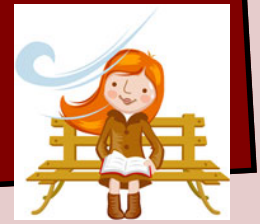




Knitters' Knews



Volume 30 Issue 7

March 2010



March 8— Melissa Leapman

—Gretchen McClain

Try Googling “Melissa Leapman”—you’ll be in heaven with a varied plethora of sites—there are book reviews of her latest and her not-so-latest publications, free (yes, that’s FREE) patterns for yarns like Cascade, and personal interviews and responses to classes that she has taught. Melissa Leapman is a rock star of knitting, and I am psyched to have the chance to hear her speak at our next Guild meeting.

Back in the 1980’s when I first learned to knit, Melissa Leapman’s name was one that I gravitated toward. I remember her patterns from *Interweave Knits* as well as from other various publications. Perhaps you are one of the lucky ones who has a copy of her sensuous *Hot Knits*—it has a goodly selection of wonderful patterns for all seasons.

With her fairly new books *Continuous Cables: An Exploration of Cabled Knots, Rings, Swirls, and Curlicues* and *Cables Untangled: An Exploration of Cable Knitting*, she really transcends the role of designer—albeit longstanding designer—to a masterful level of author and teacher extraordinaire. One can marvel at the patterns up front. But what really makes these books priceless are the Barbara Walker—like swatches of different cables. These books make you feel like you can be a designer, too—even with cables.

Melissa has been on the knit scene for more than twenty years. Her book titles suggest that she is just as good at crocheting as she is at knitting. She has hob-knobbed with many who have sought her skills, and living in New York City gives her proximity to the latest in fashion. Her fusion of good-old knitting with state of the art ideas gives us a genuine opportunity to experience fiber design at its finest. We welcome Melissa Leapman!

From Our President—Kate Findley

SPRING MADNESS

Got those February blahs? Tired of “Storm Forecasts” or “Storm Trackers” or just the weather, in general? Tired of all the gray around us: the slush, the snow, the sky, the salty film on your car?

Unplug the phone, send your spouse or family out of the house, and tiptoe through the tulips of your stash. You’ll be dazzled by the colors, inspired by the forgotten skeins, invigorated by the smell of wool.

“But, wait!” you say, “I don’t have enough tulips in my stash to make up a decent bouquet, much less take a romp through them.”

Well, knitter, have we got the solutions for you – just grab your tax return and come with us!

First, slowly scroll through this newsletter. Wow! Look at all those ads! All those advertisers have yarn a-plenty and would love to see you come walking through their doors! This is the time of year when the new yarns

for summer are blooming on their shelves. Forget the sales at the malls — one can never have enough knitting bags or knitting accoutrement. Looking for an excuse to get out of the house? These shops offer a plethora of classes for every level of knitter.

Second, the 2010 MKG Knit In is coming up on March 13 at the Bishop O’ Connor Center. In addition to Kay and Ann from *Mason Dixon Knitting*, the Guild is offering great classes and a 22-vendor marketplace. Come to knit, learn, laugh, and enhance your stash. Registration forms are in the February newsletter and on our website.

Third, Safari 2010 is on Saturday, April 17, and the registration form is in this newsletter on page 11. Come along with us as we travel through southeastern Wisconsin and fill up the bus with our purchases. It’s a spring break on wheels!

See? The grays of February are already fading.

March Vendors

Sun Valley Farm
The Sow’s Ear

Meeting Time

7:00 pm

Location

West Side Club
437 Cty Tpke M
Madison, WI

Inside this issue:

Meet Our Vendor	2
February Meeting Minutes	3
Library Notices	6
Board Nomination	7
Getting to Know Our Members	8
Book Review	9
Community Projects	10
2010 Safari Registration Form	11

Meet Our Vendors



Sun Valley Farm

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www.sunvalleyfibers.com

—Heidi Finley

This month, Sun Valley Farm brings the Madison Knitter's Guild roving and yarn from locally raised Icelandic sheep. Co-owner and shepherd Jeanette Sundstrom gave me some insight into the many faces of Icelandic sheep.

