

FOX VALLEY KNITTERS' GUILD NEWS

A newsletter by and for FVKG members

January 2010



fvkg.com

FROM YOUR PRESIDENTS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Despite that amazing snowstorm, the few, the brave, had a wonderful time at the Christmas potluck, lots of good food, good times, great show and tell, and lots of gifts and fun. We certainly understand that for many it was better to stay inside and be safe and warm, and we missed you all. Hope you were knitting anyway! There is no guarantee that January won't bring more of the same, but we'll try it again on January 13, 2010.

Here's hoping that all that Holiday knitting was a great success and well received. Now for the new year and knitting resolutions. Dorothy resolves to finish at least as many (or more) projects than she starts!!!! Gretl resolved to finish at least 4 projects in January before starting something new. That's why she was very busy casting on on New Year's Eve. That doesn't count, right, because it was not yet January?

We continue to have a great list of programs and activities (did I hear field trip?) for you in the coming year and hope that you will join us and take part in these. Our goal, as ever, is to offer opportunities for everyone to enhance their knitting experiences and expertise.

We wish you the best of the year 2010! May you finish lots of projects, may you find wonderful sales to grow your stash, and may your yarn never tangle.

---Dorothy and Gretl

JANUARY 13TH GUILD MEETING

Our request for knitting New Year's resolutions at our December Guild meeting naturally led to our January program....

Bring your UFO's - - especially your real "stumpers" for an opportunity to tackle the issues with the help of our "Knitting Wizards".

These especially talented members of our own Guild will guide you to a fabulous finished project!

---Linda Jones and Christy Becker

MAGICAL MYSTERY YARN SHOP TOUR

On Saturday, March 13th, we'll board a bus and be whisked off to a couple of Chicago yarn hot spots. Plan to leave from Let Me Arrange It Bus Company, 799 S. Maclean in Elgin at 8:45 am, returning by 5:30 pm. The cost is \$15/member (the additional cost will be subsidized by the Guild treasury). Lunch is on your own, either brown bag it (no peanuts or dairy products allowed on the bus) or eat at a convenient restaurant. Deadline for registration is February 10th, please see Christy Becker to sign up. And knitters, start saving your money, you can use cash or credit cards, no checks accepted.

---Linda Jones and Christy Becker

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.

ANYONE FOR SUNDAY AFTERNOON KNITTING?

Join Dorothy Gaines at her house on Sunday, January 24 from 1-4pm for an afternoon of knitting. She will have coffee and tea and maybe a treat. Bring a treat to share if you wish. You will find her at 513 W. Downer Place in Aurora. It would be nice to call her ahead to let her know you are coming she can be reached at 630/892-5718. See you there!

If you are interested in hosting a Sunday afternoon knitting just let Dorothy or Gretl know what date you want to host.

VIVIAN HOXBRO KNITALONG

The Vivian Hoxbro Knitalong starts this January.

We will be meeting the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month, at the Arcedium Coffeehouse in St. Charles (on Indiana St. across from the Blue Goose) at 6:30 pm.

Our first meeting is Thursday, January 7th.

This KAL is for any kit - shadow knitting, domino, something else altogether.

If you are planning on joining us, here are some preparation activities you may want to do BEFORE our first meeting.

Get out your kit.

Wind the yarn.

Do a Gauge swatch (yes, you should, you know you should.) She recommends using size 3mm needles, which is I believe between a US 2 & 3 needle. So you may need new needles.

Go to her website at www.viv.dk and look for FAQ/corrections. This is VERY important. There are corrections out there for many patterns.

Take a look at the instructions. DON'T GET DISCOURAGED or INTIMIDATED! I made one of her sweaters (cable sweater) 2 years ago. There are lots of instructions, but if you take it step by step, you can do it!

Remember this is a KAL, not a class. The group is there for encouragement, inspiration, helpful tips, and possibly peer pressure. Particularly since we will all be knitting different things, the others in the group may not have all the answers. But hopefully as a group we can figure it out.

I hope to see many of you on Thursday!

