

MAWS

Montana Association of Weavers and Spinners

July / August, 2013

A note from editor Tracey

I would like to thank everyone for your patience in waiting for this month's newsletter. I had tonsil surgery and wasn't able to get it done in time for July. During this switch to a digital newsletter, I appreciate your continued support as we work out all the bugs. If you know someone who needs a physical copy of the newsletter who hasn't contacted me, please shoot me an email at traceyhensen@gmail.com or call me at 406-366-3738. Happy Fibering!

Change in dues policy for MAWS

Guilds are encouraged to move the date their dues are due to October 1st so that MAWS dues could then be sent to Marian by November 1st. Thank you for your consideration.

**What's New at MAWS?
Check out the MAWS website
for the new feature highlighting
member-submitted photos!**

Have you changed your email?

If you have recently changed your email address please let the MAWS treasurer or newsletter editor know. You can send your changes to mnstratton1@gmail.com or traceydelaney@gmail.com.

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Visit www.mawsonline.org

Classified Ads

FOR SALE!

For sale: White oak inkle looms handmade by Rhonda McDowell-Rowen's husband. \$75.00 each. For any questions, call Rhonda 261-1713.

For Sale: Macomber stainless steel 8 dent reed, measures 4" by 25", \$30 plus any shipping. Contact Vicki at avn8166@blackfoot.net.

For Sale: Two harness Union Custom loom, with # 10 reed, 36" wide. This is a very old loom, in good working conditions, for \$ 150.00 in the Kalispell area. Has been used to weave rugs. Call 406-837-4744.

For Sale: Woolee Winder for Ashford Joy. New condition, flyer and three bobbins, original tools and instructions; sells new for \$303.00 plus shipping. I would like \$150 plus \$10 for shipping in state. Call Judie Overbeek at 406 257-6520 or email at overbeekr@montanasky.com if interested.

For Sale: (reluctantly as we have sold our home and moving south)



The Cadillac of looms: Glimakra 10 shaft standard countermarche loom bought in 11/07/2001 from Joanne Hall. It is warped with 4yds 30" black seine twine for a 44"x100" rag rug threaded to an undulating twill that will also do a dice weave.

Included are:

- bench
- 10 dent reed (have a new 8dt reed never used selling separately perhaps?)
- 48 beaming sticks
- 4 stadig feet (to keep loom from moving)
- 1 large boat shuttle
- Joanne's "Tying up the Countermarche Loom booklet"
- plus all the original instructions

\$3000 firm (unless someone is willing to weave my rug...I have 17 boxes of nice clean wool and am sad that I haven't gotten it woven but we were gone for the winter and when I returned I had a shoulder repair.

\$4800 is the current price new.

Call Vicki at 406-539-1693.



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Classified ads are free to MAWS members. Send your ads to traceyhensen@gmail.com by July 1st for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Upcoming Events

2014 MAWS Conference

"Getting RUGged in Great Falls!"

Conference: June 13-15, 2014

**Post-Conference Workshops:
June 16-17, 2014**

Location: BEST WESTERN PLUS Heritage Inn

1700 Fox Farm Road, Great Falls, MT 59404-3324
Phone: 406/761-1900 Fax: 406/761-0136

Stay tuned for more information regarding classes,
instructors and registration.

Conference chairperson Cathy Marquard,
tuliplefleur@earthlink.net

August 24 & 25, 2013 - Big River Fiber Fling! Stevenson, Washington, Skamania County Fairgrounds; www.bigriverfiberfling.com

August 28-31, 2013 - Ravalli County Fair

September 7-8, 2013 - Fall Wool Gathering, Madras, OR, <http://fallwoolgathering.com/>

September 7 & 8, 2013 - Natural Fiber Fair, Arcata, Calif. On Humboldt Bay; Check out Facebook: Natural Fiber Fair Arcata for some great photos; <http://naturalfiberfair.com/>

September 27-29, 2013 - Stash Buster Summit Knitter's Retreat in the Little Belt Mountains, near White Sulphur Springs. For more info, call 406-547-2146.

September 28-29, 2013 - Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival in Canby, OR. www.flockandfiberfestival.com/

October 7-13, 2013 - HGA Spinning and Weaving Week

October 18-20, 2013 - 5th Camp Marshall Retreat and Spin-

In; email shelleyhunter2000@yahoo.com or call 777-5205 for more information.

October 19-20, 2013 - Fiber Fusion Northwest at Evergreen State Fairgrounds in Monroe, WA., www.FiberFusion.Net

November 1 - 2, 2013 - MAPS Art Show at the First Interstate Building on the Ravalli County Fairgrounds

November 2 & 3, 2013 - Fiber Mania, Grants Pass, Oregon; <http://sojaa.com/aboutfibermania.asp>

November 4 - 16, 2013 - PERU Textile Tour - Machu Picchu, Lima, Cuzco, Andean Textile Villages (13 day trip) www.btsadventures.com

November 17 - 26, 2013 - BOLIVIA Textile Tour - Lake Titicaca, LaPaz, Sucre, Potosi, Textile Villages (10 day trip) www.btsadventures.com

June 13-17, 2014 - MAWS 2014 in Great Falls, MT.

July 14-19, 2014 - HGA Convergence in Rhode Island. www.weavespindye.org.

**The Eugene Textile Center in Oregon has a huge variety of fiber classes.
Visit www.eugenetextilecenter.com for current schedules and more fun stuff!**

August 2013

Beginning Spinning
Heat-set Shibori Techniques
Beginning Weaving
Weaving Refresher
Intro to Natural Dyeing



Sept. 2013

Beginning Spinning
2 Day Learn to Weave
Mixed Media Felted Scarf
Rigid Heddle Weaving
Weaving Refresher

October 2013

Beginning Spinning
Embellished
Pine Needle Baskets
Pine Needle Christmas
Ornament Workshop
Beginning Weaving
Weaving Refresher

November 2013

Beginning Spinning
INTRO to Acid Dyeing
Weaving Refresher

December 2013

Beginning Spinning
Get to Know Your Wheel
Needle Felting Basics



2016 Convention News

The Alpine Weavers and Spinners Guild voted to hold the 2016 MAWS Convention at the newly renovated Flathead Lake United Methodist Camp at Rollins on the west shore of Flathead Lake. Dates for the main convention will be June 23 - 26, 2016, with pre-conference classes on June 22 and 23. This will be a retreat setting with ample housing, including two roomy comfortable cabins with American Disabilities Act compliance for up to about 20 people who need more convenience. The camp will be undergoing continuing improvements during the time between now and then, but to see the camp now, go to umcamp@montanasky.net and click on "facilities". The camp set-up is flexible so that people may choose to sleep in comfortable bunkrooms, campers, tents or RVs. Attendees will be able to choose between eating prepared meals in the dining hall or cooking in RVs, the kitchens in each cabin or the retreat center. Dining hall meals will provide options for special diets for a reasonable additional fee. Those choosing greater privacy at hotels or homes will be able to sign up for any meals they wish to have at the camp. We will have use of golf carts to provide movement throughout the camp for those with mobility needs. Security issues have been addressed so that the vendor area, some of the classroom cabins, the gallery and guild booth areas can be locked when closed, and a space will be provided to check in valuables such as electronic devices. We look forward to seeing you there!

Joan Goldstein, President
Alpine Weavers and Spinners Guild

Welcome to the weaving world, Jim!



Jim Simonich gives weaving a try. Jim's wife Connie submitted this picture of Jim attempting his first weaving.

What can I buy for \$8.00?

- About 3.2 gallons of gas
- One bottle of cheap wine
 - A good hamburger
- The left sleeve of a nice sweater
 - A little bit of yarn
- Not enough fiber
- Dog food for about 2-weeks
 - Part of a hair cut

NOT MUCH really...

But wait . . . a year's membership in MAWS! YES! A bargain.

