

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild *NEWS*

A newsletter by and for FVKG members

November/December 2012

President's Letter

We Knit Together

Wild turkeys wait at dawn in fields
And lurk in the woods watching
Conversations flare and spark like campfires
Send sparkling ideas into the room
Some catch fire, some fade quietly
Stitches slide across needles
First one project , then another
Some are finished, some are started
Questions asked and answered
Gifts given and received
Fluffy bunnies share their hair
We feed on schedule,
Eagerly waiting the next time,
Like fish circling
Predawn, bright mornings, warm sunny afternoons, fading light, into the night
We knit together.

A Knitting Haiku

Knit into the dark
Black yarn, blue needles at night
Laboring to fix

~ 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 November

In November, our program will be Designing Shawls, and Amy Swenson of IndiGirl Knits will be our speaker. Amy is a great designer and teacher, and many of you may already know her or her work. She is coming all the way from Toronto to be our speaker.

This is going to be a great program. I'm very excited about it because this is the lead-in to our kickoff for a "Design Wrap Contest." The contest will be described in detail in the November meeting. You might remember we had a "Design Wrap Challenge" a year or so ago. Anything knit for that challenge will be eligible for this year's contest. There will be five prizes given for different categories that will be announced in November. You will have until the May 2013 meeting to knit your wrap. In May, we will have a fashion show and vote for the winners.

Amy will give us some great tips about designing shawls. She has designed many shawls (such as the Karen shawl that many of us have knit, as well as other things), so she has the expertise we need to get started designing ourselves!

One of the reasons we are focusing on design this year is that our official FVKG mission statement says: "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."

For those of you who might be intimidated by designing something, it doesn't have to be complex. Some of the simplest designs are the most popular. Think about Stephen West's patterns, the Clapotis, or other super-popular patterns many of us have knit recently.

~ Judy Jasper
Co-Vice President (Programs)

Program for December

For the December meeting, we will have our annual potluck, member stash sale and grab bag.

For the potluck, bring a dish to share. It can be an appetizer, main dish or dessert; you choose. Be as elaborate or simple as you like. Hospitality will provide a punch for the beverage.

For the member stash sale, bring your yarn/books/etc. that you want to sell. Bag up yarns in clear bags and label them with your name and price. For buyers and sellers, bring cash and change to make it easy to sell/purchase items.

This year, we will be having a Christmas grab bag exchange. We haven't done this in a few years, so this year, we thought it would be fun. You only have to participate if you want to. Bring a gift valued approximately \$15-\$20. If you bring a gift, you will get a gift. This is a fun way to get in the spirit of the season!

~Judy Jasper
Co-Vice President (Programs)

Welcome, New Members!

Jodee DeBates
Judy Hunnicutt
Laura Keiken
Lisa Leidberg
Raenie Maggiano
Ranie Mills
Lori Murphy

Vogue Knitting Live!

On Friday, October 26, I had a few hours to kill before meeting up with my husband for his work-related dinner party. Coincidentally, my husband's office is located directly across the street from the Palmer House Hotel, the 2012 site of Vogue Knitting Live! weekend, billed as "The Ultimate Knitting Event" for fashion, fiber and education. I cannot speak to the fashion and education aspects of the event, but I did experience a bit of the fiber part.

As you can imagine, I was not sorry at all to have arrived slightly early for my husband's dinner commitment, and I might even have brought along an especially large tote bag for the express purpose of holding any skeins of gorgeous yarn falling mysteriously into my possession during my visit. And fall they did. Although I did have to fork over a rather hefty entrance fee of \$20 for the privilege of walking through the vendor areas, in the end, I was happy to do so, as there were beautiful yarns on display, from vendors I'd never even heard of. (Can you imagine?!) One especially beautiful find was from Ewetopia Fiber Shop (www.ewetopiafibershop.com) located in Viroqua, Wis. The yarn was from Kate Wright Designs, and the two skeins I purchased were called Maple Ridge Lace, 850 beautiful yards of merino wool; and Pashm Lux, 400 yards of gorgeous merino, cashmere and silk.



The colorways available in this brand were exquisite, ranging from pinks to oranges to reds to blues to purples to greens. Several of my knitting friends drooled over this, so it's not just me. The shop vendor said that her website was "very basic," but she is always happy to do phone orders.

Another new name in yarn to me was Lost City Knits (www.lostcityknits.com), and a lovely skein of its Twin Canyon Fingering yarn came home with me. It is a luscious blend of 50% merino/50% silk. Since I had not nearly as much time to spend perusing the aisles as I would have liked, my final purchase was from the Neighborhood Fiber Company (www.neighborhoodfiberco.com), in its Rustic Fingering base. This is 475 yards of a 100% superwash merino, and, again, highly saturated, gorgeous colors. The colorway I fell in love with was Fells Point, a blue-green, laced with touches of yellow and emerald. Absolutely stunning.

