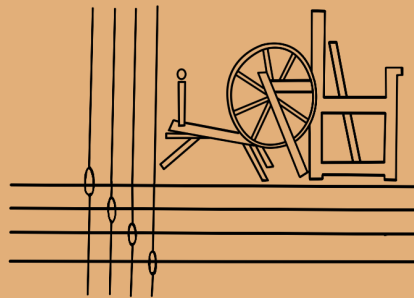


Fairbanks Weavers' and Spinners' Guild April 2024 Newsletter



Hello Spinners and Weavers! Spring is in the air and everyone at the FSWG have been busy as bees crafting and enjoying the warmer weather. We also have voted in a new board, with many familiar faces and some new members. We're back home in Davis Hall and Open Studios have been a blast. This newsletter features information about our upcoming guest instructor, recommendations for fiber travel fun, the secrets of ancient spindle whorls, and of course updates on our upcoming events.

Upcoming Events

All events at Davis Hall unless otherwise
indicated

Open Studio

Every Wednesday 2:00-8:00 pm

ABC Preschool Visit

Wednesday May 1, 10:00 am

Calypso Farm Sheep & Wool Day

Saturday May 4, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Volunteers needed! Contact [Kim](#).

Art and Craft Supply Sale

at The Folk School

Saturday May 11, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Contact [Katie Tasky](#) for drop off times

Spinning in Color Workshop

at Calypso Farm

Thursday evenings May 9th - 23rd

[Register here](#) - Limited Availability!

Spinning Wheel Musical Chairs and Tea Party

Saturday May 25th, 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Take different spinning wheels for a spin!

Contact [Elizabeth](#) with questions

[Follow our Facebook for info about
upcoming events](#)

Start Getting Ready for...

The Tanana Valley State Fair July 26-Aug 4, 2024.

The theme is "Thank you for
Bee-ing a Friend"

Colors: Magenta, Navy, Gold

Vegetable: Cauliflower

Flower: Fireweed

[Fair Information and Exhibit](#)



Send us a close-up picture of your project and we'll feature it in the header of a future newsletter.

[Send us a Photo!](#)

The header this month is a weaving project by Lois Henderson.

"Local Color" Art Exhibition September 2025

Calypso Farm is organizing a gallery exhibition on locally grown or harvested dyes/inks/stains.

It is never too early to think about planting or gathering materials!

Letter from the Presidents

Hello from Kim!

I want to thank everyone who made the last two years such a pleasure as I served as guild president. I've been president several times in the past but I have to say that sharing duties as co-president, first with Claire and then with Becky, has made the role so much more enjoyable. I am confident the co-presidency model will work well for Becky and Elizabeth as they start the new guild year.

We had a lot of great events these past two years from new classes (and new weavers) to all the fantastic pop-up events we've had recently. The pop-ups are so popular that I'm sure we will continue them. If you haven't made it to an evening at McCafferty's or a brunch at Jo's Oven yet, you are missing some fun times!

Our Open Studios continue to be the highlight of many people's crafting week. Taste testing our way through Moxie's new cookbook just adds to the fun! It turns out, we are not just talented fiber artists but we are pretty great cooks and bakers, too. I've been trying to recreate Gilda's black beans at home but hers just taste better.

Look for more classes, including a guest spinning instructor this fall, and continued coordination with fiber resources in the Interior. We continue to look for more ways to collaborate with the Folk School, Calypso, the Interior Knitters and Crocheters, and our local yarn shops. We are also putting together more Special Saturdays at the Studio so stay posted.

Thanks again and see you at Open Studio!

Hello from Elizabeth!

Greetings All! I'm so honored that you've put your faith in me to take up the baton from Kim. Weavers' and Spinners' is by far the

most fun and welcoming craft group I've ever encountered! I look forward to a creative, educational and merry year ahead with all of you.

Becky, Elizabeth, Kim

Board Members 2024-2025

Co-President: Becky Hammond

Co-President: Elizabeth Irving

Vice President: Kate Hedstrom

Secretary: Kim Kortenhof

Treasurer: Claire Spann

Board Member: Annika Mayer

Board Member: Clara Noomah

Board Member: Helen Howard

Board Member: Alicia Andrus

Congratulations to all the new board members and we are looking forward to a brilliant new year with the FWSG!

