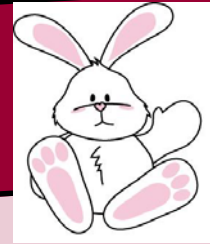




# Knitters' Knews



Volume 29 Issue 8

April 2009

## April 13 — Susan Strawn

—Janet Fishbain



At our April 13 MKG meeting, Susan Strawn will reveal how depictions of knitters have changed over time, reflecting social, economic, and political history. Using photographs of knitters

in a PowerPoint presentation complimented with vintage periodicals and hand knits, Susan will disentangle for us the story of knitters country wide. This history is documented in her book, *Knitting America: A Glorious Heritage from Warm Socks to High Art*, in which she also explores the mushrooming cyber-world of knitting blogs and websites.

Susan began as a biomedical illustrator and went on to work as a museum curator. Interweave Press contracted with her for a series of free lance illustrations while she was

working at the museum. That led to an “intense interest in hand-produced textiles,” so Susan began her doctorate in textiles and clothing at Iowa State University. From there, she accepted a tenure position at Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois. In her graduate studies, Susan had researched historical knitting topics and the history of costumes, so when Voyageur Press was looking for an author, she took on the task which resulted in her widely acclaimed book.

Susan’s own knitting history began with her Danish grandmother teaching her to knit when she was five. But it wasn’t until she was 13 that Susan became obsessed with this craft. Today she relishes exotic and natural yarns, as well as the soft, flexible architecture of knitted garments.

She knits a little almost every night and now is working on the vintage patterns in her book; she has also signed on as an editorial advisor for *PieceWork*. She continues to teach classes at Dominican University where her current interests include wartime knitting and knitting as a gendered activity.

**April Vendors**  
Argyle Fiber Mill  
Needle ‘n Pins

**Meeting Time**  
7:00 pm  
**Location**  
Monona  
Community  
Center

## From Our President—Kate Findley

Dear MKG Members,  
We are moving!

The Monona Community Center has been a great venue and has served the needs of our Guild for many years. However, our Guild continues to grow and we have outgrown the available space at the Monona Community Center to the point that serious liability issues have come to our attention since last September.

In considering a new location, there were several, non-negotiable factors we were looking for: adequate, well-lit, handicap accessible parking; a meeting room large enough for our needs; a location that allowed us to

bring in vendors; and space for our library.

While parking and a large meeting room are self-explanatory, you may be asking why the library needs space. Our library is a fantastic resource offered by the Guild to its membership and helps to fulfill the purpose of our Guild (which is to promote interest, appreciation, and skill in knitting). Our library is used by a large portion of our membership each month. In fact, over a quarter of the members attending each meeting check out books from our library. The library is stored in a locked storage space at the Monona

Community Center because of the size of the library too cumbersome to be transported to and from meetings. Additionally, whoever would be responsible for storing it would also be responsible for adding all items in the library to their homeowners’ insurance policy.

Many locations were considered and rejected because they could not meet our needs or were cost-prohibitive.

Beginning September 2009, our meetings will be held at the West Side Club located at 437 County Road M, Madison. The new location offers a larger, well-lit meeting room, separate space for our

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## Meeting Minutes for March 9, 2009

-Janette Hermanson

Kate called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. There were a couple of announcements:

1. There will be a shuttle for the Knit In. Schedule will be emailed to all who will be attending.
2. The guild is working on a bus trip to the Bohus Exhibit at the American-Swedish Institute on April 4. Watch the website for more information. (See page 11 for more details.)
3. Jane Newman asked for hats for newborns in Guatemala. Medical personal will be leaving May 20. Please bring the hats to Jane at the April and May meetings. (See page 6 for more details.)

Connie Burmeister had the applications for the teacher training class the weekend of October 10-11, 2009.

Over 200 members, including four new members and seven guests, listened to an interesting talk by Janet Szabo on knitting with cables. She had some beautiful examples of her knitting. Janet has a newsletter that is issued four times a year.

Show and Tell demonstrated many great items by Robbie, Carol, Brenda, Cristie, Sandy, Lynn and Amy.

Door prizes donated by Buttons & More, Sow's Ear, and Lakeside Fibers were won by Yvonne, Kay, and Mary Beth.

Everyone was encouraged to take a look at the newly updated guild website. Our gratitude to Delaine Zuhlke for her all her efforts in making our website look so nice!



### Reminder to Craft Yarn Council of America Teacher Training Applicants

Please be sure to bring along your applications to our April 13 meeting and give them to Connie Burmeister. If you have any questions, please contact her.



