



NEWSLETTER

September 2024

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The Wool Center at the State Fair



September
2024



Message from the President

Dear Fellow Spinners,

Our September meeting is about as late in the month as it possibly can get: on the 14th. I hope to see you all this Saturday, 9-14-24, from 11am-3pm, in the Parish Hall of the All Saints Catholic Church in Lansing (347 Ridge Road).

This is the meeting we start preparing for Roc Day. We will have a lot to plan. Also, at our September meeting we will vote for new guild officers or ask the old ones to please keep doing what they are doing for another year. I would like to thank everyone, who holds an office for the time and effort they are putting in: Rachael Skye, our newsletter editor, Louise Henrie, our treasurer, Roberta Sibley, our secretary, Marianne Pelletier, our workshop coordinator, Yvonne LaMontagne, our Roc Day coordinator, and Sue Quick, our vice president.

Editor's note: and of course, add to the list a thanks to our president!

See you soon,
Angelika



September
2024



Guild News

Guild Meeting

The next Guild meeting will be on Saturday, September 14th, 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 2024. 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: rachael.siems.skye@gmail.com.

Guild Retreat 2025

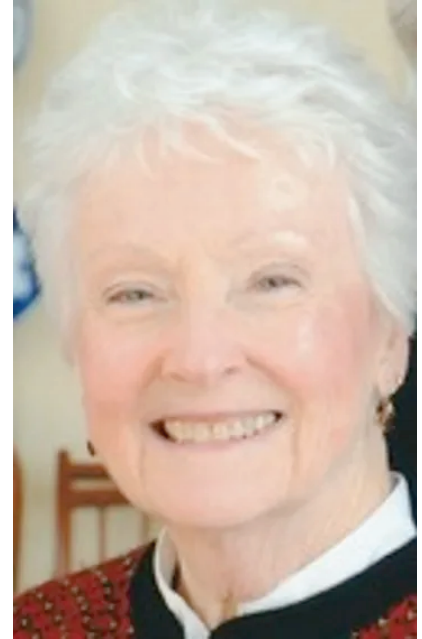
The 2025 retreat will be held March 6-9. For those who want to stay 3 nights, the cost is \$242, and for those wanting to join in Friday, the cost will be \$193. The two night package includes a dinner on Friday night provided by the retreat center. The potluck will take place Thursday night. We have room for 20 participants, and we hope you'll consider joining in! We'll be taking reservations as they roll in, and accepting payment in the month of October. We'll be requiring full payment then, rather than deposits and full payments later as we found that to be too cumbersome last year. Start planning ahead now! We hope to see you in 2025.





Kay Ross Obituary

Kay Ross, a longtime member and founder of the Black-sheep Handspinners Guild, passed away this year on August 24th. She will be missed, and her contributions to the Guild will live on. Below are portions of her obituary, as well as stories from those knew her in the Guild. Her full obituary is available in the Ithaca Journal, at this link:
<https://www.ithacajournal.com/obituaries/pnys0924034>



Kay Ross was not only a longtime member of the Black Sheep, she was a founding member. The origins of the group lay partly in our need to band together to get a wholesale price on Ashford Traditional (saxony) wheels – back in the early 1970s, these cost \$45 and came as a kit.

Kay hosted a lot of the early meetings and it was awesome to come to her house and see the herd of wheels she had (more than a few) – it was like visiting a museum. She was generous in sharing her knowledge and had marvelous programming ideas... and would give people assignments on things to research and present to the group if anyone hung back from volunteering. And she was one of those people who was always calm, kind and gracious. Although people always remember deceased friends fondly and say nice things about them, anything wonderful you can remember about her and put into words would be true! Kay was the sort of person who could be accurately described as a great lady!

-Karey Ross

Many of the wheels bought during the group's founding are still around today. It speaks to the prevalence of Ashford Traditionals in our Guild.

Kay was my first spinning teacher, in 1977. I held her in awe - a lady indeed.

-Shelly Marino



From the Ithaca Journal

Kay Ross (Carol Kay Purinton), 85, of Ithaca, New York, beloved wife of Dr. George E. Ross Jr., DVM, passed away on Saturday, August 24, 2024.

Born January 4, 1939 in Oklahoma, Kay spent her formative years in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, where she attended the same church and high school as George, her husband of 67 years.

In 1967, Kay, George, and children Don, Tom, and Amy moved to an old farm on Irish Settlement Road, Dryden, where the family raised sheep, chickens, and geese, grew vegetables in an enormous garden, and Kay tended beautiful perennial borders. Longtime Dryden residents, the Rosses were active in the Dryden Presbyterian Church and school sports and activities. Kay was also a dedicated member of the Fortnightly Club.

Kay was an avid seamstress, knitter, and fiber artist who spun wool and other natural materials, dyed yarns using natural dyes, wove on traditional looms, and taught and demonstrated these crafts at fairs and other events. One time she even turned hair from a client's Samoyed into a sweater. In the 1970s, she and partner Linda Olds owned a yarn supply and fiber arts craft store in the Village of Dryden. In recent years, she enjoyed making glass bead jewelry and designing embroidery using the latest computer technology and sewing machines.

Her favorite pursuits, though, were gardening and floral design. She created hundreds of beautiful arrangements from her own gardens, as well as for Michaleen's Florist & Greenhouse, where she worked after going back to school and earning a degree in horticulture from State University of New York College at Morrisville.

She loved decorating for all holidays, creating a mantle display, making new wreaths for the doors, and adding special touches throughout her home for family and friends to enjoy. Kay also spent countless hours making hand knitted and hand crafted Christmas gifts for her loved ones.



