

Seattle Knitters Guild



October Issue
2009

Cablegram

October 7 Annual Fashion Show Program

by Debra Fox

It's time for our annual fashion show, and as you know this year's show will include garments from the knit-a-long. The knit-along includes garments made using Karen Alfke's Top-down Sweater Unpattern or Alice Starmore's Oregon Vest. Whether you have been working on your garment for months or dashed off a lovely sweater this last week we are looking forward to your participation in the Knit-A-Long Fashion Show. Please come prepared to share. Write out your name, the yarn used, who the garment is for, what you learned and anything else you would like to share on an index card. We will have a MC and you will have the opportunity to speak as well.

Please model your garment or take it on its walk around the room. Even if you are not quite done we will want to see how far you got and hear what you learned. If you bought the pattern, bought the yarn and didn't cast on a stitch please join in the fun, own up and set your next knitting goal.

Hot water and tea will be provided. If you want coffee, better stop along the way.

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Thank You to Michele and Carl from Toots LeBlanc

by Mary Berghammer



Our guests at the August 19th meeting were Michele Camacho and Carl Brittain, owners of "Toots LeBlanc & Co."

Michele is a former Seattleite and SKG member who now lives in Oregon. She and her brother Carl, who lives in Seattle, have collaborated for several years now on their yarn business. Not only did they bring yummy yarns for us to feel and see, they brought garments made from this amazing fiber.



Michele related the story of the history of "Toots LeBlanc" and how she and Carl, mostly through word-of-mouth, find the small family farm breeders of alpaca, goats, sheep and rabbits. It's a very hands-on business, with Michele and Carl tramping through fields to meet the animals, and cleaning and sorting fleece by hand. They explained how they have come up with the various blends they use -- the properties and best use of the fibers.

Several Guild members had garments made from some of Toots LeBlanc yarns and these were also on display.

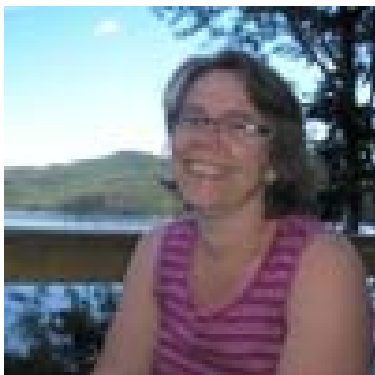
We had the final answer to our quiz on Alice Starmore -- the winner was Karen Jo Gustafson who won 2 skeins of the Toots LeBlanc angora! Keep your eyes open for more quizzes (and prizes) in upcoming issues! (See more photos on page 3)



Looking Ahead . . .

- **October 7**
Annual KAL Fashion Show
- **November 11**
Jared Flood
- **December 2**
Annual Holiday Party
- **January 6**
TBD

News from the Board, by Mary Mara



A Note of Thanks -

This month wraps up my official responsibilities serving on the board of the Seattle Knitters Guild. Thank you to all the board members who have worked so hard this past year to bring outstanding programming to our guild.

Thank you to the board members who work behind the scenes to manage the finances and membership.

Thank you to the board members who help maintain the guild's website, and to our librarian who oversees our lending library. Thank you to the newsletter article writers, and to the newsletter editor who pulls all the pieces together to bring us the Cablegram each and every month. Thank you to the board members who help distribute the Cablegram, and to the historian who helps keep a record of the guild's work. In this past year, all this work on behalf of the Seattle Knitters Guild membership has been undertaken by Mary Berghammer, Lizabeth Coller, Lizbeth Linares Davern, Karen Jo Gustafson, Debra Fox, Kathy Hightower, Terri Pena, Lois Pratt, Natasha Puffer, Evanne Vaivadas, and Devorah Verburg-Sachs. It has been a pleasure serving on the board on behalf of the guild's members. We are fortunate to have such a rich, vibrant, and creative community to feed and nurture our craft

Apologies for the abbreviated issue! Your Editor was out of town the weekend that would usually be devoted to assembling the Cablegram, enjoying the Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival and the beautiful fall weather in the Willamette Valley, and could not attend the regular SKG Board meeting. This issue was prepared a week early in order to have it arrive on time.

Membership, by Kathy Hightower

Welcome New Members:

Jo Ann Campbell, Gaye Coleman, Phyllis Daum,
Kathy Hutchinson, Kitty Mabbatt, Karen Miller,
Joni Pascoe, and Shirley Rambeck

New and renewing members contact information will be forwarded via email each month as part of the meeting reminder.

As of July 1, membership in the Seattle Knitters Guild is half price, that is only \$11, for the rest of 2009. Tell your knitting friends that this is their opportunity for a great newsletter and the privilege of using the Guild's extensive knitting Library. Members are also eligible for door prizes during the Holiday Party. Join now.