## From Our President (from page 1...)

Vendors, handicap accessible parking, an entrance with no stairs, secure storage for our library, and beverage service. You will now be able to order coffee, soda, juice, or liquor from the bar, and our use of this service may reduce the cost of our rent. For example, if the total dollar amount bought at a guild meeting is \$200.00 or more, our monthly rent is reduced by \$40.00

We believe that this location will serve the needs of our growing Guild for years to come.

We look forward to seeing you all at our September 14, 2009, meeting - our first at the West Side Club.



## REMINDER: Brown Bag Exchange

**Cold Hands Warm Feet** is the theme of this year's 8th Annual Brown Bag Exchange. For those of you participating in this event, don't forget that you will reveal your creations at our May 11 meeting. We are anticipating some wonderful things made from members' stashes!

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10-4

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## Meet Our MKG Board Nominees!

Our MKG Board consists of nine members. Board terms serve for three years with one-third of the seats being up for election each year. Elizabeth Prose, Judy Pruski, and Sue Aehl (who is finishing out Gail Snowden's term) are finishing their terms in May 2009. Elections for our new board members will be held on May 13.



**Peg Corp**

Hi there, my name is Peg Corp. I am running for a board member position because I love to knit! I am still a novice, having started knitting in 2004, but my stash looks like I started in 1902. I am making a valiant effort to learn new techniques and new stitches with each project – I think I have about eight projects in process. I joined the guild this year and have been amazed at the skills of the people around me at each meeting I attend. What is even more amazing is everyone's willingness to share and teach. This year I attended the Knitter's Retreat in New Glarus. WOW! I went back and forth trying to decide if I should go or not because I didn't know anyone else who would be going. My husband finally said – GO! You know you'll have a good time – he was wrong – I had a GREAT time! I would like to mention all the new friends that I made, but I'm afraid that I will leave someone out – but thanks to all who made me feel part of the gang! A little about myself – My husband Paul and I are celebrating our 20th wedding anniversary this year; we have a cat – Shamrock. I am a registered nurse and work for the State in a program that works on getting health care for children.



**Victoria Utrie**

My first attempt at knitting went rather poorly. My grandma put the needles into my little 6-year-old hands, but try as I might, I just couldn't get it right. Then 17 years later, in 2004, I decided to try again, and this time, voilà!

The needles have been clicking (and the stash has been growing) ever since.

In 2006, I moved to Wisconsin, and last July, I married my husband, Joe. We live in McFarland with our four cats, and Joe loves to receive knitted things. (The cats love knitted things too, and often try to steal them.)

I was very excited to discover what a helpful and friendly knitting community Wisconsin had. Since joining the Madison Knitters' Guild last fall, I've met a lot of great people. I love knitting and would love to join the MKG board.



**Elizabeth Wellenstein**

I'm Elizabeth Wellenstein, and I have dabbled in many knitting-related activities over the years such as teaching classes, writing patterns, running a fiber mill, and belonging to the Madison Knitters' Guild. Many things have changed over the years, but my Guild membership remains a constant. I have been a member for about 10 years and would like to contribute by serving on the board. During the school year, I work as a special education assistant at Hamilton Middle School. In summer, I dig in my big kitchen garden. I live in Madison with my husband and three kids, all of whom know how to knit.



**Delaine Zulke**

My grandmother taught me to knit when I was in third grade. I remember the first thing I made—my mom surprised me with a skein of navy yarn from the dime store that day, and I made a pair of slippers from a *McCall's How to Knit* book. I still have that book, and I've pretty much been knitting since then. I learned everything from books, knitting in my own little world. Growing up, I made countless slippers, baby sweaters, adult sweaters, mittens, hats, and afghans. All from acrylic yarn. Most of my knitting I gave away.

I have since moved on and discovered "real" yarn shops where I've made some very dear knitting friends. I learned about Elizabeth Zimmerman, Midwest Masters, Stitches Midwest, and, of course, the Madison Knitter's Guild. I now have a stash that fills eight storage bins...big ones!

My most favorite item that I have every knitted was a cardigan sweater for my grandmother when she was in the nursing home. It was light blue with cables. I kept that sweater when she passed away and will always treasure it.

I worked as a mainframe Programmer/Analyst for quite a few years—until I needed a change. About three years ago, I started working at Nancy's Notions in Beaver Dam on their website. I knew nothing about a website. But I learned and soon started taking classes at MATC for web development. I am currently in my last class to get my Web Development Certificate. Just recently, I took on the task of the Madison Knitter's Guild website, and I love it. It's fun for me.



