

Fox Valley Knitters' Guild NEWS

A newsletter by and for FVKG members

March 2014

President's Letter

How fast can a 60 year old knitter trash a perfectly tidy room? I think faster than a toddler with a toy chest available with lots of Legos and mini cars.

A friend stops by for help with a shawl. Of course, I recommend a pattern I've made before. I pull the painted wooden magazine holder off the shelf – it looks tidy and innocent – and a pile of things I've stuffed between it and another holder comes tumbling to the floor. Don't worry about it, I think. Now I have to find the pattern in some folder in the magazine holder. There goes half of the counter. Don't worry, I think. Then I remember that I might have the original magazine to make a better copy than copy to copy. I have to pull a bag out of the coat closet. Hats and scarves tumble. Don't worry, I think. Have to get all of the magazines out of the bag and look for the right one. There goes another chunk of counter. Don't worry, I think. Now I remember that the beginning of the pattern is 'futsy' so I want to show my friend how to start it. I need scrap yarn. I get a ball out of my odds and ends basket – without spilling anything. Great. Oh, to find the end I have to unwind several yards. Well, at least nothing fell or spilled, I think. Did I mention that I had already gotten out the two bags of yarn and the beginning of my reversible brioche afghan? Really. The cleaning goddess comes once a month and she was here Tuesday afternoon. Do you think I could have kept the place tidy until Friday evening? Another way to look at this is to think of the joy that comes with immersing oneself in knitting! Of course this begins after I finish picking up and can find my kitchen again. Unlike a toddler, mom isn't coming to help pick things up.

~ Christie Cunningham

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2014 Meeting Dates

March 12, 2014

April 9, 2014

May 14, 2014

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 of the Month – March 2014

Successful Sock Yarn Shawls

With author, Jen Lucas

Jen has been knitting since 2004 and designing since 2008. Her designs have been seen in Knit Simple, the Vogue Knitting website, and in Classic Elite Web-Letters. She has designs published with Kollage Yarns and Knit Picks. Her best-selling book, Sock-Yarn Shawls, was released in January 2013. You can also find dozens of her self-published patterns on Ravelry.

When not knitting, Jen can be found at her spinning wheel, cooking, or pinning crock pot recipes on Pinterest. She lives in Fox River Grove, IL with her husband, Alex.

There is no “homework,” but Jen will be demonstrating a couple cast on/bind off tricks she has, so you may want to bring the following, she says:

~30-40 yards of worsted weight yarn in a smooth, light-colored solid or semi-solid color,

US Size 6, 7, or 8 needles (straights or circulars, doesn't matter). Whatever size you normally use for worsted weight yarn.

~ Shirley Remes

Vendor of the Month – March 2014

Chris Krauss

Fuzzy Wuzzy Yarns

Chris closed her retail store in downtown Arlington Heights at the end of December, and is working on transitioning into an online presence specializing in hand dyed yarn. She will bring Zen Yarn Garden yarn, silk-screened project bags, and some stock from her retail store.

Also, as a special offer only the night of guild, she will be selling Jen's book Sock-Yarn Shawls, at a special 15% discount to us. Normally \$25, we can get Jen's book (signed of course) for \$21.

~ Shirley Remes

Anticipated Program/Vendor Schedule

(Subject to change)

2014

March 12	“Successful Sock Yarn Shawls” Jen Lucas	Fuzzy Wuzzy Yarns Arlington Heights
April 9	“Yarn Tasting” Joan Looi	Wool & Co. St Charles
May 14	End-of-Year Party	Members Sale

~ Shirley Remes

Special Yarn Shops

These shops are special because they offer discounts to FVKG members

Elgin Knits Works

8 Douglas Ave., Elgin
847-627-4700
<http://elginknitworks.com>

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

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.

2013 – 2014 FVKG Board Members

President: Christie Cunningham

Vice-Presidents: Rachel Neville, Shirley Remes

Secretary: Jennifer Duncan

Treasurer: Rebecca Reinke

Gallery Show: Janan Hudek

Hospitality: Bridget Christianson

Library: Teri Larson

Membership: Ellen Gilmartin

Newsletter Editors: Janet Goier, Tami Stencel

Website: Dee Heavington

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

Brooklyn Botanic Garden Show

January - 2014

Brooklyn Tweed's Jared Flood photographed Knit, Purl, Sow, 'an exploration of knitting and plant life', the art exhibition of knitted floral and plant sculptures held recently at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Thank you to Mary Louise Watkins for sending the following link from Jared's blog! <http://brooklyntweed.com/blog/?p=2488>
Visit the Brooklyn Tweed website for more knitting inspiration: www.brooklyntweed.com

~ Janet Goier

Treasurer's Report

February 2013 Budget Report

Beginning Balance:	7,133.81
Jan. Speaker	50.00
Jan. Speaker	50.00
Jan. Speaker	50.00
Vendor (Door Prize)	42.19
Jan. Speaker	50.00
Jan. Speaker	50.00
February Rent	75.00
Printing	10.00
Correction to Balance	345.89
Ending Balance:	6,410.73

~ Rebecca Reinke

Yarn of the Month – March 2014



This month I owe the selection of Yarn of the Month to my dear knitting friend and fellow Guild member, Marge Clark. Marge has a knack of finding beautiful little gems on the internet, and she is not too selfish to share them with the rest of us. So thank you, Marge, for finding Raven Ridge Fiber Arts and introducing me to the Lambent base. Lambent is a gorgeous combination of 50% superwash merino and 50% silk. It feels gorgeous and silky soft in the hand, and the colors that I have seen in person more than live up to their computer-monitor promise.

