

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild *NEWS*

A newsletter by and for FVKG members

September 2011

President's Letter

What is special about being in a knitting guild?

For an answer, here is a little story: A few years ago, I was devotedly reading the Yarn Harlot's blog (I am a true groupie), and she introduced the Sock Summit. I was so excited. I would find money somehow. I would go! Then I realized that I had a serious conflict – our family vacation (which is not moveable as we attend a two-week event with many others). I cried. I moped about. I vowed I would go if she ever had another Summit. Then my time came. The dates were announced. I booked a hotel room months early. I told my husband I was going. I invited my sister. I signed us up for classes in the first hour it was opened (and still didn't get all my first choices). Finally, I was in Portland, Ore. Portland is a special city. Almost fantasy clean and smart and pretty – my sister and I kept saying it was like the set up for a *Twilight Zone* episode – spooky perfect city.



So what do you do at a Sock Summit? There was so much available that I couldn't come close to doing it all. But, my sister and I tried! We went to classes on different heels and toes, but there were all levels up to designing and publishing your own patterns. We also went to lectures on the history and types of sock yarn and the companies that created them; how to pool yarn to look spectacular; and the philosophy of sock knitting. We went to a dance. (The 80's music was fun, wasn't it, Gretl?) We danced with yarn in a flash mob with several hundred other sock knitters. Arthurs signed books and sock blockers. (Cat Bordhi said my sweater looked good and fit me well!) There was an amazing marketplace: Each vendor handpicked so that the shoppers had access to yarns only seen in the margins of Ravelry but also could get some stitch markers, needles, project bags... We said hi daily to our own Lesley and the Wool and Company gang and Emily Parson. In fact, I was in Emily's booth when the Yarn Harlot herself zipped in and asked her to put a few balls of yarn under the table for her to come back for. I had some yarn accidents on Sunday and "slipped" and swiped my credit card as I fell. *(continued on p. 2)*

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2011-2012 Meeting Dates

September 14, 2011
October 12, 2011
November 9, 2011
December 14, 2011
January 11, 2012
February 8, 2012
March 14, 2012
April 11, 2012
May 9, 2012

St. Charles Episcopal Church
994 N 5th Ave.
St. Charles, IL

Time: 6:30 p.m. -- 9:00 p.m.

FVKG meets the second Wednesday of each month, September through May, in the Fellowship Hall of the St. Charles Episcopal Church in St. Charles, Ill. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.



President's Letter *(continued from p. 1)*

Really, what makes a Sock Summit so special is that thousands of sock knitters took over a wee corner of the universe (with the help of our own Sock Gate) and lived and breathed something we all love. There we were understood: We didn't have to explain to anyone why we knit socks, why we need so much yarn, and we could learn even more from others who care about this stuff. I have been wearing my Summit tee shirt as often as is hygienic since I got home. I believe the motto on the back fits very well – Taking Sock Knitting Almost Too Far.

So, what is special about a knitting guild? We are our own special corner of the universe each month: We offer support, we celebrate accomplishments, we believe that there is really no such thing as too much yarn – just not enough storage space. We know there is always more to learn, and we can share with each other. Let's see how far we can take our own knitting this year!

~ Kathy Schooley



2011-2012 FVKG Board Members

President: Kathy Schooley
VP and Website: Lorraine Tompkins
Secretary: Jennifer Duncan
Treasurer: Deanne Karamanian
Hospitality:
Membership: Marge Clark
Newsletter Editor: Lisa Schroeder
Gallery Show: Claudia Frost
Library: Barbara Palmer

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild Mission Statement

The purpose of the Fox Valley Knitters' Guild is to promote and foster an interest in knitting, to provide the opportunity for study and sharing to broaden one's skills, and to encourage high standards of design and technique in various forms of knitting.

Editor's Note

As Kathy writes about the Guild in this month's letter, "We offer support, we celebrate accomplishments ... We know there is always more to learn, and we can share with each other." One of the goals of the Guild is to be a resource for its members, and the newsletter is a great vehicle to share your fiber-based discoveries. In keeping with the belief that the newsletter is by and for FVKG members, I invite you to share your knitting stories – good, bad and everything in-between – in this space. If you travel and come across a fabulous knit shop far afield, please submit a review of your impressions and experience. Likewise, if you get your hands on a scrumptious new yarn or complete a pattern you believe everyone must try, review it; chances are, other Guild members would love it, too. Misadventures also make for good anecdotes: Perhaps the TSA confiscated your scissors but you got extra-pointy knitting needles through airport security by wearing them as hair sticks, or maybe you have a cautionary tale of getting out of a ticket for knitting while driving. And it seems knitters often are philosophers under their stashes of yarn; you could reflect on what this art has meant to you, whether you've been knitting for four years or 40. Whatever story you choose to tell, I strongly encourage you to consider making this space your own.