Joyce Williams and Meg Swanson decipher the code from a pattern.



Stephanie Pearl-McPhee, aka the Yarn Harlot, entertained the Madison Knitters Guild Knit In with both morning and afternoon talks. Topics ranged from a MacGyver Arts Festival, explaining to airline security that she was in fact flying to Wisconsin to talk about knitting and yarn, and somehow ending up in the hotel hallway in just her powder blue cowgirl underwear. The talk started with the official picture of the sock and the group and flowed smoothly through an explanation on how the brain achieves theta and the benefits of having the brain in the theta process for a little while every day. She finished up with questions and answers and a final joke to leave us on a happy note.

After both of her presentations, there was time for book signing and pictures with Ms. McPhee where she took a few pictures of her own with first time sock knitters and people who brought dish cloths with a picture of the state of Wisconsin on it! All of her pictures can be found at <http://www.yarnharlot.ca/blog/>

I had the chance to sit down and talk a bit with Ms. McPhee and asked her about one of her blog posts from earlier in the week. In her post, she gave a list of why it was a good time to get away for a trip and come to Wisconsin. I asked her what she liked so much about the Madison Knitters' Guild. Her response was that the MKG has such a broad range of ages, and it gives her hope that knitters and their guilds will be into the craft for many generations. By having a vast array of ages and talents, there is always someone to lend a hand when a pattern needs deciphering or someone needs help with a difficult stitch. I also asked if any of her three daughters knit. She stated that they all know how to knit, yet only one is actively knitting right now. The others will pick it up from time to time. Further along in the conversation when I asked what else she had on the needles she kind of gave me a wry look and whispered, "If I told you, I'd have to kill you." I'm guessing that we will find out more in the future when it shows up on her blog.

Stephanie Pearl-McPhee has six books to her credit and is currently working on a seventh. This year she also put out a Page-a-Day calendar titled *Never Not Knitting*. —Erin Miller

I took the Little Lace Sachet class taught by Carol Anderson. I was so mesmerized by all the luscious and colorful yarn at the vendor booths, that I almost forgot to go to my class, but I am glad that I did. The class provided an easy entry to knitted lace, producing a quick-yet-charming lace sachet that would be a perfect hostess gift or stocking stuffer. The pattern lends itself to all sorts of yarn, so once you knit one of them, you'll want to knit a dozen and use up all the half skeins left in your stash. The best part was finding out that Carol lives in Carpenter, Iowa, very close to my husband's hometown of St. Ansgar in north-central Iowa. When you're a knitter, it's a small world indeed!  
—Cynthia Robey-Duncomb



Instructor Kim Cassie holds up a pair of Bosnian socks



Tina Stevens reads *The Yarn Harlot*.

**Our thanks to President Kate Findley and Board Member Joan Deneen who made this day possible!**

Photo credit to Erin Miller and Cynthia Robey-Duncomb



## Book Review

—Amanda Haynes

**Knitting Police?** No way! I'm sure most of you have read at least one Yarn Harlot book or saw her talk at the Knit In. While always funny, Stephanie also gives some good advice on how to make your knitting more effective and interesting. She injects her writing with a good dose of humor and common sense. *Knitting Rules* walks the reader through the basics of tools, yarn, and finding inspiration. She covers traditional and unique item construction for all types of projects, giving a comedic breakdown of sweaters, hats, scarves, shawls, and socks. She thoroughly discusses the pros and cons of each garment as well as why we are drawn to knit them. This book also includes tidbits about her adventures with gauge, blocking, and disproportionate human beings. If your knitting isn't turning out the way you planned, take a good look at it. Could it really want to be something else? Stephanie breaks down the idea that just because we want a certain finished object, the yarn or pattern may not want to cooperate. By showing how to find the good in your knitting, you will see that the yarns you choose, and the patterns that attract you all play a part in the whole process of knitting. Enjoying that process or product is the reason we continue knitting. Stephanie reminds us that if you don't enjoy what you are doing, you might want to find something you do enjoy. One of my favorite features of *Knitting Rules* is the "10 Reasons" in each chapter where Stephanie gives her 10 reasons why you should knit an item. They are funny and charming, and there are always a couple of reasons that hit home with me. *Knitting Rules* will expand your knitting knowledge, arm you with the tools you need to push ahead, and create beautiful objects as well as keep you laughing.

