

○ January  
○ 2009

○ Next Meeting  
○ Jan 14, 2009

○ 2008-09 Theme ~  
○ Reaching Out

# whatcom Weavers guild

*Promoting community interest and education in textiles,  
and communication among fiber artists, with an emphasis on weaving.*

## REGULAR MEETINGS ~

September through June ~ Second Wednesday of the month  
7:00p social time ~ short business meeting

show & tell ~ scheduled program

St. James Presbyterian Church (west side, lower level)  
910 - 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Bellingham, WA

## Newsletter Editor - *Joan Cunningham*

I hope you have made it through the holidays with its various challenges including, but not limited to, weather, being housebound, relatives, traveling, too much cooking and food, not enough money, etc. But the biggest problem with this time of year is time. May January and the entire year of 2009 be filled with completed projects and ideas for more than you can complete.

There are many things to inspire us out there. Just look around outside (from inside if you want) on a really nasty day. The evergreen trees provide lovely movement and many shades of green, the many colors of gray in the clouds plus more movement, all of the colors of deciduous trees, the bit of sun that almost always sneaks into the day - and on and on. Look through our guild library for idea books. The internet has tons of weaving, knit, bead, art sites. There is also our own stash. Add all the wonderful yarn, bead, art shops. And I am missing your favorite inspiration.

Wishing you a wonderful, busy, healthful, creative, colorful 2009.

Joan

## Dates & Details ~

### WHATCOM WEAVERS GUILD

#### Annual Membership Dues:

Adult: \$20.00  
Family: \$30.00  
Student: \$15.00

Make checks payable to Whatcom Weavers Guild. Mail to Whatcom Weavers Guild, P.O. Box 403, Bellingham, WA 98227

#### WWG Board Meetings:

The Board meeting schedule will be announced once it is confirmed. Please contact any board member if you should have concerns to be discussed or want to confirm dates/times of meetings.

#### Next board meeting -

Wed. Jan. 21, 2009 6:00 pm  
Clubhouse at Darby Estates

#### The Daytime Weavers:

Thursday, Jan. 8  
Hostess: Kathy Sano  
(360) 738-7085  
See below for directions

~ The Daytime Weavers meets year round on the first Thursday of every month. Bring a sack lunch, show & tell, something to work on (or not) and get a chance to meet weavers, knitters, crafters, etc.

## MEETING INFORMATION

January's program will be a hands-on. A committee has made silk fusion paper that will be used to make covered buttons that will be put in the ANWG "goodie bags" for the conference in Spokane in May. We are trying to get 300 buttons covered so we need your help! It is a good idea to bring a pair of scissors (good sewing scissors work great).

Also, a DVD may be shown promoting ANWG Conference to be held May 28 - May 31, 2009, at Gonzaga University in Spokane. Please visit [www.anwg2009.org](http://www.anwg2009.org) or [www.northwestweavers.org](http://www.northwestweavers.org). The conference theme this year is Weaving Waves of Color.

### Speaking of ANWG Conference

The Complex Weavers have reserved the WA/CA Room in the COG Building for a "bring your cafeteria tray and come for a chat breakfast" Sunday May 31. Mealtimes have not been set yet for the cafeteria. Notices will be posted on-line before and during the Conference.

Be sure to bring an Ethernet cable and your laptop! Any changes and/or notices will be posted in the cafeteria each morning, but will be posted first on-line at [www.anwg2009.org](http://www.anwg2009.org).

There may also be a WeaveTech meeting --- Conference organizers are trying to find an open classroom or meeting room for Sunday.

The 2009 Conference Booklet is available in PDF download at: [www.anwg2009.org](http://www.anwg2009.org) and [www.northwestweavers.org](http://www.northwestweavers.org). If you have booklet information prior to 1/1/09, be sure and look at the website for up to date changes.

The Booklet will be updated and corrected in the on-line PDF so it is the most current, and hopefully correct, edition of the Booklet.

Again, the conference theme is Weaving Waves of Color. Whatcom Weavers Guild will be assembling a booth. Questions: Gloria Lebowitz.

### **Most importantly**

The ANWG 2009 registration site opened at 8 a.m. on 1/1/2009. Of course, you can also mail in your registration. Remember, the early bird gets the worm -- or the desired seminars.

