

5 Designing Women to Hold Jewelry Fundraiser Saturday

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When four creative women decided to put their talents towards a good cause, the result was a Web site featuring a variety of attractive hand-made jewelry and items for the home—all at a reduced rate and with a percentage of the proceeds going to charity. Now, 5DesigningWomen.com is holding a pre-holiday sale and fundraiser this Saturday, November 12, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the home of Palisadian Susan Whitmore, 707 Wildomar St. in the El Medio bluffs area.

5 Designing Women is the brainchild of Whitmore, who donates the majority of her earnings to The Erika Whitmore Godwin Foundation (griefHaven.org), an international foundation she started to bring hope and support to grieving parents. Whitmore lost her daughter, Erika, to cancer in 2002.

A percentage of the money raised at Saturday's sale will go to finishing a video called "Portraits of Grief: Badges of Courage," featuring grief specialists, spiritual advisors and parents who have lost a child. The video is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year.

Whitmore's idea for 5 Designing Women was inspired by her cousin Paula Fellows' handmade jewelry, and last fall, Whitmore decided to learn jewelry making herself.

"When I would wear my stuff, I'd notice people would want to buy it," says Whitmore, who sells her pieces at Whispers on Swarthmore.

She asked Fellows and two other friends, Shelly Papadopoulos and Charlene Podnos, to bring their own designs to the table, and they launched their Web site early this year.

"The fifth designing woman is Everywoman," Whitmore says. "That's the name of the gift shop where we spotlight other designers' items." The gift shop is located on the Web site.

Whitmore's designs are called Susan Elizabeth Designs, and



(Left to right) Palisadian Susan Whitmore, Shelly Papadopoulos and Charlene Podnos of 5 Designing Women show off some of the handmade jewelry and home items that will be on sale this Saturday. Not pictured: Paula Fellows.

Rich Schmitt/Staff Photographer

range in style from fun to elegant, with charm bracelets, chandelier earrings and freshwater pearl necklaces. "My stuff tends to be really trendy—whatever the trend is," she says. "I also do custom pieces."

Podnos (C&H Originals) has been designing and creating jewelry for 15 years, and is known for her craftsmanship in working with freshwater pearls, semi-precious stones and crystals from all over the world. Most of her designs, which have a vintage quality, can be customized or individualized to suit the buyer's color, size or style preferences.

Fellows (Magically Paula), a magician, crafts versatile designs that can be worn casually or formally. Her pieces are unusual, with labradorite gems, natural quartz and jade pendants, and light turquoise (chalcedony) stones.

Papadopoulos (Splendidly Shelly) handpaints items for the home, such as vases, wine glasses, wine holders, planters and picture frames, with primarily floral designs.

"There's something for everyone," Whitmore says. "We have jewelry for children and men, with beads from all over the world."

The Everywoman gift store offers hand-crafted silk decorator pillows, watches and unique pieces

of art, including wire sculpture.

"It's a fundraising of sorts without the black tie," Whitmore says.

The items on sale Saturday will be offered at discounted rates, and prices are \$10 and up. Visit www.5DesigningWomen.com.