

Loco News

BACK TO THE CHURCH

Location change

The guild meeting at 7:30 p.m. on September 10 will be held at the LaGrange Methodist Church at Grafton Road and Rt. 10/20 in LaPorte.

Besty Bruce will be teaching us pattern making for woven garments. Wear something for trying on tops and sizing your patterns.

Meanwhile, bring non-perishable food items to the church pantry that helps feed the needy. It's our way of saying thank you to the church.

Magazine time

Interweave Press is offering a deal for those of us who renew our magazines as a group.

If you subscribe to Handwoven, Spin Off, Piece Work, Interweave Knits or Beadwork you can get a sizeable discount by doing this. Bring your subscription info and a check to the meeting. Give to Betty Roll.

A word about demos

It's time for two of our important annual demonstrations. One is Pioneer Days Sept. 7 and 8, our "gratitude" demo to the Metroparks for our meeting space and the other is the paid demo at the Birmingham Antiques Festival Oct. 5-6.

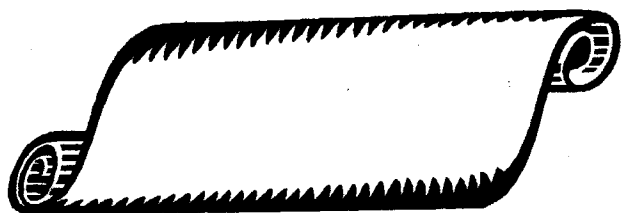


These demos enable us to survive as a guild. We all are responsible for sharing in the work.

If you aren't signed up for a day during these two important events you need to be. Don't let the rest of us down.

All skill levels are good. The public is interested in everything. See Kay Mangione for your time slot.

Both are "in costume" but the costume need only be a blouse and longish skirt with an apron. Shawls are good, as are bonnets.



Calendar

Sept. 10: LOCO meeting at 7:30 p.m. at LaPorte Methodist Church, Grafton Road, Elyria.

Sept. 21-22: Wool Gathering, at Youngs' Dairy, US 68 N, Yellow Springs, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Information: www.awoolgathering.com

Sept. 26: Mid-Ohio Knitting Guild annual program at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information: www.geocities.com/columbus_mokg

Oct. 5: All-Ohio spin- in at The Gathering in the Big Barn at Malabar Farm State Park, Mansfield, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Vendors, prizes, classes. Bring wheel, sack lunch and spinning chair. Information: Sally Rickel, (419) 589-2321 or srickel@webtv.net

Oct. 5: Toledo Area Weavers Guild Charm basket workshop by Millie Mannik, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Maumee Valley Country Day School, 1715 Reynolds Rd., in Toledo. Fee \$26 includes materials. Send check (to TAWG) to Wayne Anthony 427 E. Broadway, Maumee, OH 43537 by Sept. 5.

Oct. 5-6: LOCO spinning demo at Birmingham.

Oct. 10-13: Stitches East Needlework show, Valley Forge, Pa.

Oct. 18-20: New York Sheep and Wool Festival, Dutchess County Fair Grounds, Rhinebeck, NY.

Oct. 19: Luxury American Fibers workshop by Patsy Zawistowski for the Central Ohio Weavers Guild at Kirk House, 1885 Cassady Ave., Columbus. \$60 for intermediate spinners. Location may change. Information: www.geocities.com/twoply.geo

Oct. 25-26: Algonquin Spinners and Weavers workshop on weaving software by Ingrid Boesel at Algonquin Mill schoolhouse 4 miles south of Carrollton. \$100. Information: Lynn Carnes, (330) 735-2923 or jlcarnes@eohio.net

Oct. 26-27: LOCO workshops by Celia Quinn, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Spinning to Specifications (Saturday) and Novelty Yarns (Sunday). Information, Betsy Bruce, (440) 774-7036 or besty.bruce@oberlin.edu

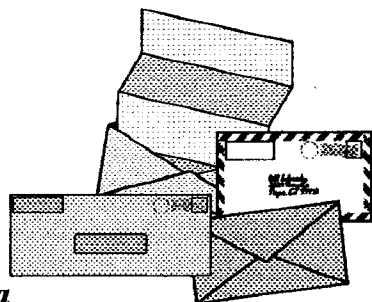
Nov. 23: Handspun-Handwoven show and sale at the John Bryan Center, 100 Dayton St., Yellow Springs, OH. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Dec. 7-9: Cuyahoga Weavers Guild workshop on Handwoven Clothing.

