

Working to save the heritage arts

Linda Folkerts ■ Staff Writer

Sharing their artistic talents with folks across the entire state of Tennessee, Connie Beck and Laura Frances Rushing travel year-round to keep heritage arts alive. Connie does spinning and weaving of wool, and Laura does basket weaving and chair bottoming.

Connie will be demonstrating spinning at the Fifth Annual Pickwick Holiday Mart, to be held on Dec. 11-12 at Pickwick Landing State Park; Friday, starting at noon and Saturday, starting at 10 a.m. Gift items will be available for purchase.

These crafty ladies scurry here and there throughout the year to share their unique and nearly extinct crafts.

Connie and Laura are both members of Tennessee Arts and Crafts Association West (TACA West), with Connie as president of the association.

Based out of Adamsville, Connie owns Appalachian Threads, 134 E. Main, where handcrafted items can be purchased.

"I teach spinning and weaving lessons on request," said Connie.

As busy as the two ladies are, a visitor may sometimes find Appalachian Threads closed, as the artists are out sharing their crafts to thousands outside Hardin County each year.

As president of TACA West, Connie organizes the annual craft fairs held May and September at Centennial Park, Nashville, where more than 1,500 vendors set up their



ARTISAN Laura Rushing of Savannah demonstrates weaving on chair bottoms at Dollywood each October.

crafts.

Both Connie and Laura demonstrate their respective crafts at Horse Creek Nature Days in the spring of each year. That event exposes Hardin County fourth graders to outdoor and heritage education.

"Our goal is to hopefully find people in the next generation to take our places," said Connie. "It's up to us to pass on the heritage arts."

Both ladies are members of Arts in McNairy and participate in the AiM Artisan Trail

held each March and November, where visitors travel to various local artisans' homes or businesses to observe arts in the making. Connie and Laura set up their crafts at Appalachian Threads. The event for November has already been held.

Laura said, "I enjoy sharing my work and telling others about the craft."

During the month of October, Connie and Laura participate at the Craftsman Valley section of Dollywood, in the

Smoky Mountains, as part of the theme park's National Gospel Music and Harvest Celebration.

"It takes several months in advance to make enough items to sell while we're there," said Connie.

They also demonstrate their craftsmanship for five weeks for visitors at Dollywood.

Laura said, "I make so many friends there. I've met people from Canada to Florida."

Connie said, "My newest venture will be next spring.



ARTISAN Connie Beck of Adamsville demonstrates weaving at Craftsman Valley in Dollywood.

I've been invited to do weaving at Dollywood's new Appalachian Heritage Shop in March."

Many Tennesseans and visitors to the state are enriched while viewing demonstrations of the heritage arts Connie and

Laura perform. With continued diligence on their part and others, the extinction of these crafts will hopefully be avoided, leaving future generations with the hands-on knowledge of the crafts themselves.

Sharon Baptist Church

invites you to join us at our new temporary location on Wayne Road in Savannah. Services are being held in the former Four-square Church, located next to the East End Shopping Center.

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Sharon Baptist Church

Phone 925-2165

Will McReynolds, Interim Pastor

■ Sewer

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of the school property.

The project also entails installation of a pump station to serve the new school vicinity, and a replacement pump station serving the Savannah-Hardin County Industrial Park, he said.

Property owners should be aware that SUD requires a one-time \$350 tap fee from each residence connecting to the sewer.

■ Murder trial

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worked 12 hour shifts as a nurse and saw her husband on April 10 after coming home from work. She left the house early the next day.

When she came home on April 11 she thought Freddie was asleep, and did not discover his condition until morning when she heard him breathing loudly, Warlick said.

Regarding the mattress, witnesses said they removed it from the Chason residence at Sharron's request because she said it would start to smell due to the bodily fluids.

They destroyed it with fire, "but she did not ask us to burn it," said Susan Dale.

Warlick contends his client is being tried "for being a health care provider. The proof is going to show that Sharron Chason is not guilty of first degree murder" or any lesser included offense, he said.

The couple was not estranged but slept in separate rooms because the husband snored loudly from sleep apnea.

Freddie also had an enlarged heart, high blood pressure and was seriously overweight, he said.

"No doubt about it, Freddie Chason got some diabetes medicine somewhere," Warlick acknowledged.

However, the level of the drug found in his system was only at a therapeutic level, not a fatal or even toxic level, he said.

If a disproportionate reaction to the drug was the cause of death, Sharron Chason would have to be an "idiot nurse" to pick it as a poison, he said. "Our killer picked a medication she had a one out of a half million chance of it working."



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