

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild *NEWS*

A newsletter by and for FVKG members

February 2012

President's Letter

Thank Heaven for Shawlettes

I was going to whine about how I don't like January: How the light is feeble, and the days are short. And then tell you all about how I tried to make myself feel better by buying more yarn and needles. But, really, that is sort of boring.

What really is making me feel better about life this January is shawlettes. We have seen a parade of them at guild meetings. Many of us knit Karen Shawls this spring and summer. I think mine is one of the prettiest things I have ever knit. The Clapotis has 18,883 projects finished and nearly 8,000 more in queue (and mine almost done). If you want to be an early adopter of a pattern, how about trying the Josephine Shawl with only 282 projects? I am working on a Spectra for my sister; 1,030 Ravelers have theirs already finished. My daughter and I both have the Hitchhiker in our queue, and 4,079 other Ravelers have it finished.

I like small shawls because they use some of that sock weight yarn I bought because it was so pretty; they tend to be repetitive so not too hard to knit once you get going; even simple triangular shawls look pretty and more complicated than they are. Think of Boneyard and Age of Brass and Steam; they keep the pulse points of the neck covered and therefore warm without bulk; and, can you believe it, they are fashionable now. I don't know if it is the thousands of knitted shawlettes that were knitted in the last year that caused it, but knitters can be fashionable with our knitted pretties.

So keep the shawl parade marching on! The three on my needles now, the baggies of yarn and print-outs of patterns are all that is keeping me sane this January.

~ Kathy Schooley

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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.



Program Notes: Embellishment Night

The February guild meeting is all about learning Embellishment Techniques. Several of our very talented members have prepared classes to show various embellishment techniques that can be used to make your finished items just a little bit more unique.

FVKG's February meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 8, and there will be embellishment techniques classes. Don't forget to do your homework!

The format for the program will be similar to last year's techniques fair. There will be stations set up around the room for each of the classes. After our guild business is done, you'll go to the location of the class that you signed up for in January. Techniques being demonstrated include: adding beads to lace; making clay buttons; making Nupps with a crochet hook; creating ruffle/frill edgings; needle felting; creating a Nicky Epstein rose; creating crocheted flowers.

If you want to do more than just watch, you'll need to do your homework and bring the equipment required for the class that you are taking.

When you are not in a class, there will be tables in the room where the vendor is located so you can sit and knit and visit with fellow guild members. Since our space is going to be pretty tight, please be considerate of your fellow knitters who may still be in class, and talk softly.

~ Lorraine Tompkins

Welcome, New Members!

Ellen Bassett
Janan Hudek
Mary Krueger
Karla Labath
Billie Needham

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

I actually now hope to catch the startitis virus reported on the Yarn Harlot blog, thanks to the new Blog of the Month column initiated by Christy Becker; having recently gone through a several-week knitting drought, it's nice to be reminded there's a flipside. Thanks to a knitting tip kindly submitted by Jennifer Duncan, no longer will I worry about having to rip out cast-on stitches or wasting yarn from under- or overestimating my long-tail cast-on; too bad I didn't learn about it before beginning my current project! And now more than ever, I want to visit New Orleans again, sip some strong chickory coffee at Café du Monde, and visit the yarn shop reviewed by Tami Haroldsen.

And there's much, much more. February's newsletter is chock-full of great information. A big shout-out to all who contributed this month; thank you! It's been fun reading all the material provided, and I hope you enjoy it, too.

A gentle reminder: The newsletter is an open forum for all guild members who have something to say. Please consider sharing your fiber-related experiences; you may find you help or inspire your fellow members. Send materials and suggestions to fvkgnews@gmail.com.

~ Lisa Schroeder

Partying in the French Quarter

Recently our family ventured to New Orleans. The Big Easy was a blast! We explored many parts of the city, including the Warehouse District, the Garden District, and of course, the French Quarter.

Most people know the French Quarter as the location of Bourbon Street, the center of Mardi Gras revelry. However, our family partied in other areas of the French Quarter. We had a blast finding all of the fleurs-de-lis on the signs, shop windows, souvenirs, Saints gear, and even garbage cans. The French-style architecture was gorgeous. The food was excellent, as well. We loved the beignets, seafood, hush puppies and alligator.

