

Dollmaker creates a clan of Willow Creek Cousins

Dollmaker Sarah Becker is taking her Willow Creek Cousins to a Country Peddler show in Marietta, Ga. early in September.

The gathering of country folk artists near Atlanta will be Becker's first national show and sale — and she is unsure of how she will feel about parting with the "cousins."

Her decision to stay home and make dolls, after three years as a bank teller, was a change of career, a business venture. But as each doll was created with loving attention to detail, it assumed its own personal identity.

Becker's Willow Creek Cousins are country folk dolls, like those made by women for their children in the 19th century. They are made of cloth and

their faces are painted and "aged" to give them character. Their hair is combed flat fiber imported from England. The flaxen locks do not tolerate additional combing, but they can be braided and arranged in traditional hairstyles.

The legs are filled with sawdust to give the dolls stability. Becker said many of the old dolls' bodies were filled with sawdust, but after experimenting, she found a fiber fill was easier to work with. It also allows more detail as it can be quilted to define the fingers. She obtains her sawdust from a friend who is a cabinetmaker.

Each dolls' body is signed,



Dollmaker Sarah Becker, who was Sarah Mistello when she graduated from North Farmington High School in 1977, is always on the lookout for old children's shoes for her folk dolls.

Runners challenged in Golden Corridor

Children's Center and Kelly Services, Inc. challenge Detroit-area runners to go for the gold in the "Golden Corridor Run" in Troy Civic Center on Sunday, Sept. 9 at 10 a.m.

Participants can compete in one of four races with all proceeds to help support The Children's Center, Michigan's oldest and largest facility that provides mental health care to troubled children and their families. Located on Alexander East in the Detroit Medical Center, the center treats 1,500 children annually at its headquarters and five satellite locations throughout the city.

Serious runners can attempt to better their personal best times over a verified 10-kilometer (6.3-mile) course, while children 18 and under are invited to participate in a one-mile fun run.

Individuals may register in advance for an entry fee of \$3 (\$10 on race day). Registration for children competing in the one-mile fun run is \$3. Special contributors can compete in "The Golden Mile" by making a minimum of \$125 donation per individual or family.

A highlight this year will be the "Corporate Challenge," in which city-minded companies can pit their four-person teams against those from other organizations. Runners from Kelly Services, Inc., K mart Corporation and other companies along Troy's "Golden Corridor" are now gearing up for the competition. The entry fee is \$250 for the first four-person team from each company and \$125 for each additional team.

All registrants will receive "Golden Corridor Run" t-shirts and certificates, and will be eligible to win a solid gold coin or other raffle prizes. Winners in each age category will receive medals, pins, and plaques will be awarded to the overall winners in each of the four races. Prior to the race, the Troy Family Resource Bureau will hold

runners in warm-up exercises. A buffet brunch, live music and break dancing performances will be provided following the race.

Entry fees will help defray the ever-increasing costs The Children's Center faces in providing treatment to emotionally disturbed children. Entry forms are available at all Kelly Services offices, local BPA Bowling Fun Centers and selected Vic Tanny Health Clubs. For more information, call 831-5555.

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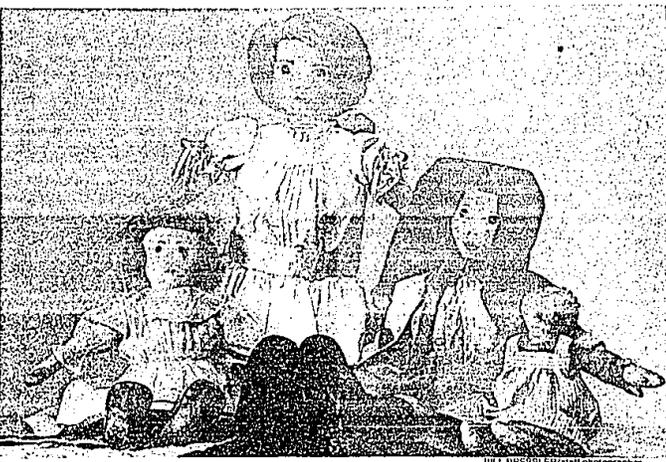
numbered and dated by the maker. It also has Becker's trademark, the perfect heart embroidered in a satin stitch. These identifications add their value as collectors' items.

The dollmaker attends antique shows, flea markets and estate sales to find materials and children's clothing for the dolls.

"Old shoes are the hardest to come by," she said. The cousins' footwear dates from the 1800s to the late 1920s and they wear vintage cotton hosiery.

Linda Neuroth of Plymouth makes the wreaths of flowers that some of the dolls wear in their hair. Becker's mother in North Carolina does the hand smocking on the dresses and 80 percent of the sewing on the clothing is done by hand. Doll quilts are patched and quilted from old materials.

Dolls range in price from \$20, for a replica of a primitive Appalachian rag doll, to \$160 for the larger, more elaborately dressed models. Some of the cousins may be seen locally at the Salt Box on Forest Street, Plymouth, and Two's Co. on Main Street, Northville.



Cousins vary from the Victorian lady in the heirloom dress (left), the doll of the '20s in the drop-waist model, to the Appalachian rag dolls on the right.

League of Women Voters host O.C. commissioner

League of Women Voters, West Bloomfield-Farmington Area Branch, will kick off the 1984 membership drive with a dinner meeting featuring guest speaker Lillian Moffitt, vice chairman of Oakland County Commissioners.

The event begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 12 in Steak & Ale, 27590 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills.

Guests are invited to make reservations, for \$11.95, by calling the league office, 855-0407.

Moffitt's topic for the evening is "Women's Role in Politics."

September is National League of Women Voters Month. The membership campaign continues through Oct. 31.

The league was founded in 1920 to

encourage political responsibility through the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and to act on selected governmental issues.

Members research and study various issues at all levels of government before taking action. During election periods the league is often the only impartial source of voter information.

The league never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

At the national level the organization sponsors presidential debates, at the state level, gubernatorial debates. State and local groups compile and distribute non-partisan voter guides.

This year the state league added a citizens information center to the services offered Michigan residents.

Legal assistant program now available at Madonna

The legal assistant program at Madonna College, Livonia, has received approval of the American Bar Association (ABA).

A visitation committee had spent three days at the college during February and March of this year to meet faculty, visit classes and survey library resources. Prior to the visit, a self-study, defining objectives of the program, course descriptions and admission criteria had been submitted for review.

The self-study was prepared by

Dennis Borzyk, program director, and Jennifer Cole, assistant director.

The Madonna legal assistant curriculum offers an associate degree, a bachelor's degree and a post-degree certificate. A legal assistant's duties include

researching and analyzing laws, investigating the facts of a case, and drafting documents under the supervision of an attorney. The legal assistant can also interview clients, obtain releases for personal information and assist in

the preparation of cases.

For further information about the legal assistant program at Madonna College, contact Borzyk or Cole at 591-5195. Madonna is located at the intersection of I-96 and Livonia in Livonia.

Old world crafters demonstrate

Craftsmen will be demonstrating Old World crafts in Plymouth Historical Museum from noon to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 8-9.

Crafts to be demonstrated will include

scrimshaw carving, making of corn husk dolls, tin-smithing, rose mailing, alibouette cutting, wood carving, enameling on copper, weaving of

cradles and baskets, thimble painting and net darning.

The Plymouth Historical Museum is at 153 S. Main St. Admission charge is \$1 for adults and 25 cents for children.

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