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## Community Projects Update

—Jane Newman

Donated items from our March meeting went to HospiceCare, YWCA, UW Children's Hospital, Columbus Hospital, Elizabeth House, and Dean Oncology. **REMINDER: no more winter wear (hats, scarves and mittens) until the fall.** Chemo hats for both adults and children, baby blankets and sweaters, preemie and newborn hats, food, toiletries, and diapers are always appreciated.



## Guatemala Hat Project

—Stephanie Drury

Nancy Comello from the Edgewood School of Nursing will be taking a group of nursing students to Guatemala again this year and has requested our help. Nancy would like us to knit up a batch of newborn hats for her and her students to distribute as

they will be teaching physicians and midwives about hypothermia and its consequences.

Nancy gave me information about why they are going:

Guatemala is a democratic republic consisting of 22 departments and which is in the process of restoring its social system after several decades of armed conflict. It is the most populous nation in Central America, whose population is largely poor, rural, young, and indigenous. Its crude birth rate is 33.8 and total fertility rate is 4.2—the highest in the region. It is a multi-ethnic, multicultural nation with 23 linguistic groups. Over 20% of the population lives on less than \$1 per day (2005), largely in rural and indigenous areas. Approximately 49% of the children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition (68% among indigenous children), and 30% of pregnant women have nutritional deficits. Food insecurity has worsened in recent years, and pockets of populations with acute and severe malnutrition have reappeared. In 2004, infant mortality of 39 per 100,000 live births was reported, the third highest in the Americas, and under-5 mortality rate of 48 per 100,000, the fourth highest in the Americas. The estimated maternal mortality rate in 2000 was 153, with the figure for the indigenous population three times higher than for the non-indigenous population. Guatemala has the third-lowest contraceptive use in the Americas.

Clearly, her group has a good purpose and needs our help.

Nancy's group is leaving May 20. Please bring your donations to our April and May meetings so we can be sure she has them to take along for the trip. They are also collecting medicines and medical supplies and school supplies for the children that are living in the landfill area. Anything we can contribute will be greatly appreciated.

## Baby Hat Pattern

If you are thinking of knitting a newborn hat for the Guatemalan project, the following pattern might be of interest.

DK weight yarn (Plymouth Dreambaby DK)

Size 2 and 3 small circular or double point needles, these size needles work for a loose knitter. May need to use larger needles if you knit tighter.

With smaller needles, cast on 72 or 76 stitches loosely. It is important that the cast on edge is stretchable. Do 2" of K1, P1 ribbing. Switch to larger needles and knit approximately 3 ½" to 4" in pattern (Below).

Decrease rows:

Row 1: K2 tog, P2 tog

Row 2: Knit.

Row 3: K 2 tog. around.

Row 4: Knit.

Row 5: K 2 tog. around.

Thread needle and draw up remaining stitches. May not have even number, just do the remaining stitch singly. End off.

PATTERN: Mock Cable: Multiple of 4 when done in the round.

Round 1: \*K2, P2; rep from \* to end.

Round 2: \*K2, P2; rep from \* to end.

Round 3: \*cross 2 front, P2; rep from \* to end.

Round 4: Rep Row 2.

Repeat these 4 rounds.

Cross 2 front: Knit into the front of the 2nd stitch on the needle: then knit the first stitch, slipping both stitches off the needle at the same time.

If using fingering weight baby yarn, increase number of stitches cast on to 76 or 80.

There are many other patterns on the internet. Have fun trying a few!



## On Donations to Columbus Hospital

—Cynthia Robey-Duncomb

Last month's newsletter gave an update on the knitted items donated at the February meeting, mentioning that baby blankets were given to the Columbus Hospital. I had the pleasure to speak with Rachel Svendsen, the hospital's OB Supervisor. She said that it was fun to see the variety of colors and styles of blankets they received and she is very thankful for your generosity. The donations were the result of a conversation with her mom, MKG member and vice-president Connie Burmeister, and her grandmother. At the Columbus Hospital, there are months when up to 75% of the babies are born to families on medical assistance. Many times, the new parents have a worn-out, stained blanket—or no blanket at all—to wrap the baby for his or her homecoming. They had a good supply of baby hats, but had few blankets. Next thing Rachel knew, she had enough blankets to give one to every baby in need! While she is well-supplied for now, she agrees that other local hospitals may be in need of baby blankets. However, larger blankets or Afghans are always in demand to send home for the whole family's use. Thanks again for your generous knitting!



