

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild *NEWS*

A newsletter by and for FVKG members

September 2012

President's Letter

A Yarn-filled Summer

I hate to brag, but I have to this time: My husband drove me to 10 Chicago yarn stores in one day. And four more the next day. Yes, we did the Yarn Crawl. He even picked up his own passport to double my chances of winning. When people asked if he was a knitter, he said, "No, but I am a knitting supporter."

Our visions of the day initially did not mesh; he thought we should aim to fill our passport – 16 stores – in one day, while I wanted a more leisurely pace so that I could see the stores. We came to an understanding and agreed to start at Wool and Company and head on in to Chicago.

So we hit the road, armed with a map and addresses and a phone with navigation. We had a great time. I went to all those stores I have heard people talk about. We got to the last store on the list in Evanston minutes before a storm hit with a vengeance.

I had a yarn-filled summer overall. I finished some projects, and started lots of others. I ran into about half the Guild at Stitches Midwest. I had all sorts of knitting activity amid heaping doses of life. Knitting entertained me, comforted me and kept me out of trouble and from melting in the heat. If I was coming undone, my husband usually asked if I had a chance to knit that day.

I think that is a good question for us to ask ourselves when we are unraveling: Have I knit today?

~ Kathy Schooley

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2012-2013 Meeting Dates

September 12, 2012

October 10, 2012
November 14, 2012
December 12, 2012
January 9, 2013
February 13, 2013
March 13, 2013
April 10, 2013
May 8, 2013

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

Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

FVKG currently meets the second Wednesday of each month, September through May, in the Fellowship Hall of the St. Charles Episcopal Church in St. Charles. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.*



Program for September

Dear Fellow Guild Members,

As one of the VPs in charge of programs this year (with my esteemed colleague Phyllis Deerinck), I am very excited about the programs we have in the works for this year. This month, I am happy to bring back Elizabeth Prose for a program on Basic Brioche Knitting. Many of you may remember Elizabeth who gave a great program a couple of years ago on different cast-on techniques. I have also taken classes from her up at the Janesville Knitting Guild Retreat in February. She is a great teacher, and has lots of great tips.

Brioche knitting is a way of working with two yarns (different colors or textures) in a row without stranding or intarsia. Brioche stitch is a wonderful, reversible, textured stitch that is a stretchy Eastern cousin of knit one, purl one rib. It's similar to the Knit One Below technique, and Estonian patent stitches. In fact, all of these techniques create similar results with slightly different approaches.

Elizabeth will give us an overview of brioche knitting, and give us a chance to create a small sample of it. If you'd like to try it out, bring the following supplies:

- Two colors of worsted or DK weight plain wool yarn. *(Please choose a light and dark yarn. If there is not enough contrast between colors, the pattern does not look as interesting.)*
- Double-pointed or circular needles in size appropriate for yarn. *(They must be double points or circular, because you need to work each row twice and slide your stitches.)*
- Basic knitting tools

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the September meeting.

~Judy Jasper
Co-Vice President (Programs)

Vendor of the Month

This month's vendor will be Elgin Knitworks. This is a relatively new yarn store in Elgin. Betsy Kuhn, the owner, is very excited to be our vendor. Please plan on stopping by to say, "Hi," to Betsy and peruse her wares.

~Judy Jasper
Co-Vice President (Programs)

Elgin Knit Works
17 N Grove Ave.
Elgin, IL 60120
847-627-4700
shop@elginknitworks.com
<http://elginknitworks.com/>

Editor's Note

Due to a shoulder injury, I've been on a knitting hiatus for several months. Just last week, I picked up needles and resumed knitting. It had been so long my husband actually commented on it; we neither of us could remember exactly when last – I think early spring. I can't tell you how good it was to have yarn in hand, needles moving in that steady rhythm, accompanied by a wonderful sense of calm, almost one of relief. With that, I realized just how much I missed knitting and promised myself there would never that long of a break again. I admit experiencing some trepidation just before beginning: *What if I had forgotten everything and didn't remember how to knit?* Fortunately, that didn't happen; I did remember and even taught myself the alternate cable cast-on in the process (thank you, knittinghelp.com). All this goes to say, I'm incredibly excited about our new guild year, the programs that are in store, and with them, the opportunities to learn and just to knit.

Throughout the forthcoming year, if you have adventures in knitting or crochet you'd like to share with the guild, please consider submitting an article for the newsletter (email: fvkgnews@gmail.com). It doesn't have to be long or fancy, just your experience.

~ Lisa Roberts

Look What We Knit!