June 22-29: 2003: Midwest Weavers Conference, "Fiber Fantasia" at Southern Illinois University. Edwardsville, Ill. Information: Amy Norris, 8742 Teasdale Ave., St. Louis, MO, 63124-1926 or email at midwest2003@aol.com. The web site is www.siu.edu/wgsl/html/MWC2003.htm

Raffle tickets

Remember to sell your tickets for the guild shawl raffle. Buy a few yourself. It will make a great gift for someone at Christmas.



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From the mailbox

Mid-Ohio Knitter's Guild will sponsor the Ohio Knit-Out & Crochet Thursday, Sept. 26 at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium. It will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Events will include advice, free beginner lessons with yarn and needles provided free, demonstrations on spinning yarn and machine knitting. There will be projects on display as well as an array of new yarns. Information:

www.geocities.com/columbus_mokg

The Honey Creek Watershed Festival will be held Saturday, Sept. 7, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Miami Country Park District's Honey Creek Preserve, 4536 S. St. Rt. 202, Tipp City, OH. It will feature historical reenactors, vintage baseball, square dancing and animals for the children as well as barn displays, wagon rides, fishing and entertainment for children.

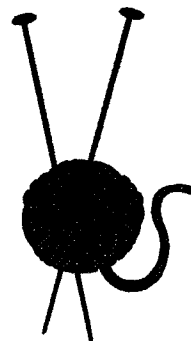
Midwest Weavers Conference June 22-29, 2003, will be Fiber Fantasia at the Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, ILL. Keynote speaker will be Bhakti Ziek. For registration brochure, send \$3, name and address to Marti Arnold, PO Box 140246 St. Louis, MO 63114, or write Midwest2003@aol.com. For more information: www.siu.edu/wgsl/html/MWC2003.htm



Itsy bitsy, teeny weeny wheels

"Miniature" spinning wheels in oak, walnut, mahogany are being offered for sale on the net.

These are in a 1:12 scale, and the maker says they make wonderful gifts for the fiber artist. Wholesale, quantity discounts are available. Online at: www.geocities.com/weaverlili Information: Lili Goczal, 6031 Trancas Canyon Road, Malibu, CA 90265. (310) 457-4133 or weaverlili@netzero.net



Ohio want ads

For sale: 4 harness, 6 treadle birch floor loom, 40' width, counterbalance, handcrafted. Hand-tied heddles and reed, raddle with 1/2" setions. Looks like a Loomcraft. Bench with sliding seat included. 4-harness Table loom, cherry. Two reeds, 8 and 15 dent, and raddle with 1 " sections. Warping board, 38" x'26", handmade electric bobbin winder, rag shuttles, bobbin shuttles, templates, stick shuttles, cotton wool and miscellaneous yarns. Joan Graham, (440) 247-8563

For sale: 4-harness, 6-treadle Herald jack loom with spool rack, 1 reed, new heddles and new texsolv treadle cords. 42" width, sturdy enough for rugs. Arlege Magar, (216) 464-8633

Yarns for sale: Jane Bode—(216) 321-4306 and Rose Rubin (216) 831-1996



Boorla Merino

Know your sheep

**The Merino
and Sharlea fiber from Merino**

Animal size: Rams: 150 to 225 lbs.

Ewes: 110 to 150 lbs.

Fleece weight: 8 to 15 lbs. with a world record of 50 lbs.

Wool type: The finest diameter wool in the world.

Blood system: fine

Numerical Count: 60s to 70s into the 90s.

Micron: 24.5-19.5

Yield: 33-55%

Staple Length: 2" to 4".