---Judy Jasper, Membership

KNITALONG NEWS

The Central Park Hoodie Knitalong will still meet at Borders, on Randall Rd, on Weds. mornings at 9:30. Bring your CPH to work on or some other current project you are knitting on to enjoy the fellowship with the wonderful ladies. Some of the ladies who have finished the CPH will be working on the Borocco Blackstone Tweed, "Nuss" Sweater, #288. You can join us whatever you feel like working on.

---Barb Harris, Hospitality Chair

HOSPITALITY

We were a small group for the December meeting but still enjoyed the delicious food that was so generously provided. I'm still looking for some extra ladies to bring treats to the January meeting.

Please contact me on my cell: 630-710-4652 if you would like to bring something.

---Barb Harris, Hospitality Chair

SPOTLIGHT ON RECIPES FROM THE DECEMBER MEETING

We had a wonderful dessert recipe from Lorraine Tompkins:

Cheesecake Cookies

Cookie Base:

1/3 c butter
1/3 c light brown sugar firmly packed
1 c all purpose flour (lightly spooned into measuring cup)
1/2 c finely chopped walnuts

Cheesecake filling:

1/4 c sugar
8 oz cream cheese at room temperature
1 large egg at room temperature
2 tbsp milk
1/2 tsp vanilla
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice

Make the cookie base as follows:

Cream butter with sugar until light and fluffy. Add flour and walnuts and mix on low speed until just incorporated and the dough forms a crumbly mixture.

Reserve 1 cup for topping.

Press remaining dough evenly into an 8" square pan. Bake at 350 until light brown (about 15 minutes)

While base is baking make cheesecake filling.

In medium sized bowl, cream room temperature cream cheese with sugar until smooth. Add egg, milk and vanilla. mix until incorporated. Add lemon juice, mix well. Scrape bowl to make sure everything is well mixed.

Once cookie base is baked, remove from oven and pour the filling on top of the base. Sprinkle the reserved cookie base evenly over the top. Return pan to oven and bake at 350 for approximately 25 minutes.

Cool before cutting. Store in refrigerator.

We also have a delicious appetizer recipe from Carolyn Swenson:

Belgium Endive Boats

4 Belgium lettuce heads (at least). Separate leaves and store in frig. between paper towels.

Mix together to make a paste:

1 small clove garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. salt

Add to the paste:

1 Tbsp. mayo
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1/4 lb. parmesan cheese cut into 1/8" pieces
1/2 cup finely chopped celery

1 cup finely chopped toasted walnuts
1/2 cup finely chopped fresh parsley

Add 1 Tbsp. of mixture to each lettuce leaf.

I often double the recipe because they are so yummy. Make as you go because they do not store overnight very well

CHARITY NEWS

We, as a Guild, donated 43 items to Merlin Muffler's Snug Hugs for Kids on November 23, 2009. These items were mostly scarves and hats. Please know that you have made many children warm and happy.

Our Guild also donated 12 red scarves to The Heart Sisters on December 3, 2009. We received the following thank you note from Jody Knack of WomenHeart of Aurora:

Dear Ladies of the Guild,

We want to thank you for your generous contribution of handmade scarves for our "Heart Scarf" project. Each one is so beautiful, yet so different. Just like each woman living with the diagnosis of heart disease. We truly appreciate your help with our project.

*Sincerely,
The Heart Sisters*

---Ruth Anderson

HELMET LINER DRIVE

Wool and Company in Geneva is hosting a Helmet Liner Drive throughout the month of January. As you know another 30,000 or so troops are being deployed to Afghanistan, and although we tend to think of it as being extremely hot, at night and sometimes during the day it can get well below freezing. The liners that the troops are issued are not necessarily warm enough so in an effort to do our bit we are making as many 100% wool liners as we can. Our goal is to have 100 ready to send off at the end of the month, but I would love to have many more.

The free pattern is printed below and available at www.woolandcompany.com, or at the store and I will bring some on Wednesday evening. I will also bring a selection of suitable yarn that can be purchased at a 20% discount and some donated yarns for anyone who is on a super tight budget right now, but would still like to participate. If you have any 100% black, brown, kahki or dark green worsted weight yarn that you don't need, please consider donating to the cause.

PS. We already have 12 at the store, not bad for just 3 days into the month, and most people who have brought them in say they take between 6 and 10 hours. Thank you.

