

Cindy English Middleton of Humboldt Tennessee will be here Heritage Day demonstrating the art of Pine Needle Basket Weaving.

*There is no historical record of when pine needle basket weaving began, but it is safe to assume that it has been around as long as people and pine trees have shared space on this earth. The South Florida Seminoles are noted as the first to use this technique. They used bone or shell needles together with fern roots, sisal and swamp grass to bundle the needles together to form baskets. Beeswax was used to coat or seal some of the baskets.

*Modern basket weaving techniques can be traced back to the Civil War era, 1861-1865, when Mrs. M. J. McAfee of South Georgia made a pine needle basket as a hat for her father. She credits herself with modernizing this technique.

Cindy grew up in Randolph on the Bluffs of the Mississippi Rivers as the oldest daughter of Bill and Louis English. With grandparents living within a half mile radius, Cindy was exposed from a very early age to the art of embroidery, quilting and sewing. As she grew, she learned these skills from her grandmothers and her mother.

After graduating college as a Registered Dietitian, she began to travel with her work. She took advantage of her travel by visiting art museums, craft stores, and even by taking classes in the areas where she worked.

While in Florida, serving as a Docent at the Heritage Village in St. Petersburg, she encountered pine needle basket weaving. She was demonstrating the art of hand sewing and quilting when another demonstrator caught her attention. She was weaving a basket from pine needles!

Cindy watched the demonstrator all that day, and the rest, is history! She has traveled to Festival's all over demonstrating the art of pine needle basket weaving, as well as selling some of her creations. Cindy will be in Covington, September the 27th from 9:00 and until 5:00 pm. Be sure to visit her booth on the north corner of the Court House Lawn (facing North Main Street.)

*Best of Home Projects-Using Pine Needle Baskets