I get:

- A quarterly newsletter so I know what's going on all over the state.
 - A dynamite biennial conference.
- MAWS sponsored workshops state-wide at very reasonable prices.
 - Scholarship opportunities for the conference.
 - Networking with other fiber fanatics.
 - A chance to expand my fiber horizons

**ALL FOR \$8
A YEAR!**

*When I put it in
perspective it's hard
to believe I would ever
hesitate!*

Visit www.mawsonline.org



I am a weaver!

By Kathy O'Hern
Helena, Montana, Weavers
and Spinners Guild

What shouts, "I AM A WEAVER!" more than a set of 4 hand-woven patio screens to give you some shade and privacy?

Helena, Montana weaver, Nadine Shafer, has been weaving for over 30 years. When she needed a patio screen to give her shade while knitting, and privacy from close neighbors, she decided upon, of course, hand-woven panels!

Nadine decided that for her patio she would weave four 20" x 48" panels, each to depict one of the four seasons. On top of that, she wanted to use a variety of fibers, and add a twist to each of her chosen weave structures. For example, on the 4-block honeycomb panel,

Nadine used five colors so the offset (another twist) honeycomb design doesn't have a repetitious color repeat.

The honeycomb panel is woven with 5/2 pearl cotton and Tencel, the 2-block rep weave is unmercerized cotton warp and weft of fabric strips, the tabby with floats is bamboo and cotton, and the twill uses the Fibonacci line technique for the pearl cotton striped pattern.

Nadine is not worried about durability. Although she plans on taking the woven panels down during the brutal Montana winters, if a panel does fade or tear, she'll simply weave up a new one. A chance to try out some new twists!

Nadine proudly flies a beautiful hand-woven banner on the front of her house – she is a weaver to the nth degree!



Value added: Innovators are always searching for ways to add value to agricultural products

By Tom Howard
Billings Gazette

Last year Montana farmers exported a record \$915 million worth of wheat, most of it destined to Asia. That's a tidy sum any way you count it.

Like many Montanans, the owners of Cream of the West were never satisfied with simply watching 100-car trains laden with Montana grain roll toward ports in the Pacific Northwest. In 2002, a group of ranch families bought the Billings-based hot cereal business and moved it to Harlowtown. Today, the brand is still going strong under the ownership of Alicia and Steven Moe and Susan and Steven Moore.

Alicia Moe, general manager of Cream of the West, said the company has expanded its product line to include organic flour and grains. "What I'm seeing is that sales are picking up at the natural and organic grocery stores," Moe said. "Our web sales (creamofthewest.com) have also been expanding."

The owners are busy making plans to celebrate the company's 100th birthday next year, Moe said. "We're doing a lot to get ready for that. It's a big deal to turn 100."

More Montana business owners are experimenting with recipes, typing up business plans and seeking ways to add value to Montana agricultural products. They refine, process, package and market products ranging from alpaca yarn to organic bacon and sau-



Cynthia Coe pulls up a piece of wool on Shasta, on of her flock, at Dun a Si farm near Billings on Wednesday, April 10, 2013.

Photos
by Casey Page

sage.

Angelyn DeYoung, a marketing specialist at the Montana Department of Agriculture, said business is booming for companies involved in value-added agriculture.

"Just 10 years ago, there would be one or two Made in Montana products in the store. But now we're finding things like pasta and barbecue sauce, salsa and seasonings," DeYoung said. "We're even seeing things like healthy-meal kits. These companies are coming up with amazingly innovative and better-for-you products."

The number of farmers' markets has grown nearly threefold — from 27 in 2002 to 78 this year. Many producers find that selling local is a relatively inexpensive way to connect with cus-

tomers, DeYoung said.

Increasingly, restaurants and even school districts are searching for Montana-made products as an alternative to mass-produced food, DeYoung said.

Montana also ranks high in the buy-local movement. Strolling of the Heifers, an advocacy group that promotes local-food consumption, ranks Montana No. 6 in its 2013 Locavore Index. The index ranks states by comparing their populations with the number of farmers' markets.

In 2004, Becky Stahl began selling her homemade preserves at the Yellowstone Valley Farmers' Market in Billings.

The preserves were a hit, and Stahl has seen steady growth for her business, Becky's Berries. Retailers carrying her products include Baker Street, a kitchen store in Bozeman, Good Earth Market in downtown Billings and Buffalo Chips, a store in west Billings that specializes in beading, jewelry and other crafts. Over the past six years, more than 170 retailers have carried her products, Stahl said.

Stahl handles the lion's share of the marketing duties by visiting trade shows where retailers sign up to sell her Montana-made jams, jellies and syrups.

Stahl's business is an outgrowth of her childhood. She



Unwashed raw wool, left, carded wool, center, washed raw wool, top right, and spun yarn, bottom right, pictured at Dun a Si farm Wednesday, April 10, 2013.

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Cynthia Coe of Dun a Si farm shows off some of the carded wool from her llama.

often picked wild berries while growing up in a Montana Hutterite colony. The tasty jams and jellies cooked up by Hutterite women served as an inspiration after she left the colony and decided to start her own business.

Stahl dreams up the recipes, purchases the ingredients and cooks up a growing assortment of products that are sweet, savory and peppery.

In fact, anytime you buy a jar of jam or a bottle of syrup from Becky's Berries, you're almost guaranteed to have a product that the owner herself handled.

At a recent trade show in Billings, Stahl explained how flavors that she first encountered during her childhood inspired one of her popular offerings. Chuckle Berry jam is a blend of chokecherry, huckleberry and raspberry.

Traffic Jam is another best-seller made from a blend of raspberries, strawberries, blueberries and marionberries.

Stahl says she makes all of her products with sugar, not high-fructose corn syrup, a ubiquitous, super-sweet food additive that has been criticized by some nutritionists.

Stahl has expanded her product line with jalapeno jellies and chipotle glazes. But she's not planning to rest on her laurels. She's also developing recipes for barbecue sauce.

"I knew that in order for my business to do well, I had to provide a quality product," Stahl said.

Gary Brester, a professor who specializes in agricultural marketing at

Montana State University, said adding value to Montana agricultural products isn't necessarily a new trend, nor is it limited to small mom-and-pop operations.

"All businesses that deal in food and fiber are creating value," Brester said. "Some people tend to say that somehow what the small businessman is doing is different or better than what Del Monte or Cargill are doing."

Making money in value-added agriculture requires the owner to follow some basic business principles.

"It's a combination of being able to produce a product or service where the revenues exceed the cost of production, plus your time and the risk involved," Brester said. "Anybody who can run a successful business, I'm a fan of theirs."

Bob Quinn, a Big Sandy farmer, spent 20 years developing an ancient Egyptian wheat variety, which he trademarked with the name Kamut. The grain is said to have some nutritional, health and taste advantages compared to modern wheat varieties. A recent study found that people who ate Kamut for eight weeks saw their cholesterol levels drop by 4 percent, and their LDL, "bad" cholesterol, dropped by 7 percent.

A big part of Kamut's success has been Quinn's vision, said Brester, who uses a case study on Quinn's efforts in his classes. "He's a very smart guy, but he's really quite the entrepreneur."

Likewise, Dean Folkvord, the founder of Wheat Montana and one of the state's best known agricultural businessmen, has similar skills. "The reason why Dean is successful is mostly because of Dean," Brester said.

Cynthia Coe grew up in cattle country, but turned to raising sheep about 20 years ago. Dun a Si Farm at 6726 Highway 312 specializes in wool, yarn and spinning and weaving supplies.

"I sell every part: sheep, raw fleeces, combed wool and yarn," Coe said.

"Anything you can imagine I can make yarn out of, except I don't do cat hair because I'm allergic to cats," she said.

Her long-wooled flock includes Border Leicester, Teeswater and Wensleydale stock.

Coe sells a lot of her products at craft shows, and Dun a Si has a website, www.montanasheep.com. Her daughter, Shannon, is a big help

in keeping the sheep well fed and healthy, Coe said.

The washed woolen locks that are clipped from Coe's curly-locked sheep are a big hit with quilters and other makers of handmade crafts. Curly wool makes excellent Santa Claus beards, she said.

