



NEWSLETTER November 2023

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Thanks, Marilee!



December
2023



Message from the President

Dear Fellow Spinners,

Our last meeting of the year is approaching. As I'm writing this, a cheerful little layer of snow is covering the world. Though as it looks in the forecast, there won't be any snowfall impeding our meeting this Saturday, 12-9-23, from 11am-3pm, in the Parish Hall of the All Saints Catholic Church in Lansing, 347 Ridge Road.

This being the last meeting of the year, we will have a holiday celebration. Members are invited to bring baked treats to share. We also have our traditional gift exchange. To participate bring one wrapped fiber-related gift. We will gather all the gifts on a central table. Then, everyone who brought a gift will draw a number and in the order of the numbers drawn choose one of the gifts on the table to unwrap. Participation is not required to join the meeting. Spinners are welcome to attend without bringing gifts or cookies.

We will also do some last Roc-Day planning. At this point, all bags of wool for the Roc-Day challenge have been claimed. Members who have taken a bag of wool and have not yet started on their project, this is the reminder to get started.

I hope to see you all on Saturday,
Angelika



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2023



Guild News

Guild Meeting

The next Guild meeting will be Saturday, December 9, 11-3 PM, in the Parish Hall of the All Saint's Church

Address: 346 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 Officers

President	Angelika St. Laurent
Vice President	Sue Quick
Secretary	Roberta Sibley
Treasurer	Louise Henrie
Newsletter	Rachael Skye
Workshops	Marianne Pelletier
Webmaster	Rosane Mordt
Roc Day Coordinator	Yvonne LaMontagne



Guild Dues

For all members who have not yet paid dues, they are \$25 for the year of 2023. 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

Guild Meeting Location

All members are asked to be on the lookout for a new guild meeting location in a reasonable price range. It must have adequate parking.

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: rachael.siems.skye@gmail.com.

2024 Retreat Update

The retreat will be the weekend of February 23 through 25 at Casowasco Retreat Center. Those who have gone in past years can tell you what a great time this is. With a minimum of 18 people registered, it will cost \$159 per person. This fee includes lodging (the entire Galilee Lodge for our group) and meals Saturday and breakfast Sunday.

We currently have 18 people registered. If you still have to pay your deposit, you can: mail a check written out to Black Sheep spinning guild to: Sarah Davis 26 Curtis Road, Ithaca NY 14850, or you can Venmo to "Black-Sheep-NY". If you Venmo, please put "retreat" in the comment.

We will accept payments toward the retreat at any time if you want to spread it out. Final payment is due to Casowasco on February 5th. Please contact Kylie Spooner, Sarah Davis or Anna Murray-Bartels with any questions.



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2024 Roc Day Planning

Hello Black Sheep Handspinners,

ROC Day 2024 is just 1 month away. Many volunteer slots are filled, but more are needed! Please check the volunteer sheet to see if there is a space for you.

We will be holding the raffle again this year and count on donations of raffle items to make it a success. Please consider donating something "fibery". Donations can be brought to the November and December meetings or dropped off at Debbie Benzer's home.

We hope to have many vendors selling their wares and many tasty dishes to share at the dish to pass lunch. Please be sure to bring a card with the ingredients of your dish, label your dishes and utensils with your name, and take back home what does not get consumed (for your lunch the next day). And of course there will be workshops, demos, the competition voting, and the spinning circle. Contact Angelika about entering the competition. Posters will be available at the December meeting for posting. Looking forward to good weather and a wonderful day! And please pass the word to you friends and neighbors!

Yvonne and all the coordinators for ROC Day 2024

Elli May Raffle

Last chance to bring donations for Roc day Elli May raffle! Any items related to fiber arts, equipment (knitting/Crocheting, spinning, weaving any equipment used to craft fiber), books-magazines with patterns or techniques, kits, completed items, any fiber-in any form, or any art/item that depicts fiber arts or sheep.

