



Rhonda adores her machine embroidered Limoncello yellow coat!

The yellow color first drew my attention to this coat, crumpled up under the clearance rack at Talbots. Curiously, I found a plain, fully lined, 100% wool coat with dusty footprints. The price tag: \$19. No way to treat a beautiful coat. I had to have it! Luckily, my friend and master machine embroiderer, Christine Spencer, expertly transformed this downtrodden coat into a jewel that I still love today. That was over 12 years ago. The spectacular machine embroidery is still a classic today. Christine did the wall hanging on the cover of this issue as well. You will see close ups of two blocks on the next pages.

The ladies in this issue make machine embroidery fun and inspiring. Start with a simple project. Remember you do not always need to start from scratch. Pick up a blouse or skirt off the clearance rack and add your own machine embroidery pizazz.

Just in case you are wondering, and yes, I am doing a little happy dance, after 12 years, my Limoncello yellow coat still fits. Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit® Too!

Rhonda Pierce Spokesperson, SCHMETZneedles.com info@SCHMETZneedles.com

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Cover: Wallhanging by Christine Spencer

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## What Inspires YOU to Sew?







There's an App for That!









# Machine Embroidery





Closeup of cover wallhanging by Christine Spencer.

#### **Machine Embroidery**

The evolution of machine embroidery for the home sewer has been mind-boggling. In the 1980s, some sewing machine companies added *lettering* to their decorative stitches. The machine companies started to attach hoops to their machines in the 1990s, and in the early 2000s, sewing machines started to hook up to Windows Operating Systems.

In the beginning, the concept of machine embroidery was brand new to the sewing machine dealers who were selling the machines, so the home embroiderer was pretty much left to figure things out on her own. It was the early days of the internet, long before Facebook, YouTube, or Craftsy. Remember *chat rooms* and *Yahoo message boards?* That is where they came to learn this new artform. Through an awkward time of dial-up internet connections, and long downloading times, these pioneer machine embroiderers were eager to share what they were learning.





Closeup of cover wallhanging by Christine Spencer.

In those early days, the sewing machine companies created machines that were capable of embroidering, but the design choices were limited to the *cards* the machine companies were selling. Each company had their own system. Bernina had their own system, Viking cards only worked in Viking machines, Brother cards only worked in Brother machines, etc. A card with ten butterfly designs might cost \$80.

The second revolution in machine embroidery for the home sewer came about when independent companies *cracked the code* and started to create designs that would work with ALL machine formats. Cactus Punch was one of the first companies to come to the market with ecumenical design packs that would work with every machine format.







Karie Coffey Director of Marketing and Education



Oklahoma Embroidery Supply & Design (OESD) is one of those heritage companies that has survived the ups and downs of the market. Now celebrating their 31st year in business, they are enjoying a super strong resurgence. Their motto is YOUR CRAFT IS OUR PASSION. OESD is an industry leading creator of machine embroidery designs and embroidery products. Their designs work for all makes and models of embroidery machines. Their 40,000 strong, superior design library is available online at Embroidery Online and Scissortail Stitches.

Karie Coffey is the Director of Marketing and Education for OESD. After getting her fine arts degree, she kind of *fell into* the embroidery world, working in commercial embroidery production for LL Bean. She spent ten years as a general manager for a top sewing machine dealer in Buffalo, New York. She relocated to the Midwest for the job at OESD.

OESD has been responding to the wants and needs of home embroiderers for over 30 years. Karie says, Our digitizing is all done in-house, right here in Oklahoma. Some of our digitizers have been here for over 20 years. We do about eight collections a month. Many of our designs are classic, but we work hard to

pay attention to the trends, too. We are able to respond or pivot quickly. Our events are all planned in-house as well, and our event team travels all over the country. We listen to our customers, and what our dealers want, so we are not getting rid of physical media. We are committed to continue delivering designs in all three formats, CDs, USBs, or digital.

OESD has worked hard to develop and maintain a relationship with brick and mortar retail stores. Karie says, Our retailers are so important to us. For example, the OESD's SPREE Club (Special Pricing Reserved for Embroidery Enthusiasts) is a special embroidery design savings club offered to OESD event attendees. Members get the newest exciting embroidery designs from OESD & Scissortail Stitches delivered directly to their local store each month on a ready-to-use USB stick.

OESD is a leader in developing 3-D embroidery designs. Karie says, Right now, in the hoop projects are very popular. Especially with the newer embroiderers. They like to have a finished thing. They can create a zipper bag or a stitch and turn doll. They enjoy having a complete project.





