

THE GOSSIP WHEEL

ZUMBRO RIVER FIBER ARTS GUILD

February, 2018



Wednesday, February 28

1 PM, Oronoco Community Center

Weavers' Study Group Meets at Noon

Machine Knitting Program

Have you ever wanted to learn how machine knitting works? Chris LaPlante, Gayle Holter, and Carolyn Barsness will demonstrate how to use a flatbed knitting machine at our February meeting. To help us know a little more about it, Carolyn has written an article for us, which appears below. We've all seen the beautiful hand- and machine-knits these three teachers wear, so now is our chance to see how the machine part works. Fun! **Treats: Judy Stevens and Darrel Waters.**

March Meeting:

Wednesday, March 28, 1 p.m. We will be meeting at Sandy Evans's quilt shop, All in Stitches, in Zumbrota. Sandy will be presenting a slide program on English needlework techniques in the classroom on the lower level at the store. Be sure to allow plenty of time to shop as well! Treats: Terry Erredge and Mary Wulf.

Newsletter Editor Wanted

Coleen Johnston is retiring as newsletter editor as of this month. Although the Guild has a website and a Facebook page, the board would love to see the newsletter continue. If you're looking for a way to interact with fellow Guild members, keep abreast of meeting times and programs as well as other coming events, and also possibly to share your knowledge and interests with the membership, please volunteer! Coleen will be happy to transfer files to you and help you get started.

Knitting Machine History and Future

By Carolyn Barsness

Gayle, Chris and I are pleased to be able to demonstrate a flatbed knitting machine at the February meeting. To give you a little background, I've compiled some information on knitting machines to help you see how we got to where we are today.

For centuries, hand knitting was the only means to supply people with the needed socks, shirts, caps and more. It has been estimated that at the end of the 16th century there was an annual need in England for 10 million pairs of stockings, allowing two pairs per person per year. At the time, hand knitters could turn out six pairs of stockings a week. England exported these for many years. During this time a 'knitting machine' was invented. This machine was still very manually operated. After many years and many revised versions, a domestic knitting machine became available for the home. These machines knit flat pieces that could be sewn together. A circular knitting machine was later developed which could produce a tube of fabric. Since the mid-19th century, knitting machines have been available for the home.



In America, the circular sock knitting machine gained in popularity during World War I. In 1917, the American Red Cross put out an urgent call for knitted goods to help fight the war. The need for socks was paramount. For American soldiers in the trenches, warm socks made all the difference. Wearing dry wool socks helped prevent 'trench foot' for the soldiers. The Red Cross had women knitting socks for soldiers a pair in an hour using a circular sock knitting machine.

Women picked up their knitting needles again as World War II entered the lives of Americans. After the war, knitting was popular for a while and then lost its popularity, but in recent years people have again picked up their knitting needles. In the meantime, circular sock knitting machines which were built over 100 years ago are still going strong, and in recent years, manufacturing of the original circular sock machine has begun again, and so once again socks are being cranked out on circular sock knitting machines.

Darrel Waters is planning on having a FIBER ARTS FAIR at his home on a Saturday (maybe Sunday) in June, date to be determined once we see weather reports. You will need to furnish your own tables and canopy, we have no trees on the lot. For Guild members only and the space is free.

If you are interested please contact Darrel Waters at murkywaters@charter.net or call [507 269 3663](tel:5072693663). More information will follow.

Off 90 Will Offer ZRFAG Members Personal Interview

By Norrie MacIlraith

I had announced the upcoming filming with KSMQ “Off 90” crew for our April or May meeting. Still don’t know which month—but Matt said they are coming. So here is your opportunity to prepare and be ready for a personal interview.

- This is an opportunity to make Zumbro River Fiber Arts Guild known throughout the viewing area and maybe attract new members.
- Think about how you want to present your fiber work/works.
- If you need extra space to set up loom, spinning wheels, or whatever, we need to arrange the room for you. Everyone will have a space to sit and show your items and demo if you want.
- If you have a business and sell your items, plan on promoting that also.
- Demos would be a great way to feature the variety of fiber techniques. Please contact me if you would like to do something: knitting, crochet, carding, spinning, embroidery, quilting, etc.
- Have additional display area where accomplished things can be shown. Calling for display racks or stands to better show items.
- Hope all of you will plan to come for this special day, we need a good turnout of members present. More on particulars of the day when I know them.

Color Challenge 2018

Don't forget: We have a color challenge project for 2018, and you won't want to miss out! If you haven't already started, here's what to do:

1. Pick up your paint chip colors from Laurice Johnson now through next few months (at meetings or contact her).
2. You will have two (2) colors (stapled together) to work from after picking your chip. These two colors must comprise 50% of your project. May be more but not less.
3. Try to replicate these colors as closely as possible - that is the challenge!
4. You may add other colors to build your project not exceeding 50%.
5. Your choice of project may be anything of interest to you. Be as creative as you wish!
6. Unveiling of the completed projects will be in October at a special dinner gathering. Place yet to be determined.