My house (Debbie Benzer) is centrally located in Ithaca – 714 N. Cayuga St. I've put a covered bin on my porch of which you can drop off items for the raffle anytime!

If you have something large I would be willing to come get it, if necessary. Contact me:
DPBenzer@twcny.rr.com

We're hoping to get all donations by the December meeting!

Last resort, the items can be delivered to All Saints on January 12th at 4:30 when we set up the raffle. The Raffle is a major source of revenue for the Spinning guild, it allows us to have low cost workshops for the guild members and pay the monthly rent for meetings.

Thanks for contributing!
Debbie



2024 Roc Day Challenge

Our 2024 Roc Day Challenge goes from raw fleece to finished objects. Participants receive eight ounces of raw Lincoln wool, four ounces white, four ounces brown*. The challenge is to make a bag out of this wool – and only out of this wool. The finished bag needs to be sturdy and tight enough to hold a cup of marbles. Participants may use any fiber art to create and adorn their bag. Felting, knitting, crocheting, weaving, nalbinding, embroidery and any combination of these are all allowed (so are fiber arts not on the list). Participants are free to dye the wool. However, dyeing is not required. No other fiber, thread, fabric, or notions (buttons, zippers etc.) may be used in the making of the bag. E.g., if the bag is constructed sewing together woven fabric, the sewing thread also has to be spun from the wool provided.



Carolann Darling of Darling Woolens in Groton provided the fleeces for this year's challenge. Here is Carolann with her four Lincoln ewes.

Finished bags should be submitted latest on Roc Day 1-13-24 by 10 am. We ask participants, to add an index card listing the crafts used for their project. Judging will be by public vote. The categories will be 'Most Beautiful', 'Most Creative', and 'Most Practical'.

Ziploc bags with the wool will be available at the November. At this point, there are still four bags of fiber available. If you'd like to participate, but can't make it to a meeting, please contact Angelika angelika@simon-stl.com.

*A little note on weight loss with washing. You are receiving raw wool, which contains a fair amount of grease, dirt and sweat. When washing the wool expect to lose 25-30% of total weight. After washing, you'll have six ounces or a little bit less of clean fiber to work with.

There are two different articles on fleece washing for beginners at the end of the newsletter, from Angelika and Ellen.



December Fiber Events



LOCAL FIBER POP-UP SHOP

November 23 thru December 2022
Wed - Sun 11-6pm, Thurs till 8pm
108 W. MLK Jr. St, Ithaca, NY

Across from the State Theater and next to Handwork
ALL LOCAL WOOL, MOHAIR AND OTHER NATURAL FIBERS,
HANDSPUN AND MILLSPUN YARN, SPINNING FIBERS,
HANDMADE GOODS, AND MUCH MORE!

This special event is made possible by:
**LocalFiber.org and
Downtown Ithaca Alliance**

WHERE DOES YOUR FIBER COME FROM?

LOCAL FIBER DOWNTOWN ITHACA



HOMEGROWN FIBER AND CRAFT MARKET

FEATURING THE GOODS OF LOCAL CRAFTERS,
FARMERS AND MAKERS

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16TH
10 AM-4 PM**

THE CORNER BREW
coffee shop & event space

1 West Main Street, Dryden, NY

Find knitted goods, felted hats, ornaments, cards,
medicinal herbs, jewelry, yarn, blankets, fleece,
hand sewn items, roving, dye plants, and more!

VENDORS: DARLING WOOLENS, GLF WOOLENS, HORSETAIL HERB FARM,
KAREN ATKINS, KIM'S KEEPSAKE CREATIONS, KURTZ'S KRAFTS,
LAUGHING WINDS FARM, PATRICIA'S FELTED HATS

Local Yarn Store Starting

Connected Stitches Yarn & Fiber Shop is a new business looking to set up in the area! They are currently looking for a brick and mortar location. Right now, they are hosting knitting classes and social gatherings called Stitch and Spin in Dryden, NY. They are at the event space next to Corner Brew Cafe (2 W Main St, Dryden, NY). All fiber crafters are welcome! Bring a mug, and tea is invited. The last Stitch and Spin had a great turnout, and the next is December 14th 6:30-8:30 PM.