The resurgence of interest in knitting and crocheting have been good for business, Coe said.

"A lot of it is that the Internet has allowed more people to buy different items," Coe said. "Videos on the Internet have helped a lot."

Out in the corral, a registered Border Leicester named Shasta, nearly as wide as she is long due to her heavy coat of wool, approaches Coe.

"It's the breed. The Border Leicester has always been known for its friendliness," Coe said.

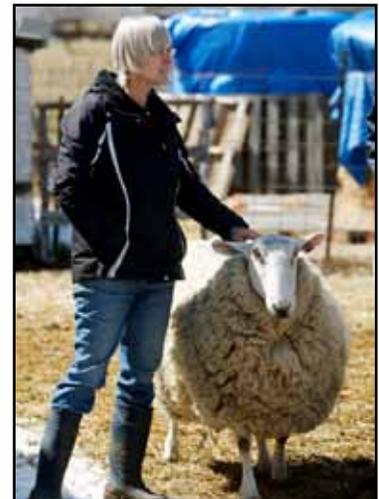
The resurgence of knitting has even created demand for a commodity that was previously unmarketable: wool from black sheep.

"The hand spinners just love the colored wool," Coe said.

Most of the sheep keep their distance, but come running in a bleating cacophony when Coe dumps a bucket of sweet grain into a trough.

It's the kind of routine that's repeated on hundreds of farms and ranches every day. Whether the product involves grain, meat or fiber, innovators will always look for opportunity in agriculture.

"I applaud a system that allows people to take risks and accept rewards," Brester said.



Cynthia Coe with one of her sheep, Shasta, at Dun a Si Farm.

Under the Big Sky: Big Sky Fiber Festival, Hamilton, Montana

June 14-16, 2013
by Rachel Potter

*Reprinted with permission from
Knitter's Review, by Rachel Potter*

The Bitterroot Mountains loom behind a flat-fieldded countryside dotted with grazing cattle, a few houses, and sign after sign for fishing and hiking areas. A bike trail runs parallel to the highway. Montana is a beautiful and diverse land, and the 45-mile stretch of Route 93 from Missoula to Hamilton is as good as any for indulging in my favorite music and imagining what I'll find at the Big Sky Fiber Arts Festival.

I'd never been down to the Ravalli County Fairgrounds. I stopped for directions, and the friendly gal behind the counter kindly directed me to take a left turn (down Fairgrounds Road, no less) about a half a mile down the road. Given that Montana rarely puts signs farther than at the gate of the event, I probably would have missed the turn.

Despite the various Missoulian tendencies I've picked up during my time in Montana, I'm still very much a New England girl. I still expect lines, parking so far away that the hike to the gate can count as my workout for the day, and the slow shuffling that goes with the crowds of the dense East. In the state with one of the lowest population densities, I quickly found parking and had a ticket for fair entry in a matter of minutes, all for a mere \$5 (about which even this broke college kid can't complain too much).

Just left of the main arena of the grounds is a big building with a plain exterior. Inside, I saw a large open space with cement floors and plain walls. For a moment I felt a pang, could it be disappointment? Am I in the right spot? Is this it? It seemed smaller and less grand than I expected. It wasn't packed with eager festival goers rushing around; in fact, the space would have easily accommodated a few more vendors.

I looked to my right and saw bags and

bags of sheep shearings from the preceding day's contest, ribbons proudly distributed over the tops of the wool. To my left: the first booth, which held a variety of yarns and homemade fudge. I'd come to the right place.

Let the wandering begin! As a fine member of the knitting community there was plenty of salivating and hand wandering to do. This may not be the biggest fiber festival, but plenty of hand-dyed skeins and bags of roving were around to caress and ogle.

I stared in awe at the spinning wheels of Montana's Q's Quality Wood Works. Even people who'd never spun in their lives could have appreciated the sheer beauty of the work.



At a booth filled with skeins of uniquely textured and colored bulky yarn, a woman gave me the low-down: this skein on this size needle gets you this much fabric, displayed in a colorful scarf. She was Fiber Voodoo from Oregon. Moving down, Rocking L Alpaca was here from Victor, MT. From Colfax, WA, came Symphony for the Sheep and Knaack Flack. I was amazed to find that people had driven a day or more to set up their booths to show off their wares here in Montana.

A dark-haired woman with a beautiful accent that I couldn't place greeted me at a booth filled with various grades of alpaca raised at the Black Wolf Ranch in St. Ignatius, Montana. I also spotted a woman from Bozeman with a bison

yarn, felt, and roving business—one that started out simply from knitting a few bison scarves for a friend.



My eye caught the sheepskins hanging along the back of another booth. I touched them happily as Lee Bates of JerryLee Farm from Viola, Idaho, told me about her business, which has been in operation since 1976. The hats she brought, she told me, were just the tip of the iceberg.

After finally feeling my way down a row, I stumbled on Judy, here from her

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farm in Centerville, Utah, where she raises Rambouillet sheep.

She greeted me with “feel free to fondle!” as she sat comfortably in her chair with a project I’ve never seen before. “It’s Locker Hooking,” and she explained how it was done, and then invited me to sit in her chair, to hook a few loops. Needless to say, I picked up a new hobby.



I met many people eager to talk and share with fellow fiber enthusiasts. And even if you start to stress at the thinning of your wallet, you can stop by the \$1-a-minute massage booth. Or if animal therapy is what you need, the animals are even more eager to greet you, from



the angora rabbits to Shetlands, the llamas, the Billy goats Billy Bob and Billy Joe, or the irresistible Suri alpacas.

But even for those without needles in their hands and yarn in their hearts, you’re in luck. The \$5 admission fee also entitles you to the farmer’s market.

It’s small, but you can easily marvel over the handmade saddles, cowboy boots, and traditional Wyoming attire, or for those with a hunger in their hearts, the smells of funnel cakes, burgers, and freshly popped kettle corn, are ever present in the air and the lines are not too long.

In the main arena you’ll find a completely different breed of entertainment:

the Montana Mule Days, the state’s largest mule and donkey show. It just so happened that I wandered in as they were starting a game of polo, but not an ordinary game; this was played by the rough and muscled cowboys of the west, dressed in drag, riding mules. Only in Montana.

The land of the big sky is the one place you can stumble into and, in one day, eat fair food, indulge in half a pound of Merino roving, buy a saddle, pet a very friendly alpaca, go for a hike, go for a bike ride, find numerous micro breweries (if that fits your fancy), and hear a story that ends with, “And the saints rejoiced in their winter underwear.”

This beautiful place, so appropriately named the Treasure State, is the place to be if you are looking for an adventure, for opportunities to fill a day. Whether you come for the mules or the fiber, the outdoors or the beer and food, you’ll stumble on something amazing.

If you find yourself in the Treasure State at the end of June, if you have an itch in your fingers and an adventure in your heart, maybe I’ll see you there. I’ll certainly be back to the fiber festival next year to see what adventures are to be had.

About the author

Rachel Potter is a New England gal who ventured to Montana to study CSD and to see what the west had to offer. Avid biker, avid knitter, and avid Missoulian, she is also the proud owner of some gorgeous new Merino roving.



These spirit dolls (made by Connie Simonich) were the result of the following Big Sky Fiber Festival class:

Spirit Dolls: Create your own personalized, unique doll in this class, using a variety of mixed fiber (fabric, foam, yarns, raw fiber) each participant will create an artistic bendable human form. Participants will learn how to create the basic structure for this form and several variations. Paper Clay faces included, participants will decorate these as well.

The class was taught by Odette Grassi. She is happily based in Western Montana. The mountains, lakes, and natural vistas are a constant source of energy and beauty for her. She travels frequently and hopes to continue to be able to explore and experience different areas around the world. Odette has a degree in Elementary Education and a Fine Art degree in Drawing and Printmaking. In addition to creating her own works, Ms. Grassi continues to teach and work with children when she can through specialist projects in the schools, private lessons, teacher workshops, and group presentations. She has installations of her work in private and public collections.