The vendors were spread out over two separate floors (three and four) of the Palmer House, so when I first arrived and saw only the one area, I confess to thinking, "What a disappointment!" but after I discovered the second floor of yarn, I was a much happier camper. There was also a small room with knitting-related art, and the artists were kind enough to let me take a few photos of their work. Please check out the websites of Carol E.S. MacDonald (www.carolmacdonald.com) and Doll Street (www.DollStreetDreamers.com) to see some of what was on display. I fell in love with a darling felted dragon.

Of course, much of the Vogue Knitting Live! event was centered around the classes available on so many different aspects of knitting it kind of makes your head spin: brioche; Latvian fingerless mitts; Shetland lace; miters by design; two-color double knitting; advanced top-down sock design; morphing cables; seams like surgery; English tailoring; knitting for speed and efficiency, and my personal favorite: math for knitters demystified (Is that really possible?). In any event, it was a veritable smorgasbord of knitting information, and, judging from the crowd I saw milling around the check-in area, quite well-attended. If you should find yourself with some spare time for next year's Vogue Knitting Live!, and if it happens to be held anywhere near the greater Chicago area, I highly recommend the experience. At the very least, it is a feast of color and texture for your eyes and fingers. And a skein or two of new yarn will always bring a smile to your face.

~ Janet Goier

My Color-filled Trip to Koigu July 2012

Even on the one rainy day of my three-day visit to Koigu Farm, Koigu colors brightened the day; on the other days, Koigu colors held their own very nicely in the sunshine. Koigu's hand-painted yarns, (www.koigu.com) with short color changes, are wonderful in lace and modular knitting, among others. The colors blend and surprise with each new combination. The yarn is available in a sock-weight (KPPPM), sport-weight (Kersti), and now a new bulky-weight. Each dye combination is identified by number. At the Koigu studio, off-white wool is wound into large hanks, which then are made wet and placed in stainless steel pans, dyed according to proprietary formulae, placed in a very hot oven for a short period, cooled gradually, rinsed and hung to dry. Then these large hanks are rewound into the smaller hanks that are shipped to LYS around the world.

Koigu Farm is a scenic two-hour drive north of Toronto. Founder Maie (my-ya) Landra left her native Estonia as a child at the end of WWII, settling in Ontario, Canada. After fashion design school, she and her husband, Harry, bought the farm as a weekend get-away. Sheep came along next, along with daughter Taiu (tie-you). Later, Maie found wonderful sources for yarns to which to apply her talents in dyeing and design. Today, Koigu is still a family business, involving Maie, Taiu, and a few local employees. Taiu's daughter, Kersti, a very tall and wonderfully poised 14-year old, serves as a model for the Koigu pattern books.

So how did I happen to be a part of all of this? Several years ago, searching for cashmere yarn online, I happened upon String Yarn website (www.stringyarn.com). The website is filled with pages of luxury yarns in cashmere, silk, merino and other delicious fibers. Owner Linda Morse left her business career to establish String, a shop on East 65th Street in New York, with a goal of stocking only the most luxurious yarns. I signed up for Linda's weekly *StringStyle* email newsletter, and in one newsletter, Linda announced the trip to Koigu. My family had a cottage near the Koigu farm, but I have never been to String in New York. Ready for an adventure, I signed up.

My need for adventure was fulfilled from the very beginning with airline delays, rental car issues, no map, Toronto rush-hour traffic, and missing highway signs. Eventually, I joined the rest of the group at Falls Inn in Walter's Falls, Ontario. Each room in this B&B overlooks a powerful waterfall with a water wheel. Our first evening, we were treated to a fashion show, with some of Maie's designs and garments by other designers who were inspired by the beauty of Koigu yarn, all modeled by Kersti.

On our second and third days, we returned to Koigu Farm. After Maie and Taiu talked to us about color through the artist's eye, we were able to hand-paint our own silk scarf, using their dyes. We could examine and try on the garments that we had seen the night before. We were able to explore the studio shop, planning our own next projects. We also could explore the rolling hills around the farm and its pond. It was a wonderful trip!

I hope to see Maie and Taiu at the Koigu booth at Vogue Knitting Chicago!, and one of these days, I will get to walk into String in New York City to see Linda again.

As a librarian, I must suggest you take a look at *Knits From a Painter's Palette* by Maie Landra, and *Luxury Knitting: The Ultimate Guide to Exquisite Yarns: Cashmere, Merino, Silk*, by Linda Morse.