The founders are very open to feedback and ideas as they build this shop. The goal is for it to be a gathering space for people to connect through fiber arts, host classes and workshops, provide opportunities to buy locally sourced fibers and products, and obtain quality crafting supplies for fiber arts, knitting, and crochet.

<https://connectedstitches.com/>





For Sale In The Guild

Julia Wright is selling a Majacraft Rose wheel and a bag of unknown wool to anyone interested. Get in touch with her at julkawright@gmail.com (Note the k)



Stories from the Guild

A quick tip from Marcia Weinert!

When I count bouts in a skein after removal from the niddy, I typically do so by counting in fives. While holding the full skein over my non-dominant wrist, I pull a pair of strands to the base of my thumb, and then a trio; when I'm positive I've got five strands (a matter of half a second), I lift them all together over my thumb into the crook of my thumb, and announce aloud (to myself) the current total. This way, it only takes 20 "lifts" to total 100 bouts--after which, I use an easily-removed twist tie to sequester those 100 bouts, so that if I lose count again or the phone rings, I know I haven't lost the effort in counting those collected strands, at least. (Shown: a 3-ply, hand-dyed skein of 8+ ounces and 856 yards, spun from hand-combed tops!)



Marianne Dyes Again

A repeated adventure in dyeing wool: by Marianne Pel



Marianne Dyes Again

A repeated adventure in dyeing wool: by Marianne Pelletier

A couple of years ago, I wrote an article for this newsletter about dyeing wool, but I had lost most of the photos. This year, I made a point of keeping them.

My first dye was goldenrod. This weed annoys my neighbors and makes us sneeze at home, but I wanted to try dyeing it. I ordered some alum online and some cream of tartar. Then I loaded a basket with the goldenrod that is taking over my hay field. Of course, once I start picking, I don't stop (just ask my poor fridge which is overloaded with apples). So I picked a bunch. And my Concord grapes were ready, too.



I could do the dyeing in the house because Darling was at work. First, I put the branches into my dye pot and cooked them. My natural dyeing book told me how much alum, how much water, and how long to simmer the goldenrod.



Then I warmed up a half pound of merino roving in water mixed with alum – I warmed the water to bring the wool's temperature up slowly. Notice that I added my canning rack to make it easier to take it out, and I put 4 ties on it. Once simmered for an hour, the golendrod was strained. Yes, I did make a lot! I'm like that.



The hot merino went in, still on the canning rack. Nifty color, eh? It came out with variegated colors because I got distracted by something when I should have been poking all the wool into the dye bath. It took several rinses to remove the extra dye, But the final color was amazing. Then I hung it to dry outside on a rope to not only keep the dye off my floors but also to give my neighbors more things to talk about.

To even out the color, we recarded the wool into batts. It came out lovely, which is why it sold within a week on the Facebook marketplace.





Meanwhile, I did, indeed, collect a ton of black walnuts to both dye and to try the walnuts. I bought a nut cracker that would get through the shells.

I dyed on a Saturday so I had time to build a fire in my fire pit and cook the husks. Black walnut does not require a mordant, so I could just warm the wool while cooking off the walnut husks. The other difference is that the walnut husks soaked for a few days, and I had them in a cider making bag to make the straining easier.

Unlike last time, my dye pot was big enough to cook the husks and I did not try to cook all the husks on my land.

I was a little less careful about dropping the wool in.

But I stick around to manage the fire and to keep the wool in the dye bath. So it came out good. Rather than fighting with hot dye and staining my hands for life, I left the wool to cool on the grate overnight. The brick in this photo (upper right) is to keep the wool under the surface.

Hauling it out, it looked good, though lighter than my last dye. Here's the photo that I had lost last time of my rinsing via the garden hose. It's not a bad process.