Welcome President Terri Pena!

October marks the transition of the Seattle Knitter's Guild board. It is during October that we say farewell and thank you to outgoing board members, and hello to those stepping into new positions.

This year we only have one change, but it is a big one. Mary Mara has retired as board President. Her commitment, energy, and guidance have helped the SKG run very smoothly over the past two years. Be sure to give her a big thank you the next time you see her.

Who's next? Its me, Terri Peña. I have been serving on the board this past year as Vice President and am really excited about the upcoming year.

I live in Edmonds and have been a knitter for about 10 years. While walking through a Barnes & Noble I saw the cover of Folk Socks by Nancy Bush. I was captivated, and decided to knit myself a pair of socks. The fact that I did not know how to knit did not seem important. I taught myself to knit using Kids Knitting by Melanie Falick, what a great book. From there I propped open Folk Socks, leaned in, and knit a pair of socks. Oh, they were not pretty, one of the socks had its toe decreases bisecting my toes, but I loved them. 10 years later and you can always find a pair of socks on my needles. I also seem to have a little obsession with lace. My family has not yet done an intervention, so I seem to be keeping it in check.

As Knitters, I can think of four other things you would want to know about me:

#1- I knit American Style, I can do Continental, but don't.

#2- I am also a spinner. I have a Kromski Minstrel named Bob.

#3- I do not dye. I do have equipment stashed away in the garage for future dyeing adventures.

#4 -This one is a little scary to admit. I am not a stasher. I do not have a drawer/room/house/storage unit filled with yarn. I tend only to buy yarn for the project at hand. I hope y'all will like me just the same. - Terri

**PLEASE COME AND ENJOY OUR
LATVIAN
CHRISTMAS BAZAAR**

**LATVIAN CULTURAL CENTER
11710 - 3RD AVENUE NE
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
(East side of I-5 Freeway)**

SATURDAY November 7 10 am to 4 pm	SUNDAY November 8 12 pm to 4 pm
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YOU WILL FIND

**CHRISTMAS SPECIALTY FOODS
ETHNIC LATVIAN FOODS
DECORATIVE PILLOWS
COSTUME DOLLS
KNITTED ARTICLES
STUFFED TOYS
JEWELRY
CERAMICS
HOT MEALS
ETCHED CRYSTAL
AND MUCH MORE!**

Valstsvalsts 2009

Board Members 2008-2009

The following members volunteer their time:

Terri Peña, President

president@seattleknittersGuild.org

dandelion on Ravelry

TBD, Vice President

vicepresident@seattleknittersGuild.org

tbd on Ravelry

Lizbeth Linares Davern, Treasurer

treasurer@seattleknittersGuild.org

llinares1 on Ravelry

Debra Fox, Program Co-chair

programchair@seattleknittersGuild.org

yarnfox on Ravelry

Mary Berghammer, Program Co-Chair

programchair@seattleknittersGuild.org

embeknits on Ravelry

Kathy Hightower, Membership

membership@seattleknittersGuild.org

khightop on Ravelry

Evanne Vaivadas, Newsletter Editor

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cashmerepurls on Ravelry

Karen Jo Gustafson, Newsletter Reporter

reporter@seattleknittersGuild.org

karenjoseattle on Ravelry

Natasha Puffer, Webmistress

Board@seattleknittersGuild.org

puffer on Ravelry

Devorah Verburg-Sachs, Librarian

librarian@seattleknittersGuild.org

cant2lope on Ravelry

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historian@seattleknittersGuild.org

lcoller on Ravelry

Lois Pratt, Newsletter Distribution

newsletter@seattleknittersGuild.org

www.seattleknittersGuild.org

Check the SKG Website for:

- Meeting dates & times
- Links to resources
- A list of local yarn shops
- Charity knitting
- Membership application

Spotted at Sock Summit - Stainless Steel Sock Blockers, by Karen Jo Gustafson

The new items I found (and couldn't resist) at the Sock Summit in Portland in August included these stainless steel sock blockers from Bryspun. Though I saw these at several stores' booths, I didn't notice any Seattle-area stores among them. The thin blockers did blend in with the mass of cool yarns and tools at the show, so I could easily have missed some. Either way, I expect some local stores to have taken note.



Except for possibly the weld point where the hook attaches, the stainless in these should be rust proof. When I tested them on a thickish sock knit from Blue Moon's Luscious Silk Singles the open framework allowed the sock to dry more quickly than I expected. The hook fit neatly over a shower rod.