Unique little shops abound in the French quarter. Among them include a voodoo shop (with ingredients for your “brews”), a stationary shop (with a French clerk), a toy store (with delightful wooden toys), and a fun needlework shop (with a little mascot, Leif Erikson). Leif is a petite dog that welcomes customers of The Quarter Stitch, a needlepoint and yarn shop. It’s a pleasure from the moment you step through the door. The walls are lined with gorgeous needlepoint canvases. The floor and shelves are piled with mounds of luxurious yarns. Many brands are represented, including Prism, Trendsetter, Noro, Colinette, Malabrigo, Tahki, Plymouth, Inca Alpaca and Muench. They also have a nice selection of art yarns and huge balls of mixed fibers to create mutli-textural afghans. Behind the counter are bushels filled with yarn to complete the needlepoint kits. On top of all of that, they have a little room full of cross-stitch patterns. Many of the patterns and canvases depict New Orleans scenery and culture.

As you might imagine, I was overwhelmed with all of my choices. I fell in love with more than a dozen items. However, my limited time and budget kept me in line. My purchase was wrapped in tissue, placed in a clear plastic bag, and tied with curly ribbon. It looked like a present – the perfect present for our party in the French Quarter!

~Tami Haroldsen



Vendor of the Month

The Vendor for February is Aunt Peggy's Closet. Many of you saw and perhaps bought some of her wonderful handspun yarn at our guild retreat last fall. I saw her beautiful yarn incorporated into Diane Brown's stunning Candy Cane Christmas shawl that she wore to our December meeting. You can find out the details of Diana's shawl on her Ravelry project page (dianalynn) or download the free pattern so you can knit a Mizzle, too). I only found one ball stashed in Ravelry.

But, to whet your appetite, if you haven't seen Aunt Peggy's yarn, here is the link to her etsy shop:
<http://www.etsy.com/shop/AuntPeggysCloset?page=1>

Oh my, she not only has a wide selection of yarns, she even has little mini-skeins of sock yarn – just what folks who are knitting the beekeepers quilt or the sock yarn blanket or even socks need!

~ Christy Becker

Charity Spotlight

Our guild created more than five dozen blocks for the Warm Up America afghan project sponsored by Craft Yarn Council and Michaels stores. Carol, the store manager in Geneva, was thrilled with our efforts and encouraged us to be part of the "joining bee" to assemble these beautiful blocks into afghans for the needy in the Fox Valley. The assembly party will be held at the Michaels store on Randall Road in Geneva on Saturday, Feb. 18 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. Our member Karen Haley is the new knitting instructor for Michaels and will be the coordinator for our guild and the store. I'll bring some treats, bring your drink and your basic kit, and we'll have a wonderful afternoon chatting and helping others. See you there!

The Cradle is an adoption agency in Evanston. It's the oldest agency in Illinois (founded in 1923), and it's placed more than 15,000 babies. The laws in Illinois require a 72-hour waiting period before birth mothers can sign the adoption papers, although it can take longer in some cases. Babies come directly from the hospital; the maximum number in their nursery is 7. These babies would love to be snuggled in hats or newborn-sized sweaters knit in cotton. Please bring your hand-created items to the meetings (both February and March), and I'll send them off to the Cradle! (As we may be getting donations created out of other materials at the February meeting, I'll look into a different place to send those.)

~ Linda Jones

Thank you, Fox Valley Knitters!!!

Your generously donated H.U.G.S. (*Hats, Underwear, Gloves, and Socks*) will be delivered to Hesed House on Jan. 20, when we are cooking and serving breakfast to 150+ men, women and children on, what-is-predicted-to-be, a cold Saturday morning. You will have made it easier for several persons to go off for the day cleaner, drier and warmer.

If any of you would like to join our merry (we do have a good time) band of volunteers in serving this ministry, give me a call – 630.208.9465.

Thank you again, and our best wishes for a happy and healthy 2012.

Cheers!

Hesed House Coordinator
St. Charles' Episcopal Church
954 North Fifth Avenue
St. Charles, IL 60174

Unraveling Ravelry – My Projects in My Notebook

I really want to be a good Ravelry Citizen. Oh wait, that was my New Year's Resolution last year.

But, I really appreciate the wonderful notes that knitters share, and I have learned so many helpful hints. When I am starting a pattern, I always check out projects and notes and even what size needles folks have used when knitting with the same yarn as me.

