

# A model idea in a difficult economy

## Local designer puts linen upholstery on the fashion runway

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WINCHESTER- Deborah Langfitt wants to get people excited about interior design - an industry hurt by an economy that left buyers steering clear of slipcovers and sofas.

"We are definitely tied to the housing industry," she said. "So what affects them, affects us."

After watching her customer base steadily decrease in recent years, Langfitt - looking for a creative spark for her design firm Classic Touch at 3038 Valley Ave. - had a brainstorm.

She held a fashion show last month at her store in which men and women modeled outfits made of silk, polyester, and linen upholstery.

The clothes were fashioned by a local seamstress, who asked to remain anonymous. The event was dubbed the First Fabric Fashion Show, leaving open the possibility of more shows in the future.

"It was an event to show the new fabric of the new season in a different way and on a bigger scale," Langfitt said. "It's a way for people to get excited for the industry, because the economy has really affected us all."

She plans to have the same 16 outfits shown Oct. 16-21 at the High Point Market Week in North Carolina, where design exhibitors from across the country will show off their home fashions.

The show is sponsored by High Point International Home Furnishings Market Authority.

"It will be a way to promote," Langfitt said. "It builds relationships with people in the same industry."

She said about 75 people came to her September fashion show, which she said generated "a wonderful response."

The vendors supplying the fabrics are Stroheim and Romann, Kravet Fabrics, Thibaut, and Sunbrella. They also supplied samples for prospective buyers.

Langfitt opened Classic Touch, which has six employees, in 1995 after attending design classes at Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown and James Madison University in Harrisonburg. Before that, she was a geriatric nurse.



Brittany models a floral dress at Classic Touch.  
(Photo by Scott Mason/The Winchester Star)



Kylie models a silk stripe fabric from Stroheim & Romann at Classic Touch.  
(Photo by Scott Mason/The Winchester Star)



Katie models a woven leather skirt and vest of Thibaut fabric.  
(Photo by Scott Mason/The Winchester Star)

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