---Lesley Edmondson

HELMETLINER KNITTING INSTRUCTIONS

Materials: Any soft, worsted (100 grams/3.5 ounces) wool yarn that will knit to gauge. (The label should state that for size 7 needle, 5 stitches per 1 inch, and for size 8 needle, 4-1/2 stitches per 1 inch. Approx. 200 yds). Wool and Company has several suitable yarns - call or ask for details.

Only 100% soft wool yarn will be accepted, because our Armed Forces are not allowed to wear synthetic fibers outside the wire. Wool is inherently nonflammable and won't melt against the skin in the event of an accident and is warm even when wet.

Colors: ONLY tan, brown, black, charcoal, or combinations of these colors are allowed by our Armed Forces. **Marines strongly prefer desert tan!**

Needles: 8 - 16" circular needle and double pointed needles, or size to get gauge Size 6 - 16" circular needles for the ribbing 1 stitch marker.

Gauge: 4.5 stitches per inch in stockinette stitch with the larger needles

Be sure to check your gauge to ensure the helmet liner will fit properly when worn. Try it on when you've finished it, if it fits you nicely it will be OK. You may need to use a different needle size to get the gauge listed above. If this is the case, use a needle 2 sizes smaller for your ribbing. Please remember that every knitter is different and every yarn is different... Check gauge with **your yarn and your needles** before you begin to ensure a properly fitting liner.

Abbreviations: k2tog - knit 2 stitches together p2tog - purl 2 stitches together

Neck Ribbing: With smaller circular needle, cast on 84 stitches loosely. Place marker.

Join in round and work in knit 2, purl 2 ribbing for 6 inches.

Cap: With larger circular needle, knit 32 stitches off smaller needle onto the larger size 8 circular needle. Leave smaller circular needle in the rest of the stitches. The smaller circular needle will just act as a stitch holder while you complete the cap portion with the size 8 circular and double-point needles.

Cast on 59 additional stitches, place marker to mark beginning of round, join in round, knit even for 4". ("Knit even" means to knit every stitch).

1st decrease row: *K 11, k2tog, repeat from * to end of round.

Next row: Knit even.

2nd decrease row: *K10, K2tog, repeat from * to end of round.

Next row: knit even, meaning to knit every stitch. Change to double point (DP) needles when necessary.

Continue decreases as established until k2, k2tog. After this, decrease every row until a total of 7 stitches remain on the double point needles. Cut yarn 8-9" long, run tail through remaining stitches and weave in.

Face Ribbing: With size 6 circular needle that is still in neck portion, pick up and knit the 60 stitches from the cast on edge of the cap portion.

Join in circle and work k2, p2 ribbing for 1 inch.

On the next row: *k2, p2tog, repeat from * to end of round.

Bind off loosely in pattern. Weave in ends.

Add a note for the recipient along with washing instructions.

The original pattern was designed by Bonnie Long, Knit Wits, 3419 Chatham Rd. Springfield, IL 62704. 217-

698-6100. Revised 5/14/2008 by Rachel Kristy. All rights reserved. Copies may be made only for the purpose of donating helmets to our active service personnel. In any case design attribution must remain.

Bring or Mail Your Completed Helmet Liner to:

Wool and Company
Attn: Helmet Liners
23 South Third Street
Geneva, IL 60134

BOOK REVIEW

Homespun Handknit: Caps, Socks, Mittens and Gloves edited by Linda Ligon, 1987

AND

All New Homespun Handknit: 25 Small Projects to knit with Handspun Yarn edited by Amy Clarke Moore, 2009

These 2 books make a wonderful pair of knitting resources. I have had the earlier book for decades, and I just bought the new one at Wool & Co the day after Thanksgiving. It was my day to rest, digest all that Thanksgiving food, and look at new knitting books. I found 3 or 4 new books that I want, but this is the one that came home with me.