However, somehow, I really failed at my resolution in December. I just spent this morning putting 12 projects into Ravelry that I had finished in late November and December. And, sadly, some of my notes aren't going to help others – in fact, they aren't even going to help me. I was glad that I could record a few important notes – I counted my scallops on my Lintilla and my points on my Hitchhiker, and I measured my Daybreak. But, there is a lot missing.

For example, I had to guess on what needle size I used on several projects. I had lost the ball bands and had no idea of the names of the color yarns that I had spent so many hours knitting with. And, I couldn't even remember the incredibly helpful hint I had learned from the Daybreak Group. Luckily, I had written about it in a past issue of our newsletter, so I could add it to my Daybreak notes.

So, here is my knitting resolution for 2012. (I envy folks who have resolved to knit 12 shawls or 12 pairs of socks or 12 sweaters or all of the above.) But, mine is much more humble. I simply resolve that I will enter every project that I start into My Projects.



Twenty-one scallops.

As soon as I cast on – or even before I cast on – I will add the project.

(One can always just click on the pull down arrow under the photo and delete it, if one's mind changes.)

I will immediately enter the yarn while the label is still floating around in my bag. And, as I knit along, I'll enter notes that others might find helpful and would also help me if I decide to do this project again.

It is really helpful to self and others to rate the yarn. If I see a number of knitters (or myself in the past) giving low ratings to a yarn, I could save myself a lot of painful untangling or moaning about splitting fibers. Interestingly, once you rate a yarn, the system retains it: For example, I had rated Koigu Painter's Palette Premium Merino (KPPPM) in an earlier project, and when I entered that Koigu as the yarn in a new project, my rating stars popped right up automatically.

Then, when I finish a project, I will immediately rate the pattern (if not sooner), so others won't get mired down in a terribly written mess of a recipe.

And, here is a great resolution for all of us. You know how you love to see when your friends start or finish or queue a pattern. LOOK over on the right side in the box called GROUPS. And, see where it says SHARE WITH A GROUP. I will go to the pull down arrow and click on FOX VALLEY KNITTERS GUILD. I hope you share your projects with all of us, too. I look forward to seeing what you are knitting!

- Christy Becker

A Look Back: January's Meeting



The members pictured to the left and below participated in the Show and Tell at January's guild meeting. They are shown wearing their lovely creations; a few items also are included below. To see individual projects, please visit the photo gallery on fvkg.com.

Photos by Claudia Frost.



Something You Should Check Out – The Ravelry Forums

Hi ho, Knitting Lovelies! I was sitting here thinking that I had nothing to share this month, when I idly navigated to Ravelry to check on a few of my favorite forums. Suddenly it struck me – you all NEED to be reminded of just how much fun (not to mention educational) these forums can be. I know that not everyone is fond of the Internet, but where knitting is concerned, I urge you to throw caution to the winds and join in. Christy Becker has been writing about the many gifts that Ravelry has to offer (that's www.ravelry.com for the uninitiated), but I don't think she's yet touched on the actual Forums themselves. I'm not sure exactly how many there are, but a quick look will tell you that the number is vast. To find one, click on the "Groups" tab at the top of the Ravelry homepage. **Disclaimer:** Once you embark upon this journey, you might look up to find that more than a few minutes have passed. But they've been FUN minutes, for sure, and a girl can never have too much fun in her life, can she? I think not.

If you have heard of a particular group that you would like to join, or have found a group on a friend's "about me" page, (they are listed along the left-hand side of the "about me" page, and by hovering over the icons with your mouse, you can see the actual names of the groups) you can type in the name of said group in the search box near the top of the "Groups" page, but, if you have no particular group in mind, you are just wanting to browse. In that case, you can click on "search by tags," and an amazing page, alphabetically ordered, will appear. When you click on a word, all of the groups associated with that word will appear on a new page. I randomly clicked on "ballet" just now, and eight groups came up, from a group for ballet dancers, to a group of people raising offspring who dance, to a group of knitters who like to knit anklets and "footies!" Clicking on "gardening" brought up a choice of 51 groups to peruse! OMG, there was one that fit me perfectly – The Black Thumbs. You are sure to find a group that would reflect your interests, too, as well as a few that might have you wondering, who *thinks* of these things?