Icelandic sheep have an extremely soft Thel, or undercoat and a long outercoat, called the Tog. Their fleece grows quickly, so they need to be sheared twice a year. The size of their herd is generally 80 with four rams but can get as high as 145 in the spring after lambing is done. Icelandic sheep come in many different colors as well as patterns. Moorit is the color brown, but there are Moorit Badgerfaces, Black Badgerfaces, Grey Moorit and Moorit Mouflons.

Sun Valley Farm has what is called a "closed flock" meaning their herd bloodlines are diversified enough that they do not need to purchase any more sheep. This helps to maintain the health of the herd.

You can find them online at both Ravelry and Etsy under the username: SunValleyFibers, and they sell their yarn locally at the Sow's Ear in Verona, Wisconsin. They will be at the Knit-In on March 13 as well as the Wisconsin Sheep and Wool festival in Jefferson, Wisconsin, September 10-12. Jeanette says they welcome visitors to the farm; just give a call first.

Finally, Jeanette says she'll be bringing roving and yarn, both natural-colored Icelandic and merino blends that they've hand-dyed. The prices range from \$2.50 an ounce for roving on up to 800 yard skeins of hand-dyed MCN (merino/cashmere/nylon) for \$30. Purchases may be made with Visa, MasterCard, checks, and cash.



The Sow's Ear

—Gail Schmitt

See, touch, smell, taste, and hear--there's something to stimulate every sense at the Sow's Ear in Verona, Wisconsin. The extensive variety of yarns comes in a multitude of colors and scrumptious textures for your viewing and touching pleasure. And as you linger among the yarns, the aroma of coffee may lure you to the café where you can also indulge in sweets and savories—pleasant accompaniments to the conversation of a group of friendly knitters.

Proprietors Debra Wheeler and Heather Black are most proud of the neighborly environment. Ever since the Sow's Ear opened in 2000, it was the first shop in the Midwest to combine a café and a yarn store, but the founders also emphasized a sense of community and sociability. Since they took over in 2007, Debra and Heather have worked hard to retain that warm atmosphere. "One of the things that people mention to us over and over again is how welcome they feel at the Ear," said Heather. "We love hearing that."

Debra and Heather have also expanded the store's selections, maintaining a dedication to locally produced products in both yarn and food by working with several local artisans and farmers. To ensure that there is something for everyone, Debra and Heather have added many new varieties of yarn, including fair-trade and locally produced yarns. "We really try and pay attention to the needs of our customers. We have everything from Peaches and Cream cotton to beaded cashmere from Artyarns."

The menu has also been expanded. Debra notes that their "plates and baked goods are perfect for sharing," which encourages people to enjoy the time they spend at the Sow's Ear knitting and socializing with their friends.

The shop hosts the highly popular Late Night Knit Nights on the first and third Friday of each month when the store stays open until 11:00 p.m. "The response to Late Night has been enormous," so get there early! There is a wide selection of classes available, including special classes with MKG speakers: before our April meeting, the store will host one with Gayle Roehm. To see the list of classes, the selections of yarns and supplies, and the menu, visit the Sow's Ear Web site at www.knitandsip.com, or follow them on Facebook and Ravelry. You can touch the yarns, see the colors, and smell the aromas at 125 S. Main St., Verona, Wisconsin (608-848-2755).

The Sow's Ear will be bringing some sock, spring-season and locally produced yarns to the March meeting, and they accept cash, check, and all credit cards (except Discover).

Monday, February 8, 2010, Meeting Minutes

—Kay Moffat

President Kate opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Approximately 265 members braved the anticipated weather forecast to attend.

The minutes were approved.