To submit an article for the newsletter, please email materials to FVKGnews@gmail.com, the same address where you're welcome to send information to be distributed to the membership at-large. (If you do have something to be sent to the group, please allow at least 48 hours for distribution.)

Over the coming months, let me know what else you'd like to see in this space. I'll be looking forward to your thoughts and your stories.

~ Lisa Schroeder

Program Notes for September

We are very excited to have Susan Waldron as the first speaker of our new season. Susan will be talking to us about her Suri Alpacas, "From Alpacas to Garments." In addition, Susan will bring lots of examples of her work for display and sale. She will also bring hand-dyed and natural Alpaca yarn and fiber for sale.

Susan, along with her husband Ron, owns Waldron Grove Alpacas, located in Elgin, Ill. They started their Alpaca adventure in 2003 with the purchase of two females; they were looking for something that they could do together. After visiting a local farm and then an Alpaca show and meeting people who were similar in age and had farms, they were hooked. The fact that neither Susan nor Ron had any farming background was not a deterrent. Once these gentle and serene animals stole their hearts, there simply was no looking back.

Waldron Farms features a 1875 farmhouse (long on charm and short on mechanics) and 5 acres of land. The house has been remodeled, and the fencing and barn all are new. The Suri Alpacas are here and definitely part of the family. "I feel a wonderful connection to them," says Susan. "We care for them, food, shelter, assistance in birthing or health issues when necessary. We train the babies to be easy to handle and go into the show ring and they give us this indescribable fleece with an annual hair cut in May." When someone asks Susan why they raise Alpacas, she just hands them some fleece and they melt with appreciation.

The Alpaca felt combines all the things that Susan loves: her 45 Suri Alpacas, color and nature. There is an organic exuberance with the hand-dyed Alpaca fiber; it feels like a combination of cashmere and silk. As Susan explains, "There is a spiritual connection between these gentle animals that we have birthed and raised and the composition of the felt work." The felt process is a wetting down of the fibers with soapy water and slightly agitated; the microscopic barbs, similar to Velcro, which are on all fibers, hook together and allow the creation of scenes that are both visual and tactile experiences. The finished product is much sturdier than it appears. In fact, the last step in the felting involves throwing the piece on the table as hard as you can.

Susan also paints in oils. According to Susan, her oil painting has grown tremendously with her experience in felt. "And my felting has grown from my oil painting. Now working with the hand-dyed Suri Alpaca fleece in my tapestries, I combine my impressionist painting style and love of color with my Alpacas."

Susan reveals, "I need to pinch myself. I am living a life I had only dreamed of. I didn't dream the details, but being able to work on my art all the time, that has been the dream since I was small."

For additional information, please go to Susan's website: www.susanwaldronart.com

~ Lorraine Tompkins
(Program Notes: Coming Attractions appears on p. 6)

Show and Tell

Every Guild meeting, we have Show and Tell as an opportunity for our members to show projects they have completed. Frequently, members want to know what pattern or yarn was used for these projects. We would like to include that information in either our newly enhanced website or the newsletter. To help gather this information, a form for Show and Tell is available at the welcome table for you to complete for any item(s) you wish to show at the Guild meeting.

**FVKG Opening Reception for
“BACK TO THE LAND” Gallery Show
Friday, Sept. 9, 2011, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**Kavanagh Gallery
Fine Line Creative Arts Center
6N158 Crane Road, St. Charles, IL**

**Fox Valley Knitting Guild Gallery
Reception and Show at Fine Line**

Gallery Show continues through October 15

Recent temperatures may not be an indication of what's ahead in the coming months, but we know better and would like to share our most recent projects with fellow knitters, other textile artisans and friends of the community who are interested in the art of knitting.

Fine Line Creative Arts Center in St. Charles is hosting the Guild's upcoming Gallery Show, BACK TO THE LAND, beginning with an opening reception, Friday evening, Sept. 9, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Refreshments will be served, and there will be raffle prizes, as well as gifts for those attending. The public is invited, so please bring your friends and family. The show will continue through Oct. 15. Fine Line is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Featured are six different categories within the BACK TO THE LAND theme of the show. Categories include: earth tones and green peas, timeworn traditions, all creatures great and small, cloud watching, simple gifts and these boots were made for walking.