Such a wonderful way to stay in tune with the fiber world!

## BOARD INFORMATION

### President - Board

Vice President & Programs: Nancy Bjerke  
Secretary: Richard Harvey  
Treasurer: Kathy Hutchinson  
Workshops: Barbara Snow & Karen Perry  
Membership: Randi Cattarin  
Librarian: Kaea Morris  
Member-at-Large/ANWG Rep: Gloria Lebowitz  
Newsletter: Joan Cunningham  
Education: Marcia Ford  
Wool Show: Marcia Ford  
Fibers & Beyond Chair: Pat Fisher & Randi Cattarin

# WORKSHOPS

## The Learning Curve

### Spring Workshop

#### Design with Color and Confidence

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, April 8, 9, 10

Do you feel confused about the meaning of hue, value, saturation, spectrum? Do you know your favorite colors, but don't know how to mix them with other colors for a new look? Learn how color works and how to mix, change or modify any color. This workshop is relevant to all mediums, so if you are a weaver, knitter, dyer, beader or painter this workshop will help you become an expert in using color. Instructor Lyn Pflueger will guide you through color exercises using paint and paper that you can apply to the medium of your choice. Learn from famous artists to find and reproduce your color choices.

Cost: \$185. Payment due March 1, 2009.

Installment plan of 3 payments is available: First payment (\$75) due February 1. Second payment (\$75) due March 1 and final payment (\$35) due April 1, 2009. Send checks to Kathy Hutchison, WWG Treasurer. For more information contact Karen Perry, Co-Workshop Chair, (360) 724-4812.

*The Learning Curve* is a program created to provide an opportunity for guild members to share their expertise with other members. These mini workshops are given my guild members for guild members.

We will continue with The Learning Curve workshops again this year. If you have a skill that you would like to share with fellow guild members, here is your chance to do so. Last year's Learning Curve workshops were well received and we have heard lots of raves about the experiences had by our members.

Here's how it works.....

Decide on a skill that you would like to share with the guild.....as an example.....Beading on Leather. Decide how many people can comfortably fit in your workspace and then decide how much you would like to have participants pay. So, if you have 6 participants at \$10 apiece.....for a 3 hour workshop.....you will receive \$60 for your efforts and 6 people will have learned a new skill! It is a great way to get to know fellow Guild members and have fun besides.

Announce your workshop at the Guild meeting or in the newsletter giving all of the particulars that members need to know. You are in charge! I am anxious to see what fun things our members think of this year.

Contact Guild workshop co-chairs, Karen Perry (360-724-4812) and Barbara Snow (360-676-4379) to brainstorm ideas about a workshop you could

### Is LibraryThing for us?

We are considering an additional way for our members to be able to browse the guild's library. LibraryThing, a Web-based cataloging system, is used by many libraries, small and large. It enables users to browse the collection, search by author, topic or title, read reviews and submit reviews. We could also use it to keep track of books that are in circulation. Use of LibraryThing is free to individuals and the cost for an organization like the guild is \$15 per year. Public libraries pay big bucks.

At this point, we have entered in most of the titles we have under the category of "Weaving", one our major categories. We encourage you to go on-line and see if you like using Library Thing - will it be useful for you.

To access the portion of the guild's library we have entered at this point, go to [www.librarything.com](http://www.librarything.com). On the right, sign in with user name: sheriward password: wwguild.

Let us know your thoughts. Is this helpful or not.

Sheri Ward [sherriward@clearwire.net](mailto:sherriward@clearwire.net) 360-961-4956

Kaea Morris [wwgkaea@comcast.net](mailto:wwgkaea@comcast.net) 360-656-6692

## **Q**UILT AND TEXTILE SHOW

January 16 is set up. Sale is January 17 and 18. Location is Skagit Valley Nursery, 18923 Johnson Road in Mt. Vernon. Maggie has rented 2 spaces. One for her quilts and one for anyone who wants to sell weaving. The weaving booth will be the responsibility of whomever volunteers. They will set up, deal with customers and do take down. The cost of \$50.00 will be divided between how many people want to display items and work in the booth.

