

FAIRBANKS WEAVERS' & SPINNERS' GUILD

Mailing address: PO Box 73152, Fairbanks, AK 99707, Studio: Davis Hall, TVSF Fairgrounds www.fairbanksweavers.org
fairbanksweavers@gmail.com, (907) 452-7737

President's Letter

Greetings Everyone!

Hope all is well in your world! I love this time of year as we transition to the light Alaskan months. I get amnesia after the long, dark winter!

March is the end of the calendar year for the FWSG. Our annual meeting is in April and we have our yearly election for Board members and dues are due.

Have you ever considered being on the Board? It's a great opportunity to help keep the Guild going as a benefit to our community of fiber enthusiasts. Please email the Guild if you would like us to add your name to the list of candidates.

Voting for the Board will likely be done on Survey Monkey. Stay tuned for the information about that via email.

I hope you can join us at our in-person annual meeting at Davis Hall on the TVSF grounds on April 6. Masks required except when eating and we will have a section for those eating- there's lots of room! We will provide sandwiches and hot drinks. There will be door prizes but no White Elephant this year. Doors open at 5:30 pm and meeting will start at 6. We're hoping to have some previously unavailable books for purchase as we have had to downsize our permanent library some more.

Don't forget March! Gail Friday's talk on March 6. This is a ticketed event so please see info in newsletter. The March general meeting is on the 9th. Hope to see you there!

Cheers! Buffy



Officers & Board Slate for 2021-2022

President: Buffy York-Dewitz 347-5370
 Vice President: Bonni Brooks 980-3126
 Secretary: Pat Costello 457-7033
 Treasurer: Maureen English 388-4465
 Historian: Laurel Herbeck

Board of Directors:

Kate Hedstrom 590-1420
 Chris Waigl 699-9943
 Claire Spann 978-7104
 Amy Mackinaw

Librarian: OPEN
 Hospitality: OPEN
 Newsletter: Amy Mackinaw, Chris Waigl
 Website: Chris Waigl
 Fair Supervisor: Moxie Pender 479-8443
 Kate Hedstrom 590-1420
 Rob Cermak
 Education & Outreach: Mina Doerner
 Social Media: Bonni Brooks
 Maureen English
 Dye Garden: Gail Mayo 479-3425
 Spinning Group: Alice Stickney 479-3425
 Busy Bees: Jodi Gouwens 474-9144

Save the Date - Annual Meeting Wednesday, April 6, 2022, 5:30 pm

All members are invited to meet at Davis Hall on the fairgrounds

Election of Officers and Board, followed by refreshments provided by the guild, and door prizes!

March/April Calendar 2022**Sunday, March 6, 4-5:30 pm -****In Conversation with Gail Friday** via Zoom

Fairbanks artist Gail Friday joins us to discuss tapestry as an art form from a painter's perspective. This is a joint presentation of the Fairbanks Weavers' and Spinners' Guild and Alaska Tapestry Weavers.

Ms. Friday will speak about fiber arts, specifically "Why Tapestry?" Using *The Art is the Cloth* by Micala Sidore as a jumping off point, Ms. Friday will take us through her perceptions of the medium and its expressive potential. Tickets are \$12.24 (including Eventbrite fee) [here](#), and all are welcome!

Wednesday, March 9, 6 pm - Monthly meeting Discussion of "Inspiration & Creativity"

Last October the Alaska Tapestry Weavers presented a program "Inspiration and Creativity" with local potter Lori Alexander and weaver Laurel Herbeck. Please watch the 1+ hour video sometime before the meeting: <https://youtu.be/5nfP83vx9vo>

At the meeting we'll chat about the video and also hear about a recent fiber workshop a couple members attended at Red Alder. Feel free to sit and stitch! A Zoom link will be sent via email to members to join this fun evening!

Wednesday, April 6, 5:30 pm - Annual Meeting

All members are invited to meet at Davis Hall on the fairgrounds, masks required; social distanced eating area will be accommodated. Election of Officers and Board, followed by refreshments provided by the guild, and door prizes!

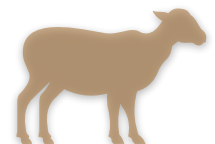
Saturday, April 9, 10:15 am - Lily Hope Virtual Presentation

Lily Hope is an artist, teacher, and a community facilitator. She intertwines indigenous techniques and spiritual teachings with traditionally sturdy artist communities,

supporting and enthusing Chilkat and Ravenstail weavers internationally. Information about attending this virtual event will follow. Visit Ms. Hope's website for more information about her work: <https://www.lilyhope.com/>

**Tanana Valley State Fair - Save the Dates****July 29 - August 7, 2022**

(entry the weekend prior)

Theme: Sheep Herder in Paradise**Flower:** Sunflower**Vegetable:** Pumpkin**Colors:** Red, Orange, Yellow**Next Newsletter Deadline - Tuesday, May 3**

Send any photos, Member Focus ideas, calendar items to fairbanksweavers@gmail.com Thank you!