"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; I will not refuse to do the something I can do."

- Helen Keller

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## Getting to Know Our Members— Susan Hill

—Molly Tully



### How did you learn to knit?

I first learned to knit when I was in middle school growing up in a small town. There wasn't a lot to do, but a friend and I would go to the local yarn shop on a Saturday afternoon, and the owner taught us how to knit. We would also enjoy a bottle of pop and a candy bar during our break. My mother knew how to knit but didn't feel she had the patience to teach me. As the high school years came along, my friend and I spent many a Friday and Saturday night eating pizza and knitting. Those were the good old days!

### What role does knitting play in your life?

I always try to have an easy knitting project to do when I take older family members to various medical appointments. I like to have something to help occupy my time. It is great how strangers will come over and ask to see what I am knitting and strike up a conversation. I am usually making baby hats or baby sweaters for my many friends who are becoming grandparents.

### Talk about either your worst knitting project or your best knitting project.

My worst knitting event was when I made a V-neck cable sweater for my husband shortly after we were married. I was so anxious to have him try it on when I had finished the sweater. To my shock and horror, the sweater was huge and would have fit someone twice his size. Check the gauge, check the gauge! Well, I ripped the sweater, washed the yarn and with my husband's help, rolled it back into balls. I re-made the same sweater. Thirty-four years later he is still wearing the sweater which really warms my heart.

## "Whatcha Workin' On?"

—Gretchen McClain



**Erin Miller** of Evansville  
 "These are little, baby Easter booties out of Jitterbug Rainbow from the Sow's Ear. They're for Baby Emma, my boss' daughter. She's four weeks old. The pattern is Saartje's Bootees—free from Ravelry."

**Renee Sanford** of Madison  
 "I was inspired by Nancy Bush's talk, so I started a Nancy Bush shawl with noups. It's out of Skajche fingering wool—basically thread—let's not kid ourselves. It's really, really fun, and I'm hoping to be done in a few weeks. It took about 11 rows before getting to a comfort level with the pattern. But I figured that if the Estonian women could do it, I can do it, too."



**Stephanie Drury** of Verona  
 "Socks! Always socks. This is a pair of Rockin' socks from Stitchers' Crossings. I'm a sockaholic. My favorite sock yarn has silk in it. I got some in a shop in Galena but can't remember the name. The silk makes it nice and soft—no scratchiness."

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Are you interested in seeing the Bohus exhibit at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota? The cost of the trip will include :

- ◆ Travel to Minneapolis on a comfy chartered coach (that's A LOT of knitting time!)
- ◆ A tour of the exhibit
- ◆ A DVD presentation on the history of Bohus knitting
- ◆ Dinner at the Norske Nook in Osseo, Wisconsin, on the way home (choice of hot beef or pork sandwich, cup of soup, beverage and PIE! Vegetarian option available)
- ◆ Bring brown bag lunch, and we'll provide beverages

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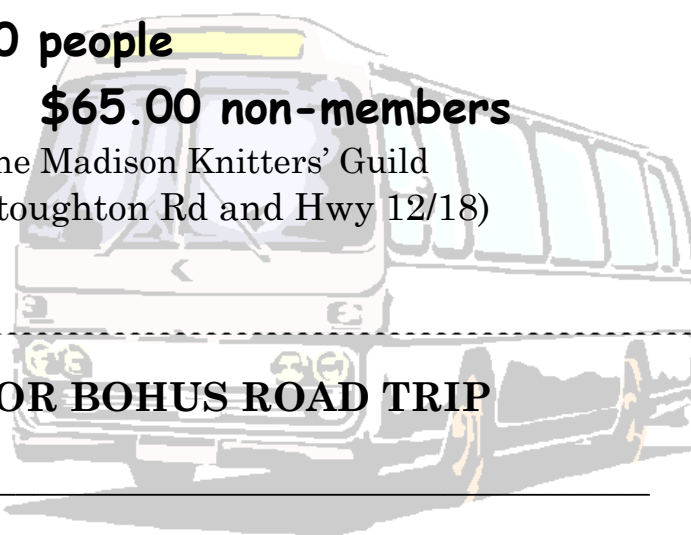
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

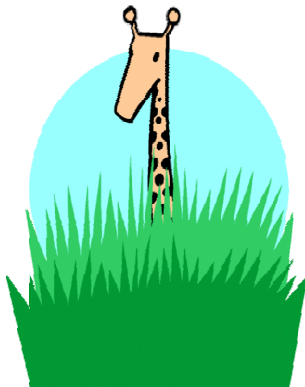
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