Reen Wilcoxson was featured in Issue #40 of **SCHMETZ** *Inspired To Sew* magazine. That issue was all about *In The Hoop* (ITH) embroidery designs, and Reen is considered *THE EXPERT* in this exciting machine embroidery specialty. ITH designs are ones where you create a 3D item like a purse, wallet, key ring, etc. in the hoop of your embroidery machine. Designs are created in steps with stops. When the machine stops you add fabric, trim, manipulate fabrics, etc. When the design is finished it's trimmed and turned to the right side as if you had sewn it using a sewing machine. Although nobody knows for sure who invented ITH, there is no doubt that Reen Wilcoxson is a pioneer in the field.

Reen designs and sells *in the hoop* machine embroidery files online through her website, <u>www.EmbroideryGarden.com</u>. She does all the designing, digitizing, instructions, web page work, and advertising herself. Like many entrepreneurs in the sewing industry, she does not have a staff, although, she does have many testers.

Reen says, It's important for me to have testers who stitch my designs and go over the instructions for accuracy. Their feedback is invaluable; because even though I always know where I'm headed with a new project, I need to be sure the directions are clear enough so that every home embroiderer will achieve the desired result.







We cannot talk about machine embroidery and not talk about software, that digital link between the computer and the embroidery machine. Software proved to be a difficult learning curve, especially in the beginning. It would be impossible to discuss or evaluate the various software programs that have come and gone. Instead, we turned to one of the most popular pioneer teachers in the field. Lisa Shaw has been teaching third-party embroidery software for over 25 years and she has a gallon jar full of dongles to prove it. She has taught software classes at the biggest consumer sewing shows in the world, and the lucky girl makes frequent teaching trips to Australia. On her website, <a href="https://www.Sew-Bubbles.com">www.Sew-Bubbles.com</a>, she shares her knowledge and love of all-things-embroidery-software.

Because of her geek tendencies, Lisa was ahead of the curve when the Covid pandemic hit. She was already doing an After-Hours tutorial every week on her Sew-Bubbles Facebook page. And she has taken those tutorials, and added additional recorded classes to the mix, to her VIMEO channel.

Before the 2020 all-stop, Lisa was a frequent flyer, traveling to sewing shows and conventions every other week. In 2021, she is only planning to do two shows, and both are very focused *embroidery only* consumer shows. She'll be teaching at the <u>Everything Embroidery Market</u> in Biloxi, Mississippi in September and the <u>Appliqué Getaway</u>, July 23-25, 2021 in Irving, Texas. Lyndsie Salcido, the founder and Creative Director of the Appliqué Getaway, accidentally got into machine embroidery when she purchased her first sewing machine at Walmart, and it happened to have an embroidery element. Due to her youth and enthusiasm (she was in her 20s), she decided it would be easy to digitize her own designs and sell them on the web.

A driving force behind Appliqué Getaway was that Lyndsie realized home embroiderers loved sharing information, and she believed they would enjoy getting together. Since nobody else was doing it, she decided to create a conference,









Lisa Shaw

where they could meet up socially and have fun. They had their first event in 2013 with almost 500 attendees. They have social events, shopping hours, and classes. They provide a grab-and-go lunch option and focus heavily on the *let's have fun* element. For example, they had an 80s themed evening event where everybody dressed up like Madonna.

In 2020, the show was scheduled for June. In April, they moved it to November, but, in August, they decided to go to a virtual format. They were delighted to have 1200 people pay \$25 to attend. All the events were recorded, so attendees had two months to watch all the classes. The show also did a completely Virtual Goody Bag, which included digital designs from vendors, as well as virtual coupons for vendor websites.

Lisa will be teaching for Embrilliance software at the Appliqué Getaway in Texas. But no matter what machine she is using or what software, her favorite sewing machine needle for embroidery is the **SCHMETZ Chrome Embroidery 75/11**.

If she is using silk thread on silk fabric, she will switch to **SCHMETZ Chrome Microtex** to get that nice sharp point. If she is stitching on Neoprene (for Coozies) or marine vinyl for key fobs, she uses a **SCHMETZ Super NonStick 90/14**. It makes a nice hole for that bean stitch, for example, that triple stitch around the edge of a key fob.

On her website, Lisa says, Over the years, I have learned a lot about all things related to machine embroidery, the good, the bad and the ugly. One of my favorite quotes is:

An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.

— Benjamin Franklin

Every project, every stitch out has some bit of knowledge that we can learn from. Our successes as well as our failures are valuable lessons.





### Machine Embroidery Bundle



This pre-picked "bundle" offers a selection of three needle cards for Machine Embroidery. Includes the following:

- one card of Embroidery Needles
- one card of Embroidery Gold Needles
- one card of Super NonStick Needles
- #SCH-TAG
- #D-81 SCHMETZ ABC Pocket Guide

#1904

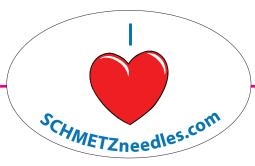
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