Announcements:

1. A vendor is needed for the April meeting.
2. Craft scissors were found from the last meeting.
3. Membership cards were placed in the back of ones nametags.
4. A Cable needle was found tonight and is at the podium
5. Members were reminded to check out our vendors for tonight Argyle Fiber Mill and Susan's Fiber Shop.
6. A graduate has yearn for sale - if anyone is interested see Kate for the information.
7. The February newsletter has information for carpooling - be sure to check this out if you need a ride to the meetings or Knit-In.
8. The speaker for next month will be teaching at the Sows Ear.
9. Woodland Studios is starting a new newsletter. They will also be sponsoring Sally Melville with us for next year.
10. Knitters for Critters has a new chapter. Knitting for the animal shelter and donations are made to the Dane County Animal Shelter.
11. Please help the Board members by picking up flyers, water bottles, etc. around your area at the end of the meeting. Thanks.
12. Please turn OFF your cell phones.
13. Weather report - the board will be checking the weather and if necessary we will not take a break, draw for prizes, and have show and tell next month. (This did not happen.)


Our speaker tonight was Donna Druchunas from Colorado. While here, she also taught classes at the Sow's Ear. Donna has traveled in different parts of the world to learn about ethnic knitting. This has resulted in publishing books like *Arctic Lace*, *Ethnic Knitting Discovery* and *Ethnic Exploration* as well as many articles and workshops. She was taught knitting by her grandmother at the age of 4 or 5, then knitting was laid aside for 2 1/2 decades — now knitting obsessively. She and Lucy Neathy will be leading a knitting cruise this spring (The Musk Ox and Glacier's Cruise) to Alaska. She talked about knitting in Lithuania and showed wonderful slides of knitted items, as well as pictures of the area.

Four new members and four guests were introduced.

Show and Tell items were shown by Judy Pruski, Barb Hogan, Betty Lanske, and Amy Anderson.

Prizes donated by the vendors and Amy Anderson were won by Jodi Schappe, Barb Hogan, Kathy Wedig, Liz Wood, Jerry Carlson, Jane Neuman, and Janette Hermanson.


The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.



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Cover The Bridge

—Janette Hermanson

The 2010 Artist-in-Residence at the Cambridge Centre for the Arts would like to cover the Main Street bridge over the Grand River in Cambridge, Ontario, Canada. She is looking for knitters who would like to knit a block or more for the project. After the blanket is taken down from the bridge, the blocks will be washed and made into scarves and blankets for charities in the Cambridge area.

If anyone is interested in making blocks for this project, it would be greatly appreciated. I will collect the blocks by the beginning of June to take with me when I travel to Canada in July.

You can use any type of yarn, pattern, color and knitting technique you wish. The sizes requested are:

1. Pieces 21"x27" (or as close as possible to this)
2. Pieces as long as you like that are 8", 10" or 22" wide.

Please attach a piece of paper to your knitting with your name, address, phone number, and email.

If you have any question, you can see me at the next guild meeting.



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MKG's Library Return Policy

Our new library policy has gone into effective as of September 1, 2009. All library materials are to be properly checked out by

members and are to be returned or renewed at the next monthly meeting.

Each month's newsletter will include a reminder to those members who have overdue items from the library. Any member who has overdue items from the library shall not check out more items from the guild library until all overdue items are returned to the guild library.

If materials are not returned after this overdue reminder has appeared in the newsletter, a penalty of \$5.00 per item will be assessed for each month the item remains overdue.

If any item is overdue for more than four months, the library may bill the borrower for the replacement cost of the item. The member is responsible for the overdue fines or the replacement cost, whichever is higher. Any exceptions or special arrangements may be made at the librarian's discretion.

Any unpaid library fees will be added to membership renewal fees and must be paid before a borrower's guild membership can be renewed.

MKG Library Return Reminder

The following members have overdue items from our guild's library. Please plan to return your items at the March 8 meeting. Thank you!

Julie St John
Sara McGregor
Jaala Spiro



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Request for MKG Board Nominations

Nine of your fellow guild members serve on the MKG Board. Board terms are for three years with one-third of the seats being up for election each year.

The Board member terms of Connie Burmeister, Kay Moffat, and Kathy Trudell are ending in May. We thank them for all of their hard work and effort they've made to ensure that MKG remains a vibrant, active and well-respected Guild.