(Website: www.inspirationenterprises.com)

News from our Guilds

From Big Sky Fiber Arts Guild:

From May:

The April Invitational was held April 27 at the DeSmet School in Missoula. We had an abbreviated meeting so that people would have time to enjoy the vendors and the always delicious pot luck.

The Invitational Spin-In was a great success in large part because of the great vendors who grace our spin-in. It was Margie Nagle, our past president, who made the suggestion to invite vendors to the Invitational. She felt we needed to get to know who our local producers are and what they have to offer. By not charging for a space she hoped to encourage the small producer to come forward and explore the possibilities of selling.

Romneys Available

I am selling off my flock of Romney/Romney cross sheep. I have spent ten years breeding

for spinning fiber and healthy sheep and would like to see these lines continue.

I have four lambs for sale for breeding: 1) Jake, white purebred Romney ram lamb; 2) Elvis, a very black crossbred ram lamb (1/2+ Romney) out of a moorit Romeldale/Romney ewe; 3) Cass & 4) Bess, two white twin ewe lambs (3/4 Romney) with extremely soft and silky wool. I think they will all make very fine breeding stock. The Romney rams I've had have a very mellow temperament.

I also have adult ewes for sale: two one-year olds (Casey—very black, 5/8+ Romney, finer, soft; Lani—white 7/8 Romney, very soft, long, silky), and two two-year olds (Willow—my favorite—white with lustrous wavy locks—dam of Bess and Cass ; Taffy—white purebred—also lustrous wavy locks—dam of Jake).



April 2013
Big Sky Fiber Arts
Guild
Invitational Spin-In.



Please contact Ruth Plezner at 642-3016 or ruthplezner@gmail.com.

From June:

Another successful Festival! While all the numbers are not yet in, the Festival Board feels the Festival was a great success.

We have heard great reports on the classes, appreciation for the vendors, oohs and aahs for the sheep and goat shows and the exhibited cashmere goats, alpacas and llamas and noticed a sensual wallowing in the fleece show.

A lot goes into a successful Festival. Good judges are paramount and thankfully we have talented people who are willing to step in and tell us what are doing right and what we need to do to improve.

Vendors who are willing to travel and bring their wares to our doorstep tempting us with glorious fiber in wondrous colors, tools almost too beautiful to

use are central to any festival.

Dedicated artists who come to teach us new techniques and improve our skills, sharing unselfishly their knowledge are hugely important.

Our shepherdesses and shepherds bring their animals to show, giving us the opportunity to reconnect with the source of our fiber.

While the board loves hearing how much you enjoyed the Festival, we also want to hear your suggestions, your ideas to improve the Festival, your concerns and yes, even your complaints. We can't improve without feedback, without knowing what was good and what wasn't good enough.

Please contact the following people with any input you can offer: Chair—Joyce Walters, Vice—Marty Walters, Secretary—Don Artley, Treasurer—Sonya Provaznik, Check Signers—Lucille Molinari & Marty Walters, Animal Show Shepherd—Sondra Gibson, Vendor Shepherd—Suzanne

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Artley, Booklet Publisher—Sondra Gibson, Workshop Shepherd—Joyce Walters, Volunteer Coordinator Shepherd—Laura Miklautsch, Fleece Show Shepherd—Cathy Marquard, Donation Shepherd—Lucille Molinari, Web Master—Erik Randall (Suzanne Artley's son)., Set-up—Don Artley, Lee Bridges, Laura Miklautsch, Montana Wool Growers Local Liaison—Lucille Molinare, Advertising Shepherd—Marty Walters

We welcome all comments.

From July:

Willows & Wool Re-Opens!

Willows & Wool is re-opened at it's new location in the Mountain Colors Building located at 1200 Eastside Hwy. in Corvallis.

The shop is open Wednesday to Friday, 10-4 and Saturday 10-3. Be sure to call before driving down, just to be sure. Debbie Rogers' phone number is the same, 406-961-3582.

Now a trip to Corvallis gets you two treats—Willows & Wool and Mountain Colors! And don't forget, if you drive down to Hamilton, the Yarn Center has twenty-seven bins of gorgeous buttons, the largest collection in the area in my opinion!

A drive down the Bitterroot is now a three-fer!

From Bozeman Weavers Guild:

From May:

Farm and Ranch Show

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Farm and Ranch Show and for Tina for organizing it.

The Fleece to Shawl was great fun. Here are some pictures from the event.



Mary weaving, Joyce and Angie teasing fiber



Joyce spinning "skunk"



Connie and Mary



Joyce



Barb weaving



Tina carding the wool



Connie spinning, Anita weaving

From June:

Bozeman Weavers Guild Annual Sale:

• Place: We are exploring a new venue this year. Possibilities we are looking into include a vacant

downtown space that we could rent, a member's home, or a public space such as the Story Mansion.

• Date and Time: The first two weekends of December, Thurs. through Sat., Dec. 5, 6, and 7, and 12, 13, and 14. Hours will be 10 to 6 each of these days. All members will be requested to put in at least one 4 hr. shift each weekend. The first Thurs. (Dec. 5) could be an opening reception with goodies served (might go later in the evening).

Tips & Tricks 2013:

Handy ideas from our weavers:

(Thanks to Anita Krueger for typing up the following tips)

Anita: Ideas for rug weavers, etc.

To keep edges taut on rag rug: clip a weighted carabiner, I prefer the figure 8 style of clip, over the threads that are loose; let it hang below the warp beam.

Wind floating selvedge in with the warp then weight in the same way from the start. (I don't wait until it is slack.)

To mark progress: at 1 foot, slip a string around the floating selvedge, then tie one knot in it; at 2 feet tie 2 knots, etc.

For better selvages and more consistent beat, begin your project when you will be able to weave a little (or a lot) on it every day. It seems to help a bit if it's the same time of day as well.

When warp is still on the warping board, tie the cross (or crosses if you make two) AND tie all 4 "arms" of the cross. This makes it very easy to put the lease sticks in place – no skipped threads!

Connie:

To mark progress: to attach tape measure on the edge of your work, use a tiny office clip; move it forward as you weave.

Additionally, Barb French demonstrated direct warping of the rigid heddle loom using a warping peg.

Continued on page 12

**From Missoula Weavers Guild:
From May:**



Dona Fisher (standing in front of her rigid heddle loom) demonstrated the knotted pile techniques she learned in Sara Lamb's workshop at the conference last June, while Terri Schaub and Bonnie Schuster look on. Linda Johnson and Shelley Peters have their backs to the camera in the foreground. Below is a woven sample Dona made, along with Sara's book and the cotton yarns that Sara recommends using for warp and foundation weft.



Jenne Pugh shared the samples she made using some of the Indian cotton that Bonnie Tarses passed out at the Christmas party. Jenne sett the sample at left at 24 working ends per inch (each end was a double strand), inspired by the Almost Ikat technique she learned from Bonnie Tarses. She sett the sample at right at 16 working ends per inch (each end was a double strand) and tried out lots of different wefts.



Linda Johnson brought a veritable trunk show of her recent production, including the rug below, woven with weft cut from one king-size sheet and matching carpet warp sett at 10 epi. The glasses case below was woven in 8/2 cotton sett at 20 epi. Linda says that the pink and brown warp in the piece behind the glasses case "was a gift of unknown (but very static prone) fiber content."



The weft was a pink cotton slub I had, and the brown was 100% wool I had hand spun on a drop spindle."



Sharon Schroeder shared lots of her woven items, including the sample at left from a bamboo horoscope warp. When you look at the scrumptious hanks below can you believe she only learned to spin in January?

Sharon wove the natural white bedroom rug with a weft that Shelley Peters said is grade A alpaca, the very best fiber, spun into rug wool by the mill by mistake! It is so soft Sharon hesitates to put in on the floor.

From August:



Wendy Tyler has a little shop on her ranch (who knew?) that is open whenever she is at home. Shelves are full of alpaca yarn, knitted and woven items, and interesting tools, like the revolving cone holders that Wendy's husband makes—you can see those on the shelf at left in the picture.