Knitted items include coats, sweaters, cowls, purses, socks, children's toys and afghans. Lacy shawls, felted ornaments and hand-dyed yarns will provide inspiration for the gift-giving holiday season ahead. See you all Friday evening. Let's celebrate the Art of Knitting. Contact Claudia Frost for further details (cfinspirations@aol.com; 630-772-0109).

Thanks to all who have volunteered their precious time.

~ Claudia & Natasha



Join the FVKG at the Friday night Gallery Reception from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. To get started with the new Guild year, Marge Clark, membership chair, will be accepting membership dues throughout the evening. Avoid the long line at the first Guild meeting next week and make more time to visit with all your knitting friends.

If you'd like to complete the form ahead of time, the membership form is included at the end of the newsletter for your convenience.

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild Fall 2011 Knitting Retreat at the Stronghold Conference Center in Oregon, Ill., Oct. 28-30

Fall is sort of in the air, and the knitting retreat will soon be here. The September Guild meeting is the time for getting final headcounts and collecting the balance of the room-and-board costs for the retreat.

As of the end of August, we have filled 13 of the 16 rooms at Stronghold. That means there are just three rooms available. If you have not yet signed up to go and would like to, please let me know ASAP. We can add six more people in the three double rooms. Email me at gkramer@foxvalley.net to let me know if we should save a room for you!

Cost for two nights and four meals is \$122 for a shared room and \$202 for a single room. I must make the second payment to Stronghold before Sept. 28, 2011, so I need the following payments right away.

MEAL PRICE INCREASE:

- ✓ The cost of the meals has just been increased after years of remaining the same. The increase is \$0.50 per meal (fifty cents), so for the four meals, **it will be an extra \$2**. Please bring the \$2 to the September meeting, along with your balance payment.

RETREAT OVERNIGHTERS:

- ✓ If you have already paid the \$50 deposit, please bring the balance of \$70 + \$2 for a shared room to the September meeting (single room balance due is \$150 + \$2). (If you are unable to come to the September meeting, please send a check right away for the balance to Gretl Kramer, 580 Covered Bridge Dr., Elgin, IL 60124.)
- ✓ If you have not yet paid the \$50 deposit, please bring the entire amount of \$120 + \$2 (\$200 + \$2 for single room) to the September meeting, or mail it right away to Gretl at the address above.

RETREAT DAYTIMERS:

If you cannot come for the entire weekend, you may join us for the Saturday events. Gretl needs headcounts and meal money by the September Board meeting:

- ✓ Lunch only \$8.50
- ✓ Breakfast and lunch \$17.00
- ✓ Lunch and dinner \$17.00
- ✓ All three meals \$25.50

ALTERNATIVE DIETARY NEEDS:

Stronghold is very responsive to dietary needs of the guests. If you have requests or have food allergies, please fill out the form on its website, and bring it to me at the September meeting. The form is here: www.strongholdcenter.org, then click "Download Page" on left, click top tab that says "For Visiting Groups." Print and fill out form called "Alternate Meal Request." Bring it to Gretl at the September meeting.

Just wanted to let you know some exciting news about the knitting retreat this October:

I have arranged for two vendors to come on Saturday afternoon to sell their wares. One is "Aunt Peggy," and she spins handspun yarn. I know her from Friday night knitting at Wool and Company. The other is "Happy Hoppers," who used to be members of our Guild. They have angora yarn, patterns and soaps to sell.

~ Judy Jasper

Quick General Review of the Retreat Schedule:

Friday: Check-in between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. (no supper served – bring food/snacks or eat in town)
Massages for those who have pre-paid.

Saturday: Three meals, lots of knitting and sharing and talking, vendors.

Sunday: Breakfast. Check out before 2. Eat in town, visit the local yarn store.

Surprises throughout the weekend – many I don't even know about yet! Bring knitting, show-and-tell items, knitting problems for your friends to help solve, snacks, books, magazines, etc. Remember: NO pets, alcohol, candles or smoking on the retreat grounds.

~ Gretl Kramer

Program Notes: Coming Attractions

I'm very excited about many of our upcoming programs. As each program gets closer, I'll include more information in each newsletter.

At our October guild meeting, Carol Rhoades of Madison, Wis., will be giving us a tour of Scandinavian Knitting. Her work has been featured in *PieceWork*, *Interweave Knits* and *Gavstrik* (Danish knitting magazine). She is also the technical editor of *Spin-Off*.