I bought a Medium set for my size 9 1/2 feet and Large for my husband's 10 1/2s. A Small size was also available. The going price at the show ran \$16 a pair.

I won't give up my beautiful handmade wooden blocker any time soon, but these will be a useful addition, especially for those need-them-now blocking incidents. To store them I can just slip the pair in next to a storage box or on top of a pile of yarn. They'd make a nice gift for one of the many occasions that occur in this part of the year.

Toots LeBlanc, continued from page 1



Latvian Mittens with Sandy DeMaster and Mary Germain

by Karen Jo Gustafson



From the time I spent hosting and shuttling Mary (left) and Sandy (right) before their talk for the Seattle Knitters Guild on September 9th I believe I'd enjoy any trip where they came along. Their talk covering two trips to Latvia and the mittens they found there confirmed that.

Sandy DeMaster developed an interest in ethnic crafts during a two year stint in Madrid for a Masters degree in Spanish. She later met Mary in Milwaukee where Mary owned a yarn shop for ten years. Another of Mary's customers, an immigrant from Latvia named Irma, sold hand-knit mittens through the shop. Pricilla Gibson-Roberts, another shop customer and ethnic knitting conservator, talked Sandy and Mary into writing an article based on Irma's work.



Sandy did the ethnic-related research for the article and Mary handled the technical side such as writing the pattern. Their work on more articles and several self-published books still follows this pattern of division of labor.



While developing the article Mary and Sandy visited Latvia where they collected many of the samples in the colorful and massive collection they brought for our members to enjoy. When Lizbeth Uptis, author of *Latvian Mittens*, came to town to do a workshop they arranged for her to meet Irma. Upon discovering that Lizbeth spoke fluent Latvian, the pair convinced her to lead a knitting-related trip to Latvia in 2001. Of course they both went.

During that first trip they discovered many unusual cuffs on the mittens they collected. Men often carried their mittens tucked into their belt when not wearing them so the tradition of making the cuff especially decorative developed. Mary deciphered and charted several of these for their first book *A Distorted View of Cuffs*. The book arrived from the publisher just before Irma died at the age of 87. They were able to rush to the hospital to read Irma their dedication of the book to her.

Sandy and Mary took us through a tour of both that 2001 trip and the trip to Latvia they took in 2005. They gave a good sense of the culture, history and architecture of the country and wove



it into the descriptions of the knitting traditions and how they arose. Many of the patterns used in the local knitting arose from symbols that still have meaning for the people. They did find it much harder to come by knitted goods on the second trip. But they also

found several shops that are recording and cataloging the knitted objects they receive with the dates and location of production to have a record of the regional variations.



Guild members were fortunate to have several local knitters originally from Latvia as guests at the meeting. Our speakers were able to confirm and to learn several things from the group during their talk.

The workshops Mary and Sandy give and another of their books teach a method of making a mitten with an attached lining that they learned from Irma. This technique both gives an extra warm mitten for the cold Balkan winters but also protects the colorwork floats on the inside of the mitten. Besides samples of this style of mittens they brought a table-full of mittens, gloves, hats and socks using traditional patterns and techniques, many bought in Latvia. From the response of knitters eagerly investigating the knitted items and perusing the books I'd say Guild members were very glad we could coordinate this talk with Sandy and Mary's workshops at the Nordic Heritage Museum.



Editor's note: Sandy and Mary have collaborated on several books, each priced at \$15, all of which may be ordered on

line. Contact Sandy at weecroft@hughes.net for information. *A Distorted View of Cuffs*, *For Love of Fair Isle Knitting: Corrugated Ribs, Steeks, and other Techniques*, *Latvian Mittens: Design and Techniques*, and *Ethnic Socks and Stockings*. Sandy also maintained a flock of Finnsheep for many years, and sold fleeces and roving to spinners, as well as lovely millspun yarn to knitters.

Casting Off in October - Changes at SKG

by Evanne Vaivadas

It's the time of year to welcome the new officers that volunteer to serve on your Board of Directors. Mary Mara has served in the leadership two consecutive years as Vice President and President of the Seattle Knitters Guild. Terri Peña will now assume the role of President having taken the position of VP mid term and done a great job of learning the ropes in a shorter than usual period of time. I hope you will all extend both of them your appreciation and gratitude for their efforts on your behalf.

All other Board positions, except VP now vacant, are filled with returning officers that are experienced and competent at their jobs. As a result of their thoughtfulness and dedication, you are able to enjoy a regular and dependably entertaining series of programs and other benefits membership in SKG brings you. Along with the annual events such as the Fashion Show, Holiday Party, and Fiber Frenzy, the Board brings you well known knitters that bring some of the best to the craft - patterns, products, classes, and fibers.