As you all know (or should know!), there is a group of guild members that meets every Wednesday morning at the Arcadium Coffee House in St. Charles. As you also might know (or should know!), the wonderful knitting website, Ravelry, has a tradition of holding its own Mock Olympics, or Knitting Olympics, in the Olympic years. Different groups of knitters participating in the Ravelry Forums also participated in these Ravellenics, and our Wednesday Morning Knitting Group decided to have a little Couch Knitting Marathon of our own (so dubbed by Donna Elftmann).

Christy Becker suggested a wonderful shawl pattern for us to knit, and we were off. The pattern was called TGV (High-Speed Knitting) by Susan Ashcroft, and each knitter choosing to participate picked a yarn from her stash and cast on July 27, during the Opening Ceremonies of the 2012 London Olympic Games (or shortly thereafter). We all knitted furiously for the duration of the Olympic Games, and endeavored to cast off before the Closing Ceremonies on August 12. One of our group, Sandy Andrews, had so much energy, that she actually completed TWO of these shawls during the Ravellenic Games, but most of us were quite happy to finish just the one, and a few of us are still knitting away, having been on vacation (or helping with a new grandchild) during the Ravellenics.

Here is our little group, in all its glory, wearing our Couch Knitting Marathon Shawls. Compliments of Christy Becker, some of us are holding up our Couch Knitting Marathon Participant Medals, and three of us were awarded Gold, Silver and Bronze medals for Knitting Excellence. Whew! That Olympic participation gave us all quite a knitting workout.

~ Janet Goier



Gallery Updates

GAIL BORDEN LIBRARY, ELGIN

We will be displaying knitted items with a holiday theme at the Gail Borden Library during November. They have asked us to double the size of our display to accommodate two glass cases. If you have Christmas stockings, sweaters, hats and mitts in red, green, cranberry, white, gold or silver, they would be much appreciated. Also, knitted ornaments are welcome.

Items will be returned at the beginning of December. Please bring them to the October meeting, placed in a plastic bag and labeled with your name and contact number or e-mail.

ST CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY

The St. Charles Library would like us to display holiday projects in the case at the front lobby this year during the month of December. I will need to gather those holiday items at our November meeting. Knitted animals and ornaments depicting Jan Brett's illustrations found in *The Hat*, *The Mitten*, and *Gingerbread Friends* would work great. I especially need a hedgehog, gingerbread folks and candy canes.

Need ideas? Check out these references for free patterns:

http://littlecottonrabbits.typepad.co.uk/free_knitting_patterns/mini_knitted_christmas_stockings

www.planetpurl.com

www.purlbee.com

<http://knittingwithkarma.blogspot.com>



Thank you,
~ Claudia Frost, Gallery Chair

This Month in Ravelry: Our Favorites

Amazingly, there is always something new to learn in Ravelry. All summer, I have enjoyed looking at what my friends have been favoriting (I have my tab set that my Friends folder opens to Friends Activity). And, I have clicked on the little red heart to add many a pattern to my favorites. Actually, I have added 615 favorites as of this writing, and I am sure that I will add a few more by the time you are reading this.

But, after watching the great new Ravelry video, I now know what I can do with all those favorites, and why I will be clicking on that heart even more frequently now. To watch this video, you can click on the ball of yarn next to the Ravelry name in the upper left-hand corner.

In my Favorites, I have 454 patterns. However, although I suspect that hundreds of those patterns are scarfs and shawls, I can only quickly find five scarves and 11 shawls; I have failed miserably at tagging my favorites. But, now that I know what a tag can do, I can go back and quickly edit my favorited patterns and add a few simple tags.

If you look at your Top Tags column on the left side of your screen, there is a list of all the tags that you have used. When you add a pattern to your favorites, type in a tag or two. You might choose some that are already listed for the pattern, or you can use very basic tags for cowl, socks, Christmas and kids, for example. Then, you are just a click away from pulling up all your favorited cowl patterns to peruse whenever you want.

But, you can favorite so much more than patterns. I have seen people favorite other people's projects, and thought that was just a nice way of acknowledging the good work of your friend. And, that is a very fine thing to do with a heart!

But, now I know that when you favorite someone's project, it will be there, next to your favorited pattern. You can easily revisit what yarn someone used or perhaps collect your favorite three- color combinations for the Color Affection shawl. And, if you have favorited a person's project who has helpful notes or who did something that you would also like to do when you start knitting this project yourself, here is something extra-exciting.

For example, I favorited Sunday Swing Socks, and I also favorited a pair of these socks that I found in the projects. Then, I decided that I would like to knit them, and I moved them to my Queue. Then, when I click "Start Project," there is the favorited project in my related bookmarks, along with all the projects that I thought had helpful notes. Now I just have to remember to look at these before I start my second sock. Jennicole01 has her instructions on how to knit the second sock as a mirror image of the first, instead of both the same. I favorited libbilu's Mirrored Sunny Sunday Swings. Now I am linked to the mirror image chart that she nicely added to her project page.