Breed Origins: The word Merino comes from the Spanish word for wandering because this breed was famous for wandering the plains of Spain. It is known that for about 500 years, beginning in 712 AD under Moorish rule, woolen goods played a major role in the commerce of Spain. Great flocks of sheep were developed and Spanish woolen exports became preeminent in world trade. Following the end of Moorish domination in 1212 the woolen industry declined but the flocks remained as Spain continued to be a major exporter of wool.

The thousands of sheep were driven in huge bands hundreds of miles to northern Spain for summer pastures. At the onset of winter they

returned south and only the hardiest animals survived this ordeal due in part to their strong flocking instinct.

From these bands, several individual families of sheep developed, differing somewhat from each other in size, conformation and fleece. Two bands, the Paulers and the Infantados, provided most of the foundation bloodlines for the American Merino.

Prior to the Napoleonic Wars, Merino sheep, which were prized for their fine wool and the weight of their fleece, were primarily owned by Spanish nobility. When war broke up the Spanish estates, outsiders were able to purchase some of the sheep and Napoleon himself purportedly confiscated a great number and returned with them to France. The Delaine-Merino was developed in France from the Spanish Merino, having an unbroken line of breeding 1,200 years old.

Spain had strict laws forbidding the export of Merinos and it was necessary to smuggle them out of the country for many years. Eventually breeding stock reached Sweden in 1723 and the United States in 1793 and Australia around 1800.

The early Australian Merinos, due to the large percentage of Saxony blood, were small, fine wooled sheep, cutting light fleeces. As settlement pushed out into drier and more arid areas, certain breeders decided that a larger, more robust sheep would be more profitable, even at the cost of sacrificing some of the fine wool qualities.

In the 1840's the Murray flock was established in South Australia using careful selection from stock within Australia to breed a larger and heavier wooled type. At about the same time the Bungaree stud was established by G.C. Hawker, these two flocks became the forerunners of the present South Australian type of Merino, noted for their size, plain body and

heavy fleeces of long, strong quality merino wool.

The first Merinos to arrive in the United States were imported by members of our diplomatic corps. In 1793 three head were smuggled out of Spain by William Foster, of Boston. He gave them to a friend, who killed them for meat, not knowing how valuable they were, until he later paid \$1,000 for a ram of the same breed. Seth Adams of Massachusetts, later of Ohio, imported a pair in 1801, and in 1802 Colonel Humphreys, of Connecticut, brought to America nearly 100 head. These Humphrey sheep proved very valuable, and from them some of the best flocks in America started. Much interest followed these two importations. Soon other people began to import Merinos into the United States and very high prices were paid for them. People went wild over Merinos, as high as \$1,500 being paid for individual animals.

During this time people cared little for mutton, but high prices were paid for wool, for which the Merino was especially valued. Fortunes were made trading Merinos and their wool. An economic panic in 1837 caused the price to fall and in 1846 the Wool tariff was repealed.

Vermont had been the center of a very profitable sheep breeding industry, but Merinos lost favor to dairying after the panics.

The following is from Sierra Park, Continuing the Saxon Tradition

"From the very earliest times when the King of Spain made the first grant of fine wooled Merinos to his cousin, the elector of Saxony, the Saxon Merino has been selected for fineness."

"The Saxon is bred to take higher rainfall. Their average fiber diameter doesn't blow out and get coarser as they age as other strains of merinos do. Almost any animal will take the hot weather; it's the cold that stresses them and

the cold is where the Saxon excels, says Bill Crawford."

"The modern Saxon is producing a longer staple while maintaining its inherent low micron characteristics. There is little variation in fiber diameter. And this has been achieved through selection within the breed.

The Saxon line is correct and will complement another Merino line well. They will hold their wool down the legs and maintain a white soft, stylish fleece that will withstand the effects of high rainfall. Bill says other breeds crossed with the Saxon perform very well. It helps them in difficult and wet wool growing environments. It's in the less pasture-improved areas that the Saxon really comes into its own. It's been bred to produce under these less than ideal conditions."

Sharlea (exerpted) from an article by Patricia Emerick, 1988.)

