

Black Sheep Handspinners Guild Newsletter

November 2010

President: [Jim Johnson](#), 607-564-7178

Vice President: [Carol LaBorie](#), 607-277-9108

Treasurer: [Sharon Gombas](#), 607-280-8726

Librarian: [Ruth Allen](#), 607-227-8467

Newsletter Editor: [Marianne Pelletier](#), 607-277-1758

<http://www.blacksheephandspinnersguild.org>

The Black Sheep meet from 11am-3pm on the second Saturday of the month at the All Saints Church, Route 34b in Lansing.

We are meeting at the All Saint's Church in Lansing, across from the Lansing Schools, from 11AM to 3PM, November 13, 2010.

President's Message

Jim Johnson

The program for the guild is Member Made, a time for any interested in showing off and sharing with the guild anything they have made, even if it is not fiber related. A good time was had last time we did this and I expect we all will see unexpected sides of our members.

The next meeting of the Roc Day committee is Wed Nov 17 at 5:30 in the Tripphammer CTB {old Hope's Way}. All are invited to come and help to make this the best Roc Day celebration yet.

Program for the October Meeting

Susan Sarabasha

Program for November is **Member Made.**

If you make anything yourself - ie: dye your own yarn or fiber, raise animals and then have fiber or yarn or fleeces for spinning or felting, turn wood, make soap, make bowls, quilt, felt, etc please bring them to show and/or sell at our November meeting.

Are You Ready to Find Out What Ruth's Mystery Fiber Was?

It's a Crab Boil!

Given that winter is slowly bearing down, Ruth Allen and I opted to create one last vision of summer for us with -- did you guess what fiber Ruth brought to the October meeting? -- a crab boil! Here's Ruth's article.

Fiber? Now I've Seen Everything!

Ruth Allen

Picture it. Sunset at Virginia Beach in August. The kids shrieking after a volleyball and doing face-plants in the sand. Somewhere a folk guitar is being strummed. Pots and pots of water boiling over burning driftwood in the sand. Endless ears of corn brushed with melted butter. And crabs. Tearing them open with sharp metal picks; almost more effort than they are worth - but not quite. Oh so delicious, prying out that last tiny morsel, and then tossing the shells aside on the sand.

But wait a minute, in this era of conservation and reuse, why waste something as valuable as a crab's shell? What, just garbage, you say? "Not so!" declares the fishing industry. It seems they've put a new spin on old, smelly sea trash. After processing their haul of crabs and other exoskeletal ocean delicacies, the shells, which are mostly pure protein, are sold off for a variety of purposes. Including for spinning fiber. Who knew?

The mystery fiber I brought to the October guild meeting is made from crab shells. Chitosan is a linear polymer - a protein fiber made from crab shells, a by-product of the fishing industry. I bought an ounce and spun up most of it, leaving a sample of the raw fiber, a sample of single plied yarn and a small skein (about 2/3 ounce) of two-ply. See the photo.



Here are my observations: Crab is a very fine fiber, similar to silk. It is extremely lustrous and appears to glow. The staple is about 4 inches and is very consistent. It has no crimp at all. It is extremely smooth and slippery to handle, and "gets away from you" until you become comfortable spinning it, even more so than, say, a superfine superwash merino. Once you have

found a comfortable tension and technique for it, crab fiber handles consistently and is not difficult to spin. It requires a lot of twist. This fiber is incredibly strong - I can't break my very thin yarn - but it has no stretch or give at all. The yarn seems to be well-defined. It "wants" to spin up quite thin. That ounce cost about \$6 plus shipping, so it is quite pricey. There is a dealer for it both on Etsy and on E-bay.

There are many products made from chitosan, and they are fully biodegradable and non-harmful, but I don't know yet what the *process* to create the fiber from the raw material involves, and how this process might affect the environment. There is a great article about chitosan at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chitosan>

The article does not address its use as fiber, but discusses a multitude of other applications, including agricultural and biomedical ones.

I knitted up a small sample - see the second photo - and found the yarn wants to blossom a bit. Due to the lack of stretch it is a lot like knitting with a fine cotton yarn. In spite of the very smooth, silky nature of the fiber, the blossoming everywhere acts a bit like mohair, and it has a slightly prickly feeling against the skin. Judging by the sample crab would be warm to wear.