Once you have found some groups that you are interested in and have joined them (it's as easy as clicking on the "join this group" button in the upper right hand of each group's main page), you will want to have your groups organized on your "Forums" page. I wandered around for quite some time, not realizing that the groups could be alphabetized or ordered in your particular preference by using the settings tab on your main "Forums" page – this little button can be found at the top of the page, far right. Clicking on this tab will bring up another page listing your forums, and will allow you to left-click on the forum names and drag this forum to whatever position in the lineup you need it to be. My forums are basically alphabetized, except for the four or five forums I visit most, which I have dragged to the top of my page for ease of checking on threads. When you have joined an embarrassingly large number of groups, being able to find them alphabetically, rather than just scrolling and scrolling *and scrolling*, is a wonderful time-saving device.

Check on your favorite forums regularly – you will begin to recognize the knitters who hang out there, and cyber friendships will develop. There is something really neat about chatting with a fellow lace-lover in New Zealand, or Greece, or maybe just Naperville, Ill., while at the same time sitting in the comfort of your own home. Of course, there is really no substitute for having knitting friends IRL (in real life), but sometimes it's two in the morning, you just can't sleep, and your computer is sitting there, calling to you. Or not. But it's good to have options, and Ravelry gives you a whole world of options. There are groups for football fans, there are groups for people who love Stephen King and *Lord of the Rings*; do you love vintage Hollywood movies or puppies? Are you short? Do you love yoga? There is a Ravelry Forum just right for you.

Are you looking for an event? There is a tab that you can click on when you are on the "Groups" main page. Listings of events in your area (although "area" can be defined somewhat broadly to include events in neighboring states!), as well as events in an area where you might be traveling, are just a click away. You can also find swaps on this page, if that is something you are interested in, and if you scroll down a bit, you will see all of the newly-formed groups listed, just to make sure you didn't miss the perfect group for you.

If you can't find a group to fit you to a tee on Ravelry, you haven't looked hard enough. Or, if you truly cannot find what you are looking for, you could start your own group – If You Create One, They Will Come! I hope that you will give the Ravelry Forums a good looking-over. They opened up a whole new world to me, and I hope they will do the same for you.

~ Janet Goier

Knit Gatherings

Interested in regularly getting together with others to knit outside of the monthly guild meetings? Here are some local opportunities:

Tuesdays

1 p.m. – 3 p.m., Living Well, Geneva
4 p.m. – 6 p.m., Panera Bread, St. Charles

Tuesdays (first and third of the month)

7 p.m. – 9 p.m., Fair Isle knitalong*, Panera Bread, St. Charles

Wednesdays

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Arcadium, St. Charles

Fridays

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Wool and Co.
6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m., Wool and Co.

Sundays

3 p.m. – 5 p.m., Wool and Co.

If there are other open knit gatherings you'd like to include here, please email fvkgnews@gmail.com with days, times and locations to add them to the list.

~ Lisa Schroeder

Five of us met for the Fair Isle knitalong* on Thurs., Jan. 19. We decided to continue to meet on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at the Panera Bread on the east side of St. Charles: 2871 East Main (Rt. 64), 630.513.1044 from 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Hopefully, a few more people will be able to join us. The new location should prove more central for participants. This Panera is near Charlestown Mall, between Dunham and Kirk, on the south side of North Ave. (Rt. 64). The next meeting will be Feb. 7.

~ Phyllis Deerinck

“I do some of my best thinking about life and a lot of different things when I'm knitting. My mind is someplace else rather than just sitting there in the living room.”

~ Marty Pendleton

Program Notes:
Coming Attractions

March 14 – MEMBERS-ONLY MEETING

Our speaker for March will be Ann Budd who is the author of many books including *The Knitter's Handy Book of Sweater Patterns* and *Getting Started Knitting Socks*.

Her presentation will be based on her upcoming book *The Knitter's Handy Guide to Top-Down Sweaters*. The book won't be available until July (hopefully), but she will bring the garments and images from the book to show at our meeting.

- Lorraine Tompkins

Guild Meeting Agenda

6:00 p.m. Set up
6:30 p.m. Gather to knit
7:00 p.m. Meeting begins:
Introduce new members/guests
Announcements/reports
Show and Tell
Door prizes

7:30 p.m. Break
7:45 p.m. Program
9:00 p.m. Lights out

2011-2012 FVKG Board Members

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

2012 Knit-in

The Janesville Area Knitting Guild holds its 23rd annual knit-in on Fri., Feb. 17, and Sat., Feb. 18. You are invited to join the festivities on Friday evening and/or all or part of Saturday. The fun includes a pizza party with a speaker and door prizes on Friday evening, and classes, lots of vendors, coffee, lunch and room to just sit and knit. There usually are about 15 vendors – some you probably won't see anywhere else. It is quite difficult to come home without any new yarn or tools or at least a beautiful bar of soap!