One of the items in Wendy Tyler's shop that caught everyone's eye was a knitted vest. It consisted of a simple rectangle of garter stitch with slits knitted in for armholes. Above, Leslie Taylor is looking very stylish modeling the vest with one of Wendy's shawl pins. Wendy makes the pattern available for use with her alpaca yarn.



Bonnie Tarses brought a blanket that she wove in 1980, when she first moved from Missoula to Seattle. She used alpaca yarn that was left over from her weaving shop, Cat's Cradle, which operated for a year in Missoula in the early 70s and pre-dated the original Joseph's Coat. She seamed five scarf-widths together to make the blanket and her late mother used it for many years. We had fun trying to find the seams, or what Bonnie refers to as the "invisible joins," hidden among the stripes. Left to right, Sondra Gibson, Joan Contraman, Leslie Taylor, Sharon Schroeder, and Bonnie Tarses share a laugh.



Barbara Hand, left, and Vanetta Burton, right, unfold a sampler from Margaret Whitney's notebook for a closer look.

Submission by Heather Torgrenrud

Folks near St. Ignatius relive the fur trade times



Sylvia Callantine & Donna Peck with their hand cards (in 1846).



Spinning spinning flax from a distaff on the antique wheel.

By Faith Smith,
KECI Reporter, fcronin@keci.com

In May, St. Ignatius folks took a step back in time to the days of the early fur trade.

Atlatl throwing, wool spinning and knife throwing are just a few of the 'old time' activities the Fort Connah Restoration Society set it up for folks to try.

The historic site near St. Ignatius boasts one of the oldest fur trading posts in the nation built in the 1840's and many folks ventured inside to check out historical fire arms and native artifacts.

Society members tell us it's been hard work preserving the historic site and buildings.

Preston Miller has spent over 40 years making sure no one forgets how important the 166-year-old trading post is.

"We have put it all back together and restored it to the point where I can actually set up an old time trading post inside of it, just like in the old days," said Miller.

Miller tells NBC Montana the fort was a crossing point for goods to be gathered and distributed over the mountains to the east and west.

"Buffalo robes and stuff would be coming from the west and being shipped to the east," said Miller.

Miller tells me he's proud of the restoration

work he and other Fort Connah Society members have done.

"It's really important that here in Western Montana we have this," said Miller. "And not only the site but one of the original buildings that were part of that early trade era."

Society member Edd MacDonald tells me most visitors say they've never tried the "old life" experience.

"It's not thinking about it, it's not looking at it in a book or in any other way, we're actually living it and there's no replacement for that," said MacDonald. "To put hands on, to see things and to handle things and to do things that our ancestors did, we don't get to do very much."

Miller says it's been hard work preserving the historic site and building but it's worth the effort.

"It's kind of sad that as the older people die off there aren't going to be younger people in here to step up and take this over," said Miller. "So I hope by doing this we can get young people interested and get them to come out and realize there is more to life than the computer."

If you missed this historical event, not to fear, the society will be hosting another in August.

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Straw Weaving - a tutorial.

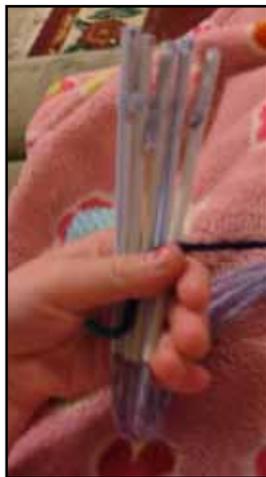
From www.unprocessedfamily.blogspot.com/2010/03/straw-weaving-tutorial.html. The author writes:
This project was so much fun, so easy, and so satisfying that I wanted to put a tutorial together for it.



This is an introduction to weaving that is perfect for children. It introduces the basic process in a way that is much more accessible to a young child than moving a string over and under other strings. While my six-year-old really enjoyed this and has made several, my three year old showed little interest in making one (but a lot of interest in picking which yarns went on the one I made for her). I can see other three-year-olds having a lot of interest in doing this and it would be easy enough for them to do on their own once you got enough lines of yarn on the straw so that they wouldn't have to hold the straws together.

To do this you'll need:

- five drinking straws, cut in half (I cut mine a bit longer, almost 3/4 of the straw to make it easier to handle)
- yarn
- tape



Cut five pieces of yarn. These need to be the same length, but that length is variable. If you want to do a simple bookmark, cut the yarn into 18 inch pieces. If you want to make a dog collar or belt, cut the yarn 12 inches longer than the length of the item you

want to make.

Thread each piece of yarn through one of the straws. My husband taught the girls to put the yarn in the straw about an inch and then suck on the other end to draw it through. My girls got proficient at that really fast. Every time I tried, I ended up with a mouthful of yarn and two hysterically giggling girls. When you have the yarn through the straw, fold the yarn over the end of the straw by about an inch and tape it.

Even up the tops of the straws, straighten out the yarn and tie a knot at the end. Cut a length of yarn, about 3 feet to begin with. Hold the straws in one hand as shown below with the end of the length of yarn under your thumb.

Now begin to weave the yarn in and out of each of the straws all the way to the end, around the end straw and weave back to where you the other side. Keep weaving until you get close to the end of this first length of yarn. After you have about an inch on your straws you won't need to hold the straws together anymore as the yarn will do that for you.

Once you have a few inches on the straws, move the bottom inch off the straws. Always leave at least an inch of weaving on the straws - if it all comes off, it is very difficult to get it back in working order.

When you get to the end of one length of yarn, cut another, tie it on to the end of the first length, and keep weaving.

This is a project that you can put down and come back to - as long as you put it out of the reach of 2 year old hands.

When you have it as long as you want it, slide all of the weaving off of the straws and down to the knot on the far end.

Take the tape off of the straws and pull the straws off of the yarn. Tie a knot at that end (this knot will include the end of your last weaving yarn. Now slide the weaving around until it is as even as you want it to be.

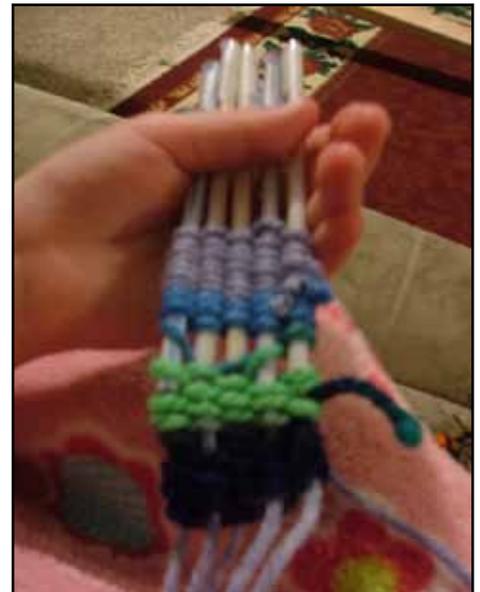
We put long ends on Hannah's bookmarks because she wanted to put beads on the long yarn ends hanging down.

You can easily vary the width (more or less straws) and the length of this for different projects, and different textured yarns can



make it more fun. This is the one I made for Ainsley.

If your kids like doing this and their interest in weaving is peaked, definitely go get the book that this idea came out of - You Can Weave by Kathleen Monaghan - and get them



going on one of the many other weaving projects that are included there.

Visit www.unprocessedfamily.blogspot.com/2010/03/straw-weaving-tutorial.html for original tutorial and more photos.

Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor's work will be coming to Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings for their 50th anniversary show in 2014.

Submitted by Linda Shelhamer



www.elisabethhigginsconnor.com

Send in your stories and photos!

As always, it is your user-submitted content that makes this newsletter great. Please email any photos or articles you have that relate to your guild, fiber, fiber animals or anything MAWS related to traceyhensen@gmail.com or be sure to tag me (Tracey Delaney) in your fibery Facebook posts!