Nobody stopped by to ask me what the heck I was hanging on my porch so I tried again with the black walnut wool.

I opted not to re-card it – I want the color variation because I am making a hat for a friend. Here's the yarn (right)

It'll make a great winter hat! After, of course, I lecture the daylighters out of the friend on not putting it in the washing machine.





A Quick Guide to Washing Wool

Written by Angelika

The idea of washing wool can be intimidating. Wool can felt and no spinner wants that to happen to their precious spinning fiber. Luckily, wool needs a combination of heat and agitation to felt. Heat alone, without agitation, will not result into felting. When washing wool keep two rules in mind:

- (1) Never move wool from hot or warm water into cold water. The fiber contracting in the newly colder environment can provide the agitation necessary to felt. Taking wool out of a hot bath and letting it cool off in the air, does not result into felting, because air is a so much worse heat conductor than water.
- (2) Always fill the washing container first with water and heat the water to the desired temperature, before adding the wool. Running water or bubbles forming from heating the water can agitate the wool into felting.

Here is a quick recipe that I use to wash raw wool:

- 1) Cold soak. I fill a container with cold water and submerge the wool in it and let it sit for an hour or two, or even overnight. Wool tends to contain a lot of easily water-soluble dirt, like the sheep's sweat or plain old dust that can easily rinsed out that way. The first rinsing water often becomes reddish brown and almost opaque. It makes for excellent plant watering. I tend to give two or three cold rinses, until the rinsing water looks reasonably clear.
- 2) Scouring. This step is to remove the lanoline and waxes from the wool fiber. I bring a pot of water with about a cup of dish detergent to at least 180F. I then submerge my wool and let it sit for 20 min. I pour out the scouring water and let the hot water drip off of the wool.
- 3) Second scouring. I repeat step #2.
- 4) Hot rinse. I bring detergent free water to 160-180F and submerge the wool again. This step mostly serves to remove the left-over detergent from the wool.
- 5) Drip off and drying. I let the wet wool drip off for a while, then I gently roll it in a towel to extract some of the moisture (be careful not to agitate the wool too much while rolling it up) Then I lay it out on a fresh dry towel to dry.

Things that make washing wool easier: Putting wool into a lingerie bag for washing, makes it much easier to move it in and out of the baths. Sturdy rubber or nitril gloves can protect the hands while handling hot liquids. An old salad spinner can be useful to spin water out of the washed wool and facilitate faster drying.

How much time does washing raw wool add to a project compared to starting from washed wool? Two to five days. Washing the wool with all the cold soaks takes about one day. How long it takes to dry the wool after the wash depends a bit on the weather. In dry early spring outdoors or once indoors heating has substantially reduced the air humidity, drying takes a full day. Under more humid conditions it might take up to three days. As a rule of thumb, when the cat elects to sleep in the wool, it's dry.

FINNSHEEP FLEECE WASHING

by Elizabeth H. Kinne Gossner

Prized by handspinners, purebred Finnsheep grow some of the most luxurious soft wools and are a source of creative inspiration throughout the year. The transition from raw fleece to pristinely clean fiber can be accomplished in several ways. For processing in bulk there are carding mills which will efficiently clean and combine large volumes of fleece into a well-blended presentation.

However, for those who prefer to remain connected to individual fleeces, hand processing may be the better choice. Basic “scouring” is quite simple. As fleece grows and during shearing it is helpful to prevent contamination from burdock, hay chaff, etc. For cleaning, first skirt the fleece (remove undesirable areas such as manure, 2nd cuts, & VM), then divide into smaller sections which will conveniently fit into soaking pots.