Pattern: Short band of Garter Stitch; Larger band of Stockinette; Band of Seed Stitch; Band of Cables; Short band of Garter Stitch

And now on to how you can make use of the leftover corn...take it away, Marianne!

You Can Make Everything from Corn

Marianne Pelletier

I remember sitting with some clients once describing my spinning hobby, and how I had just spun some ingeo, a fiber made from corn. One of my clients piped right up. "You'd better not get near the cows, then," she offered. "They'll eat your shirt."

Ingeo was invented in 2003 and is now owned by NatureWorks, LLC (<http://www.natureworkslc.com/>), which is owned by Cargill. The dextrose in field corn is extruded into fibers. How on Earth does that happen? Well, NatureWorks made a poster just for that question: http://www.natureworkslc.com/the-ingeo-journey/eco-profile-and-lca/~media/Our%20Values%20and%20Views/EcoProfile_LCA/HowItsMade/Ingeo_plants_to_plastics_poster_pdf.ashx. And you thought washing wool was work! Imagine having to cook the a product at 122 degrees for 40 hours and then making sure the little bugs eat it right and make the polymer whatever they are's. Farming, grinding, cooking, fermenting, and chemistry all come together to make a renewable shirt.

NatureWorks plans to find ways to make ingeo from other plants, especially by products. See here for that story: <http://www.natureworkslc.com/the-ingeo-journey/raw-materials.aspx>. Originally, the fiber was available for clothing, and now the company is selling ingeo to replace plastic.

According to NatureMade, ingeo works with "nonwoven clothing." Where can you get your hands on some? Paradise Fibers offers some (where I've borrowed the photo of what the top looks like): <http://www.paradisefibers.net/Undyed-Ingeo-Spinning-Fiber-p/2132.htm>.



And Kendig Fibers has some: <http://www.kendigcottage.com/ExoticFiber.htm>.

And now onto wiping all that butter off our faces -- did you bring your handspun linen napkins?????

And Now: Fall -- And Rhinebeck

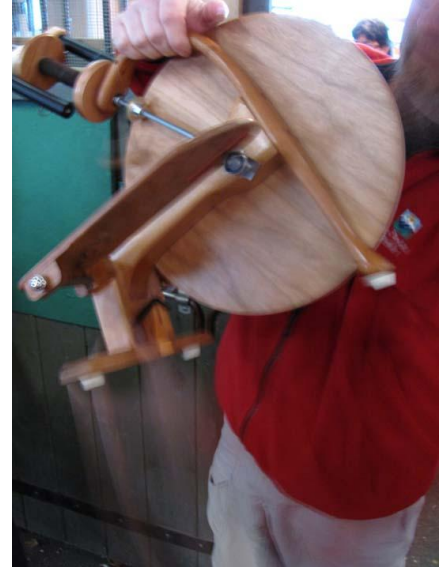
Anne Furman

Four of us went to Rhinebeck this fall. We stayed Friday night in a motel in order to be early at the Dutchess County Sheep and Wool Festival. This was the earliest we had ever been. The gates weren't even open yet. Fortunately the weather was good and the waiting crowd was cheerful, so we had fun talking to everyone. After we (Jean Currie, Ellie May, Vernice Church, and Anne Furman), decided where to meet for lunch, we split up and went our own ways.

A new wheel is always a fun discovery. Here is one that is supposed to weigh 6 pounds and is made in western Washington state. Lots more information at the web site.



Pocket Wheels by
Jon
Jon McCoy
1900 Country Lane
Oak Harbor, WA
Jon said it was designed
by an aeronautics
engineer for his wife.
Jon bought the rights to
the design. There is a
woolie winder for it.
www.pocket-wheel.com



Norm Hall had a new design too. Big, beautiful, and pricey. The new wheel is in the foreground. Norm is in the picture too in the red shirt, but he wouldn't turn around. To his left, there is a banjo player providing music for everyone.

In his booth, Norm had a couple of his older wheels which he was reselling. So there is Amy Cook's wheel up on the table. Brings back good memories.





