

HONORS

By Dolores Andrew

When we join a NAN program, for one certification or another, we never know where it can lead. Obviously, having NAN certification as a teacher or a judge can open many doors professionally. It gives us a quality of assurance that is comparable to no other program of its kind. Whether we continue to teach or to judge in our own locality, or to find our expertise in demand around the country, the NAN certification can lead to many rewarding experiences and the opportunity to meet and work with many exciting people.

These are very satisfying goals, but Nan has other programs for advanced study, which offer even more opportunity for growth and challenge. One of these is the Honors Program. It is a two-year, in-depth study in a needleart field of the student's own choice. Honors follows NAN Teacher Certification, but can be undertaken by a member of any other needleart organization, who has comparable credentials.

Many areas of interest have been studied by past Honors candidates: Oriental, Turkish, and Judaic themes, as well as many historic periods, design elements, and special techniques. Completing the Honors Program can often lead in even more exciting and challenging directions. Several of us have found that our Honors subject has given us many invitations for lectures and programs. Three of us, so far, have found ourselves published authors.

Peg Laflam, Gail Sirna, and Dolores Andrew have been fortunate to have their theses of interest to publishers. Peg's book, based on her studies and experiences while she lived in the Middle East, was on Turkoman Rugs. She researched the history of the areas, the lives of the tribes, and carefully described the elements that make up the Turkoman rug.

Gail became interested in the study of paintings that portrayed a stitcher in some setting. She traveled, researched, read, and gathered photos from museums around the world. It took a long time, (as did all of our research) to secure the photos, as well as the permissions necessary to use them for her Honors presentation.. The wonderful book that has resulted has recently been published, and will be a welcome addition to our libraries.

Dolores' book on Italian Renaissance Textiles was almost published by accident. Besides the Honors, it had been the subject of her MFA thesis. A casual conversation with a fellow art teacher led to a meeting with her publisher, who was interested in a "book by a woman author". After that meeting, twenty years ago, they have since published two other books on other needleart subjects.

These are just three examples of where Nan Certification and Honors can lead. (Each of us has continued to study and gather more information on our Honors subject, because usually they become a lifetime pursuit for us.) When we enter the Honors program, it usually is because some subject fascinates us, or because it is a new, maybe unexplored field just waiting to be researched. We give the presentation at Assembly, never knowing what other opportunities lay ahead. So, try it, You never know!

See You in Kansas City!