

BUSINESS

Collector promotes cultural awareness through dolls

By Lee Brown

Special to Sentinel-Voice

In just seven years, Carol Scott has watched her hobby turn into a business venture. In this time, her passion for doll collecting somehow made a 360-degree turn, and four years ago she entered the business world as co-owner of For Someone Special Doll Co., LLC.

For Someone Special Doll Co. is an African American, family-owned business that seeks and sells the work of some of the most prolific, little-known doll artists in the country, in addition to enhancing and selling their own culturally accurate and ethnically authentic dolls.

Established in 1995 by Scott, her sister Dorothy King, her brother Sgt. Major William Staples and sister-in-law Magdalene Staples, the company sells dolls primarily through trade and doll shows nationwide, as well as through mail order.

King enhances the features of the company's line of dolls, which are primarily made of vinyl and cloth, while William Staples serves as the company's secretary and photographer and Magdalene Staples' expertise is in training and program development. Magdalene

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— Carol Scott

also researches cultural traditions and makes some of the dolls' clothing. The company, at one time, made porcelain dolls, but found they didn't hold up well when traveling.

"I'm a doll collector myself and I thought that doll collectors, on the whole, had tunnel vision and that you can do much more with dolls than what was actually being done," said Scott of her transition from a hobby to business.

"Doll collecting has become quite sophisticated over the years," she says, adding that it's no longer something that just little girls do.

"More adults are into it now. When we go to the (doll) shows, what amazes me is that there are more and more men out there in doll collecting."

Scott, whose personal collection has grown to roughly 700 dolls over the past seven years, is also quick to point out that young girls aren't playing with dolls as much as they did years ago.

"That's one of the things I think we need to try to get back into — hobbies and other types of enjoyment other than TV and video games. I think that when you play with dolls, you have to use a little bit more of your imagination."

The company features dolls from a wide variety of ethnicities, including: Aborigines, African, African-American, Asian, Asian-American, Native American, Latino and Rastafarian, as well as Jewish and Catholic nun dolls. Ranging in size from 18-to-24 inches in height, and priced from \$79 to \$500 (depending on the amount of customizing requested by the customer), the featured dolls represent infants to the elderly, and themed dolls are likewise enhanced, such as a bride and groom, a boxer, and the like. Also, accompanying each doll is an adoption paper and information regarding doll care.

"We're really into authenticity," says Scott.

Doing business through a



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Carol Scott, owner of For Someone Special Doll Co., stands beside part of her collection.

distributor in Garland, Texas as well as at trade shows in cities such as Atlanta; East Brunswick and Roselle, New Jersey; Martha's Vineyard; and Tulsa, Oklahoma and Las Vegas. Scott, who also teaches second graders at Mabel Hoggard Elementary School, hopes to increase the number of shows they travel to from seven to 12 in the near future.

"We're looking to more nationwide coverage this year," she said. "We will be exhibiting with African-

American Women on Tour, and we are finalizing dolls which can be used in hospital training classes, as well as broadening our doll clothing and accessory lines."

The company was honored with the opportunity to have its Aborigines and Rastafarian dolls juried at the 18th Annual Black Doll Festival at the William Grant Stills Art Center in Los Angeles. And for Black History Month, Scott planned a special presentation called "From Africa to America,"

was displayed for elementary students at Mabel Hoggard.

"We're also getting ready to finalize a new series of dolls for abused children — something we're really excited about," she said of future plans for the company. "This will be the first time we'll have dolls with a story, plus music to go along with it — a whole package. I would also like to do some type of curriculum using dolls."

For more information on For Someone Special Doll Co., call (702) 253-6917.

Speed up sale of home with creative marketing techniques

Special to Sentinel-Voice

In a buyer's market or anytime you're having trouble selling your home, you need to do extra work to attract a buyer. Some steps involve spending money or making price concessions; still others mean adopting creative marketing techniques. Ideally, you take these actions before you list your home to achieve a quick sale. But you can also implement them later, if your home fails to sell.

When you are not getting buyer traffic or offers, ask your agent why, or if you're selling the home on your own, make follow-up phone calls to prospects to find out their reactions. Certain situations may be hindering a successful sale, including problems with the property, drawbacks with the neighborhood, overpricing or an ineffective selling broker or agent.

Thoroughly check-out any problems with your property. Perhaps a lack of curb appeal, interior defects, poor condition or property flaws

are limiting interest. Do an informal survey among neighbors and friends, asking them to give you an honest assessment of your home and property. They can be more objective than you can, and most will have some thoughts about what needs to be changed. Give priority to any problems or improvements that are mentioned more than once.

Unusual colors, for example, create a negative first impression that is hard to overcome, whether it's the walls or the carpet. Houses painted or carpeted in unusual or outdated colors do not sell easily. Also, remember not to overlook the yard and landscaping. The appearance of your yard and landscaping is an area which is extremely important to prospective buyers.

The main tips to remember are to paint inside and out, make all needed repairs, perhaps even changing the carpet, check yard and landscaping and freshen up and clean thoroughly. These

Real Estate Perspective

By Loretta Arrington
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are just a few steps toward speeding up the process for a quick sale of your home.

As always, please contact a professional for all of your Real Estate needs or write to me c/o Real Estate Perspective, Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice Newspaper,

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