

New Business Simmer and Stitch Brings "A Lot of Joy" to Artist

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - If you need a last minute gift, Brooke Peipert has got you covered with her new business Simmer and Stitch.

Peipert is a longtime artist, but she hadn't had the opportunity to create her own art in awhile. She started making simmer pots and embroidered necklaces for her loved ones, then decided she would try selling her wares, just to see what happened.

"I was hesitant to put them out there and I did, and the first batch sold in less than an hour and I thought, 'Well, I guess I'll make some more,'" she laughed. "That's kind of where it all started. I spent a lot of years perpetuating the arts in other areas and for other artists in our community, so it's been nice to get back into doing something that I can perpetuate for myself...Everything in my life is kind of made full circle with this project that I'm pursuing."

Peipert has a lot of respect for older methods. She remembers women in her family putting on simmer pots and hand-embroidering clothing, but both of these traditions have fallen away in recent years. She has enjoyed introducing a new generation to these ideas.

The simmer pots are a favorite tradition in Peipert's own life. She harvests the herbs and materials for the simmer pots from her own garden. She explained that all you have to do is simmer the herbs in a pot of water, and the steam provides the aroma.

"Simmer pots are a simple joy of mine in my own home that I've done for a long time," Peipert explained. "I think people got away from doing it for a period of time. Bath and Body Works took over and the wallflowers and all these toxic ways of providing fragrance in your house. I have a parrot at home and animals and stuff, so I'm always looking for safe for my bird. You just never know what's in all that stuff with words you can't even pronounce on the label."

She also enjoys how sustainable the simmer pots are, as all of the ingredients can be dumped outside when you're done with the pot. Peipert currently has Christmas and New Year's Eve simmer pots available for \$7 each, with plans to introduce a new scent after the holidays.

While she has been making simmer pots for several years now, embroidery is a newer skill. Peipert had been assisting an artist who taught her how to embroider, and she soon began making hand-embroidered necklace pendants and selling them over Facebook. It has been a fun, "meditative" hobby with a modern take on a traditional method.

“When she taught me how to do that, my mind just exploded,” Peipert joked. “That’s really what I’m trying to do, bring a new spin on an old trade that not a lot of people do.”

The necklaces are a smaller version of traditional hoop embroidery. The prices vary, but Peipert said she makes a point to keep everything affordable.

Throughout the years, simmer pots and embroidery have been powerful healing tools in Peipert’s life. She has enjoyed finding new ways to use these skills and share them with other people. For anyone who is still finding their way, she encourages them to stay hopeful because hope got her through difficult times to where she is now.

“It’s giving my gardening a purpose now and I get to actually utilize what I grow and all the work that I put into my backyard...And then with my stitching, that kind of came into my life after one of my first jaw surgeries,” she shared. “So it was a really nice thing that came into my life that was really healing to me, gave me something to do to get through the pain I was enduring and things like that. When they say things fall into place in your life, I do firmly believe that in some weird way. I never thought it would be simmer pots and stitching, but it’s bringing me a lot of joy.”

To learn more about Simmer and Stitch, visit their [official Facebook page](#).