Raven Ridge also features other yarn bases, such as Welcome, a fingering weight blend of superwash and nylon; and Graceful, an 80% merino/20% silk blend; as well as hanks of spinning fiber.

Rickie van Berkum is the fiber artist behind Raven Ridge Fiber Arts, and her colors are inspired by Montana landscapes. You can find these beautiful yarns at www.ravenridgefiber.com, where Rickie blogs about her color inspirations, gives a link to her Etsy shop, and also features pictures of projects from her customers using Raven Ridge yarns. Above is a photo of the two colorways I received, "Hellroaring Creek", the green/blue colorway, and "Indian Paintbrush", featuring lovely hues of red and orange. ☺

~ Janet Goier

Knit Blogs

Blogging has become a very wonderful way of informally communicating with the rest of the world, and the Knitting World has its own good share of fabulous knitting bloggers! This column will feature a different knitting blogger each month. Please do check out a few of them. These columns are just one more way that we can explore the Wonderful World of Knitting. Anyone with suggestions can send them to: fvkgnews@gmail.com. All submissions welcome! ☺

This month I would like to suggest taking a look at Whistling Girl Knits, a lovely and thoughtfully written blog by Sarah, a knitter from the Portland, Oregon area. The words are wise, the photographs beautiful. Find her blog at: <http://www.whistlinggirlknits.com/>. She is also on Ravelry under the name 'whistlinggirl'.

~ Janet Goier

Designer of the Month – March 2014

Another month, another designer! I know that many of you may already be familiar with Scottish knitter/designer Ysolda Teague, but in light of her most recent shawl design, I think that she bears a second look! (And third, fourth, etc.!) Ysolda has several books to her credit, most familiar being her Little Red in the City, perhaps, or her Whimsical Little Knits series, and many 'single offering' patterns, which can be found, where else? on Ravelry! ☺

Today, though, I would like to direct your attention to her latest shawl pattern, 'Follow Your Arrow'. This pattern was released in the form of a Knit-Along (KAL) on Ravelry January 13th – February 10th, 2014. As any of my knitting friends is already aware, I am a fan of the KAL in pretty much any shape or form. The Follow Your Arrow KAL is no exception. While a typical KAL features one new clue a week, spread over a period of three to six weeks, the Follow Your Arrow KAL added a fun twist to the mix. Instead of just one clue, knitters could choose from one of two clues each week, Version A or Version B, in the fashion of the children's books "Choose Your Own Adventure", where a child reads one chapter and then chooses which next chapter to jump to, thus influencing the outcome of the story in a unique way. In the same way, the Follow Your Arrow shawls, while using the same basic pattern, have very different outcomes. There was a single-color option as well as a two-color option. And, of course, some knitters chose to use even more than two colors, which resulted in an even different project outcome than imagined by the designer. I encourage you to check out all of the wonderful outcomes found as a result of knitting the Follow Your Arrow pattern. As of this writing, there are 798 finished projects shared on the 'Finished Arrows!' thread in the special forum for this project, "Follow Your Arrow KAL Group" on Ravelry, with a random drawing being held to award several skeins of beautiful yarn to the winners of said drawing who posted a picture of their finished project before the specified deadline. (See, participation brings rewards! LOL I have personally won several such random drawings for participation in different forums on Ravelry, so I know that prizes really ARE awarded!)

In addition to being an innovative knitter/designer, Ysolda is also a prolific blogger, so be sure to check out her words of knitting wisdom at www.ysolda.com. If you are a fan, you can participate in her Ravelry Forum, titled, unsurprisingly, "Ysolda", and chat with other avid Ysolda fans about past, present, and future Ysolda designs. Should you have questions about a specific project, you will find that, in addition to the usual other forum participants who have knit the project before you, Ysolda herself answers your questions. You can also be her friend on Ravelry when you visit her profile page 'Ysolda' and click on the 'add to my friends' button. That way, you will be sure to see all of her latest knitting projects. Happy Knitting! ☺

~ Janet Goier

FVKG – February's Show and Tell

A sampling of the finished items in our Show and Tell session during the February 2014 meeting.



