

Pattern classes are popular

Pattern making is a family affair for the Reuben "Rod" Doyle family of Genoa.

When the Doyle family was stationed in Taiwan with the U.S. Air Force, Mrs. Doyle decided to take advantage of Taiwanese pattern making classes at a local school.

"It's the custom in Taiwan for all marriageable young girls to attend the classes to learn to make clothing for their families," Mrs. Doyle said. "There were about 40 women in the class and I was the first American to enroll."

While Mrs. Doyle, with the help of an interpreter, studied pattern making, her husband took over many of the household duties.

After completion of the course, the seamstress found herself in great demand by other military wives in Taiwan who didn't want to go to all the trouble of hiring an interpreter to attend classes.

So she set up school in her home with husband Rod as one of her first pupils. "He was very good," she said, "one of my best students. I figured if he could learn pattern making, any woman could."

Since taking those first lessons in Taiwan, Mrs. Doyle has made some big strides in pattern making. She now teaches community education classes at Platte College, writes a newspaper column and has authored her own textbook.

The tiny woman has found her classes so much in demand that a special workshop has been planned at Platte on May 1 to train area home economics and adult education instructors in the basics of pattern making.

"I had no idea I would become this involved when I started pattern making," she said. "There just is not enough time for me to do all the teaching."



INSTRUCTOR Sarah Doyle, left, helps student Donna Nelson of Newman Grove with measurements for her pattern.

The instructor said she got interested in the class mostly for her own information. "With six children you go through so many patterns you can spend a fortune. I thought the class would be a big saving."

Mrs. Doyle thinks one of the main reasons her classes are becoming so popular is "with the price of clothing today more and more women are going back to home sewing. Many don't like to sew for themselves because they can't get the proper fit, so they sew for their children hoping that the kids will eventually grow into the clothes."

"The basic reason they take this class is so they will know that their clothes will fit, too."

The Doyle family lived in Florida before moving to Taiwan where they took in sewing. "So many of the women needed patterns altered," she said. "We found that very few women have the

perfect figure.

"I have found it takes less time to make a pattern from scratch than to alter one I have purchased," she said.

Students in Mrs. Doyle's classes at Platte learn to draw patterns in class, then take their work home to sew. The piece then is brought back to class the following week for everyone to inspect.

From the basic bodice pattern pictured in her textbook, Mrs. Doyle's students learn to make dresses, jackets, coats and many articles of clothing. "And once you make your basic pattern you never have to change it unless you gain or lose weight," Mrs. Doyle explained.

The instructor's textbook, which was a family project from the beginning typing to final publishing, covers women's and children's pattern making. Mrs. Doyle now is working on a textbook for men's and boys' clothing and advanced women's garments including gowns and suits.