MKG Member?     Yes     No

Send check and completed form to: Elizabeth Wellenstein, 633 Sheldon St.,  
Madison, WI 53711

Questions? Call Elizabeth: 233-1449 or email: [<cewellenstein@gmail.com>](mailto:cewellenstein@gmail.com)



## KNITTING SAFARI 2009!

Join us as we hit the road for some fun, some excitement, and some stash-enhancing opportunities! The Knitting Safari is heading to the western part of the state. As of our newsletter press time, we have stops scheduled at Baskets of Yarn in Onalaska, Ewetopia Yarns in Viroqua, and a fantastic lunch planned at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Our itinerary may include one or two more stops along the way.

**Saturday, April 25, 2009**

**COST: \$45.00 members \$50.00 non-members**

The Safari will be leaving the Dutch Mill Park and Ride Lot at 6:45 a.m. on Saturday, April 25, and we will be back in Madison around 7 p.m. that evening. The cost of the Safari is \$45 for guild members, \$50 for non-members. A detailed itinerary will be emailed or mailed after April 10.

If you have any questions regarding the Safari, please contact Kate Findley at [<kmfindley@wisc.edu>](mailto:kmfindley@wisc.edu) or see her at our April 13 guild meeting.

### KNITTING SAFARI 2009 APPLICATION

Please print clearly!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to contact you, if needed: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

I am an MKG member

I am not an MKG member

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

Please email itinerary/information to me

Please mail itinerary/information to me

Please mail this application form, along with your check made payable to the Madison Knitters' Guild, to Kate Findley, 975 Bascom Mall, U.W. Law School, Room 4315E, Madison, WI 53706



## MKG Calendar

Apr. 13	MKG Mtg	7:00 p.m.	Monona Community Center Vendors: Argyle Fiber Mill & Needles 'n Pins Sequoia Branch of Madison Public Library
Apr. 20	MKG Bd. Mtg	6:30 p.m.	Sequoia Branch of Madison Public Library
Apr. 25	Knitting Safari		Details to Follow
May 11	MKG Mtg	7:00 p.m.	Monona Community Center Spring Potluck, Fashion Show, & Brown Bag Exchange
May 18	MKG Bd Mtg	6:30 p.m.	Sequoia Branch of Madison Public Library
June 15	MKG Bd Mtg	6:30 p.m.	Sequoia Branch of Madison Public Library

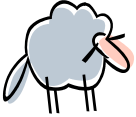
Mark Your Calendars for Next Year's Events:

January 22-24, 2010

Annual MKG Knitting Retreat Weekend in New Glarus

March 13, 2010

Annual MKG Knit In



## Other Fiber Events

**Bohus Exhibit** at the American-Swedish Institute in Minneapolis January 23 - April 30, 2009.

**Fifteenth Annual Shepherds' Market** is being held on May 16-17, 2009, at Whitefish Bay Farm in Sturgeon Bay, WI.

For more information visit: <[www.whitefishbayfarm.com](http://www.whitefishbayfarm.com)> or phone 920-743-1560.

**World Wide Knit in Public Day** will be held on June 13, 2009. Visit: <<http://www.kipday.com/>>

**Midwest Felting Symposium** at Alliant Energy Center's Exhibition Hall, July 29-August 2, 2009. For more information visit <[www.midwestfeltingsymposium.com](http://www.midwestfeltingsymposium.com)>

**Knitting Along the Viking Trail** in Decorah, IA, at the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, July 12-October 11.

Visit <[www.vesterheim.org](http://www.vesterheim.org)> for more information.

**Milwaukee Brewers Stitch 'n Pitch** will be held on July 29, 2009. Visit the following website for more details:

<<http://milwaukee.brewers.mlb.com/mil/ticketing/stitchnpitch.jsp>>

**Stitches Midwest** on September 10-13, 2009, will be held in Schaumburg, IL. For more details please visit:

<<http://www.knittinguniverse.com/>>

**Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival** in Jefferson, WI, September 11-13, 2009. For more information, visit:

<<http://wisconsinssheepandwoolfestival.com/>>

**Susanna Hansson** workshops in Monticello—September 21-24, 2009. Email <[knitterstreat@wekz](mailto:knitterstreat@wekz)> or phone 608-235-2835.

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Madison Knitters Guild

397 Starling Lane

Madison WI 53704