Carol will also be giving two classes at Wool and Company. The first class is: "Sock Options." In this 6-hour class, you will learn how to choose sock yarns, match needle size to yarn and pattern, and how to design socks that fit your feet and your fancy. The class is designed for anyone who has knitted a basic pair of socks and wants to develop her/his skills and diversify those sock options.

The second class is: "Victorian Lace Knitting." This one-day workshop explores the world of Victorian knitting through lace patterns, using yarns similar to those used during the period. After the introduction to Victorian yarns and a review of the terms commonly used for knitting during the period, students will knit several lace patterns to compare how the patterns look in various yarns and on different needle sizes. Students will also learn how to read, spot and correct errors in patterns, and how to adapt Victorian patterns for modern sizing, yarns, needles and uses. The class will be useful even to those with little or no interest in Victorian work. The primary purpose of the class is to help students learn stitches and techniques that are not as common today, but can be adapted for today's styles and purposes. The interpretation and correction of the old patterns will also be useful exercises towards devising one's own designs.

Each class is limited to 15 students. There will be much more information about the classes on Wool and Company's website.

~ Lorraine Tompkins

Upcoming Fiber Events

Sept. 9-11

Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival

Jefferson County Fair Park, Jefferson, Wis.
www.wisconsinsheepandwoolfestival.com

Sept. 17

Fiber In The Park

Earlville, Ill.
www.fiberinthepark.com

Sept. 24

YarnCon

Chicago
www.yarncon.com

Sept. 24-25

12th Annual Northern Michigan Lamb & Wool Festival

Ogemaw County Fairgrounds, Mich.
www.lambandwoolfestival.com

Sept. 24-25

National Alpaca Days Celebration

True Colors Alpaca Farm, Caledonia, Ill.
www.truecolorsalpacas.com

Sept. 25-26

Sheep and Wool Festival

Mt. Bruce Station, Romeo, Mich.
www.sheepstuff.com/Festival.html

Oct. 22-23

Fiber Expo

Ann Arbor, Mich.
www.fiberexpo.com

The Ellwood House Museum in De Kalb, Ill., is hosting "Threads of Tradition." It features knitting, crochet, quilting and embroidery dating from the 1830s-1930s. The exhibit is open now through Nov. 20. For further information, see its website: www.ellwoodhouse.org.

~ Lorraine Tompkins

Special Yarn Shops

These shops are special because they offer discounts to FVKG members

Esther's Place

201 W. Galena St. (Route 30), Big Rock
630-556-WOOL (9665)
www.esthersplacefibers.com

Fine Line

6N158 Crane Road, St. Charles
630-584-9443
www.fineineca.org

Fishbed Knitting Emporium, Inc.

320 N. River Street, East Dundee
847-844-YARN (9276)

The Fold

3316 Millstream Road, Marengo
815-568-5320

Gene Ann's Shop

117 East Station St., Barrington
847-842-9321
<http://www.geneannsyarns.com/TheShop.htm>

Knitche

5150-B Main Street, Downers Grove
630-852-5648
<http://knitche.com/>

Loopy Yarns

47 West Polk St., Chicago
312-583-9276
www.loopyyarns.com

Needle Things

426 South Third Street, Geneva
630-232-9915

Never Enough Knitting

119-121 North Main, Wheaton
630-221-1007

Stitches in Time

300 W. Washington, Oregon
815-732-4599

*Wool and Company

107A West Main Street, St. Charles
630-444-0480
www.woolandcompany.net

*Wool and Company has switched to a Stash Cash card program instead of a traditional discount.

In Other News

Sweater Wizard User Group

Do you have the Sweater Wizard computerized sweater-designing software? Do you use it or would you like to? Are you interested in being part of a Sweater Wizard User Group?

This group would exist to help each other learn to use Sweater Wizard and make the most of its capabilities. We could meet as frequently as the members wish (not during regular Guild meetings, however) and focus on whatever topics the group would like to discuss and try out.

If you are interested in getting such a group started, please contact Gretl Kramer (gkramer@foxvalley.net).

"Thank you to those who sent me good wishes and came to my birthday party last month! It was a joy to greet so many people who have touched my life: family members, neighbors, church friends, teachers, knitters and book readers.

My very longest time friend from high school (whose birthday is the same as mine) sent me words from Delaware to remind me to "be glad wrinkles don't hurt, 'Scottie!'"

*Love to all,
Mary Stowe*

Library Offerings

Did you know the Fox Valley Knitting Guild boasts a knitting-related lending library? The FVKG library is a members-only benefit, with resources available for check-out at no charge. Peruse the offerings below; authors, titles and formats are listed. If there's something you're interested in borrowing, please contact Barbara Palmer (barb3040@sbcglobal.net; 630-761-8142) to arrange to have materials brought to the next meeting.