How guilds can apply for a MAWS grant

MAWS Workshop grants of up to \$400 each are available to member guilds. These are used to help defray the expense of bringing an instructor to the host city. Participation in the workshop must be made available to MAWS members state-wide and must be advertised through the MAWS newsletter or by correspondence with the other MAWS guilds. Registration should be open on a date specified in the announcement of the workshop. Local guild members will also be held to that date (no early reg-

istrations). Requests should contain the following information:

- Instructor name
 - Classes to be offered
 - Dates, time and place of workshop
 - Total cost to guild
 - Maximum number of participants
 - Plan for communicating to MAWS members
 - Beginning registration date
- After the workshop is over, the host guild will send the board a written report to include the following:

- Number of participants
- A description of the workshop content
- How you liked it/or didn't
- Some photos if possible
- Anything else you think might be useful!

The intent is to give future workshop planners some concrete information about the instructor, their classes and teaching success.

Contact MAWS president Sylvia Calantane (see page 2) with questions.

Found on Facebook

Beautiful work everyone!

From PJ Bergin: A challenge was presented to me to create a Network Tapestry using letters or phrases from any alphabet to create an artwork to be displayed in the Salida Library during the June Art Walk this year. Naturally, I used the Chinese alphabet. The theme was "Journey." Here are some photos of the initial stages of the design process:

From Edie Schilz: My shawl is finally off the loom; this is my part of our group project from last season.



From Double A Ranch: I was on hands and knees under this bush unclogging an irrigation ditch. It was hot, the bush kept scratching me and the bugs were everywhere, but when I looked up and saw this beautiful nest made with WOOL my day got lots better. This was built by a true craftsman. Don't you agree?



From Regina Benson: I created Solar Storm in the spring snow. I think of the wonderful dichotomy of creating a hot subject on a cold surface. In this work, which is basically a 2-part dimensional wall hanging, I first dyed white satin fabric, painted it with melted soy wax as a resist, then discharged it all as it lay on top of the snow. The discharge solution, dyes and melting snow all flowed together to provide this image of a vibrant celestial storm!



From PJ Bergin:
The Glow Tube runs on its own power!
It even has its own brain. Once you set the timer, it will come on at the same time each day, stay on for 6 hours and then turn itself off. It will do this every day until you change the program.
www.feltinhand.com



greenUPGRADER
UPGRADE TO A GREENER LIFESTYLE...

From Green Upgrader: Recently a commenter asked what they could do with all the old newspapers they had piling up. With enough time, patience, and newspapers you can create newspaper yarn. From the design studios of Greetje van Tiem and her "Indruk" project she can purportedly spins 20yds of "yarn" from a sheet of old newspaper. <http://greenupgrader.com/2138/handspun-recycled-newspaper-yarn/>

These works of fiber art were collected from around the web. To submit your own creation for MAWS newsletter publication please email it to traceyhensen@gmail.com.

Bass Ranch and Fishtail Community Center

FISHTAIL SPIN-IN SAT, 6/15 in FISHTAIL, MT

Here are some photos from the Fishtail Spin-In on Saturday, 6/15/2013 at the Fishtail Community Center. The photos were taken and submitted by Edie Schilz.

The day began with a tour of Bass Ranch, owned by Carol Bass, who is also the owner of Muddy Lamb Studio. The tour began at 9 am, so everyone met at the Fishtail Community Center (next door to the Muddy Lamb) at 8:45 to travel out to the ranch.

After the Bass Ranch tour, the group toured the Muddy Lamb, and began the felted soap classes. Muddy Lamb ran a special sale on spinning supplies for us!

The "Washing of the Fleece" commenced after lunch.

Food was available both at the Fishtail General Store, and the Cowboy Bar and Grill, both mere steps from the location.





Tracey's Pattern Pick

ANOBLECOWL

By Emily Kausalik

This cowl combines two of my favorite elements: openwork/lacy patterning and a cotton blend yarn. Rowan Wool Cotton is great for showing off stitch definition without being scratchy. The stitch pattern is comprised of a shield surrounded with openwork, providing an interesting lacy design with a feminine touch.

Finished size:

28cm/11" from cast-on to bind-off edges

Yarn:

Rowan Wool Cotton (50% Merino Wool/50% Cotton; 113m [123yd]/50g): 2 balls. Color shown: SH900.

Needle(s):

4mm(US6) 16" circular needle or dpns.

Notions:

Stitch marker (m), tapestry needle

Gauge:

22 sts/30 rows = 4"/10cm in St st.

Skill Level:

Intermediate.

Note: I tend to make cowls large and droopy because I love pinning them. The stitch pattern is in groups of 15 sts, so feel free to cast on less if you want a smaller circumference cowl.

Pattern:

Cast on 120 stitches. Join in the round and place marker. Purl (p) 2 rounds.

Begin Shield Pattern.

1: * k2tog, k3, yo, k2tog, yo, k1, yo, K2tog, yo, k3, k2tog; rep from * around.

2 and all even rounds: k

3: * k2tog, k3, yo, k2tog, yo, k1, yo, k2tog, yo, k3, k2tog; rep from * around.

5: * k2tog, k2, yo, k2tog, yo, k3, yo, k2tog, yo, k2, k2tog; rep from * around.

7: * k2tog, k1, yo, k2tog, yo, k5, yo, k2tog, yo, k1, k2tog; rep from * around.

9: * k2tog, yo, k2tog, yo, k7, yo, k2tog, yo, k2tog; rep from * around.

11: * k1, yo, k2tog, yo, k3, k2tog, k4, yo, k2tog, yo, k1; rep from * around.

13: * k1, yo, k2tog, yo, k3, k2tog, ssk, k3, yo, k2tog, yo, k1; rep from * around.

15 and 17: Same as Round 13.

19: * k2, yo, k2tog, yo, k2, k2tog, ssk, k2, yo, k2tog, yo, k2; rep from * around.

21: * k3, yo, k2tog, yo, k1, k2tog, ssk, k1, yo, k2tog, yo, k3; rep from * around.

23: * k4, yo, k2tog, yo, k2tog, ssk, yo, k2tog, yo, k4; rep from * around.

25: * k2tog, k3, yo, k2tog, yo, k2tog, yo, k2tog, yo, k3, k2tog; rep from * around.

27: * ssk, k3, yo, k2tog, yo, k1, yo, k2tog, yo, k3, k2tog; rep from * around.

Next: Repeat rounds 1 through 28.

Then: Repeat rounds 1 through 14. The end result should be 2.5 passes of the Shield Pattern (1 that establishes, and 1.5 repetitions).

Purl (p) 2 rounds, then bind off loosely. Weave in ends and block flat.

Abbreviations:

k2tog - knit two stitches together; **yo** - yarn over; **ssk** - slip two stitches as if to knit, then insert left needle through the front loops and knit together.

For further help with knitting techniques refer to www.knittinghelp.com.

Please do not sell this pattern or any items made as a result of using this pattern. Thank you.

Notes from the author

This pattern is available as a free Ravelry download

This cowl combines two of my favorite elements: openwork/lacy patterning and a cotton blend yarn. Rowan Wool Cotton is great for showing off stitch definition without being scratchy. The stitch pattern is comprised of a shield surrounded with openwork, providing an interesting lacy design with a feminine touch.

I tend to make cowls extra large and droopy because I love to pin them (it must be some deep-down obsession with cravats and other neck accessories that can be knotted or pinned). The pictured cowl is 11" in diameter which is definitely big. That being said, if you like closer fitting cowls you can subtract sets of 15 sts from the pattern for a smaller end result. Casting on 105 sts should result in a cowl with a diameter of about 9" (though I haven't tested this yet, please let me know if you do!).

P.S. Yes, the lace pattern does go up to 16 sts at row 11 and stays there for a few rounds. :) It will go back down to 15 sts, so just follow the pattern and you'll be alright! You may want to place stitch markers every 15 stitches at the beginning to keep track of the lace repeats.

P.P.S. This project uses 1.5 balls of Rowan Wool Cotton. You don't need two full balls of yarn. 200 yards of a DK weight is plenty to make this pattern, hence the yardage range.



