

Pam Thompson began sewing at age 11, taught by her mother, and she “fell in love with colors, patterns, and textures.” Her mother made her clothes, and Pam remembers when she, her sister, and her cousin all wore matching Easter dresses and coats made by Pam’s mother. “She could have been a home economics teacher,” says Pam. “Mom dropped out of high school to get married because that’s what you did back then.” Later on, Pam’s mother worked in an electronics factory in Tazewell, VA, and then “she was a cook in the McDowell County Schools”.

# Pam Thompson

When Pam was in high school her home economics teacher often called upon her to assist, and she taught sewing as a helper. She remembers that a friend gave her some nice textiles during that time, and she made bags from upcycled fabrics from thrift stores. “I’ve been repurposing and upcycling fabrics since the 90s, I started refashioning probably 10-15 years ago.” she says. “I enjoy connecting with our past through treasures such as vintage quilts, doilies, and laces. Friends, and now even strangers, pass on well-loved items to be transformed into something new.”

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“I like bargains,” she says, and “I like shopping in thrift stores. I can’t throw stuff away. We throw away too much; we could make better use of things.” Regarding used fabrics, Pam says “I like jeans fabric, the denim. I like to see what I can make from it. I like making one-of-a-kind things.” She adds, “I’m not interested in making multiples from a pattern.” Refashioning clothing has become a favorite of mine. I get used clothing through thrift stores or giveaways and alter in some way. I think of it as giving a ‘2nd chance’. Since I do not use patterns, much of my creative process is spent on choosing fabrics and the design.”

Pam has a degree in Art Education from Fairmont State, and she also studied Interior Decoration and drapery-making. For a while, she worked as an intern for a small business making draperies in Fairmont and then as a Shop-at-Home Decorator for a home store. “I did like that but it required working evenings and weekends.” Pam was then single, raising 2 children. “I would have liked to be in on custom window treatment home sales, but that didn’t work well with raising kids.”

Pam taught visual arts in the public schools for 20+ years, starting in Taylor County, WV, and she retired from Lexington Senior High School, in NC. “I had some amazing students that I watched grow from K - 12 in WV, some have gone on to become artists (I’m so proud of them). I taught in NC during Covid-19 and had two talented students who persevered and passed their AP art portfolio. (I’m proud of them too).”



“Creativity is a way of life for me. Over the years, I have worked with other media such as dried flowers, wreaths, and jewelry.”

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Pam says she has “always had a side job”, including working part-time as a police dispatcher. From time to time Pam has tested the waters placing her handmade pillows and garments in retail shops. “When there’s no monthly fee it can work out, but if there’s a fee on top of a percentage, it doesn’t. I have sold through several gift shops, online through endlessinspirations.etsy.com, at craft shows, and at one time, I was a Tamarack artisan, where, Pam recalls “it was slow selling. There was a lot of competition, a lot of people making similar things. It is a hobby for extra income.”

“While teaching, I had limited time to complete an artwork. I now have more time to refine my skills in drawing and painting. I’m concentrating on sewing, visual art, my flower gardening, plus making time for family and friends.”

Never idle, Pam is contemplating re-jurying at Tamarack with her new refashioned garments which include embellished, found denim hand-pieced dusters.

**Website and social media:**

**- Online Shop: [endlessinspirations.etsy.com](https://endlessinspirations.etsy.com)**

**- Facebook: [pam.thompson.14606](https://www.facebook.com/pam.thompson.14606)**

