

A glimpse into the creative heart of today's most talented sewing \S quilting artists.



I have just returned from International Quilt Market in Houston TX as the quilting mecca celebrates its 35th anniversary. Seeing all the quilts and surrounded by so many inspiring and enterprising individuals just takes my breath away, better yet... makes me want to sew and quilt! I appreciate my good fortune of working in this colorful industry. Check out my photo collage which includes a treasured pic with Karey Bresenhan, the founder of International Quilt Market & Festival.

Are you ready to Tie One On? After reading about EllynAnne Geisel, I'm sure you too will be inspired to share a smile and a thoughtful gesture with an acquaintance. As EllynAnne suggests, aprons often serve as memory triggers. Above I'm wearing an apron from Winnipeg stamped 1952. My friend Carol recently gave it to me along with the story of how Canadian nurses served in the Korean War. I treasure our friendship along with this beautifully constructed apron with its meaningful history. Meet Joi Mahon who's passion for fashion and perfect fit has created a career beyond her lowa home state – the internet is one remarkable tool. Besides designing and teaching, Joi recently added author to her accomplishments. These gals are trail blazers carving their own paths. So grab a cup of java and enjoy their stories Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit Too!

Rhonda Pierce
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Monkey Biz Car Caddy

Eazy Peazy Quilts

www.EazyPeazyQuilts.com

Interviews by: Rita Farro

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There's an App for That!







Designeriol Design Studio LLC Joi Manon



Joi Mahon —

"That Girl" — Successful Entrepreneur

Joi Mahon is one of the most successful young sewing entrepreneurs in the country. Her fitting classes and sewing camps are hot tickets wherever she goes. She has made a splash with her Craftsy classes, has a new book hot off the press and a deal with McCall patterns. So — who is Joi Mahon? And what inspires her to sew?

As a child, Joi hand sewed doll clothes and crafts. In the 6th grade, she joined 4-H and had her first sewing class. It all really clicked and made sense to her. She took sewing every year in school and was "that girl" — off by herself, sewing advanced projects while everyone else struggled with square pillows.

During high school, she apprenticed for a tailor which was a life-changing opportunity. Not only did she learn to fit all types of bodies — men, women, children, big, small, young, old — she did custom sewing for brides, men's fine tailoring and ladies alterations. Joi also learned all aspects of running a business.

At lowa State University, Joi paid extra so she could have her own dorm room which she modified to set up a large cutting table and sewing machines. She produced the student fashion show and won top prize in many categories every year. Joi graduated first in her class with a degree in Apparel Design, Merchandising and Production with a secondary in product development.

After college, Joi leased an office space and started doing custom designs. She says, "I feel it is important to actually do what I teach. Custom work is still a portion of my design work. I am always open to design opportunities. I design clothing in collaboration with independent companies and I have a patent on a garment which may soon be licensed."

Joi considers teaching an extension of her design work, but with a husband and two young children at home, she limits her travel. Last year she was honored to be named the American Sewing Expo's Teacher of the Year. She is frequently invited to teach the teachers — at sewing machine conventions and industry events.



Joi's First Book Available Now



Joi Mahon— Continued



Teaching Craftsy classes Fast Track Fitting and Fast Track Fitting In The Details allows Joi to reach people all over the world with her unique fit methods. These classes are based on the unique measuring and fitting methods she developed over the years.

Writing is also a logical extension of Joi's design work. Her first book just came out: **Create the Perfect Fit:** *Measuring and Pattern Fitting for Real Sewing Solutions*. Joi says, "The book is a natural step because as I travel the country — I meet all these people who have what I call "Fit Anxiety". They struggle with fit and they have taken every class, bought every book and still cannot get fit right. I have real solutions for them."