The cost is incredibly reasonable, and the weekend is so much fun. Many of your fellow members have gone many times. Ask Eileen Hoesly, Phyllis Deerinck, Sandy Andrews, Diane Evinger, Lorraine Tompkins or Christy Becker about this great weekend. I know that Eileen won the Design Challenge one year. This year's challenge is Hats. You can bring your hat to registration on Saturday morning with a \$5 entry fee, and you might win for People's Choice, Best Technique or Most Creative. And, it is only about 90 minutes from home!

The classes are:

- Fit to Flatter by Amy Herzog
- Easier Entrelac and Bobbles by Andrea Mielke
- Demystifying Double Knitting by Elizabeth Prose
- Naalbinding by Andrea Mielke

The cost is \$15 for the pizza party and program. It's \$15 for lunch, shopping and knitting on Saturday. Or add one class, and Saturday costs \$40 with lunch and shopping, too. If you add two classes, the total Saturday cost is \$65. There is a group rate at the Hampton Inn in Janesville, Wis.

If you want to register or find out more, check out its website at <http://jakg.org/id18.html>.

Or,

For more information, contact:
Linda Chism
phone: 608.868.7434
email: flchism@centurytel.net

Mary Kay McDermott
phone: 608.756.0383
email: family_mcdermott@yahoo.com

- Christy Becker

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.finelineca.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
www.geneannsyarns.com

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.*

Quick Tip of the Month

Here's a quick tip I found on Ravelry that really opened my eyes. I generally use the long-tail cast-on method, and I constantly fuss with how much "tail" to leave myself for any given number of cast-on stitches I will need. I've tried giving myself one inch per stitch to be cast on, but that has proved to be very unreliable. There's nothing worse than casting on 180 stitches and realizing my tail isn't long enough to make 20 more cast-on stitches! Or, being the frugal beast that I am, finishing my cast-on stitches and leaving a 2-foot tail!

So, I read with delight Betty Balcomb's ingenious fix. She calls it the "short-tail long-tail cast-on," and you can find it on Ravelry as a free pattern download, but it's so simple you can probably figure it out without reading her pattern. Simply use two balls of yarn (or opposite ends of one ball) and make a slip knot with the two strands. One strand becomes your long tail, and the other is your short tail. Cast on the number of stitches you want and, when you're done, cut one of the strands and start knitting with the other. She makes it even easier by suggesting that when you knit your first row, you can drop the slip knot altogether. No pesky knot at the edge of your hem. Brilliant!

Betty's Ravelry ID: bicostalbetty.

~ Jennifer Duncan

Wanted

A Knitting Gallery Committee is now forming. If you would like to participate in this artistic adventure, please notify Claudia Frost at cfinspirations@aol.com. Credentials needed: fun-loving, energetic and willing to motivate any reluctant knitters.

~ Claudia Frost

Blog of the Month

There are so many knitting blogs out there, and it is impossible to read all of them, explore Ravelry, and still have time to knit! But, there are a few that many of us don't like to miss. Highlighting these fun and helpful blogs could make for great reading every month. But, only if many of you would sit down right now and write a little column and maybe add a favorite entry to whet our collective appetite.

This month: **The Yarn Harlot**
www.yarnharlot.ca

The Yarn Harlot is Stephanie Pearl McPhee, who lives in Toronto and is a knitting humorist. She has written several books, including *At Knit's End*, *Knitting Rules*, and *Stephanie Pearl McPhee Casts Off*.

She writes about knitting and life with her husband and three daughters, and she makes me smile. (I have added her as a friend in Ravelry so I can also just read her blog there when I'm looking at my Friends' Activities.) Some of my favorite entries have been when she and Joe had rented a car, and she couldn't find one of her favorite double-point needles and they had to pay a late fee after she finally found it stuck behind her ear, and the ones about escapades with her washing machine, and her annual Canada Day (July 1) articles where I really learn a lot about our nice neighbor to the north.