Questions: Maggie Weyers  
380-0888  
mageez@comcast.net

Knitting Teacher and Author Nancy Bush to teach classes at NW Handspun Yarns

Thursday, January 8, 10:00 - 5:00

### **Vintage Socks—Old Tricks for New Socks**

This workshop will begin with a discussion of the patterns that were written for sock and stocking knitting in the 19th century, drawing extensively from the Weldon's Practical Needlework journals. We will look at styles that were popular and how they translate into modern times. We will also discuss the patterns, how they were written and how best to translate them into 21st century knitting language. Students will make a sampler in this class, using techniques adapted from Nancy's book, *Knitting Vintage Socks* (Interweave Press, 2005), including a very interesting heel and toe shaping not commonly used today. Students should be familiar with using double point needles. *Vintage Knitted Socks* required text.

Friday, January 9, 9:00 - 5:00

### **Making a true Haapsalu Sall; a traditional rectangular shawl from Estonia**

The tradition of knitting lace shawls began in Haapsalu, a town on the west coast of Estonia in the early 1800's. In this class we will study the history and the techniques involved in making shawls as they have been made in Haapsalu for almost 200 years. We will make a miniature rectangular shawl, easily translated to a human size, that incorporates unique stitch patterns and special ways of finishing. Nancy's new book, *Knitted Lace from Estonia* is required text.

Each class is \$80.00, and potluck lunch each day. Material list yet to be determined.

## Classified Ads ~

I have received an overstock inventory of reeds. It includes over 70 brand new stainless steel reeds. All are in original packages and were made in Sweden.

The reeds vary from 16" to 48" and vary in dpi. Each reed is available to guild members at the price of \$1/inch.

Alicia Elvstad  
371-4184  
alecia@loominesce.com

I was contacted by a gentleman, Ed Herring, from Lynden recently. His wife died this summer and he is interested in selling her remaining yarn. Most all of it is high quality Norwegian wool - a wonderful selection of types and colors—all unused, well stored and of excellent quality. Many are in unopened bags of 12 skeins. He is asking \$1.50 a skein but probably would go even lower for anyone buying several. It really is worth looking at - his wife had a whole room dedicated to her yarns. I asked his permission to pass on contact info to the Guild and he was delighted. He will be leaving to go out of state on December 20 and will return on the 27<sup>th</sup>. His phone number is 354-6018 and his name is Ed Herring. If you say you got his number from Debbie Day when you call, he will understand.

Debbie Day

## The Weavers Guild at the Fairhaven Tour D'Art - Thanksgiving 2008

The owners of the Fairhaven Village Inn offered the Guild space to participate in the Fairhaven Holiday Season Tour D'Art on Thanksgiving weekend (Friday and Saturday). As an experiment, the Board decided to take them up on their offer, in order to follow our mission of providing more information to our community regarding the Guild and the wonders of weaving and to provide another possible selling outlet for interested members.

Our display, demonstrations and selection of Guild product were all exceptional. Thank you to Kaea Morris for a great display (with contributions by Randi Cattarin, Joan Dudley, Marcia Ford and Sondra Rose). Many thanks to Kathy Hutchinson, Joan, Marcia, Toni Wade, Donna Hunter and Julie Barnes for some great demonstrations and discussion for our visitors. And thank you to Janice Hartwell, Kaea Morris and Joyce Noordmans for coming by as general 'staff'.

For a first attempt, we were organized well, but had lessons to learn. The staff at the Fairhaven Village Inn was most supportive and accommodating of our event. However, the weather, economy and overall draw to the holiday event throughout Fairhaven were not favorable. As a result, we saw fewer than a 100 visitors and only sold approximately \$125 of product. Those who visited us liked the presentation, were very interested in displays and demonstrations, asked many questions and took Guild brochures away with them. However, since they were usually cold and wet, they were nervous of trying on hats, scarves, wraps, etc in fear of making them wet...Disappointing!

By the second day, we had learned enough to extend our hours and add new signage to make us more visible from the street, which resulted in more visits.

One unexpected benefit - on Friday evening, while we had relatively few visitors, the 4 or 5 of us there had a great 'mini-retreat' - weaving, spinning and knitting up a storm with much interesting fiber-related gossip and sharing of information! And we got pretty good at individually taking a walk around outside to figure out whether it was a general problem, or just us - the empty, rainy, windswept streets told us it wasn't just us!

