room. And with Photoshop and complete license, we fashioned the eyes for the doll.



From her web site, agavemaria.com, I snatched the milagro from one of her original quilt hangings to place on the cheeks (it's on this newsletter masthead). The three featured fabrics were selected by Kate herself at our favorite Textile Company during her visit last June.

THE BEGINNING

Carefully the face was drawn on nude fabric from my paper template using the light table. The final smile was delivered by one school teacher to my favorite



school teacher and embroiderer, Eileen, with the original watercolor, ten selected embroidery cottons, some strict guidelines about stitch direction and those burgundy leaf tips but complete freedom otherwise, to embroider that face. It took four hours. An aside, Eileen has a historic connection to the birthday girl.

THE ACCOUTREMENTS

Recent pictures featured Kate at her sister's Gift of the Pig celebration in Mexico, dressed in a short skirt, vest, boots and cowboy hat. Perfect. Using Gretchen Goose as the model, I created the patterns. I took to the computer to write the directions and turned over the cuttings, trims and the directions to Bunny Carpenter who knows Kate from age four. All except for the tricky "apron." My job. A penchant for shades of green led me to the agave leaf concept. Slipping in a rib of burgundy rickrack on the leaf end and fashioning the belt became a special mission.



A shopping expedition to Keene, NH took us to New England Fabrics and Jo Ann Stores. Sister Kelly insisted the cowboy shirt have pearl snaps. And the cowboy boot buttons made a perfect belt buckle. The cowboy hat came all the way from Oregon - the crowning glory. Black felt was the perfect answer for boots. That head to toe match is critical.



THE CENTER

The face was in my happy hands, and I proceeded to build the perfect body. Once sewn and stuffed, the wiggling was the next step. Our cat Silvio and I trooped up to the yarn dresser; he hopped into the brown drawer and there it was: a perfect brown baby alpaca blend with just a little auburn hint for fat joyful braids, just like the ones little Kate wore. The bows on those braids--an important finishing touch. I completed the overskirt just as the rest of the snappy fashionable wardrobe came back from Bunny. Lew took to the hammer and "installed" the special pearl snap buttons. Done.



THE FINALE

My friend Adelaide gave my new creation her thumbs up. That's important. Off to the light box with the Canon Rebel with the Kate doll under his arm, Lew was totally enamored with his subject. Thirty shots later in as many minutes, they returned. Proudly I signed the botanist's left leg, "Kate, 1/2009, Bonnie Watters." Added the hangtag bearing her name and mine, and the deed was done.

THE GIVING



After research to her absolute whereabouts on The Day, (she could be anywhere on the Colorado Plateau fulfilling her duties for the Grand Canyon Trust), I wrapped the treasure in tissue and bagged and boxed her for the trip to her office in Flagstaff. While I packaged, Lew created one of our classic birthday cards featuring five or six pictures from birth to adulthood of the feted one. She went just as the crocus in her bulb garden burst. The girls at the Chester P. O. love to hear the stories about who is going where to whom. They loved this story. Away she flew. Priority Mail.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

"I love her!" She cried. Kate was happy. That made Mom happy too.