She also writes patterns and sometimes includes them in her blog. Check out this entry – http://www.yarnharlot.ca/blog/archives/2006/10/12/one_row_handspun_scarf.html – for a great scarf pattern that works with whatever weight yarn you want to knit with. (And, of course you can check in Ravelry and see what 6,932 folks have used to knit this pattern.)

But since this is January and I have been struggling with a severe case of Startitis all month, I thought you might enjoy this excerpt. Stephanie actually wrote an entry titled “Annually Apparently” on Jan. 5, 2012, and included a reference back to this one. Perhaps you contracted the disease, too. I'll be anxious to see what you accomplished at our next meeting.

News Item

Toronto, Canada – Sources are reporting that a remarkable outbreak of "Startitis" has been identified in a Toronto knitter's home.

Thus far, the disease appears to be limited to this one knitting environment, but authorities report that the infected crafter appears to be "absolutely reckless" in her attempts to spread it. Despite the shocking disorganization and lack of focus the disease inflicts on knitters who contract it, patient zero has boldly claimed that she "doesn't care" about the consequences to other knitters she may infect. Despite repeated pleas for her to "rein it in" and "stop talking about mittens," the knitter in question is still emailing links of patterns to other knitters, offering them yarn, and sending notices regarding yarn sales to other victims....

To read the entry in its entirety, visit
http://www.yarnharlot.ca/blog/archives/2011/01/10/news_item.html.

~ Christy Becker

Member Spotlight: *Gretl Kramer*

(See her photo on p. 6.)

When, where, how and why did you become a knitter?

I became a knitter as a child of about 7. My mom was my teacher. She taught both me and my sister to knit, and every Christmas we knit slippers for The Aunts. I recently ran across a revival of that old pattern and plan to make some for myself: <http://bevscountrycottage.com/maggieslippers.html>.

English or Continental?

English with a pencil hold of the right needle thrown into the mix. I can knit a bit Continental, but purling gives me trouble. I try to knit two-handed for Fair Isle and have a bit of tension issues.

Circulars or Straights?

Usually I use circulars, something I started while commuting into DC for work decades ago. I didn't want to poke my seat mates. But I'll grab whatever needles are available in a pinch.

Tell a little about your family and pets and other hobbies if you would like.

I come from a knitting family. My grandmother, aunt, mother and great aunts knit. My 93-year-old dad remembers when his grandmother taught him to knit. I seem to have passed the gene on to my two grown daughters. We are now working on teaching the next generation – seven grandkids. I have no pets; my husband says there's already plenty of "fur" around the house from all the yarn and we have no need for more. In addition to wanting to knit 24/7, I like to read, play with my grandkids, spend time with friends, travel and see the beautiful places and people of this world.

What is your favorite knitting book? or favorite item you have knit? or both?

Oh my goodness, do I have to pick just one book? Impossible! Some of the books I have are like beautiful coffee table books, and although I might never knit a thing from them, I love looking at them. Some of these are Cheryl Potter's *Handpaint County*, Debbie New's *Unexpected Kniting*, and lots of Alice Starmore books. There are other books I've knit many things from, such as Pam Allen's *Scarf Style* and Melanie Falick's *Handknit Holidays*.

Favorite items I've knit? Probably the Philosopher's Wool Kilim Jacket

(<http://www.philosopherswool.com/Pages/NightSkyKLJ.htm>) and the Kathryn Alexander Color on Color scarf (http://fiberwild.com/index.php?main_page=page&id=103&chapter=8).

Who would play you in the movie version of your life?

I have no idea!! That would be one long, convoluted movie!

What is an interesting factoid about you?

I used to be a downhill ski racer and then a ski instructor.

What are you currently knitting?

I'm just finishing up the Noro Belted Cardigan Vest by Theresa Schabes. I'm working on a Green Mountain Spinnery cabled cardigan that I started a few years ago. I'm forever going to be working on the Scarf Style Modern Quilt Wrap, made of many, many colors of Kidsilk Haze. I have about eight pair of socks started. And I'm still trying to finish my daughter's 2011 Christmas sweater. There's more, but you don't want to know.

Anything else you'd like members to know about you:

I'd like to say that no matter the number of months or years any of us have been knitting, this guild always offers something new and inspirational to its members. Also, after having been on the guild board for a couple of years, I really appreciate the work that past and present board members have done and are doing to keep the guild fresh and interesting. I encourage other members to jump and give a board position a try.