Books

Albright, Barbara	<i>Knitter's Stash: Favorite Patterns from America's Yarn Shops</i>
Hansel, Alison	<i>Charmed Knits: Projects for Fans of Harry Potter</i>
Jacobs, Kate	<i>Knit Two: A Friday Night Knitting Club Novel</i>
Macomber, Debbie	<i>The Shop on Blossom Street</i>
Macomber, Debbie	<i>A Good Yarn: Return to the Shop on Blossom Street</i>

Cassettes

Macomber, Debbie	<i>The Shop on Blossom Street</i> (read by Linda Emond)
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DVDS

	<i>Bohus Knitting: From Relief Work to World Success</i>
Galati, Nenah	<i>How to Crochet: Step-By-Step Demonstrations, Written Instructions</i>
Galati, Nenah	<i>Knitting Korner: Halter Top, Turtle Neck & Tank Top</i>
Galati, Nenah	<i>Sock III: Eight Leg Patterns Using Self-striping or Varigated Yarn for the Foot</i>
Neatby, Lucy	<i>A Knitter's Companion: 1 Knitting Gems: Take Lucy Home</i>
Neatby, Lucy	<i>A Knitter's Companion: 2 Knitting Gems: Take Lucy Home</i>
Neatby, Lucy	<i>A Knitter's Companion: 3 Knitting Gems: Take Lucy Home</i>
Neatby, Lucy	<i>Double Knitting Delight</i>
Swansen, Meg	<i>Elizabeth Zimmermann's Baby Surprise Jacket</i>
Zimmermann, Elizabeth & Swansen, Meg	<i>A Knitting Glossary: Over 130 Handknitting Techniques Demonstrated</i>

VHS Videos

Hodges, Susie	<i>Knitting, Multi-Color Techniques for Handknitters</i>
Luters, Ginger	<i>Knitted Trims: For Woven, Pieced, Felted, Crocheted, and Knitted Projects</i>
Philosopher's Wool Co.	<i>Two-Handed Fair Isle and Other Stories</i>
Solomon, Leslye	<i>Buttonholes & Bands: The Knitter's Guide</i>
Starmore, Alice	<i>Fair Isle Without Fear</i>
Swansen, Meg	<i>The Mimbres Vest</i>
Swansen, Meg	<i>Saddle-Sleeve Sweater</i>
Swansen, Meg	<i>Shawl Collared Vest</i>
Williams, Joyce	<i>Socks Knit T to T</i>
Wiseman, Nancie M.	<i>Entrelac and Seamless, Bobbinless Argyle Socks</i>
Wiseman, Nancie M.	<i>Learn to Knit: Basic Knitting and Sweater Finishing</i>
Wiseman, Nancie M.	<i>Three Techniques for More Colorful Knitting</i>
Zimmermann, Elizabeth	<i>Knitting Glossary: Part I, with Meg Swansen</i>
Zimmermann, Elizabeth	<i>Knitting Glossary: Part II, with Meg Swansen</i>
Zimmermann, Elizabeth	<i>Knitting Workshop: 12 Half-Hour Lessons, Beginning to Master Classes</i>
Zimmermann, Elizabeth	<i>Norwegian Pullover: Wool Gathering #41</i>

~ Barbara Palmer

"Properly practiced, knitting soothes the troubled spirit, and it doesn't hurt the untroubled spirit either."

~ Elizabeth Zimmermann

FOX VALLEY KNITTERS' GUILD

Membership Form

(Please print)

Annual membership dues of \$30 are due by September 30 of the current year. New members joining in April or May can pay a reduced rate of \$15. Cash or check and the membership form will be accepted at the guild meeting, or you may mail your membership form and check to: Marge Clark, 113 Dartmouth Ct., Geneva, IL 60134

If you mail the form, and want your card mailed back to you, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Otherwise you can pick up your card at the next Guild meeting.

DATE ____/____/____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Ravelry id (if you have one) _____

Month of Birth (optional) _____

NEW MEMBER????

YES/NO

If yes, do you want a nametag? \$10 additional fee.

YES/NO

NAME as you want it to appear on the NAMETAG:

How did you hear about our Guild?

+++++

MEMBERSHIP/TREASURER CHAIRPERSON USE ONLY

Dues _____ Check No. _____ Cash _____

Membership card given? YES/NO

Member gift given? YES/NO

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