Education and Outreach: Envisioning the Future of FWSG

WOW! It is hard to believe it's been a year since the Education and Outreach Working Group (EOWG) was first convened. The Guild and the board have faced many challenges during this past year, but met them all with grace and kindness. One of the bigger tests of patience was moving from the 2nd Avenue studio space and the question of what to do with All. Those. Looms. In the midst of this chaos, the EOWG was formed to consider all aspects of the role of the guild in Fairbanks' fiber arts community: possible partnerships, studio space availability, revenue generation, and teaching/learning opportunities. After our first Zoom meeting, it was very clear that there is ample opportunity for the guild to grow and thrive through education and outreach efforts.

Education is targeted to two different groups: our internal membership and the Fairbanks community. The community definitely contains those people who don't realize yet that they are fiber artists! Outreach here is defined as a community fiber arts opportunity provided by the guild to the public at little or no charge in order to market the Guild and draw in new members. The EOWG identified three goals for the Guild to achieve in order to continue to grow:

- Provide educational opportunities for Guild members to build/continue skills through invited artist-led and Guild member-led workshops and programs.
- Grow new fiber artists → Grow the Guild
- Classes and workshops provide a source of revenue for studio or storage space, equipment purchase, etc.

While the pandemic has put many things on hold, we have been able to grow several new fiber artists through the New Weavers Workshop (partnering with The Folk School), beginning rigid heddle (TFS/Fiber Festival), and tapestry weaving (TFS/Fiber Festival) classes. We held Davis Hall Open Studio Nights during January 2022 and covered spinning, warping looms, and tapestry weaving. The guild recently offered a beginning spinning class, held at Sophie Station Suites, through Eventbrite which meant that the class generated some revenue thanks to the donation of instructor time and materials. We are excited to report that *very* new spinners and weavers are participating in our offerings; our youngest spinner is a talented 11-year old and we have a 10-year old weaver-want-to-be!

Planning for, marketing, and teaching classes takes considerable effort and time. A good model for providing classes for the public may be one that charges an hourly rate and provides one-on-one instruction in specific learning experiences: beginning spinning, rigid heddle weaving, tapestry weaving, and others. Arrangements would be made directly between the student and instructor. We are also hoping that this model makes the idea of teaching less intimidating to our members who have so much knowledge to pass along. We hope that you will volunteer to share your skills with a new fiber artist or volunteer to present a short program to the guild about a technique, tip or trick you find particularly useful. (Cont'd on page 4)





(Education & Outreach cont'd from page 3)

Hopefully you have seen a number of questionnaires circulated via email. Responses to these questionnaires are extremely useful to the board and to the EOWG. We can get a good idea of members who would be willing to teach and what they want to teach and what kind of classes they would like to take. We will continue to use these tools to shape our workshop/classes offered BY and FOR guild members.

All in all, this has been an exciting year for the Fairbanks Weavers' and Spinners' Guild. We look forward to continuing our journey of revitalizing the guild and making it a valuable part of your fiber art life. If you have any programs or workshops you would like to participate in, or suggestions for meeting our goals listed above, please contact Mina at mdoeart29@gmail.com. This is your guild, and you make it stronger by your participation!

Members of the EOWG are Bonni Brooks, Buffy York-Dewitz, Mina Doerner, Kate Hedstrom, Laurel Herbeck, Sherrill Peterson, MK Romberg, and Claire Spann. •



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Dues Due:
March 31,
2022

Fairbanks Weavers' & Spinners' Guild

PO Box 73152, Fairbanks, AK 99707-3152

Annual membership (April through March)

\$30 per year

(\$15 for the rest of a year if paid after September 1st)

Check one: Renewal New Membership

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ for 2022

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

An email announcement is sent when the newsletter is available on our website, so please provide a legible email address. Please enclose your check (to: Fairbanks Weavers' & Spinners' Guild) and this form in the envelope using the address shown above.

Thank you for joining the Fairbanks Weavers' & Spinners' Guild.

<http://www.fairbanksweavers.org/> • fairbanksweavers@gmail.com • (907) 452-7737

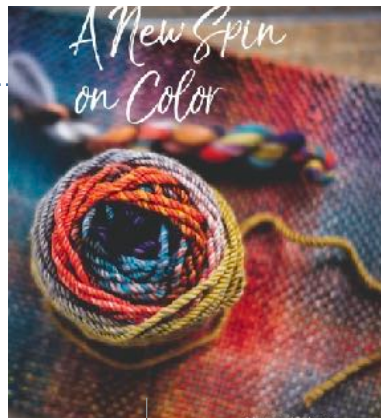
March Book Review

By Maureen English

A New Spin On Color by Alanna Wilcox,
(2017) Rochester, NY, Self Published

The title of this book says it all...it introduces a new way to spin fiber to get the colors that you want. I'm sure most of us are familiar with purchasing solid colors and possibly blending them to get a new color. Maybe we've even experimented with a drum carder or a blending board to get multi-colored bats to spin. This book focuses on spinning a painted top to get a wide variety of yarns. The resulting yarns are absolutely stunning. This book is easy to read, easy to follow and logically organized. I would definitely recommend it to new and old spinners alike.

