

OCTOBER
2025

ROVINGS



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Fall foliage in the Adirondacks
(Photo courtesy of Saloni Dhopte)

Fiber-y Events and Opportunities

Our October 11th meeting
will be 11-3pm at 347 Ridge Rd in Lansing. We will have a garage sale and a “scary fiber” meeting (see newsletter for details).

NY State Sheep and Wool Festival
October 18th-19th
Dutchess County Fairgrounds,
Rhinebeck, NY

Cornell Sheep and Goat Symposium
October 31st-November 2nd
Cornell University, Ithaca NY

Message from the President

Dear Fellow Spinners,

It's an odd sort of fall this year, with the leaves already dry and crinkled on the trees. On the bright side, the drought made my grapes the best I had in year. Dry or not, fall is a great time for spinning. We'll have our next guild meeting on Saturday, October 11 th , 11am-3pm, in the Parish Hall of the All Saints Catholic Guild in Lansing (347 Ridge Road).

I would like to thank Rose Helmbright for stepping up to be our new Vice President and Marianne Pelletier and Anna Bartels for stepping up to be our new Roc Day coordinators. With this, we are back to a full set of guild officers.

Roc Day planning is well on its way. During our next meeting, the volunteer list will be passed around. Members interested in teaching classes or doing demonstrations, please speak up. Our Roc Day Challenge is to create a scarf inspired by a photo of Taughannock Fall. Rules and photo can be found on Facebook, on our website, and in this newsletter.

Our October meeting will host two different events: There will be a guild garage sale. If you have fiber related items at home that no longer spark joy, the October meeting is a good opportunity to bring them and sell them to other guild members.

We also will indulge in the Halloween spirit: if you have spinning fiber at home that scares you (aka. It seems too difficult and intimidating to spin), bring it along to scare the rest of us, too.

I hope to see you soon,
Angelika



Guild News

Guild Meeting

The next Guild meeting will be on **Saturday, October 11th, 11-3 PM**, in the Parish Hall of the All Saint's Church

Address: 347 Ridge Rd, Lansing

New Members

If you know of folks who would like to join, please have them contact Louise Henrie and pay dues at: henrielm6@aol.com.

Address List

We put together a list of names, email addresses, and telephone numbers for guild members. This list is available in printed form at guild meetings or by request to Secretary, Roberta Sibley at robertainez@yahoo.com.

Guild Dues

For all members who have not yet paid dues, they are \$25 for the year of 2025. Please pay at a meeting, send your check for \$25 to: Louise Henrie, 417 2nd Street, Ithaca, NY 14850, or now you may send money via Venmo to Black-Sheep-NY

To Place an Ad

The cost for ads is \$5.00 per month for non-members. Current members may submit one business-card sized classified ad per month for free. Send a check made out to BSHG to our treasurer, Louise Henrie, 417 2nd Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Send the ad in digital form to the newsletter editor: rschnir@gmail.com

Guild Officers

President	Angelika St. Laurent	Newsletter	Ruby Schnirman
Vice President	Rose Helmbright	Workshops	Marianne Pelletier
Secretary	Roberta Sibley	Webmaster	Rosane Mordt
Treasurer	Louise Henrie	Roc Day Coordinator	Marianne Pelletier and Anna Bartels