The Great Black Walnut Caper (mess)

By Suzanne Artley
Benny Fibers, Florence, Montana

A few years (!) ago, someone brought a bunch of crushed black walnut hulls to the Guild and I took them. Little did I know..

So, they were in gallon bags and I threw them in the freezer and would look at them now and again and say "Hmmm..really ought to do something with those", take out a lb. of burger and go away. This strategy worked for a few years until we got a half beef this year instead of a quarter. Beloved Husband (BH) started unloading the boxes, looked into the meat freezer and held up a bag of frozen moldy mushed black walnut hulls and said "Toss ?" Noooooooo I said and the dye processing began.

Since I have a studio, I unloaded one bag into warm water, started to simmer and 5 minutes later turned on the studio fan. I don't know how fresh hulls smell when cooked, but these were pungent. Almost as bad as Tansy. Note that this was also in a stainless steel pot because the tannic acid in black walnuts will eat stuff.

Cooking them isn't hard...you just simmer away. Then you start straining. And straining. And straining. I finally strained out big glumps (scientific term) of mushy stuff through my studio metal strainer. And then realized that a LOT of very small particles were still floating around. So straining started again, this time with an old nylon stocking in the strainer. Thinking to myself, this is a lot like making jelly, which I don't like to do. The goop coats the nylon very rapidly and then you stop, turn it inside out, rinse the nylon and start again. And at this point I am at the first cooking of the first of three bags of hulls.

It took 3 days of 4-5 hours each in the studio to get all 3 bags cooked, strained and in plastic gallon jugs. I wound up with 3.5 gallon jugs of dye of varying (I later found) intensity. Did I label which batch came from the first cooking ??? Noooooo. Dumb. Please also note the black walnut dye is color fast and it dyes everything it touches, including you, old white sneakers, concrete floors..



the list evidently is endless if my studio is any example.

So then I think...mission accomplished. Bags out of the freezer and safely tucked away for some rainy day and I start reading up on dyeing with black walnut. Oops. One of the first things I see is that the dye will eventually eat through #2 plastic jugs. Rats. Back to the studio.

Fortunately, I had just gotten a shipment from Diana Blair from GTTS Mill of weaving singles from Leslie McGuire's Navajo Churro fleeces. So, dye goes back into a big pot and the stove goes on, and the fan in the studio follows quickly. Soon some dark grey Churro goes in and I quickly discover that this stuff is kind of like commercial turquoise dye in that it takes forever to set. And there is no hurrying it. So, bring to almost boil, turn off, cover, rinse the next morning. Nice black. After a while, the colors are getting greyer, so then I throw in a white skein. And it comes out an intense green, and next two are lighter versions of the same green.

Huh...go figure.

I pour in more dye stuff from another jug and start dye again...and of course if I had labeled these jugs as to which batch they were, I would have a bit more information. I put a white skein in this one and it comes out a deep chestnut brown with red undertones. The subsequent white and light grey skeins come out various tans and fawn.

I have worked my way through the about half the dye stuff so far and keep checking the plastic jugs for leaks...but I'm pretty much out of weaving singles in light colors to dye until the next batch goes through Diana's mill.

Wouldn't think someone with a degree in Biological Sciences would measure and label ??? Evidently not.

Still have dye left, and am foolishly hunting for more hulls for next year...there were leaves and stems in this mix as well, and I THINK that is where some of the greens came from and they are gorgeous. Got a black walnut tree ? I've got wool...

Knitter's Hand Balm Tutorial

from <http://ambersambry.blogspot.com/2009/03/hand-balm-tutorial.html>



Disclaimer 1 If you are a soap maker, this will bore you to tears. Like, for real. Read the recipe and then skip to the end where I show the nifty way I put the shrink bands on.

Disclaimer 2 The recipe I use calls for a blend of beeswax, solid butters and liquid oils and is a modified version of a recipe I found online. The most important thing about the recipe is to maintain even amounts of liquid oils and solid butters. You can tweak the beeswax and starch amounts according to your personal taste, but you must use equal amounts of oils and butters for them to properly solidify. Anyway, if you do a quick search for "solid lotion bar" or "solid hand balm" it should bring up a slew of different recipes for you to choose from. I will share my favorite here:

2.5 oz grated beeswax (or beeswax pastilles)

3 oz liquid oils (I've used a bunch of different combos of the following: avocado oil, sweet almond oil, golden jojoba oil, rice bran oil, wheatgerm oil -- still searching for my favorite blend)

3 oz solid butters (I've used varying amounts of each of the following: unrefined shea butter, cocoa butter and mango butter)

1.5 tbsp starch (I was using corn starch, but I have switched to arrowroot)

1 - 2 mL fragrance oil or essential oil (depending on desired strength -- you be the judge, but I prefer my scents on the lighter side and generally don't exceed 1.5 mL)

*This recipe makes 12 mini-muffin sized balms

You will need:

- Beeswax
 - Any combination of the oils listed above (or substitute your favorites!)
 - Any combination of the butters listed above (or substitute your favorites!)
 - Starch
 - Fragrance, if desired (you can find skin safe fragrance oils at most craft stores with the soap making supplies, or you can use essential oils)
 - Mini muffin pan "mold" (I use both silicone and non-stick metal pans with success, but the flexible silicone pans are MUCH easier to release the balms from)
 - Kitchen scale that measures at least in half ounce increments
 - Utensil for stirring
 - Ladle for pouring melted balm into "mold"
 - Crock Pot set to LOW, double boiler over LOW heat or oven safe dish in a warm oven (no more than 200° F)
- ***The key is to use an indirect heat source.*** Amber's Ambry is not responsible for horrendous kitchen fires caused by irresponsible wax melting ;)
- Individual containers for finished balms (Snack size baggies will do the trick, but don't expect your balms to retain their lovely little shapes that way. After a few trips in your purse or pocket, they will get smashed and smear all over the inside of the baggie. Still usable, but extremely, um, gross looking, so don't say I didn't warn you.)

Continued on page 23



Step One: Measure your solid ingredients.

Start with your beeswax so it gets a head start at melting. However, it is not necessary to melt it completely before adding the other ingredients.

Step Two: Add solid ingredients to melting device and cover. (Covering is not necessary if you are using an oven.)

Step Three: Measure your oils.

I measure my oils all together until I get to my desired ounce total -- in the case of this recipe: three ounces.

Step Four: Add oils to melting device.

Step Five: Twiddle your thumbs and wait for everything to melt. Stir occasionally. Wash some dishes or something. The time will go faster than if you are hovering over your pot waiting for the chunks to disappear. Not that I know this from personal experience...

When your mixture has melted completely, it will be totally clear, with no little pieces floating in it. You may experience some fine sediment at the bottom of your pot from several sources, especially hand-grated beeswax and unrefined shea butter. This is nothing to worry about and you can just stir it in with the starch in the next step.

Step Six: Add starch. This is an easy one. Just measure and dump carefully so as not to splash and stir thoroughly with a wire whisk or a fork.

Step Seven: Add fragrance. If you are leaving yours unscented, ignore this step. Otherwise, measure 1 - 1.5 mL of your desired fragrance and stir it into your melty balm mixture.

Step Eight: Ladle into molds.

The balms will actually start to set up pretty quickly in a cool room. Use care not to move or bump them during this process or they will develop unsightly cracks and uneven areas.

Step Nine: Release from molds and place in containers.

You did it!!! Now enjoy your balm and give some to all your friends. They will be so delighted with your crafty-ness AND they will have nice, soft hands when they give you the pat on the back you so richly deserve...

*Now for the packaging addendum:

If you are going to sell your balms and need to seal them with shrink bands, I have a neat little trick I use to keep them from rolling away when I turn the heat

gun on them.

I place two thick oven mitts or hot pads on the table and I place my broiler pan (the kind that used to come with new ovens) on top of them. Then I line up the shrink bands over my tins and place the tins on their sides in the grooves of the broiler pan. The pan keeps them from rolling while the heat gun is shrinking the little bands, and it provides a heat resistant surface (with the help of the oven mitts underneath) so I don't have to worry about scorching my countertop or table.

