

## Juanita's Christmas Treasures

<jensoriginalsewembroiderydesigns.yolasite.com>

Posted 2025 September 5

I'm not the only one in my family who loves making ornaments: over the years, my sister Juanita has produced many wonderful Christmas treasures. What follows is just a sampling.

These adorable 3D diorama scenes have been on my tree for 40 years or so. The figures – Santa and a pair of carollers -- are all entirely handmade: super tiny paper-twist dolls that are only about 1" high.

Even the teeny fireplace with its stockings is handmade. My sister, an avid (and highly inventive) recycler, created her sweet diorama ornaments by repurposing containers that once held gumball machine prizes.

I just love these ornaments.



Although Juanita can turn her hand to almost any craft technique, she's most celebrated in the family for her clever freestyle crocheting.

These wonderful little elves are a case in point: standing only 4" tall, they were crocheted out of fingering yarn, using a very small hook, more than three decades ago. I love how colourful and cute they are, and I look forward to seeing them when I unpack the ornaments each year.

Another of her crocheted ornaments is this witty Christmas turkey, who is about 6" high. I laughed out loud when I saw him for the first time. He's celebrated Christmas with us since the mid-1980s.

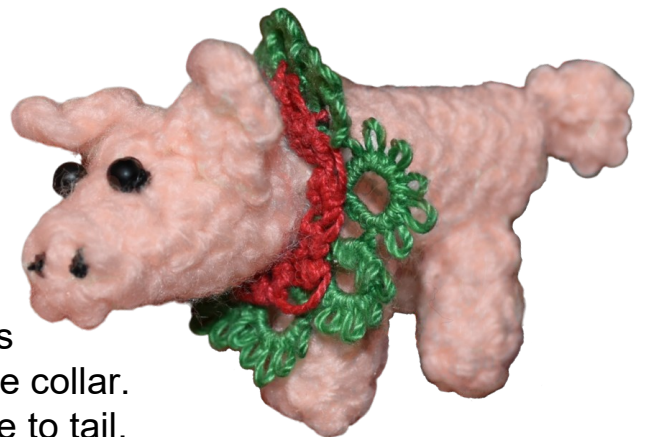


Since she retired, Juanita's had more time for crafting. She's been making the most of it, and we've all been the beneficiaries.

Four or five years ago, when our sister Sheena began playing the Elf on the Shelf game with her young grandson, Juanita contributed several elves -- in a larger size this time -- to take part in the game.



Just last year, in keeping with the family theme that she and I started so many years ago, Juanita sent me this super cute teeny piggy with a tatted wreath-style collar. He's adorable, and only about 3" long from nose to tail.



Back in 2020, Juanita started making animal stockings for all of the sibs and various spouses. Predictably, most of the family got piggies, but she surprised the spouses with special creatures of their own. For example, DH received Sylvester, his favourite Looney Tunes character.



All the animal stockings are filled through the characters' mouths, but Sylvester offered an additional surprise: hilariously, his open mouth reveals a tiny Tweety. We love him!



You may recall my previous post about these adorable primitive paper mache snowmen, which my sister moulded by hand some thirty years ago. Apart from the repair I made to their twig arms last year, they are just as cute as they were when they arrived, and they still go on my tree every year.



This cute loon ornament is another of Juanita's hand-moulded paper mache efforts from years back. Loons sit quite low in the water, and she's caught that flattish profile; the paint job is wonderful too, and really captures the loon's speckled colouring. The loon, of course, is a very Canadian symbol, which we love, and DH likes water birds, so this ornament is perfect for our tree.

I've written previously about Juanita's gorgeous "Yip Yip" stockings – hilarious alien creatures inspired by the ones from an old Sesame Street bit. She made these for everyone in the family back in 2020. It was a huge undertaking, but much appreciated by all of us. DH and I have hung them for Santa every year since.



For Christmas 2024, Juanita created finger puppets for Sheena's Elf-on-the-Shelf hijinks, and sent some to all the sibs. Among those we received are this adorable Santa and elf.



One of my favourite Christmas decor items that Juanita recently made for me is this collection of yummy-looking chocolates, packaged in a vintage *Pot of Gold* box (for more detail about the chocs and the box they came in, see my post for 14 February 2025). They were a delightful surprise: better for me than the edible kind, and I can enjoy them for many Christmases to come!

Based on my collection of her ornaments, it's becoming clear who's behind the continuation of the piggy theme in our family: in addition to the other pigs she's made, she sent me this hilarious "pig in a blanket" ornament for Christmas 2024. "I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself," as Clement C. Moore might have it.



I find it all but impossible to single out one favourite from among her ornaments, but if I could, this teeny version of our beloved toy dog,

Morgan, might well be the one. Miniature Morgan is only about 3" long – perfect for a tree ornament. I absolutely love him. (For more on the original Morgan and his celebrated origins, see my post from September 2023).

As I look over the beautiful ornaments and decor items my sister has made over the years, I'm struck by their variety and creativity, and by the generosity with which she's shared her work. I've been delighted and honoured to be on her gift list, and I look forward to seeing what she has in store for all of us for Christmas 2025.