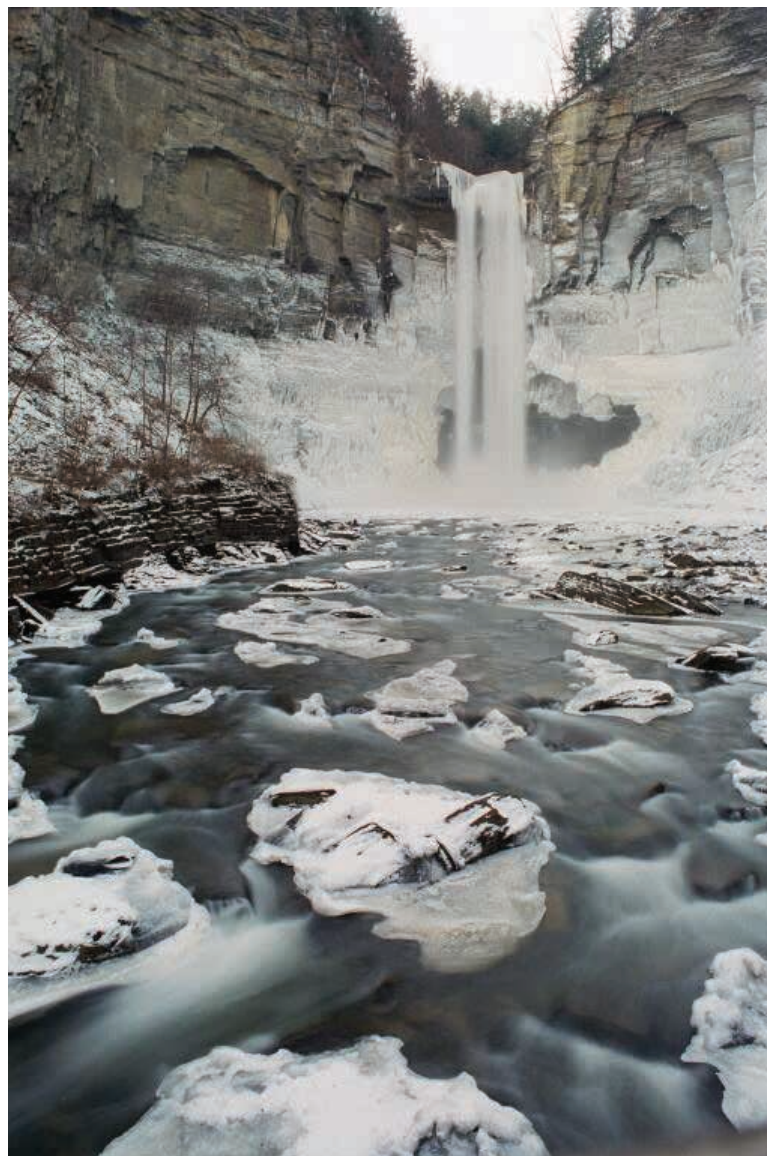
Roc Day 2026 Competition

Angelika St. Laurent

Objective: Create a scarf inspired by the photo of Taughannock Fall in Winter*.

Rules: All yarn and thread used in the project has to be handspun by the person submitting the project, this includes warp yarn, sewing thread etc. The scarf may be constructed with any fiber art technique known to humankind. Any fiber or blend may be used. If you want color, you may either dye your own fiber at any state of the process or resort to commercially dyed fiber. The finished object has to be submitted latest at Roc Day 2026, January 10th , by 10:30am. With the submission add a note about which fibers and techniques you used in the creation of the scarf and how they relate to the photo-inspiration.

All submitted scarfs will be judged in three categories: Most Beautiful, Best Interpretation of the Photo (both by public vote), and Best Technique (by a team of judges).



The guild has a limited number of 8-ounce bags of white Finn 2 wool available for members, who do not feel they have suitable fiber in their stash for the project.

With any questions contact Angelika St.Laurent, angelika@simonstl.com, 607-277-8105 or 607-793-4215.

*Photo credit: Susan Verberg

**Sheep raised by Elizabeth Kinne Gossner.



Roc Day Announcements

Roc Day this year will be January 10th, 2026. Please see below for important announcements regarding planning to ensure that we have another successful Roc Day.

Bring your thoughts about Roc Day to the next meeting

Anna and Marianne are ramping up Roc Day! Think about these topics and bring your ideas.

1. Can we get volunteers to teach? Topics of interest: wet felting, demonstrating a knitting machine, beginner spinning, spindles, something else?
2. Can we get volunteers for the shifts? We'll have the sign up sheet.
3. Who do we want for vendors?

Elle May Roc Day Paper Bag Auction

Is your stash of fiber, yarn, handmade fiber creations (very popular) or any other fiber related tools, books, or other related items taking up too much space in your house? Consider **donating** to the Elle May Roc Day Auction.