Check Out the Salem Glen Art Fair

Just a reminder that the Salem Glen Winery is looking for artists for their summer art fair again this year. Contact <dustin@salemglenvineyard.com>, Salem Glen Winery, or check out their website, http://www.salemglenvineyard.com/fiber_art.html.

Shepherds Harvest Festival, May 11-13

Just a reminder: Registration begins March 21. Check it out: www.Shepherdsharvestfestival.org

Thoughts from some of the board members on the benefits of being a member of the Zumbro River Fiber Arts Guild

At its last meeting, the ZRFAG board members talked about some of the many good things that come from being a member of the Guild. Listed below are some of their responses. Have more? Bring them to the next Guild meeting and share!

We like being Guild members because of:

- access to fiber art magazines and books
- access to guild owned equipment for trials
- access to fiber art experts
- field trips to area exhibits
- opportunity and avenues for shared interests
- challenges to expand applications of works
- opportunity to integrate techniques and methodologies
- camaraderie and means to develop new friendships
- spending time with people that like the same things I do
- exposure to different and new crafts/techniques through speakers or workshops

“Members are friendly, fun to be around and willing to share,” someone said. And it’s true. Lucky us!

Note: Lists of the Guild’s books and equipment are (or will be soon) available on the Members Only section of our Facebook page. Thanks to Carolyn Barsness for putting this all together. Awesome work!

Convergence, July 6 – 12, Reno

Handweavers’ Guild of America

We at HGA hope you are as excited as we are about HGA's 2018 [Convergence®](#) conference taking place July 6-12, 2018 in Reno, Nevada. The [Convergence® Delegate Registration Book](#) is an insert in the [Shuttle Spindle & Dyepot](#) magazine and is available for [download](#) now. You can also go to our website to review [Sessions](#), [Special Events](#), [Tours](#), and more.

[Online Registration](#) **Open for Convergence® Value Packages (CVP)**

www.convergence-con.org ›

ZUMBRO RIVER FIBER ARTS GUILD

Minutes January 24, 2018
Oronoco Community Center

The business meeting opened at 1:00 p.m.

New members were introduced and guests were welcomed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: \$1413.76 in checking; \$2047.48 in savings.

Chemo Cap Report

60 caps were delivered to Mayo Clinic. More responses are coming back since the attached feedback cards now have stamps placed on them. The guild received donations of \$250 for the chemo cap project from Donna Enzenauer, who shared profits from a Lula Roe party, and her employer who will match her donation with \$117. Thank you notes were sent to acknowledge the gifts.

OLD BUSINESS

A carpool is being formed to visit the Weaver's Expo in Faribault, February 16. It was suggested that the Guild consider having its own show in Faribault or at Crossings in Zumbrota.

This year's color challenge was explained and color chip cards were given to those who hadn't gotten one yet. It was suggested that another challenge sometime could be to make a gaudy holiday garment.

NEW BUSINESS

Laurice shared next year's programs. Coming up in February is a demonstration of machine knitting. In March we will meet in Zumbrota at All In Stitches for an English Needlework program. Other upcoming planned meetings will include a tour to a couple fiber farms, a visit by KSMQ to film an upcoming Off 90 show starring us, Join the Journey representatives will give us their perspective on the Chemo Caps, Silk Fusion at our Dye Pot fun day, color challenge dinner and show and a demo on rug hooking.

Our current newsletter editor, Coleen, will be retiring from the position this year. The guild thanks her for her fantastic work and the time she graciously volunteered in writing the Gossip Wheel every month. Anyone interested in filling the editor's position can contact President, Anne Black-Sinak or Vice-President, Laurice Johnson.

A poll was taken of the members present to see which fiber related internet sites are used.

Members shared their most recent projects.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris LaPlante, Secretary

We Remember Loren Bushman



One of our members, Loren Bushman, died on Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2018, following a short illness with cancer, at Cedar Hills Home in Rochester, where he had been a resident for the past four years. Some of you may not have seen his obituary in the *Post-Bulletin*, and so here is an abbreviated version:

Loren Bernard Bushman was born on March 11, 1944, in Stewartville to Bernard and Inga (Lecy) Bushman. Loren was born with physical and mental disabilities and lived with his family in rural Stewartville and Chatfield until the age of 14. He lived in various institutions during his younger years, including Lake Park / Wild Rice Children's Home in Fergus Falls, Minn., Faribault Regional Treatment Center, Rochester Social Adaption Center and Olmsted ARC Homes. He moved into his first Bear Creeks Home in Rochester in August 1982.

He was a longtime employee of Ability Building Center in Rochester, where he was involved in its in-house manufacturing and also worked for various businesses in Rochester with ABC's placement program. He was a past member of Zion Lutheran Church in Stewartville as a young boy and had recently attended services at Faith Community Church in West Concord.