But – and this gets wild and crazy – you can also favorite:

Designers – a quick way to keep up with their latest patterns;

Yarn and Yarn Brands – a quick way to check the fiber content and yardage;

Forum Posts – a way to find a particularly helpful post again.

For example, I read a thread in the group Lorna's Laceaholics. A member had asked if anyone knew any good sock patterns for variegated yarn. DoodlebugYarn (you could also favorite this yarn shop that currently has shibui and bijou basin and lorna's laces on sale) posted that slip-stitch patterns really are great at minimizing undesirable pooling, and included a link to some great examples. She had done a Ravelry search of sock patterns utilizing slip-stitch. And, now I have all those patterns at my fingertips.

I just pulled up all my favorited forum posts. I had favorited a post on June 28, 2008, that linked to an article on how to increase stitches evenly across a row. Wow! This is a very useful article. And, I didn't even know I had it.

And, just in case you see an advertisement that captures your attention, you can favorite an ad, too. Simply scroll with your mouse over the ad, and up pops an option to click on a heart.

Now, if only I could find time and knit faster so I could tackle all 454 wonderful patterns!

~ Christy Becker

Taking in Stitches Midwest 2012

Stitches Midwest is an annual event that many in the FVKG look forward to attending each August, and this year was no different. On August 10, 11 and 12, many of our members made the drive to Schaumburg to oogle, caress and, of course, buy beautiful skeins of yarn. I daresay that several members made the drive more than one time during the three-day event (technically, it was four, owing to the Thursday evening talk presented by Nicky Epstein), but in the interest of not inciting envy, no names shall be revealed.

However, what shall be revealed is this: Stitches Midwest (and its sister events, Stitches East, South and West) is something that every knitter should get to experience at least once in her (or his) lifetime, and preferably on an annual basis. It is a wonderful gathering of some of the most beloved names and vendors in the knitting world, and we in the FVKG are lucky to be a pretty easy drive from the Schaumburg venue. Of course, even if we were in downstate Springfield, I am sure that quite a few of us would have had no problem hopping in the car with a few knitting friends for the three-hour drive!



In any event, Christy Becker, Donna Elftmann and I made the drive on Friday, August 10, and were excited to run across a number of fellow Guild members as we consulted our maps and checked off each and every must-see vendor on our lists. (Hint: Some of our members are so organized that they found a wonderful map indicating the exact location of each Stitches vendor, and had plotted out their plan of attack days, nay, even weeks ahead of time.) Some of the familiar faces we ran into were Sandy Andrews, Deanne Karamanian, Lorraine Tompkins, Kathy Schooley, Corinne Hohmann, Diana and Michelle Brown, Rita Zalud and Denise Cavallaro. I know that there were more of you, but my brain was on such a yarn-high that day, I am blanking out on the rest of the names; if I omitted yours, please understand that it's all the yarn's fault!

We were there purely to shop, but other knitters availed themselves of the wonderful classes given during this event on topics ranging from custom-knit jackets with Jean Frost, to magnificent mittens and socks with Anna Zilboorg, to beading with Betsy Hershberg. Maybe next year ...

Vendors visited included Signature Needles (Yes! You need some of these!), Miss Babs Hand-Dyed Yarns & Fibers, The Fold, Twisted Sistah Beads & Fibers, TuckerWoods Artisan Yarns & Fibers, The Plucky Knitter, Zen Yarn Garden Inc., Blue Heron Yarns, Knitwhits/Freia Yarns, Dragonfly Fibers, Kollage Yarns, and our very own wonderful LYS, Wool and Company.

With bags overflowing and feet a bit tired, Donna, Christy and I made our way back to the car at the end of the day, dreams of next year's Stitches Midwest already afloat in our fiber-fuzzed brains. Because, as you all know, you can never be too rich, too thin, or have too much yarn.

~ Janet Goier

Charity Knitting Opportunity

AID (Aid for Individual Development) has made its annual request to our guild for scarves. AID provides assistance to disabled individuals. Its facilities are located in Aurora and Elgin. The organization uses the scarves in its various fundraising events.

While any type of knitted or crocheted scarf is appreciated, they definitely find the decorative accent-type to be the most popular (corkscrew, potato chip, diagonal, knotted ends).

I will collect these scarves in a labeled box that will be at the guild meetings in the fall, and deliver them in mid-December. Here is your chance to experiment with color, pattern, stitch, technique and leftover combinations. All scarves are welcome! Thank you.