Several things to learn from this.

1. We need to become involved earlier before the event in order to make sure we are more obvious in the advertising by the local organization.
2. Weather can be a major deterrent at this time of the year.
3. Never have less than 2 people 'on staff', to keep an eye on things.
4. If we use this venue again, more visible outside advertising, e.g. a sandwich board, is necessary, and more directional signs inside the building should also be set up.

The owners of the Inn have offered to make space available to us again in the summer at the Fairhaven Summer Solstice event - with improved weather, lessons learned and enough interest from members we may take advantage of their offer. It will be interesting to see if any of the visitors who took away brochures and participated in demonstrations decide to join us.



Joan Dudley hard at work.



A wonderful assortment of our fiber world.

Thank you to all the members who supported this event - your help was much appreciated.

Pat Fisher - Past President

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## Saki Ori Weaving in Japan

Wouldn't you know it! I spend a couple of months hunting down information on saki ori weaving so I could write an article on this obscure Japanese weaving technique, and in the latest edition of Vav magazine from Sweden, there it is-- an eight page spread on historical and contemporary saki ori weaving, complete with gorgeous coloured photos. So go have a look at that and I'll just add to it. This is part of my on-going research into the *Textiles of Necessity*, that book I'll never write. Another book I'll never write is *The Geography of Textiles*, and saki ori brings these two interests together.

While most of the Japanese population until recent times were poor rural farmers and peasants, most of the history of Japanese textiles is concerned with the sumptuous vestments of the tiny ruling class. Saki ori [fabric made with a baste warp and cotton rag weft] were woven by the poorest people who often lived up in the mountains where much of the year was cold and the soil infertile.

They could not grow the new miracle fibre, cotton and some couldn't even grow that old stand-by, hemp. Many people were loggers. Both men and women carried heavy loads of logs on their shoulders. The rag-woven saki ori provided a cushion for their shoulders, as well as a layer of relative warmth. Being able to buy a bundle of rags, some pieces of which would be only a few centimetres long, was a great expense. Before the availability of cotton, people wove with fibres such as forest wisteria, mulberry bark, ramie, hemp, nettle, and linden.

It was hard and slow work to extract a usable fibre from these plants. Some of the fibres were made from knotting strips together, and it could take five or six months of daily work to produce enough to make a garment. This work was done by women at night when all the other work was done. Even after they completed all this work, they often had to use the best cloth to pay their taxes and were left with the poorest quality to wear for themselves. Some of these fibres were so tough and scratchy that they could raise welts when worn next to the skin.

The saki ori was difficult to weave because the weft cotton rag was thick and the baste warp created a lot of friction. The loom used was a backstrap loom, although later the jibata loom was introduced. The latter was basically a backstrap loom placed in a frame so that the warp could be wound on beams. It also had one foot pedal to lift one heddle. Because it took up less space it could be moved indoors. I'm sure that these poor communities had a history of weaving with baste rags before cotton came along, as the poor waste nothing. But what is known as saki ori was developed after the introduction of cotton cultivation, around 1750. However, due to the mountainous nature of Japan, some areas did not have access to cotton until the early

20<sup>th</sup> century. While saki ori weaving had largely died out by the 1920's, there was a resurgence right after WW II as people grappled with shortages in those difficult years. Now there is a society that has formed to maintain this old weaving technique and, as you can see in the Vav article, modern weavers are using it in new and interesting ways. If you are interested in reading more on this topic have a look at, *Riches from Rags: Saki-Ori and Other Recycling Traditions in Japanese rural Clothing* by Shin-Ichiro Yoshida and Dai Williams.

Submitted by Toby Smith

Editor's note – If you aren't familiar with Vav Magazine, it is definitely worth a visit to [vavmagasinet.se](http://vavmagasinet.se). They now offer their magazine with English. Years ago you could get Vav with an English insert. Another great source of ideas and inspiration.

Thank you Toby, and for anyone else the Whatcom Weavers Guild newsletter would love to have information on your favorite article, book, magazine, yarn. Please pass on your knowledge. It enhances our world.