Loren enjoyed music, puzzles, bowling and played baseball at the different homes where he lived. He had learned weaving in recent years at Cedar Hills Home and weaved rugs and clothes. He loved time spent with his brothers and family. The Bushman family would like to thank everyone at Bear Creek Services for their loving care of Loren.

He is survived by his brother, Robert (Evelyn) of Kenyon, and his twin brother, Lawrence (Wilma) of Utica, Minn.; and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Carl Bushman; and stepmother, Dorothy Siems Bushman.

The Bushman Family suggests memorials to Bear Creek Services in Rochester.

Sett in My Ways

Some of you may be familiar with Julia Cameron's book, *The Artist's Way*. If you've never encountered it, you might want to check it out sometime. Though you may not think of yourself as an artist, if we call ourselves "fiber artists", then we may all qualify, despite what we call ourselves. *The Artist's Way* is a book that encourages you to think about how you go about creating things, about how color affects you, about where your inspiration comes from. One winter several years ago, I went through the book, one chapter per week, and tried to complete as many of the exercises and tasks in it as I could. Cameron tries to expose her reader to new ideas and experiences that will help spark creativity by giving a list of assignments in each chapter.

Now, granted, I don't remember a lot of it, maybe not even most of it, but Cameron gave one assignment that I loved and tried to complete every time I had a chance. She said that one should go to a thrift store or sale every week. One week buy something in a color you haven't worked with before and let your imagination go. Create a collage from found objects. Etc. A thrift store aficionado from way back, I loved having permission to go wild at the Salvation Army whenever I felt the urge. Flea markets, ditto.

And so it was that a couple of years ago, at Goldrush in Oronoco, I found myself pawing through a box of somewhat soggy sewing notions, bits of lace, buttons, and the occasional windshield wiper blade and washing machine repair manual. Deep in the box, I spied some old lace, grabbed hold of it and began to pull. What surfaced was not just a piece of lace but some kind of garment trimmed with lace. In a past life it appeared to have been white, but it looked as though it might have been used to wipe off parts in the washing machine repair process, hence the manual, or to have washed several windshields. "Some nice lace in there you can rip out and use," the dealer called over to me from across the tent. Five dollars later, I was taking it home. My fellow shoppers Marit Lomen and Joann Ronningen would have been shaking their heads, but they had long ago grown used to my weird purchases.

The most egregious sin the dress had encountered was that someone in search of a piece of lace had removed about 30" from one of the bands in the skirt. Oh dear. I didn't want to launder the dress until I had repaired that because I thought the wet weight would put too much pressure on the fibers on either side. After a few weeks of trying to match the lace, I settled for something similar, but slightly coarser, and hand stitched it into place feeling disappointed that I had not been able to find the exact lace needed.





Once this flaw was repaired, Joann put me onto a product called Vintage Textile Soak, which I ordered from Amazon, and a few weeks later I screwed up my courage and decided to see if there would be anything left of the dress once it was exposed to soap and water. It was, you see, once a wedding dress—possibly 1890s-1910s. The fabric (lawn? dimity? fine muslin?) was extremely thin and there were a couple of little holes. After 24 hours spread out in the tub, soaking, the dress was ready for a second look. I took it out, rinsed it—and was



amazed. It was almost white again, with very little staining. I hung it lengthwise over the shower bar to dry, and then I faced ironing it. This is where I got weak. Julia Cameron never assigned ironing, after all, and even though I was still ironing white shirts weekly for my husband, I got very weak. I set it aside for a day when I would have time. Almost a year later, that day came, and to my surprise ironing the dress was not as bad a job as I'd expected, though my finished product wouldn't win any blue ribbons at the county fair, I admit.

The thing about the dress, though, is not what it's worth as a collectible or piece of art, but about how taking on a project like this dress offers inspiration in so many different ways, from learning about new products, to learning about fancy sewing techniques of yesteryear (gussets, pin pleats, pin tucks, crocheted buttons, and inset lace, to name a few), to the way the fabric itself has survived its checkered life and remains a source of beauty after a hundred years in someone's musty old trunk, rag bag, or dog bed. It all inspires me. It makes me think that creating a thing of beauty is never a waste of time. That quality endures, despite hardships, and that summer days with friends are memories to cherish.

Thank you, Julia Cameron, for assigning me a task that has helped me become an artist of the forgotten and unwanted, of the found and the lost. You may find your hidden artist in a tube of paint or skein of yarn, a loom or knitting machine, a sewing machine or a simple needle and thread. But if your inner artist has trouble finding the right project, you might think about exposing yourself to some completely different project or color or technique and see what happens. Or you could just wait for the summer flea markets to flood your senses with colors and textures that can both evoke the past and propel you into the future. Third weekend in August: Goldrush! Julia Cameron gives you permission to search for treasure(s).

--Coleen Johnston

P.S. If anyone happens to have a piece of lace like the one pictured, I'd be interested in taking a look at it and buying it if it's a match. It's about 1-1/4" wide, and I need about a yard. Thanks!