[Old] Homespun Handknit:

Homespun Handknit #1 was the result of a contest held by Spin-Off Magazine way back in 1985, almost 25 years ago. The magazine editors asked knitters to submit their favorite patterns for small projects. Many of the projects submitted were made of homespun yarn although not all of

them were. The names of the contestants whose works were accepted and subsequently published in the book in 1987 are about 3 dozen of the who's who from the knitting world. They include, among many others, Sidna Farley, Jacqueline Fee, Lizbeth Uptis, Linda Ligon, Priscilla Gibson-Roberts and Elizabeth Zimmerman.

The book includes very nice photos of the projects, the patterns, technique tips and tricks, great descriptions of the projects and the yarns used, and information for finding substitute yarns to use, handspun as well as commercial millspun. There are more than 20 hats included, more than 15 mitten and glove patterns, 8 socks and stockings, and 6 cap and mitten sets. Each pattern is rated beginning, intermediate, experienced or expert. There is a beautiful intermediate pattern for rainbow knee socks by Betty Amos that feature custom calf shaping for a perfect fit.

I love this book, and its "old" patterns are really timeless. The editor, Linda Ligon, is the founder of Interweave Press, publishers of *Interweave Knits*, *Interweave Crochet*, *KnitScene*, *Spin-Off*, *Handwoven*, and many other books and magazines. *Homespun Handknit: Caps, Socks, Mittens and Gloves* is currently out of print, and there are used copies available from many sources online ranging from \$15-68. If you haunt used book stores and run across a copy, snap it up. Also, did you know that Guild member Barbara Palmer is a used book dealer? She can help you get your hands on a copy of this book.

All New Homespun Handknit:

While you wait to find a copy of the 1987 book, take a look at its successor, *All New Homespun Handknit: 25 Small Projects to knit with Handspun Yarn*. This new book is edited by Amy Clarke Moore, the current editor of *Spin-Off* magazine. In the introduction, she describes receiving a copy of the first *Handspun Handknit* from her aunt more than 20 years ago.

When Moore decided to put together the next generation *Homespun Handknit*, she called on many contemporary knit designers to revive the spirit of the first book. Her group includes Kathryn Alexander, Faina Letoutchaia, Diane Mullholland, Nancy Bush and spinner Judith MacKenzie McCuin. Carol Rhoades of Madison makes a repeat appearance in this book.

As in the previous book, this one has beautiful photographs. There are multiple photos of each project showing different views. As in the first book, this one has many explanatory sidebars and helpful illustrations. Each pattern includes extensive information for spinners about how the original yarn was spun, and each pattern also describes the yarn in terms to help you select substitute yarns whether handspun or millspun.

There are 7 hat or headband patterns, 5 for mittens, 2 for sock and 3 scarf or shawl patterns. There are 3 patterns for bags and even a couple of kids' jackets, lanolinized baby soakers (with lanolinization instructions to make them "waterproof") and a hoodie. These projects include some lace, some mitered squares, some Fair Isle and even a little entrelac in addition to wonderful stockinette and garter stitch.

My favorite pattern, the one I plan to tackle first, is a child's Nordic cardigan that is knitted in Sock Monkey colors of oatmeal, brown, black, and red! The red yarn was Kool-Aid dyed by the designer, Sarah Anderson, and she includes how-to instructions. There is a chart for the border design in both a girls' and a boys' version. I have started to call this pattern the Scandinavian Sock Monkey Jacket, and I can't wait to start it.

One of the things I especially like about this book is that where there are charts, the charts are large enough for my aging eyes, and many are in colors to help read them. This is a more colorful book than the 1987 version and has more photographs although it includes fewer projects.

I really like both books, their timeless patterns and rich, warm look. I recommend them both and look forward to seeing what you knit from them. Be sure to share!

---Gretl Kramer

LAMB EXTRAVAGANZA OPEN HOUSE

Sat. March 20th, 2010; 10-4 pm

Mark the Calendars! "Ewe" are invited to the Lamb Extravaganza Open House!

Esther's Place, 201 RT 30, Big Rock, IL 60511

630-556-9665, <http://www.esthersplacefibers.com>

Join us for all kinds of fun things to celebrate the sheeepy season! As you may well know, Spring of 2009 brought a few surprises, one of which was an abundant lambing season due to the unexpected adventures of "Romeo Ram" one late evening in the fall. What that led to was a literal doubling of our flock in a week! In response to all that, we have gotten many laughs and the inspiration for a book!