Color, color everywhere. This display caught my eye. It is what Ellie May likes to call “guild colors” as so many of us just love this particular color way. But for anyone who prefers other colors, there were many other displays that they would have fallen in love with. I sometimes wish I could just fling myself into colors and be swept up in them. A good reason to visit the museums, fabric stores, yarn stores, and Rhinebeck.

Pendulum wheel. For a video of one in action to go: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJMXYOBg2F0>



Young weaver in the display area:



Unbelievable as it may seem, we used our eyes and fingers more than our credit cards. Yes, really! There were some purchases, but all of them reasonable and necessary. Yes, really! Of course, that doesn’t count the Golding wheel that Vernice is on the waiting list for. Now that we have matured a bit and are more restrained, we can certainly get prepared for next year and another Rheinbeck adventure which includes the area’s restaurants, the wooden indian on the corner in Rheinbeck, the farmer’s market on Sunday morning, and the friends we see at the fair.

Deadline for entries to the December newsletter is Wednesday, December 1.

Upcoming Events

Marianne thanks Knitter's Review for most of these listings. Oh, and for including Roc Day in their listings. Please forward events you know of to Marianne at fudger28@yahoo.com for inclusion on this list.

Wine Trail Handspinners

Wine Trail Handspinners meet one Sunday a month 1:30 to 4:30 pm at Graceful Arts Fiber Studio, 4760 State Route 414, Burdett 14818. This is an informal group with no dues, membership or leadership. Meeting dates vary – anyone who wishes to be notified of meeting times (generally decided at the previous meeting) should send their email address to Karey Solomon at threads@empacc.net.

Greater Appalachian Llama and Alpaca Conference

November 11-14

Holiday Inn Conference Center, Harrisburg/Hershey, PA

<http://www.galaonline.org/conference.htm>

Small Alpaca Farms of the Northeast Association Annual Conference

November 20-21

Liberty Fire Company, New Holland, PA

<http://www.safona.org/events.html>

Sheep Shearing Weekend

Adams Farm, Wilmington, VT

How hysterical are we that this would be interesting?

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

Lake Country Fiber Festival Show & Sale (thanks to Susan Sarabasha for some of these)

Perinton Square Mall, 6720 Pittsford-Palmyra Rd, Fairport, NY

sponsored by Lake Country Spinning & Fiber Artists

Sat, Nov 13th, 10 - 5

more info- call: 877-287-20-501

Wool and Fiber Frolic

Beaver Lake Nature Center, 8477 East Mud lake Rd, Baldwinsville, NY

sponsored by The Golden Fleece Spinners' Society

Sat, April 16, 2011 from 10am to 5 pm

goldenfleecespinners@gmail.com

Artistry in Thread

A Juried Celebration of the Fiber Arts with Vendors, Exhibits, Lectures & Workshops

sponsored by Rochester Museum & Science Center Women's Council, 657 East Ave, Rochester, NY

Sat, April 30th, 10-4, Sun, May 1st, 11-4

585-271-4320

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New York State Sheep and Wool Festival
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2009: "Reserve Grand Champion" Natural Colored Fleece
Finger Lakes Fiber Arts Festival
Hemlock, N.Y.

Christine Johnson
johnson.chris123@yahoo.com

To place an ad

A check for \$5.00 made to BSHG for an ad to run three times (a year is \$15) should be sent to the current treasurer, Sharon Gombas, 177 Salmon Creek Rd. Lansing, NY 14882. Send the ad to the newsletter editor, Marianne Pelletier, at: fudger28@yahoo.com. If you have a question for her or others, you can email us through the links at the top of the newsletter.



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Stash Bins FOR SALE

I have 44+ unfinished wooden bins that were hanging on the wall of my shop (we have changed to shelving). Their only use was to store fiber. They are stackable as well as hangable.

I purchased them at AC Moore. The retail price is \$9.99. I am selling them for \$2.50 each. Purchase 1 or as many as you choose. Dimensions are 14" wide x 15.5" deep x 9.5" high.

These are perfect for organizing your stash or even for children's toys or clothing.

Please contact me

(susan@spinningbunny.com) for more info and directions to my shop to pick them up.

In the picture, the top row is screwed into the wall on its end, while the rows below are in stackable formation.