Sharlea sheep are normally wethers (neutered rams) that have been carefully selected from flocks of Superfine Saxon Merino Sheep. In 1985 there were approximately 15,000 Sharlea sheep being raised. The developmental work on Sharlea wool was begun in the early 1970s by Tom Harmsworth and Wallace Reynolds of Victoria, Australia. Sharlea is the name of Mr. Reynolds' ranch, where the initial work was begun.

Sharlea sheep are not a breed, since they are not self-reproducing. The individuals chosen are raised with meticulous care and a regular controlled diet. Humane and gentle handling of the sheep is of prime importance; any stress the sheep undergo will be reflected in the fiber that is reproduced. Therefore Sharlea sheep are raised in what are known as Sheep Care Units. These are pens in buildings that are completely weatherproof. Sharlea sheep are fed a diet with known nutritional properties. Raising Sharlea sheep requires great dedication, since it is extremely labor-intensive. The costs involved in

beginning and maintaining Sharlea production are unique in the wool industry.

The requirements for Sharlea fiber are carefully maintained through the Sharlea Society. The fleece must be extremely uniform in diameter along the staple length and must be 17.5 microns or finer. This is comparable to a grade of 90s and above. The average staple length is 3 ½ inches (85mm).

Sharlea has a much higher tensile strength than other fibers of similar diameter and is always "sound" along the entire length of the staple. The color is bright white and is also very uniform throughout the fleece.

Contamination by vegetable matter must be no more than .2 percent and the yield for these fleeces is 78 percent or better.

Sheep Characteristics: A white-faced, pink-nosed animal with characteristic wrinkly neck and shoulders, the merino outnumbers all other breeds in the world.

The fine fleece covers the entire body, often coming down over the face to the nostrils, and covering the legs even to the toes. From sheep having folds or wrinkles over body, we should get the finest and shortest wool. The fewer folds over the body, as a rule, the larger the sheep and the longer and coarser the wool. These gregarious animals have strong foraging and herding instincts and can withstand intense heat, cold, or drought, but do not do as well on wet ground. They are notorious nibblers. They do not and never will equal the mutton breeds in rapidity of growth. But if fed properly will produce a good quality carcass with good flavor and very little fat.

Today the Delaine or "C" type Merino is the most popular of the three recognized type. Ewes are polled, while the rams usually have spiraling horns.

Fleece characteristics: Look for a fleece which is bright white in color, exhibiting well-

defined, firm locks with blocky tips. Fleeces which are sticky to touch will be more difficult to scour and will yield less clean wool. Darkened dusty tips are normal for this breed, but avoid fleeces where the tips are encased in a thick crust. Crimp should be even throughout the fleece and appropriate for your intended use. Beginners are advised to start with longer-stapled Merino fleeces in the lower count range. Purchase small amounts of this fleece, since a little goes a long way when spun.

Spinning pointers: For spinners who have good control of their wheel, the lovely fine Merino wool offers a worthwhile challenge. The heavy yolk, often referred to as wax in this breed, necessitates more preparation than with other wools.

Merino top eliminates preparation headaches and may be the answer for those with limited time. Yarns will require higher twist per inch and firm plying: take care not to stretch the singles while plying. Three-ply yarns spun for this wool are preferred by many, although two-ply yarns are acceptable. Well-spun and plied yarns have tremendous elasticity and are very soft and pliable. Yarns may need to be preshrunk before use; garments will require gentle washing.

Breeders' Association: American & Delaine Merino Record Association, c/o Mrs. Charles R. Clouser, Secretary, Rt. 1, Nova, Ohio 44859

Sources; Sheep Magazine, by Barbara Platt, Pennsylvania; USDA information. Know Your Sheep Breeds: Merino, Linda Berry Walker, Spin-Off Magazine, Summer, 1988; A Study of Farm Animals, Charles S. Plumb, The Webb Publishing Company, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1924; Vermont's Merino legacy lives on, Jane Choate, Sheep! Magazine, March 1995; Preparation and Spinning of Merino Fleece, Kenneth Loyal Smith; Precious Fibers Magazine, November, 1985; CompuServe, August; Sharlea Fiber, Patricia Emerick, Spin-Off Magazine, Summer, 1988

Compiled by: Roni Rospert 1996.

Reprinted