~ Barbara Palmer

Show and Tell: September and October meetings



Scarf by Ellen Gilmartin



"Animal Menagerie" by Nicky Jo Herner



"Scarf with Felted Leaves" by Janan Hudek



"Summer Flies Shawl" by Barb Harris



"Mara Shawl" by Jan Siers



"Crocheted & Knitted Pumpkins" by Lisa Liedberg



"Entwined Hearts Shawl" aka "Downton Abbey Shawl" by Sandy Andrews

Here we present a small selection of photos taken during the Show-and-Tell sessions at the September and October meetings. Additional photos of all the lovely projects can be seen on www.fvkg.com. Photos by Claudia Frost.

2012 Fox Valley Knitting Guild Retreat

The annual Fox Valley Knitting Guild Retreat was held at the Stronghold in Oregon, Ill., on October 26-28, 2012. Nineteen members attended the three-day event. On Saturday, Happy Hoppers brought its beautiful rabbits to demonstrate how the fur is trimmed for spinning into its wonderful yarn. After the demonstration, Happy Hoppers sold yarn, soap, patterns and homemade grape jelly to those attending the retreat.

I would like to thank the following people for all their hard work in making this retreat a success: Judy Jasper, Michelle Brown and Diana Brown, for writing letters to vendors so that each of the ladies attending the retreat received a wonderful gift. Another thank you goes out to Eileen Hoesly for the welcome gifts that were put together and given out on Friday. And thank you, ladies, for all your support and encouragement this past year. I greatly appreciate each and every one of you. And lastly, to all wonderful ladies who attended the retreat, thank you for the wonderful snacks, all the laughs and all the beautiful knitting projects that were being worked on. This retreat would not be a success without you.

Now about next year's retreat: I have talked to the Stronghold twice, and in order to hold the retreat next year at the same building (Heritage Lodge), the weekend of October 25- 27, 2013, is the only weekend it has open. As you can tell, this building is in high demand, and dates for its use fill up fast. I tried for an earlier date and a later date, but they are already taken. So please mark you date books for next year with the dates for the next retreat. I will start taking reservations/deposits for the next retreat in January. Price for the retreat deposit and balance due will be announced in the January newsletter.

~ Sincerely,
Sandy Andrews

Upcoming Fiber Events at Esther's Place

Saturday, November 17: Christmas at Esther's
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Join us for our annual holiday open house full of great gift ideas, homemade cookies, hot chocolate and festive music.

Sunday, December 16:
Evening with the Shepherds at Esther's Place
3 p.m., 5 p.m., 7 p.m.

Live music, candle-lit ambiance and a light dinner fare featuring local foods will inspire your holiday season. Horse-drawn rides around town can be enjoyed as well. Mingle with friends as you celebrate the season. Tickets are \$15 per person, and are available by reservation on a first-come, first-served basis. Call us at 630-556-9665.

Esther's Place
201 RT 30
Big Rock, IL 60511
www.esthersplacefibers.com

~ Natasha Lehrer, Esther's Place

FVKG Members Gallery Show

Fine Line Creative Arts Center
April 5 - April 27

"Inspired by the Masters of Color, Form and Light:
Claude Monet and Mary Cassatt"

- * Save the date
- * Research impressionist painters, Claude Monet and Mary Cassatt
- * Select a pattern
- * Go through your stash
- * Visit your favorite yarn store
- * Start knitting your beautiful piece
- * Submit by March 13 (March guild meeting)

Opening Reception Date:
Friday evening, April 5
5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

~ Claudia Frost

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.estersplacefibers.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

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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

Scarves for A.I.D.

If you need to take a break between your big knitting projects or your Christmas knitting projects, why not whip up a fast, fun, funky scarf for A.I.D.? A.I.D. is the Association for Individual Development, an agency in Aurora and Elgin that provides programs and assistance for disabled children and adults. They use these scarves in their fundraising events. They love the colorful, fancy, fluffy, furry, corkscrew types, as well as the good, old-fashioned, warm, functional types.

Thanks for all the delightful donations that you have knitted so far. I will be delivering these scarves to A.I.D. in mid-December, so you can still bring them to the November and December meetings. May your yarn basket always be brimming with beautiful yarn and your fingers be humming with happiness!

~ Ruth Anderson

Spotlight on ... LACE KNITTING

This month's SPOTLIGHT focuses on lace knitting. Lace knitting is a way to create patterns with a combination of decreases and yarnovers. It can be easy and straightforward, or it can be very complex. There are many tips and techniques to help you be a more successful lace knitter. Lace patterns can be in shawls, sweaters, socks or just about anything else.

Bring your favorite lace knitted object, and share a written tip about it to be eligible to win a special door prize.

~ Judy Jasper

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TIP FORM

TECHNIQUE: _____

TIP:

SUBMITTED BY: _____