Elections for the three available Board seats will be held at our May monthly meeting. The Board of Directors meets on a monthly basis throughout the year. Currently, the Board meets the third Monday of each month at the Sequoya Branch of the Madison Public Library located on the corner of Tokay and Midvale Boulevards in Madison.

Most board members hold either an office and/or chair a committee. Officers and committee chairs are determined by the board members at the first board meeting following the May election. Offices on the board include the following positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Our by-laws do not require that a committee chair must be a board member, so any guild member can hold the position of a committee chair. Committees include the following: Website, Membership, Historian, Publicity, Librarian, Community Projects, Advertising, Newsletter, Knit-In, Knit-Aid, and Hospitality.

While the MKG Board is a working board, members also find time to develop new friendships. Board members tend to have a lot of creative ideas, are dependable, and are committed to making our guild a good experience for all of our members.

If you have any questions about being a board member, please feel free to talk to any current board member about her experience of this service to the guild. If you would like to be a board member, or if you know someone who is interested in being a board member, please contact Kate Findley or any current board member. You won't regret this wonderful opportunity to serve our guild!

Please note that if you would like to run for a board position, you should plan to provide a short biographical sketch and photo of yourself to be printed in the April newsletter. The newsletter deadline will be March 20. Thank you!



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Getting to Know Our Members— Jenny Keeley

What role does knitting play in your life?

Knitting is relaxing and meditative for me and has become an important way for me to express myself creatively.

Describe your first knitting experience.

My very first knitting experience was trying to teach myself to knit with a booklet I bought from the Weaving Workshop in the 1990's. I've been a weaver since 1984, and I was looking for a portable craft. I gave up after having tension problems.

How did you learn to knit?

I finally learned to knit at a one-day scarf class with Elizabeth Wellenstein at Lakeside Fibers in January 2003. The best advice she gave us and I always give to anyone learning to knit is to choose a yarn you love. Even though I reknit it several times, I still have that purple scarf made with Online Linie 67.

What's your all-time favorite yarn? Why?

The stripy colors of Noro Kureyon sparks my creativity the most — I've made three sweaters, two felted bags, a blanket-in-progress, and many hats, mittens and scarves.

Describe your oldest uncompleted project.

I don't fret about unfinished projects. I usually have a dozen or more works in progress at any one time — something for almost any mood or situation.

What project do you currently have on your needles?

My newest project is a Peace Fleece fair isle vest kit called Novi Deen (New Day) using their sport weight yarns. I also have the Oblique Cardigan (Knitty.com Fall 2007) about 80% finished.

Do you have a best knitting memory?

My best knitting memory is coming to my very first Madison Knitters' Guild meeting in September 2005. I met wonderful friends and learned who Sally Melville was (now I have all her books).

How about a worst?

I don't have any worst knitting memories, but knitting has helped me through some rough times, preventing bad memories!

Have you ever smuggled yarn in to the house and were you caught? Can you describe the incident?

I don't smuggle yarn— it just seems to follow me home.



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Book Review

—Amanda Haynes

America Knits is a compilation of interviews with knitters, designers, and knitting educators from across the United States. They invite us into their homes, studios, and creative minds. Melanie Falick allows us to meet the best in the business and find out how they started, what inspires them, and where they get their support to keep creating. There are also glimpses into many of the American farms and mills that create the wonderful yarns knitters love to use.

Melanie's dialogs are in depth and decidedly straightforward. We are introduced to Luisa Gelenter, a yarn dyer who doesn't believe in following a recipe, just going where the dye takes her to make her stunning yarns. She also interviewed iconic designers, Meg Swansen, Pam Allen, and Kristin Nichols, designers we as knitters know and trust for good patterns, beautiful designs, and a driving force in the future of knitting. Melanie spoke with artists, like Katharine Cobey who uses knitting as a medium in sculptures, installations, and even protests. There is also an interview with a Waldorf school and how they are incorporating the skill of knitting to increase the education of children. Also included is a fascinating interview with Barbara Walker and what inspired her to create the Treasury of Knitting Patterns.