~ Ruth Anderson

Fox Valley Knitting Guild Retreat

October 26 to 28, 2012

Location:

The Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center, Oregon, IL

Arrival time on October 26: 4:00 p.m.

Departure time on October 28: 1:30 p.m.

Four rooms are still available for the retreat. Price includes meals on Saturday and Sunday. For those members who have paid their deposit, balances will be due at the September meeting.

Double occupancy \$125.00 per person;
\$50.00 deposit, \$ 75.00 balance

Single occupancy \$205.00;
\$50.00 deposit, \$155.00 balance

If you are attending the retreat and require special dietary meals, please see me at the meeting so that a form can be filled out and given to the Stronghold in advance.

For those members attending the retreat, please remember to bring:

- Warm clothes and comfy shoes if you want to walk the outdoor labyrinth.
- Toiletries and medications
- Cozy pajamas and slippers for lounging in
- Knitting projects, needles and accessories
- Projects you need help finishing or fixing – someone else may have experience with that same pattern and can help you.
- A portable light and extension cord
- Mug for hot drinks
- Food/snacks – please remember to bring napkins, utensils and plates to serve the food.
- Guild nametag
- If you have a special comfy chair you like or a seat cushion, bring it along, as there will be hard chairs, table and some couches in the meeting room.

~ Your friend in knitting,
Sandy Andrews

For Sale: Gorgeous alpaca wool in natural colors wound into five balls of 665 yards (8.25 oz each). Call Mary Stowe at 630-495-6915, or e-mail through her daughter at justruth8@gmail.com.

Upcoming Regional Fiber Events

September 7-9

Wisconsin Sheep & Wool Festival

Jefferson, WI

www.wisconsinssheepandwoolfestival.com

September 21-22

Third Coast Fiber Arts Festival

Detroit

<http://artisansknitworks.com/3rCoastFestival2.html>

September 24

Yarn Con

Chicago

<http://www.yarncon.com>

uncommon threads

an art-to-wear show and runway show and luncheon

Sunday, October 21, 2012

presented by and benefitting Fine Line Creative Arts Center

Boutique open from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. and following the runway show

Lunch served at 12 p.m.

Runway Show begins at 1 p.m.

Runway fashions go on sale in the boutique after the show

Tickets are \$60 per person

(\$30 of your ticket purchase is a donation and tax-deductible).

Barb Palmer and Claudia Frost are organizing a group trip to attend this upcoming event sponsored by the Fine Line on Sunday, October 21 at the Stonegate Conference and Banquet Centre, Higgins and Barrington Roads, in Hoffman Estates. Tables seat 10. A group order at one time with full payment will need to be placed if we want to sit together. If you are interested in attending, please bring your check (made out to the Fine Line Creative Arts Center) to the September meeting, so we can reserve a table or maybe two.

~ Claudia Frost

Wool and Company will have its Annual Cruisette on the Fox River on Sunday, Sept. 30 at 4:30. It also is hosting a color workshop with Madelinetosh on Friday, Sept. 28. In addition, Wool and Company has a great new club called Club Red to make your heart and your knitting healthier. Full details can be found on www.woolandcompany.com.

~ Lesley Edmondson, Wool and Company

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.com

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

2012-2013 FVKG Board Members

President: Kathy Schooley

Vice-Presidents: Judy Jasper; Phyllis Deernick

Secretary: Jennifer Duncan

Treasurer: Deanne Karamanian

Gallery Show: Claudia Frost

Hospitality: Tammy Caltagirone

Library: Barbara Palmer; Marianne Moye

Membership: Marge Clark

Newsletter Editor: Lisa Roberts

Website: Lorraine Tompkins

If you need to contact a board member outside of a meeting, visit the members' section of www.fvkg.com for individual contact information. The password is printed on the back of your guild membership card; it remains the same as last year.

To notify the guild at large, simply email fvkgnews@gmail.com to have your note distributed. Be sure to allow at least 48 hours' advance notice.

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.

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

Spotlight on ... Brioche Knitting

I'd like to start a new monthly Show and Tell for a certain technique each month. Each month, we will have a "Spotlight" on a different technique. Members can bring an example of this technique and share tips about how to be successful with it. This is an expanded Show and Tell that allows you to bring something that maybe you knit years ago, and share your experience with the group. Each person who shares a tip (and writes it down) will be eligible for a special door prize. The tips will then be gathered up and put on a special page on the FVKG website. This is a way for our experienced knitters to share their invaluable expertise with the rest of us.

This month, I thought we would spotlight brioche knitting, since this is our program. Anyone who has knitted brioche, bring in a sample, share a tip, and maybe win a prize!

~ Judy Jasper
Co-Vice President (Programs)

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TIP FORM

TECHNIQUE: _____

TIP:

SUBMITTED BY: _____