Fill a large vessel with very hot water and then add about 1/3 cup of liquid dishwashing detergent (ex: Joy liquid). Stir. Gently place handfuls of raw fleece into the vessel and push beneath the surface. You may crowd the fleece for this first soaking which will help retain heat. Cover if possible and allow to soak without stirring for about an hour. While still warm prepare 2-3 pots of clear rinse water. They should approximate the temperature of the soaking bath to avoid shocking the wool. Next, simply take a handful of damp wool from the initial bath, squeeze out, and swoosh through clear water. Repeat this step with each successive rinse vessel. If lock tips are muddy they can be manipulated gently in the rinse process. Renew rinse waters as needed. When the entire amount of fleece is rinsed it can be placed into a top loading washing machine which has a **spin only cycle** to further drain out the water. Hang the wet wool on a clothesline or drying rack and if the day is sunny with a breeze, you may have beautiful dry fleece which is ready to use in a couple of hours.

This hands-on approach has the advantage of retaining individual lock character as well as color definition in patterned fleeces. An awareness of the individual sheep providing its wool can be a certain pleasure as we spin the precious fiber into our yarns.

Whether the preference is for glistening white wool or any one of the natural colors that our Finnsheep have to offer, this simple approach to washing fleeces gives us the ultimate creative opportunity.





Roc Day Volunteer Schedule

Volunteer Schedule for 13 January, 2024

<p>Set-up Friday 4:30 - 6pm - Yvonne L.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Louise Henrie 2. Angelika St Laurent 3. Melody Narvaez 4. Kay Stickene 5. Suzanne Schwartz 6. Mary Nichols <p>Raffle Set-Up</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Lynne Anguish 8. Sue quick 9. Debbie Benzer Roberta Sibley 	<p>Welcome Table - Kathy Halton</p> <p>9:45-10:45 Kathy Halton</p> <p>10:45-11:45 Amy Glaser</p> <p>11:45-12:45 Louise Henrie</p> <p>12:45-1:45 Susan Sarabasha</p> <p>1:45-2:45 Sharon Gombas</p> <p>2:45-3:45 Ruby Schnirman</p>
<p>Spinning Circle - (Need Point Person)</p> <p>10-11 Zoe Gras</p> <p>11-12 Mary White</p> <p>12-1 Suzanne Schwartz</p> <p>1-2</p> <p>2-3 Ronda Porras</p>	<p>Raffle 10am – 1pm - Deb Benzer Roberta Sibley</p> <p>10-11 Beth Varieur 10-11 Lynne Anguish</p> <p>11-12 Christianne White 11-12</p> <p>12-1 Marilee Williams 12-1</p> <p>1-2 Ronda Porras 1-2 Lynne Anguish</p>
<p>Kitchen - Jean Currie</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ruby Schnirman (9-11:00) 2. Marianne Pelletier 3. Sue Quick (9-11:00) 4. Christianne White (12-1:00) 5. Sarah Davis 6. 	<p>Floaters - Yvonne LaMontagne</p> <p>10-11 Sharon Gombas</p> <p>11-12 Zoe Gras</p> <p>12-1 Amy Glaser</p> <p>1-2 Kylie Spooner</p> <p>2-3 Kylie Spooner</p> <p>3-4 Kylie Spooner</p>
<p>Competition - Angelika St. Laurent</p> <p>Competition Table</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Angelika St. Laurent (9:30-10:30) 2. Kay Stickane? (10:30-11:30) 3. (11:30-12:30) 4. Rachael Skye (12:30 till announced) 	<p>Clean-Up 4 - 6:30 pm - Yvonne LaMontagne</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Angelika St Laurent 2. Jean Currie 3. Kylie Spooner 4. Sarah Davis 5.



Guild Vendors

Sheepy Hollow

Wool + Yarn + Roving from an Ithaca
Local Flock of Romney Longwool Sheep
Now at LocalFiber's Pop-Up Shop

Instagram: @sheepy.hollow
Email: SheepyHollowLLC@gmail.com
Facebook: sheepy.hollow.ny

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315-246-1178 mflowers@wells.edu

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tion cloth, books..... And more!

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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 Rachael Skye (734) 476-0634. 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.