Diane Brown's Holden Shawlette in Classic Elite "Magnolia" Color #5425 and Prism Angora in "Highlands"



Nicky Jo Herner's baby vest in sports spun vintage yarn
Needles US4, pattern on Ravelry at The Thrifty Knitter thriftyknitter.com



Judy Jasper's Kerry Cardigan From Blackwater Abbey Yarns Worsted weight - Color: "Braden"



Nicky Jo Herner's February Lady Sweater by Pamela Wynne Free on Ravelry



Judy Jasper's Tracery Vest
Fair Isle Stained Glass vest from the Unofficial Harry Potter Knits magazine
Yarn: Manos Alegria and Regis Angora - both fingering
Modified pattern to add steeks at neck and armholes and less ribbing



Diane Brown's own design in Isager Wool!
In colors #52S, 13S, 47, and 40



Nicky Jo Herner's cable sweater for expected grandchild
Stylecraft #4175
Made size 20" but measures 24"
Yarn: Caron Simply Soft Baby
Knit on US6 and US8 needles. . .



. . . and matching booties

~ Photos by Janet Goier

FVKG – February’s Show and Tell
(Continued)



Roxanne Mikulecky's Escher Falling Cubes doubleknit scarf in Cascade's Lana D'Oro
one skein each color



Ellen Gilmartin's "We Like to Cardi"
by Vickie Howell
Caron Simply Soft yarn
with handmade polymer clay buttons
(foreground)
Baby Raglan Jumper by J. Trevena
Knit in Hayfield Raw Cotton Aran
(background)



Ruth Dykstra's Lady Eleanor
Entrelac Stole from the book "Scarf
Style" by Pam Allen
Yarn is Jarbo Duo, purchased at
The Fold in Marengo



Kimberly Jarodsky's
Navajo Indian Afghan
Crocheted in Kraemer Yarn in
Copper, Alligator, Grape,
and Quartz
Made for her son Jonathan who is a
park ranger at Mt. Ranier in
Washington State



Nicky Jo Herner's
5-Hour Quick Baby Sweater
Knit on US8 needles
Red Heart Camo colorway
"Woodsy"



Ellen Gilmartin's
"Peary the Polar Bear"
Pattern by Michele Wilcox
Yarn is Loop & Threads
Impeccable Solids
"Able the Monkey"
also by Michele Wilcox
Knit in Plymouth Yarn -
Jeannee Chunky



Nicky Jo Herner's commissioned dog sweater

~ Photos by Janet Goier

2014 Winter Olympics – Awards Ceremony

Remember to bring your finished items to the March Guild meeting for your chance to win not mere gold, but *CASHMERE*. Be prepared to have a fellow knitter swear (on a skein of cashmere) that what you claim is true.

As a reminder, the three categories were:

Category 1 for the finished project that has been a WIP the longest.

Category 2 for the person who completes an item in a style they've never knit before, such as in the round, with cables, stranded, etc.

Category 3 for the person who started and finished knitting an item during the time of the Olympics, (February 7 – 23).

For those of you interested in a knitting story that happened in the “other” Olympics, our thanks to Mary Lou Watkins who alerted us to this article:

<http://www.wptv.com/dpp/sports/antti-koskinen-knitting-olympics-coach-caught-knitting-at-starting-line>

~ Tami Stencel

Book Review

Finding the perfect book that provides EVERYTHING you would ever want to know about knitting, written in a way that is clear and easy to understand is perhaps a fruitless quest. I have yet to find a decisive description/illustration of how to pick up stitches and while I enjoy a little story written with enthusiasm to go along with the practical instructions, too often such inclusion substitutes for good instruction. I suspect that, written by highly skilled knitters, individual steps are so automatic for the author that important information is often left out.

Such is the case with How to Knit: techniques and projects for the complete beginner by Tina Barrett. The illustrations are not bad, but the instructions for cabling (which I had never done) were of no help.

I finally succeeded with the instructions contained in Anna Wilkinson's Learn to Knit, Love to Knit (ISBN 9780804136808). Still, the description and picture of picking up stitches were not helpful.

Perhaps surprisingly, a better choice is Knitting Masterclass from The Knitter, edited by Juliet Bernard (ISBN 9781908449023). This would appear to be for advanced knitters, but it has some of the clearest instructions and most helpful illustrations I've come across. The chapters on how to size garments and using slip stitches to create interesting color designs are particularly well done. Alas, though, the chapter on cables had the same omission as How to Knit mentioned above. To wit: no indication that before knitting the stitches from the cable needle, those stitches are slipped back onto the working needle.

Artful Color, Mindful Knits by Laura Militzer Bryant (ISBN 9781933064260) is the find of the month. The projects are not complicated to knit, but measuring the color runs of hand-dyed yarns to create a specific look is a process that takes careful attention. The results are worth it, as the many inspiring photos illustrate and the instructions seem clear and understandable.

These and so many other knitting books share some of the same frustration-inducing aspects: too many referrals to other pages for pattern or other instructions and small or hard-to-read typeface. I think the Fox Valley Knitters' Guild should lead a campaign to demand that publishers of knitting and crochet books do away with trying to be 'artistic' and make certain that their publications are above all truly useable. Oh, and editors of their books should be novices to fiber arts who try out the samples to see if THEY can succeed with the instructions and illustrations as given. RISE UP AND REVOLT!

*May you always have the yummiest yarn,
The right size needles,
And the perfect pattern (with the clearest instructions),
And may you knit in peace and freedom.*

Your friend in fiber,

~ Janan Hudek