Designing, teaching and writing all led to Joi Mahon's McCall Patterns. M7025 is a coat with two lengths. M7017 is a four piece skirt & top. She also has a Holiday design coming out in the Winter catalog, with at least five more patterns to follow. Look for a new design in each pattern catalog.

www.designerjoi.com

Joi's Needle Tip:

To keep your sewing healthy and issue free **change the needle** — **and change it often**. I change my sewing machine needle several times during any project. This is a habit I developed early on — and for me, it's just like flossing teeth. Initially, I didn't do this on my sergers, but since most serger problems (snagged and skipped stitches) can be easily solved by CHANGING THE NEEDLES — I've started to change those needles with every project, too.













EllynAnne Geisel





EllynAnne Geisel —

Tie One on Day™

EllynAnne Geisel married her Prince Charming and for over 20 years lived her dream as a full-time mom. As the nest emptied, she imagined living another dream, that of a writer. A first article, she decided, would be about the symbol of domesticity and motherhood: the apron. Scrounging secondhand shops and estate sales for aprons to purchase as inspiration, she found herself thinking about the woman who had worn the apron, the family she had cared for, and the stories the aprons might tell.

Seeking others who thought of aprons as storytelling prompts, she toted around a basket full of old aprons as a prop to encourage people to recall their apron memories. For four years, EllynAnne listened and wrote it all down. Initially, she thought people would share warm fuzzy memories of mothers and grandmothers . . . but the scope and variety of the stories stunned her.

Uncertain what to do with her apron research, EllynAnne impulsively attended a writer's conference. Her idea of aprons as memory triggers that celebrated the spirit of women was greeted with such encouragement, she gained the confidence to embark on her dream. It wasn't long before she wrote her first article about aprons.

Eventually, she gathered hundreds of aprons and as many apron memories from across America. From those stories, she curated and wrote **Apron Chronicles: A Patchwork of American Recollections**, a traveling exhibit, which earned her a national spotlight and recognition by The New York Times.

EllynAnne has written the award-winning **The Apron Book:** *Making, Wearing and Sharing a Bit of Cloth and Comfort, Apronisms: Pocket Wisdom for Every Day,* and **The Kitchen Linens Book:** *Using, Sharing, and Cherishing the Fabrics of Our Daily Lives.* She has been featured on CBS Sunday Morning and NPR's Weekend All Things Considered.

She also created **Tie One On Day™**, recognized by Chase's Calendar of Events and celebrated annually on Thanksgiving eve. So -- what is **Tie One On Day**?





EllynAnne Geisel — Continued





EllynAnne explains, "Nine years ago, as I was preparing for my family's traditional turkey dinner, I suddenly thought about a neighbor. Her family had recently experienced a tragedy, and their Thanksgiving was not going to be about pumpkin pies.

Spur of the moment, I wrapped a loaf of bread in an apron and slipped a handwritten card in the pocket. Still wearing my apron, I walked two blocks, nervously half-hoping no one would answer the door so I could leave my offering on the porch. But my knock was answered, and my neighbor was so grateful of a gesture of recognition, so appreciative of an in-person delivery and a few minutes of kindly conversation. Walking home, I felt this unexpected joy. That such a simple act had made someone happy and my heart swell as well was an experience I knew needed to be shared. So I created **Tie One On Day** (... an apron, of course!) as a yearly encouragement to give from the heart through an act of kindness before giving thanks on Thanksgiving."

Celebrated the Wednesday before Thanksgiving (November 26 this year), **Tie One On Day** participants are encouraged to wrap a baked good in an apron or other cloth and tuck in an personal note; then deliver their offering to a charity, neighbor, co-worker, janitor or nameless service clerk in need of physical or spiritual sustenance, a bit of recognition or just a kind word.

Whether homemade or brought home from the store and repackaged, a **Tie One On Day** offering includes a handwritten note and delivery in person. "One of my favorite things to give," says EllynAnne, "is a few bakery cookies I've dipped in chocolate and packaged in a vintage tea cup." Her message from the heart is always the same: "Thinking of you." For a free, downloadable **Tie One On Day**™ notecard, click here.

www.apronmemories.com



Quilting * Stars









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