The first 2 chapters, 'Color Theory' and 'Preparation and Spinning Mechanics' discuss the basics of color and spinning. The author does an excellent job of introducing terms like painter's palette, printer's palette, temperature and value as they relate to fiber and mixing colors. In addition, she describes how spacing and drafting influence the final yarn and the final project. For example, she shows what happens if you want to knit a sweater with yarn spun from fiber that has equal lengths of four different colors. Since the body of the sweater is wider than the sleeves, if you spin all of the fiber exactly the same, you'll end up with wider stripes on the sleeves. However, you can change the spacing and spin your yarn for the sleeves differently so you get shorter lengths of the four colors in order to have the stripes on the sleeves (cont'd)



(Cont'd.) be the same width as the stripes on the body. That is just one of the many tips offered throughout this book.

The next 3 chapters, 'Solid and Crisp Colors', 'Barber Pole and Heathered Yarns' and 'Blended and Muted Yarns' are the core of this

book. As one who typically spins by stripping off a section of the top and spinning it from end to end, I was quite surprised to see what happens when you spin the first section of color, blend the section where the first and second colors join to get a new color and then spin it and continue on through the colors this way. You could even mix up the color order, if you want. The resulting yarn, when chain-plied, results in long, crisp, sections of the original colors with shorter sections of the gentle blends joining them together. There are no abrupt color changes and the colors flow naturally from one to the other in the yarn.

There are seven examples of ways to spin/ply a painted top to get barber pole and heathered yarns and 10 examples of ways to spin/ply to get blended and muted yarns. Each is described in detail, from how to split the fiber to spinning and plying the singles in different ways to get the yarns shown. The examples are inspirational and made me want to spin something completely different, like adding solid as one of the yarns in a 3-ply. These chapters are like a 'try before you buy' option. All of the examples are shown with their matching knitted swatch so you can see exactly what will happen with each yarn.

(Cont'd on page 6)

(Book review cont'd) My favorite part of this book is the examples of yarn and knitted items (there are very few woven examples). Not only are the examples of fiber absolutely gorgeous, the examples of finished projects are unbelievable. Socks, shawls and sweaters are not just solids and stripes. They are works of art. One amazing example is of two socks, each knitted with yarn made from the same top, but plied differently. The sock made from the yarn that was chain plied has clear, solid sections of color. The other sock, made from a 3-ply in one of the examples for a heathered yarn, has much softer tones and no one color stands out. There is also a shawl that follows the colors in a peacock's feather and a sweater that shows the progression of colors in the rainbow. The sweater was made from seven different painted tops that were spun in order of the colors on the color wheel.

Plying bobbins of the same top, then plying one bobbin of one top with a bobbin of the next top result in yarns that progress smoothly from one color to the next. (Cont'd above)

As someone who loves to spin and think of the project later, the concept of planning the way to spin fiber for a project made me think differently of purchasing fiber. Planning for the final project requires patience. Once the fiber is spun, creating a knitted or woven sample from the resulting yarn will tell you if it will work for your project. After searching through my stash, I've found that I lean toward the Ashford blends or just solid colors. It may be time to search out a painted top just so I can accept the author's challenge and try the examples in this book!

This book is a must have for anyone interested in experimenting with colors. I can see myself using it as a reference for years to come. It's not only a great source for suggestions on how to spin a beautiful yarn, it's a wonderful inspiration for planning a new project.

Alanna Wilcox would like to offer FWSG members a 20% discount to use toward one of her online workshops through March 31, 2022. Find Alanna's website at <https://www.alannawilcox.com/> and use Coupon Code FWSG20% at checkout.

Guild FAQs:

Membership Meetings: Monthly either in person at Davis Hall on the fairgrounds or via Zoom

Newsletters, events calendar, general guild info and other fiber-related resources:

Available on the website at

www.fairbanksweavers.org

More questions? Email:

fairbanksweavers@gmail.com



Maureen English's beautiful handspun yarn appeared on the Guild's Instagram page @fairbanksweaversguild.

Watch for Maker Monday, Tapestry Tuesday, Weave Structure Wednesday and Fiber Friday each week.

Thanks to Bonni Brooks for managing the page, and please submit any photos to her at fairbanksweavers@gmail.com

We'd love to see your work there!

