

Community

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At 92, necklace makers are hanging up their craft

BY KEN SAIN
Tribune Staff Writer

A gift five years ago inspired a Chandler woman to start making her own necklaces that became so popular, one of them was sold to an admirer on an elevator ride.

But that ride is coming to an end, as Glenmar Fullmer and Barbara Taylor say they are giving it up.

Both are 92 and live at The Park at Copper Creek senior living community.

“My daughter-in-law from Africa brought me one,” Fullmer said, explaining her inspiration for her necklaces. “I still have it. We looked at it, and we figured out how to make them. So, that got us started.”

The necklaces use fabric to hold everything together, so they need large



Barbara Taylor (left) and Glenmar Fullmer make each necklace by hand and have been selling them for the past five years. The proceeds are donated to Dogs4Vets, a Gilbert nonprofit. (Ken Sain/Tribune Staff)

holes in the beads. The biggest beads are wooden, and covered in fabric. The smaller beads they buy online.

The rest is up to the creativity of the person putting it together.

“You visualize how is this going to look, and you got to be creative,” said Barbara Taylor, who joined Fullmer on the project. “You start off, you think, ‘oh no, I don’t like it.’ Then you take it apart and start again.”

There was a third member of the team, Fullmer said, who did the fabric on the large wooden beads, but she recently moved. That was one factor in deciding that this would be the last time they would sell the necklaces.

“I even sold one on the elevator once,” Taylor said. “She wanted to buy

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Expert plans free AI workshop for QC students

BY SAMANTHA REA
Tribune Staff Writer

Queen Creek students curious about artificial intelligence will learn to do more than ask it for homework help at the AIronautical Engineering Student AI and Coding Workshop on Jan. 3.

Held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Queen Creek Library for middle, high school, and college students in Queen Creek, the free hands-on workshop will teach them how to apply AI to real-world projects and use AI tools to write code. He also plans a workshop for Feb. 7.

Parents are invited to join in the workshop’s closing segment for information on keeping kids safe and honest with AI.

Led by Manikandan Chandran, author of “AIronautical Engineering,” students will learn how to leverage AI for tech coding and software development.

Additionally, students will learn practical guardrails for what not to share with AI tools like

ChatGPT and Gemini, including passwords and confidential data.

During the closing segment, parents will receive a list of the AI software their children may use and get guidance on safe and responsible use. Additionally, they will receive a basic knowledge of prompt engineering and how to turn prompts into code.

After the workshop, students should be able to install AI tools such as Cursor – an AI-assisted coding program – on their laptops and use those tools for real-time coding.

Chandran, who earned a master’s of computer applications from Madras Christian College, has nearly two decades of experience working with cutting-edge technologies such as cloud computing, machine learning, and AI.

Currently, he works as a senior software engineer at Matson, Inc. in Phoenix.

He makes one point that he emphasizes above



Manikandan Chandran

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a blue one. When we got out of the elevator, she tried it on. I happened to have some with me. She ended up buying three of them.”

Taylor said she was born in Chicago and came out to Tucson to visit family. Her husband got a job offer, so they went back home and moved to Tucson. He soon got transferred to Tempe and that’s where they lived for 30 years.

Fullmer grew up in Spokane, Washington, then moved to Idaho to attend college and raise her family. The family became interested in horses and began collecting them, growing to six horses at one point.

After her husband died, she said she got tired of snow and moved to Arizona to be close to one of her daughters.

Both women were residents at a se-

nior living community in Ahwatukee when they met and decided to start making necklaces together. When Taylor moved to The Park at Copper Creek, she encouraged Fullmer to join her.

The African-inspired necklaces have been a huge hit with all generations.

“This is my great grandson,” Taylor said, pointing to a photo on the table. “He said, ‘Grandma, would you make me one?’ I said, ‘Sure, what color do you want.’”

Her great grandson is apparently very patriotic, he chose red, white and blue. They said making so many necklaces has been enjoyable because they were doing it together.

“We worked usually on Tuesdays for a couple of hours, and then in between on our own we would do some in our apartment,” Fullmer said. ■

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all others: “AI will never replace humans, but if you’re not learning AI, then for sure somebody with AI skills will replace you.”

In talking with students, Chandran said he learned that many were lagging behind the current AI trend.

Thus, he brainstormed the idea of a workshop to help community students.

This will be the first AI student workshop.

Depending on interest, he said he may offer additional sessions in the future. During the Jan. 3 session, Chandran will collect students’ project ideas and use them to guide the topics and instruction of future workshops.

“By seeing the YouTube video or tutorial, anyone can learn,” Chandran said. “But my plan is to incubate their ideas, implementing their ideas.”

There is a limited number of seats

available for the workshop. Those interested in attending should register on Manikandan Chandran’s website before the event. Laptops are not required to participate in the workshop.

In a world consistently integrating and developing artificial intelligence tools, Chandran emphasizes the importance of knowing how to use them.

“We cannot 100% rely on those [AI] outputs,” Chandran said. “Sometimes, it can produce bugs. Sometimes it can make mistakes ... So we cannot 100% rely on AI tools, but it will help us.”

“For example, if I’m taking 10 days to complete a task, if I’m using AI, maybe I can complete it in two or three hours. It will make our lives easier.”

The workshop will be held at Edward Abbey Hall in the Queen Creek Library, 21802 S. Ellsworth Road. Register at manikandanchandran.com. ■

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