Allie Pleiter will be joining us on that day as writer of the inspirational "Kentucky Corner Series" published by Love Inspired, a faith based offshoot of Harlequin books. She will be our guest, signing books and doing a reading. A portion of the proceeds from books sold will go to feeding our increased flock! We'll have farm tours through out the day and treats, along with limited edition fiber and yarn from our flock. Come out and linger for a while, enjoy the country air and celebrate Spring!

You can keep up to date with all the fun stuff at Esther's Place and on the farm. By checking out our blog at <http://www.friendsofester.wordpress.com>. We also welcome you to join our Ravelry Group, Esther's Place Fans.

---Natasha Lehrer

FVKG Treasurer's Report

	Guild Fund	Retreat Fund	Ending Balance
Balance Nov 30, 2009	\$3,926.73	\$253.72	\$4,180.45
Income:			
Membership	\$450.00		
Nametags	\$20.00		
Retreat 2010		\$800.00	
Expenses:			
Hospitality -	\$(23.99)		
Membership - return of duplicate payment	\$(30.00)		
Nametags	\$(24.95)		
Postage stamps	\$(17.60)		
Program	\$(87.16)		
Rent - St. Charles Episcopal Church - Dec	\$(50.00)		
Retreat 2010		\$(800.00)	
Balance Dec 31, 2009	\$4,163.03	\$253.72	\$4,416.75

---Diane Evinger, FVKG Treasurer

Special Yarn Shops

- **Esther's Place** 201 W. Galena St. (Route 30), Big Rock
Phone: (630) 556-WOOL (9665) - Web: <http://www.esthersplacefibers.com/>
- **Fine Line** 6N158 Crane Road, St. Charles Phone: (630) 584-9443 - Web: <http://www.finelineca.org/>
- **Fishbed Knitting Emporium, Inc.** 320 N. River Street, East Dundee
Phone: (847) 844-YARN (9276)
- **The Fold** 3316 Millstream Road, Marengo
Phone: (815) 568-5320
- **Gene Ann's Shop**
117 East Station St., Barrington
Phone: (847) 842-9321 - Web: <http://www.geneannsyarns.com/TheShop.htm>
- **Gifted Purl** 120 West Main St., West Dundee
Phone: (847) 783-4650 - Web: <http://www.giftedpurl.com>
- **Knitche** 5150-B Main Street, Downers Grove, IL 60515
Phone: (630) 852-5648 - Web: <http://knitche.com/>
- ***Needle Things** 426 South Third Street, Geneva
Phone: (630) 232-0015
- **Never Enough Knitting** 119-121 North Main, Wheaton
Phone: (630) 221-1007
- **Sheep's Clothing** 257 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso, IN
Phone: (219) 462-1700
- **Stitches in Time** 300 W. Washington, Oregon, IL
Phone: (815) 732-4599
- **Wool and Company** 23 South Third St., Geneva
Phone: (630) 232.2305 - Web: <http://www.woolandcompany.net/>

*These shops are special because they offer discounts to FVKG members.

2010 FVKG MEETING DATES

- January 13, 2010
- February 10, 2010
- March 10, 2010
- April 14, 2010
- May 12, 2010

We meet the second Wednesday of each month in the Fellowship Hall of the St. Charles Episcopal Church at 994 North Fifth Ave. in St. Charles and start at 6:30p

FVKG Board

President: Dorothy Gaines & Gretl Kramer
Vice President/Programs: Christy Becker & Linda Jones
Treasurer: Diane Evinger
Secretary: Sandy Andrews
Hospitality: Barb Harris
Membership: Judy Jasper
Newsletter: Linda McEwan
Website: Christie Stotko
Gallery Show: Natasha Lehrer

The Agenda for Each Guild Meeting

- 6pm—set up
- 6:30pm—gather to knit
- 7pm—Meeting begins:
Introductions of new members/guests
Announcements/reports
Show and Tell and Door Prizes
- 7:30pm—Break
- 7:45pm -Program
- 9pm—Lights out

Newsletter comments, suggestions or article ideas?

Please contact me at lmcewan@foxvalley.net or at (847) 697-1513. Thanks! ---Linda McEwan