Melanie also included her meetings with the owners and families of the farms and mills Morehouse Farm, Big Sky Fiber, and Northwest Alpacas Ranch. I am in awe of Margrit and Albrecht of Morehouse Farms. They brought Merino sheep to America when it was considered a forgotten breed. These beautiful, fluffy sheep had a bad reputation of being hard to raise and maintain. Yet Margrit and Albrecht took the chance and now have over 500 Merino on their farm. In the process they realized the American Dream of creating a home and running a business doing what they love together. I am happy to support their hard work and determination while benefiting from their beautiful natural yarns.

I read both the paper copy and listened to the audio book of *America Knits*. The audio book offers a voice, to complete the storytelling quality that this book works so hard to achieve. However, the reader doesn't use the common pronunciation of many standard knitting terms which I found to be a distraction to the stories. Melanie is able to put on paper the interesting and informative side of these artists, creators, designers, and still leave you wanting more. If you like this book and want more information on American knitting, check out the Guild Library for *Knitting America* by Susan Strawn or *No Idle Hands* by Anne Macdonald.



Community Projects

—Jane Newman

The total number of donated items is now up to 559. There are still a few weeks of winter left so all the hats, mittens, and scarves donated at the February meeting will be put to good use. The March meeting will be the last one that winter items will be collected this year. The schools and other organizations that have benefited from our knitted winter attire do not have space to store items over the summer.

Although knitter's choice always applies, the designated item for March is the lowly but always useful dishcloth. Paired with a bottle of dish soap, it is an item on the wish list of several organizations. It is best to use light colored cotton yarn since the dark colors run and could ruin a whole load of clothes.

Here is a basic dishcloth pattern:

Materials: Worsted weight cotton yarn such as Sugar and Cream & Size 7 or 8 needles

Cast on 4 sts. K2 rows.

Next row: K2, Yarn over, Knit to end of row. Repeat row until there are 47 sts. on the needle.

K1, K2 tog, Yarn over, K2tog, Knit to end of row. Repeat until there are 5 sts left. Bind off.

If time is short this month, consider donating just a bottle of dish soap that can be paired with a dishcloth knitted by another Guild member.



Master Knitter Program — TKG

—Kathy Dugman, Master Knitter

The Knitting Guild of America, now known as The Knitting Guild Association, began the Master Knitting Program in the late 1980's as a correspondence course for knitters to expand and explore the techniques of

knitting and critiqued by other knitters. After a few years, the Machine Knitting Program was also added. It is a three-part course, and you must pass one level before you proceed to the next, and there is no longer a time limit involved in completing the program. My reason for participating was to challenge, expand and test my knitting knowledge. What I also learned was a great deal of humility and to take my time with each section!

On TKG's website, www.TKGA.com, there is a comprehensive copy of a *Cast On* article outlining what is required at each level and how the process works. It is a wonderful education process for anyone interested in taking their knitting to "the next level." I will be happy to answer questions anyone has.

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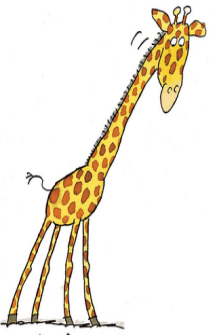
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It don't take a genius to spot a goat in a flock of sheep.

—Cowboy Proverb



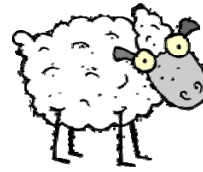
Knitting Safari 2010!

Join us as we hit the road for some fun, some excitement, and some stash-enhancing opportunities! The Knitting Safari is heading to the eastern part of the state. At our newsletter press time, we have stops scheduled at Knitch in Delafield, Main Street Yarn Shop in Hartford, and Ruhamas in Milwaukee. A delicious lunch is planned at the Mineshaft in Hartford. Our itinerary may include one or two more stops along the way.

The Safari will be leaving the Dutch Mill Park and Ride Lot at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 17, and we will be back in Madison around 6:00 p.m. that evening.

The cost of the Safari is \$45 for guild members and \$50 for non-members. A detailed itinerary, along with menu choices for the Mineshaft Restaurant, will be emailed or mailed after April 2.

