

Quilts hanging in the garden

By TONY HOLT, Hernando Today, Published: October 24, 2009



Carolyn Small, left, and Joyce Kenney inspect one of the 127 quilts on display Saturday at the "Quilts in Bloom" quilt show at Nature Coast Botanical Gardens. The day-long event was hosted by the Hernando County Quilters' Guild and Spring Hill Garden Club. Quilts were hung through out the gardens and several quilting supply vendors were on hand.

SPRING HILL - Quilts aren't merely used to keep warm these days.

Most of them are a means of artistic expression. There are those serious quilt makers who paint, embroider and even stitch photographs on them.

More than 120 quilts were hanging Saturday at the Nature Coast Botanical Gardens during its annual quilt show.

The blend of quilts and exotic plants seemed just right to those who were visiting.

"It reminds me of when you've just laundered your quilt, you're hanging it up and that gust of wind hits it just right," said Pat Scotland, a long-time quilter who attended the show at the gardens. "It's just very homey."

Scotland, of Spring Hill, has one quilt at home that was made by her great-grandmother. It is made partially of silk and satin and includes a James A. Garfield campaign ribbon from when he ran for president in 1880, she said.

Quilting got a surge in popularity in 1976, when Americans were celebrating the country's bicentennial, said co-organizer Bonnie Staveski, a member of the Hernando Quilters' Guild.

"It's come a long way from utilitarian," she said. "It's more for art-hanging."

Saturday's event was a joint effort by the guild and the botanical gardens and included raffles, live music and quilt vendors.

"This is a beautiful setting to hang quilts," said Beverly Salkin, who was one of the organizers. "You can sit down in the gardens, enjoy the ambiance and see all of these beautiful quilts hanging."

The event ran from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. By mid-afternoon, more than 350 people had visited the gardens and purchased raffle tickets, organizers said.

"Quilting is appreciated by anyone who is an artist of any field," said Bonnie Giustozzi, a guild member and quilter.

Maria Sparacio, of Spring Hill, visited with a group of friends possibly to compare the quilts at the gardens with what they had hanging inside their own homes.

"It's amazing how many different creations you can make out of a piece of material," Sparacio said.

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