Member Focus - Each issue we are featuring a member's fiber art story. We'd like to hear yours! Email: fairbanksweavers@gmail.com

Helen Howard

My textile background started age 11, when I was taught to knit by another 'boarder' at my Boarding School in Cornwall, England. My mother was a knitter, using the German method of holding the yarn left-handed whereas I use the English method.

My introduction to the Weavers' Guild was at Lydia Fohn Hansen's home possibly in 1969. Lydia is known for having taught some Home Economics students how to weave scarves using the underwool of the 1930's Greenlandic musk oxen that were penned in the area now named Musk Ox Subdivision. Those animals, which were placed on Nunivak Island in 1936, fathered every musk ox now in Alaska.

It was Ann Lillian Schell who took me to the Weavers' Guild meeting. We were working for the Musk Ox Project, led by John Teal. Its purpose was to develop a village-based qiviut knitting industry and a domesticated musk ox.

The qiviut hand-knitting industry really did not begin until December 1968 when Ann Schell taught a workshop in Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island.

In 1968 I was in England where I learned to spin. I was asked to return to the Musk Ox Project, arriving in May 1969. Ann completed her Master's degree. She soon moved to Barrow, and departed the Project, leaving me to continue the qiviut workshops, develop production and set up the Producers' Cooperative. Ann and I both were taught knitting-design by Dorothy Reade and we used her graphic (cont'd above)



(Cont'd) stitch notation method to write knitting patterns that became signature to individual villages.

I conducted qiviut knitting workshops in multiple villages, but my first was in Goodnews Bay, where I stayed with a Yup'ik family and was rather intimidated when asked to use an interpreter as I demonstrated how to follow a graphed knitting pattern.

After Ann had left for Barrow, a skillful Japanese weaver, Kyo Currier, joined the Musk Ox Project to dye some of the qiviut knits. Fran Reed followed Kyo, dyeing hats, scarves and nachaqs for the Project. I visited a spinning mill on the East Coast. Fran studied qiviut's heat retention properties at another company. Both the idea of domesticating musk oxen and of using their qiviut were totally new ventures which meant inquiry and experimentation. (The word *qiviut* was established by John Teal, and I introduced it to the Webster dictionary.)

Kyo Currier started a weaving class at the University. From Kyo I learned tapestry and wove a long hanging*.

(Cont'd on page 8)



(Member Focus - Helen Howard cont'd from page 7)
 An elderly friend, Forbes Baker, gave me his grandmother's antique wool wheel. It was perfect for me to spin fine qiviut. Later I got an Ashford, then a Majacraft. I was loaned a table loom and wove a square necked top. I wove the trim on a birch inkle loom my husband built me. Then I bought Gayle Hazen's 4-Harness Leclerc which I loved and used for years.

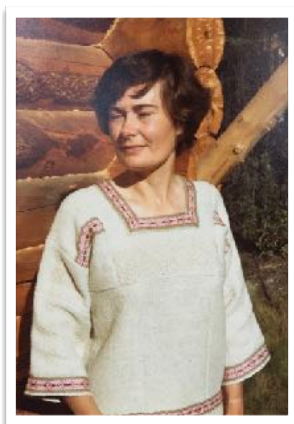
Over time the University weaving program lost its space on campus, and looms were eventually moved to Moose Creek. Not many weavers were eager to drive 25 miles out there in winter so the looms were stored and weaving stopped.

It was thanks to Penny Wakefield's boundless enthusiasm and eagerness to teach that the University classes restarted and that the Weavers' and Spinners' Guild became such a vibrant group. There were weaving and spinning workshops with visiting teachers on more than an annual basis, and in 1989 we hosted a weaving conference, FiberAlaska, followed by a second FiberAlaska two years later in Anchorage. I wove a shadow weave dress* for it. Laurel Herbeck wove some wonderful pieces for her church. Marjorie Rees held spinning bees at her home and we dyed indigo there in a pot on her porch. Penny arranged with the University to allow students credit for weaving and gathered a huge yarn stash filling 2nd floor Lathrop Building on 2nd Avenue. I and others had a plethora of opportunities to learn techniques and new skills. We had a wonderful dye workshop with Michelle Whipplinger and I produced a pullover*, a vest and a hat from the dye samples I got from it. (Cont'd)



(Cont'd) When I retired in 1999 I started watercolor painting so my weaving interests were laid aside until recently when I wove a stole on a warp I had made in the 1980's. The Guild has been important to my life and populated by my best friends. It challenged me and made me grow. •

Editor's Note: The above is an edited version of Helen's fiber story. To read about the full history of the musk ox project and more, go to Member Focus at www.fairbanksweavers.org



Fun fiber tip:
 Thanks to Mina Doerner for sending along this [link](#) to a "cool" podcast produced by Interweave Press: Fiber Nation. Enjoy!
 If you have a fiber tip you'd like to share, send it to fairbanksweavers@gmail.com