I myself have devoted many hours to writing, encouraging others to contribute, and producing this Cablegram for you every month. Thanks to the brains at Microsoft, the Publisher program makes it fairly simple to assemble a presentable newsletter for you to enjoy, full of color and photographs, most of which are taken by Board members for this purpose. Distribution is carried out by other members of the Board, and we do our best to assure a timely publication that acts as a reminder of the upcoming meeting as well as it provides the news.

We also enjoy the benefit of a talented and artistic Webmistress, who has created a well organized, linked, and informative site that you can be proud of. There is much untapped potential for knitters to expand their interests through use of the internet.

I would like to see more of you participating in the heart of SKG by sharing some of your time and talent to make the meetings, events, charitable efforts, and publications even better than they are now. Please approach your officers and offer to volunteer, in particular for the position of Vice President. It is rewarding and worthwhile to be involved in such a successful and fun organization.

Having said all that, I now need to close by asking for someone to step forward to take over as the next SKG Newsletter Editor before the end of the year. I find that the professional position I accepted is demanding more and more of my ability to sit in front of a computer and think and focus on a daily basis. While I love both of the jobs, the one that provides an income needs to come first, and I don't want to have the newsletter quality suffer or become a difficult chore rather than the fun pastime it has been for the last year and a half. I can help a new editor learn the ropes, but since I took over with very little tutoring, I feel sure that anyone with basic writing skills and familiarity with MSOffice programs could produce a newsletter equal to or better than mine. The amount of time it takes every month is up to the personal preference of the editor, based on skill, ability to collect contributions, and the amount of information that one wants to research and include.

Please either contact me directly with questions at evanne@seanet.com, or make your interest known to Terri Peña so that we can arrange a smooth transition before the end of 2010. It has been a pleasure serving as your Editor, and a privilege working with the many people that have contributed to the Cablegram.

A Knitter's Calendar of Fun Fiber Events

- *September 26-27, Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival, Clackamas County Fairgrounds, Canby OR, www.flockandfiberfestival.com*
- *October 5-17, Mediterranean Knitting Cruise with Melissa Leapman, www.craftcruises.com*
- *October 25-November 1, SOAR, Sun River Resort, Sun River OR,, registration begins May 7, 2009*
- *November 7-8, Latvian Holiday Bazaar, Seattle WA , 11710 3rd Avenue NE,, Nort of Northgate Mall*
- *November 7, Hawaii from San Diego, Knitting with Joan Schrouder, Judy Pascale, and Bobbi Daniels, www.craftcruises.com*
- *November 27-29, Sock Knitters Retreat, Gwinwood Conference Center, Lacy WA, contact Ruth Haworth ruthmhaworth@msn.com*
- *December 6, Christmas Craft Markets, lace Knitting with Myrna Stahman, www.craftcruises.com*
- *December 10, YWCA RAGS Guild call for entries of digital images - wearable art and jewelry deadline, www.YWCApiercecounty.org*

SEATTLE KNITTERS GUILD

PO Box 15341

SEATTLE WA 98115

2009 - 2010 CALENDAR OF SKG MEETINGS

Mark These Dates! Cut and save this Calendar for 2009 SKG events.

Seattle Knitter's Guild is transitioning to a new meeting schedule on the first Wednesday of each month beginning in 2010 (see April and May *Cablegrams* for details). To ensure that members have plenty of notice regarding the new meeting dates and will not miss a single meeting, the SKG Board completed scheduling programs through January 2010. Mark these dates on your calendar! We have great programs planned for you and you won't want to miss a single one!

Your Editor was unable to attend the Board meeting this month, so there may be updates to the meeting schedule for 2010 planned by our Program Co-Chairs I am not aware of. More information will be provided in the next *Cablegram*!

Board Meeting	Cablegram via email	Regular Meeting	Topic
September 23	September 30	October 7	"Oregon" and "Top-Down" Knit-A-Long Fashion Show
October 21	November 4	November	Jared Flood of Brooklyn Tweed
November 18	November 25	December 2	Holiday Potluck Party
December 16	December 30	January 6	TBD

SEATTLE KNITTERS GUILD
(EST. 1985)

Meetings every third Wednesday of the month until August, 7:00 PM

Wedgwood Presbyterian Church
8008 - 35th Ave. NE, Seattle
(northeast corner of 35th and 80th)

Visitors always welcome.

Parking available in the lot behind the church or across from the south side of the church on 80th Street

Dues: \$22 per year, \$11 after July 1

Library cart open 6:30 to 7:00 PM
(Only members may check out books.)

Cablegram is published monthly by the Seattle Knitters Guild. Material for inclusion should be sent to the Editor by the first Friday of the month.