Debbie Benzer and Roberta Sibley will be collecting any donations during the Nov-Dec meetings. If it's more convenient, drop off donations at any time at 714 N. Cayuga St. Ithaca (place items in bin on porch).

If you have larger fiber-related items you would like to donate for the silent auction (looms, spinning wheels or yarn winders) they need to be checked by Lois Swales. Please call her at (607)-220-8973 to discuss repair, reverberation, and transportation of items several weeks before the auction.

Kitchen and food reminders

Jean Currie says, "As usual for our Roc day I hope you will bring a wonderful dish to pass. Just a few reminders about the logistics:

- Bring the dish as early as possible
- Have a label of some kind that has ingredients-- this is for those with allergies
- If it needs either cooking or heating, let me know when you arrive
- You don't need a serving utensil-- the church has plenty of them
- Please take any leftovers home with you and remember to take your dish. We hope that everything was eaten and that we have washed it for you!
- Bon appetit!

Any questions, let me know at ejeancurrie@gmail.com." Thanks, Jean!



Member Ads and Announcements

Finnsheep fleece available at next meeting

Elizabeth Kinne Gossner will be bringing a few small bags of washed Finnsheep fleece, available for people who aren't planning to attend the NY Sheep and Wool Festival. If you have a request, please reach out to Elizabeth at (315)-852-3344 with a return phone number.

October meeting events

At our October meeting we will hold a guild garage sale, so please bring any fiber or fiber-related items that you would like to pass along or sell.

We will also do some seasonal spinning-- if there is a fiber that you are scared to spin, please bring it to the October meeting for some group spooks and exposure therapy.



Column: Zoe Goes to Grad School

Zoe Gras has started an exciting journey in an MFA program in textiles. Zoe will be sharing dispatches from her experience here!

October Edition

Hello all, I just started my Masters of Fine Arts program at Textiles at Parsons The New School! I'm already on my fifth week of classes and have been so busy learning and creating. The classes I am taking include introductions to natural dyeing, felting, embroidery, weaving, spinning, bobbin lace, e-textiles, crochet, knitting machine, and 3D printer, so I'm definitely in my element! I also have a class on textile history that has been incredibly interesting. The most recent thing I learned was indigo dyeing... and to everyone who said I'd become addicted to it, you were right. I love it!

September in New York City was Textile Month and I took advantage of all the events happening in addition to the wonderful state-of-the art museums that are here. I went to the Woven Textiles exhibition at the MoMA three times and loved every second of it. I also live down the street from a flea market that sells yarn fiber tools every weekend!

Although I love living in a city, I miss the nature that we have in Ithaca. Thankfully, I'll be coming back upstate for Rhinebeck, I hope to bump into some of you there! If you'd like to follow my journey, my Instagram is @acreatorliveshere.



My studio area at school, including all my new indigo swatches in preparation for my next project, and a knitting machine that I am slowly learning to use.



From the Archives

Since we have a lot of Roc Day information in this month's newsletter, here's an excerpt from the November 1987 newsletter with some historical information about Roc Days past. Anyone have any corrections or other information to add??

WHAT IS ROCK DAY, ANYWAY??? Depending on the language it is taken from, the distaff usually used in handspinning flax was called a roc, rocke, or rocken. In English-speaking countries, the distaff was sometimes called a "rocke" and St. Distaff's Day, or Rock Day, was celebrated by spinners in Britain on January 7. This is the day after Twelfth Night, when the Christmas festivities ended (a period of vacation for spinners), and the spinners resumed their work. (Remember, spinning was an almost seven-day-a-week CHORE in an effort to keep up with the demand for yarns for domestic and commercial use, prior to the Industrial Revolution -- it wasn't just a chatty, fun time...)

One of the stories associated with Rock Day is that the farm boys' vacation lasted until the following Monday, so they spent their idle time teasing the girls by setting their tow flax on fire. The girls threw buckets of water on the flax, and on the boys, of course. (Nowdays, we would use our AB fire extinguishers.) Herrick described it in this poem:

Partly work and partly play
You must on St. Distaff's Day;
... If the maids a-spinning go,
Burn the flax and fire the tow.
Bring in pails of water then,
Let the maids bewash the men.