Alright, that does it! I hope you enjoyed Hand Balm 101. Please check back much, much farther in the far off distant future for more tutorials. But first I have to think of things that I do that don't already have eighty bajillion tutorials devoted to them. ;) For real though, I hope you enjoyed it. Have fun making hand balm!



COMPLEX WEAVERS

Complex Weavers is an international volunteer organization dedicated to expanding the boundaries of handweaving and encouraging weavers to develop their own creative styles. Weavers of all levels share information and innovations with fellow weavers through newsletters, a journal, study groups, a biennial conference and an exhibit titled Complexity.

Complexity 2014 is an international juried exhibit featuring works employing complex weave structures interlacing threads and fibers in ways beyond plain weave. Complex weaving is defined by the cloth produced and the mind it took to cre-

ate it, not by the equipment used. There is no requirement that the work must be woven on a minimum number of shafts or on a Jacquard loom. Works with historic inspiration and interpretations, as well as non-loom interlacements such as ply split braiding and tablet weaving are welcome.

This exhibit will travel to three locations:
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery, Lincoln, NE
April 7 – May 9, 2014
Hotel Murano, Tacoma, WA
June 28 – 30, 2014 (During Complex Weavers Seminars)
Brown University, Cohen Gallery, Prov-

idence, RI

July 14 – August 1, 2014 (During HGA's Convergence®)

All members of Complex Weavers and full-time students at accredited colleges and universities may submit entries. Non-member artists may join Complex Weavers (www.complex-weavers.org) by the submission date. Work will be evaluated by three jurors: Marguerite Gingras, Alice Schlein and Wendy Weiss.

Entry deadline: Nov 18, 2013.

Prospectus: www.complex-weavers.org
Questions: Sandra Hutton (719) 488-3716, CWExhibit@comcast.net

Wonderful Weaving



In July, the Lewistown Fiberistas got together at Marcy Foran's house for some knitting, spinning and chat. Marcy shared her woven wrap that she had just completed. After some teamwork, the girls figured out how to wear the lovely garment, shown here modeled by Susan Lohmuller.

Where I've Been – Where I'm Going

by Vanetta Burton

I will never have enough days on this earth to complete all the weaving projects that are running around my head. While I'm winding warp for one project, I find that part of my brain is already thinking ahead to the next weaving project.

There are so many possibilities! Like many of us who were products of the 60s and 70s, the whole back-to-basics and Mother Earth influence had a huge effect on me. When my then-fiancé, Larry and I found ourselves hitchhiking through Europe and Morocco in 1973, I had my first injection of loom fever. I don't know if it was the weaving that hooked me, but it was definitely the loom. I was more curious about how all that wood and string could be used to produce such amazing pieces of cloth—things that a hippie could make and wear; rugs we could use in the teepee we planned on buying when we got back to Montana!

Coming back to the states, and after a couple years of reality checks, I found myself working in Missoula at the Opportunity Workshop for developmentally disabled adults. Weaving place mats and rugs was part of the training for the clients, and I loved to walk through the workshop, watching them proficiently weave on their 2-shaft looms.

The director of the workshop offered me an old 36" Union Loom that was being stored in a garage. It was perfect for me, and one of the most precious things I owned at that time. I hauled it all over Montana, and after landing back in Missoula in the mid-1980s, I decided it was time to upgrade. As I became more exposed to the world of weaving, and joined the Missoula Weavers' Guild, I knew the Union Loom would have to go - not for something bigger, but something that had more harnesses. I was ready to take on 4 shafts.

In the late 80s and early 90s I got hooked by Navaho Weaving. Joseph's Coat was offering a class



and once again, it was the back to the basics, working with a simple wood frame, wool and yes—even sitting on the ground—that reduced it all to such a simple, beautiful process. I was so excited and inspired by Navaho Weaving that I abandoned my children (not really—they stayed with friends) and Larry and I drove to the Four Corners area, with the goal in mind to visit as many trading posts as we could in one day. It was a magical tour—the trading posts were disappointing, but the museums and shops were awe-inspiring.

A 3-month visit in the mid-90s to Mexico and Guatemala immersed me in the world of the Backstrap Weavers. I was able to locate a medicine woman in Guatemala who agreed to teach me to weave on a backstrap loom. It became clear to me that the 2–3 days that I had to spend with her were not going to allow the time for me to learn the process. I now have that same loom on my basement wall—it makes a great wall hanging but I don't think the backstrap is for me.

Over the years, going to ANWG and MAWS conferences, challenging myself by entering woven

pieces in open shows, meeting weavers and instructors from all over the country, has only deepened my love and appreciation for the weaving process. As a gift to myself for my 50th birthday, I purchased a used 60", 8-shaft, LeClerc Loom. I love that loom as much as I did my Union Loom. It has served me well and shown me that investing in a good loom eliminates so many headaches and frustrations.

Someday I hope to find my niche in the weaving process. I would love to find one structure; one type of weaving that grabs me for awhile, long enough that I feel like I have "mastered" it before I move on to the next. When I find myself feeling restless with my weaving, I dream of having a heavy-duty rug loom. But if I had a good rug loom, would I only weave rugs and get really good at it? Not likely—there are too many projects still running around my head to settle down to just one type of weaving, at least for now.

With my son getting married in August, I've found more weaving projects. Thanks to the sewing skills of Shelley Peters, I now have a beautiful hand-woven, hand-sewn vest to wear to the rehearsal dinner. I'm currently winding warp for a runner to be used on one of the tables at the reception. With my plans to retire in August, I've been trying to figure out how I can squeeze in some "going away gifts" for friends at the University.

In September, Larry and I are leaving for Spain where we plan to hike the Camino de Santiago—a 500-mile pilgrimage trail through the Basque country. If things go as planned we'll be on the trail for 5–6 weeks, possibly returning to Montana in December. As for the picture I've included—how can I possibly be away from a loom for 4 or more months? The research I've done says to only carry 10 percent of your body weight in your backpack—but nothing I read says anything about how much the loom should weigh!

Stash Buster Summit Knitter's Retreat - Sept. 27-29

Held in the heart of the Little Belt Mountains (30 miles east of White Sulphur Springs, Montana). Weekend includes 2 nights, food, 2 workshops, yarn vendors, prizes and more! Cost is \$80 by 9/10 or \$100 after 9/10. Registration deadline is Sept. 24. Pick up your registration form at Purl in Billings or contact Carol at 406-547-2146.



Johnna Hesper and Tracey Delaney had a great time taking classes and loading up at the vendor booths at the Big Sky Fiber Arts Festival in June!

MAWS Online

Please check out the site at www.mawsonline.org. Your feedback is critical and much appreciated. Send your ideas on ways to improve the site. Some of the links you find are still under construction but as time allows and information is provided – they will all be updated.

Websites are a wonderful thing and a great way for MAWS members to stay

connected but they do need constant attention. New photos, upcoming events, change of officers or duties updated contact information needs to stay current. Don't forget to submit your guild's newsletter if you have one. If your guild has a contact person – please send that information along to Kathy at ohern_1@mawsonline.org.



Order of Rotation for MAWS Conferences:

Bozeman
Helena
Billings - 2010
Missoula - 2012
Great Falls - 2014
Alpine - 2016

Note: You can place quarter page paid ads for \$15 an issue. Our newsletter reaches over 300 fiber artists. Contact Tracey Delaney: traceyhensen@gmail.com.

Montana Association of Weavers and Spinners (MAWS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Membership runs from November 1st through December 31. Annual dues are \$8 and include a newsletter subscription. To join MAWS, send dues to: Marian Stratton, 2120 3rd Street South, Great Falls, MT 59405, 406) 452-3238 marianstratton@yahoo.com. Donations to help offset expenses are gladly accepted and can be mailed to Marian.

Next Newsletter deadline is October 1, 2013.

Email articles to Tracey Delaney at traceyhensen@gmail.com

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