

KELLY'S CORNER

by Jan Kelly

The leaves of the tupelo and the bayberry have turned from green to red, a signal of change. We try not to notice this advancing of fall and passing of summer. Both leaves are small and allow our gradual adjustment. Steeplebush loosestrife, joe-pye weed, and fireweed clutter the wild grass areas. The colors are brilliant and arresting, splashed over the once-monotone area. August's wild flowers are tough stemmed, sturdy, large, and bright.

Steeplebush is in the rose family and blooms from the top downward. Its floral shape in total resembles a steeple. Loosestrife is its own family and is the brightest display of these meadow flowers. Joe-pye weed is in the daisy family and is a cluster of small blossoms forming an umbrella shape. The color is more subtle. Fireweed is of the evening primrose family, four petals rather than five as in the rose family, has seed pods, and grows where fire has destroyed. Hence, the name fireweed not for color but for occurrence. All this purple will give way to asters white, yellow, and light blue, and then to foliage. The poison ivy, then the cranberry, and eventually the deciduous trees will carpet us into winter.

The craft fair of the Provincetown Craft Guild and invited guests was held August 12th and 13th and will be held again on August 26th and 27th. Part of the proceeds of the forty stalls went to the Provincetown Business Guild. My first cursory visit of the two-day fair aroused admiration for the quality and curiosity about the control. I was directed to Lilli-Ann Green, organizer of the fair for the nuts and bolts information of what was a display of products demonstrating ingenuity, craftsmanship, and a love of beauty. The difficult task of scheduling this display of forty talented artists and artisans began the September before. Hundreds of applications are sent out. Those that return, along with 3x5 slides of the artist's work, are juried so that the quality will be insured. So the collection of woodwork, jewelry, weavings, Bonsai, paintings, mirrors, clothing, framed poetry, furniture, photographs, pottery, and giant dolls was spread out for the observer's delight.

Lilli-Ann Green's pottery stenciled with fern, oak leaves, and other local plant parts are of the most beautiful colors and glazes. Soup tureens, mugs, mushroom or herb keeper, garlic keepers, plates

and lamps for the practical and candle holders that project dancing starfishes for whimsy.

Lilli-Ann Green has been interested in pottery since she was ten years old. She was a visual arts major in college, and studied pottery with Philip Seacrest at his craftsman's barn and gallery in Wellfleet. She was a sculptor before this, but for the last thirteen years has been potting, and successfully. Lilli-Ann Green taught art in high school and taught environmental education in Truro at the Need Collaborative for eight years. Now potting takes full-time precedence. Her ideal as a crafts fair coordinator is not only quality control, but to urge Provincetown artists and artisans to involve themselves as a valid way to market their work. Since most have to hold jobs to pay the bills while they develop their skills, the crafts fair gives good visibility to their wares, and Lilli-Ann is eager for the good work of Provincetown to be seen, purchased, and used by all.

Across from Lilli-Ann, Fayette Watkis of FAWA Fabrics was weaving natural dyed, natural fabrics into dramatic and beautiful clothing. The clothes are custom-designed, hand-woven, and one of a kind. Fayette has a catalogue of styles with family members modeling the clothing. Daughter Bequitta and mother Mary Spencer Nay look quite content in the personalized clothes. Grandmother Mary had both five-year old Bequitta and baby David in her charge while Fayette held her post at the fair. The fishermen's smocks for children and adults, the jackets, blouses, booties, and pillow covers are available year-round. You can request your own colors and design.



Fayette Watkis at her loom

The strong and beautiful jewelry designs of Carl Tasha are always represented in the fairs. Nancy Gibbon and daughter Ariel Tempest soldier that fort! Almost every Provincetowner has at least one Carl Tasha. Belt buckles, bracelets, earrings, and rings are featured at the fair. Chess sets and necklaces or great psychic draw a show in the finest stores of New York and Boston. People usually

start with a belt buckle and keep moving through the collection. I notice my Tasha jewelry gets constant stares in international airports. Nobody has seen anything quite like it before.

Dale Holmes of Hawley, Massachusetts, in the Berkshires, was next to Nancy. His wind dervishes were selling well, but even more interesting was the "squash basket." Handcrafted from one piece of eastern maple, worked with oils to bring out the full color and to protect the wood, Dale has designed a collapsible basket. It opens to serve as a basket for fruit, flowers, or rolls. When open, a head and tail harbor the basket. The 3 designs are wood duck, cat, or rabbit. When you collapse and flatten the basket, it becomes a hot plate—all one piece of wood. The center spirals when opened, and a small pedestal, twists at a right angle for a standing base. The wind dervishes delivered this design after a year-and-a-half. Dale was a carpenter, but now devotes his work time to crafts. He likes the craft fairs, "It's a little marketplace. We welcome all lookers. Their observance and appreciation add dimension to the labor." I chose the wood duck for my piece of Yankee ingenuity. It's getting so much praise, I think I may lose it to an emotional admirer.



Vince Gyga and his Bonsai

The Fujii Bonsai and nursery display by Vince Gyga was of great curiosity to the public. A twenty-five-year-old juniper used as a stock plant was the largest and stunning. Besides evergreen, which must be treated as the larger trees, that is, set out doors in winter, Vince has groomed deciduous Chinese elms and others that change color to foliage and drop leaves for the winter. He also had a collection of flowering trees. I chose a snow plum and feel as responsible as if I had acquired a pet. The plum trees are capable of bearing tiny fruit, too. They are indigenous to the Chinese River lands. A Bonsai can outlive you, if tended properly, so you may have to will it.

A Bonsai is a miniaturized tree in a pot. The process of severe pruning to miniaturization began in China 1000 years ago. The art was introduced to Japan in 1280 A.D. I visited the Bonsai museum in Japan and saw miniature landscapes that had the effect of *trompe d'oeil*, fooling the eye. Like the effect of phantas magoria, you were duped into believing the trees were full size. Bonsai are heirlooms in Japan, such as prize carp and selected stones. With the broadening of interest and the shrinking of the world, Bonsai are possible outside the Orient. Many Provincetowners own one now. Vince Gyga made it easy for you. A good introduction of understanding is contained in a pamphlet on Bonsai care with the species' name, type of bloom, and type of care. Many people have developed Bonsai care as a skill and hobby. It is absorbing and relaxing. Vince has been doing nursery work for fourteen years, Bonsai for five years. He was so sensitive to his plants; staying at a campground, it was a chore of unloading and watering daily. For all who were present, don't miss the next crafts fair, even to browse, you'll gain.

Roz Baxandali called me and asked "Who is a justice of the Peace who could marry my friends? They have lived together fourteen years, have a twelve-year-old child, and now want to marry." The woman says she is feeling so romantic towards him now and feels committed enough to make a decision for life. The man says, "It's the new tax law."