(Some spinners, perhaps from California, have misinterpreted the latter line to be some sort of get-together in a jacuzzi, but no scholarly evidence has been found to substantiate it.)

Handspinners have at least one other day to celebrate, but it is less known or widely celebrated.

Saint Catherine is the patron saint of spinners. She was a Christian martyr in Alexandria. In 307 AD, she was condemned to be torn apart by the spokes of a wheel. November 25 is her Saint's Day and in some parts of Europe it was celebrated by spinners taking the day off for a festival.

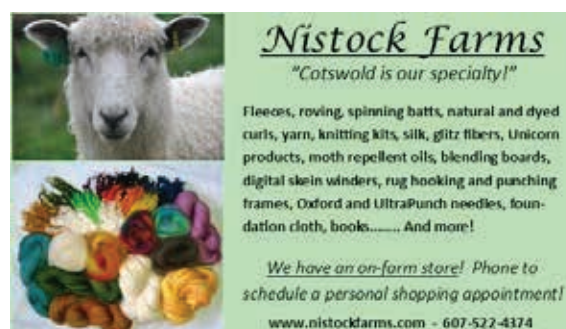
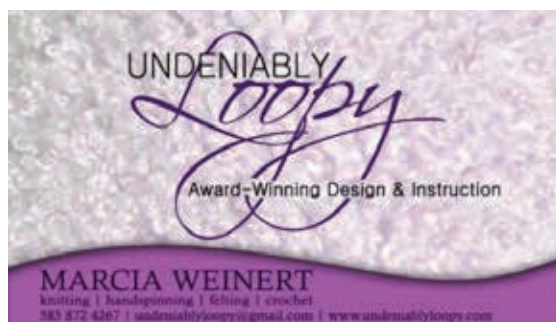
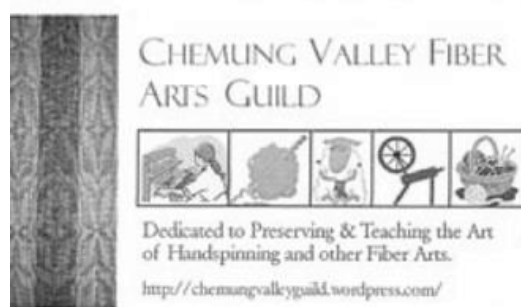
The fairy witch of Scottish peasants is a Nordic, named Gyre Carline. Spinners must look to her for skill in spinning and if you are lucky, she will grant it to you. (And here you thought it was just a lot of practice and hard work!) She also comes to your home on New Year's Eve to inspect your wheel, which you must leave with the drive band loose and bobbins empty. If you have left a partly-filled bobbin on the wheel, she will spin up the rest for you, but she will mutter and curse you for being lazy.

Well, some of us have been accused for being worse... BUT THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: finish up those spinning projects in time for Christmas, take a spinning break over the holidays, and start some new, challenging and interesting projects for the New Year -- ones you will complete. And COME TO ROCK DAY on Saturday, January 9th!!!

-- Jean Warholic
with some help from SPIN
SPAN SPUN by Bette Hochberg



Guild Vendors



New Member's Form

Name _____
Address _____

Email (Print Neatly) _____

Phone # _____

This information will be shared with registered guild members. If you wish to remain anonymous, please let Louise Henrie know.

Please list your wheel(s) _____

Do you spindle spin? Yes or No (circle)

Do you Knit? Weave? Crochet? Dye? (Natural or Chemical?):

Would you be willing to share your skills with other members (ie: teach beginners, present a meeting topic, demo to the public, etc?)

If you raise fiber animals, please list them

here _____

We need your help on committee(s). If you would like to volunteer, let our president, Angelika St. Laurent know.

Roc Day Programming	Newsletter
Membership	Website
Outreach	Treasurer

Our newsletter is distributed electronically. If this is a problem, please contact Ruby Schnirman (401)-486-7237. Please fill this out and either bring it to a meeting, mail it with your check for \$25 to: Louise Henrie, 417 2nd Street, Ithaca, NY 14850, or send via Venmo to Black-Sheep-NY.