If you have any questions regarding the Safari, please contact Kate Findley at kmfindley@wisc.edu or see her at our March or April Guild meetings.



Shearing at A-Z Farm

The time is coming for shearing at A-Z Farm. The ewes have been outside on natural pastures since last spring and are in good condition. We anticipate good quality and clean fleeces again this year.

We are not inviting the public for the shearing day this year, so we can devote more time to get the fresh fleeces prepared for buyers. The fleeces have been available for your selection since February 15, 2010, at the farm. This would be a good time to restock wool resources when the selection is best. The fleeces will be skirted and clean. If you desire fleeces from ewes of specific breeding, please let us know, and we will try to reserve desired fleeces. The fleeces will come from ewes of primarily Targhee and Texel breeding.

At the annual Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival's large fleece Show and Sale, our entries have done well. In 2009, A-Z Farm had the Champion and Reserve Champion market fleeces, both came from Targhee and Texel-cross sheep.

A-Z Farm is a family operation specializing in naturally raised lamb and wool produced without the use of hormones, growth stimulants, and antibiotics. Frozen lamb, sheep pelts, wool and natural colored yarn from wool produced on our farm are available.

Visit newborn lambs at the Lamb Birthing Barn, Sundays, March 14, 21, and 28, 2010, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission for this event is \$3.50 per person, 2 and under are free. At other times, group farm tours are available by reservation, in addition to hosting birthday parties and special events.

For more information visit our website, www.a-zfarm.com or contact the Antoniewicz's at A-Z Farm, 1820 Schuster Rd., Oregon, WI 53575, phone 608-835-5553, cell phone 608-212-8526, e-mail: rayatoz@merr.com.



Visit Us on the Web!

You are encouraged to visit us on the worldwide web at:

<http://www.madisonknittersguild.org/>

KNITTING SAFARI 2010 APPLICATION

Please print clearly

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Email address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Best time to contact you, if needed: _____

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

I am a member of the Madison Knitters' Guild

I am not a member of the Madison Knitters' Guild

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

Please email the itinerary/any pertinent information to me

Please mail the itinerary/any pertinent information to me.

Please mail this application form, along with your check made payable to the Madison Knitters' Guild, to Knitting Safari, Madison Knitters' Guild, P.O. Box 14443, Madison, WI 53708



MKG Calendar

Mar 8	MKG Mtg	7:00 pm	West Side Club with Guest Speaker Melissa Leapman Bishop O'Connor Center, Mason Dixon Knitters will be guest speakers
Mar 13	MKG Knit In	8:30 am	
Mar 15	MKG Bd Mtg	6:00 pm	Sequoia Branch of Madison Public Library
Apr 12	MKG Mtg	7:00 pm	West Side Club with Guest Speaker Gayle Roehm
Apr 17	Annual Knitting Safari		To Be Determined
Apr 19	MKG Bd Mtg	6:00 pm	Sequoia Branch of Madison Public Library
May 10	MKG Mtg	7:00 pm	West Side Club with Annual Fashion Show and Brown Exchange Results
May 17	MKG Bd Mtg	6:00 pm	Sequoia Branch of Madison Public Library



Other Fiber Events

Knitting Group at Esquire Club: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays; 9:30 a.m.— 3:00 p.m.

Knitting Group at DeForest Library: 2nd and 4th Thursdays; 6:00 p.m. — 8:00p.m.

Knitting Group at Lakeview Library, Madison: Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.— 8:00 p.m.

Knitting at Yola's Café; 494 Commerce Drive, Madison: Second Wednesday of each month, 5:00 p.m. — 8:00 p.m.

Open Knitting Group at Woodland Studios: Wednesday nights are open knitting. This group is raising money for Heifer International throughout 2010 by asking for a \$1 donation each time you come to the knitting group.

Open Knitting at The Cat and the Crow: 3rd Wednesday night of each month.

Knitting Workshop with Melissa Leapman. Susan's Fiber Shop, March 6 & 7, Phone: (920) 623-4237 or email holly@susansfibershop.com for more details and registration.

Madison Knitters' Guild
P.O. Box 14443
Madison WI 53708