Fiber Events

Spinners Requested

Lively Run Goat Dairy in Interlaken will be having their annual Fiber Fest on Oct. 5. The start time is noon, and Suzanne is asking for volunteers for a spinning circle during the event. She has angora goats and will be doing a shearing, and there will be food and vendors. See <https://livelyrun.com/> for information

Textile History Lecture

Textile Historian Rabbit Goody is giving a lecture on Saturday, October 5 at 3 PM at the Arkell Museum in Canajoharie, NY. Free admission to both the lecture and the museum. You can get additional information or register at 518-673-2314, ext. 105.

This is a delightful small museum that was founded by Bartlett Arkell, the head of the Beech-Nut Packing Company in Canajoharie in 1927. It is housed within the Canajoharie Library, which he also founded for the people of Canajoharie. Interesting aside: B-N employees got lunch breaks and there was a cafeteria, in which there was a piano, and Mr. Arkell hired pianists to play for the employees while they ate their lunches.

The lecture will be about the painter's canvas and the clothing depicted in "The Night Watch," which is a wall-sized painting on display and in the museum's permanent collection.





New York State Fair

Once again, we had a lively and interesting state fair, and Linda at the Wool Center did a fantastic job organizing volunteers and plenty of free materials to play with. As normal, the fair promises that next year, there will be a new enclosed space for us in the sheep barn - we'll find out if it's true this time! The spinners, knitters, felters, and dyers had plenty of visitors and many questions, and we were able to direct people to their nearby guilds. Hopefully, Rochester and the Golden Fleece will see a few new members this year.



We also had several friends down in the Agriculture Museum, where quilting, spinning of both wool and flax, and many steps of processing were demonstrated. Several spinners were going back and forth between the demos. Marilee Williams has written about her experience at the fair this year (and the need for a new building), and I went twice to take pictures.



It's a Fair Deal

*Some friends from the
Wool Center*

written by Marilee Williams

Many of us enjoy the chance to share our love of the fiber arts with others by demonstrating at public events. In my experience, one of the best venues which reaches the largest number of people is the New York State Fair. We are lucky to live so near the fairgrounds that it's even possible to volunteer at the Wool Center for more than one shift. The chance to interact with folks who may or may not have experience with fiber crafts can be rewarding and/or challenging (right, Rachael?)

Editor's note: I chatted for what felt like a half an hour with a woman who wanted to record me for every step, and kept making me go back and restart so she could film. It was definitely both a rewarding and challenging conversation! She understood a lot more by the end, but it took a lot to get there.



I love to interest children in what we do. Allowing their innate creativity to bloom doing things that don't require batteries or screens seems to be a win/win, for their minds as well as their developing motor skills and sense of personal fulfillment.

There is a picket fence separating the doers from the watchers, and when a tyke can barely see over that 3 foot divide, it's particularly rewarding to grasp that kid's interest. This year I had a little guy who told me he is 4 years old. I was showing how the drum carder works and I always ask children to choose the colors from the bag of dyed locks that is next to the carder ready to be carded and blended. This boy chose such lovely colors that blended into the most heavenly Easter egg batt. I think he has a future in some kind of art related field. And his mom had difficulty getting him to leave the Wool Center to get on with the Fair!



The drum carding station always caught a lot of attention

That was on opening day. One week later, I was using the Wool Center's Ashford Kiwi wheel to spin yarn from one of the batts provided by the Wool Center. This same little boy came in again with his mom and said to me; "You're using a different machine!" Wow!! Four years old and he not only remembered me but also the tool I was using when we met. You've got your hands full Mom!!

Several years ago, when the sheep barn was directly adjacent to the Wool Center, I would ask the children that came through if they had ever seen any pink, green, purple, or other colored sheep, to explain how we take the wool from animal to yarn to sweater or hat. I would also ask them if they had been to the sheep barn yet. If they said "No" I would ask them to please say "Thank-you" to the sheep because if it wasn't for them, I would be unable to do what I do. One little dude's eyes lit up when I said that. As I was heading to the parking lot after my shift had ended, this same little boy ran up to me from the crowd and excitedly exclaimed "I said thank-you to the sheep!" WOW! Mission Complete!



I certainly hope that by next year's State Fair, we will not only have a new, un-flood-ing Wool Center (with its own restroom), but also a REAL sheep barn to house those animals that are integral to our fiber enjoyment as well as an important part of New York State agricultural history. "Small", by today's standards, sheep flocks helped to grow NY as an important wool producer. Other industries also developed as a result of the number of wool producers in the area. I am a third generation Skaneateles resident and I'm aware that the teasel growing industry was an important part of the development of our town. Teasels were used to raise the nap on wool blankets woven in a mill in Skaneateles Falls. You can't get much more "local" than that.

I intend to write to New York State Ag and Markets to voice my opinion that the Fair has diverged from an agricultural spotlight to something else, I'm not sure what. But I do know that alpacas and llamas were not even present in NYS, much less important in NY agriculture, but they have a brick and mortar building? Really?!

Will you add your voice to my request to Ag and Markets that we honor an animal that helped make NY the Empire State? The sheep, and we, deserve nothing less!



Piles of wool for sale



A pile of carded battes Rachael made during several hours on the drum carder. Linda told me she always has trouble getting people to sign up to card - I recommend doing it! Just like Marilee, I had so much fun letting visitors choose my next color combo. I teamed up with a spinner behind me, and lafter I was done with a batte she would take 5 minutes to spin a quick souvenir.



A few friends that I found in the Poultry/Rabbit/Duck barn



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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.