Pay your 2024-2025 Membership Dues

For the first time in guild history, you can pay your dues
ONLINE!

<https://fairbanksweavers.org/membership-2024/>

You can also mail in your form ([download form here](#)) or stop by Open Studio and pay our Treasurer, Claire Spann, directly via cash, check, or card.

Members receive the newsletter, get discounts on classes, and can advertise equipment they are selling. The mailing list will be updated to remove people who have not renewed in July, so if you want to renew, do it by then!



Open Studio Gallery





Who is Jillian Moreno?

By Linda Hearn of the Anchorage Weavers' and Spinners' Guild

We are so excited to have world-famous [Jillian Moreno](#) traveling to Alaska this coming September to share her spinning wisdom! Jillian will be traveling to both Anchorage and Fairbanks to do workshops! You might want to save the date on your calendar now; she'll be in Fairbanks on the 14th and 15th and Anchorage on the 21st and 22nd.

Jillian has been called a “yarn goddess” and has taught workshops



in craft schools and online at Knitty.com, PLY Magazine, and Spin Off Magazine, and was a writer for the popular [Yarn Detective column](#) for Modern Daily Knitting. You may know her as the author of the best-selling book, [Yarnitecture: A Knitter's Guide to Spinning:](#)



[Building Exactly the Yarn You Want](#). When she is at home in Ann Arbor, Michigan, she can be found wantonly basking in her stash and working on her next book.

Jillian is passionate about investigating the structure of yarn and color, and using them in intentional ways in knitting, stitching, and weaving. She explores, questions, and plays with fiber and wants to take as many people as possible along for the ride.

She believes all yarn is beautiful and useful and enthusiastically encourages her students to feel joy making and using their handspun. Jillian believes in making yarn you like and want to use, she throws 'must' and 'should' out the window, though does enjoy the fun that comes from the phrase 'it depends'.

Combining technical and intuitive approaches to spinning, her students gain confidence as well as solid skills to build any yarn they can dream of. In her classes Jillian shows there is never only one way to make a yarn. Knowing and seeing the outcomes of a variety of spinning skills frees students to build unique and useful yarns to use with any project they have in mind.

In her classes Jillian's students play and experiment with fibers and color, gain an enthusiasm for sampling, and come to see that their own definition of beautiful, consistent or perfect yarn is the only one that matters.

Get on the List for Jillian's Fairbanks Classes

The prices and times of workshops in Fairbanks are still being finalized. The next newsletter will feature more in-depth

information the workshops we will be hosting:

- All the Singles Ladies: Spin and Knit Sensational Singles (3 hours)
- Match Game: Spinning for Knitting (3 hours)
- Spinning Braids: All the Fun, None of the Stress (6 hours)

Contact [Kate Hedstrom](#) if you are interested signing up for any of these classes (and have not put your name on the interest form at Open Studio). Getting an estimate of participants helps us price the classes.

Spinning Sojourns, Weaving Weekends: How to make the most of your fiber travel

By [Kim Kortenhof](#)

Over the last couple of years, I made a point to do as much fiber travel as I could afford. Turns out, there are so many options that I easily could have bankrupted myself. I did consistently blow my craft budget every single month, so I guess that's a sign of success!

Whether you are interested in week-long immersion classes or a quick museum tour, there really is something for everyone out there and sometimes it's on our doorstep.

[Red Alder Fiber Arts](#) and [Calypso Farm](#)

I started my fiber journey by attending the Red Alder Fiber Arts conference in Tacoma, Washington. After a failure to knit to gauge on a fair isle hat, I signed up for every knitting technique class that was offered. Apparently, taking a class in every available time slot is called the Rookie Mistake. I was exhausted but I learned so much. The instructors were world class and I'm still amazed that

they could all knit backwards while facing the class to help the students learn techniques.

I came full circle with my fair isle knitting with a recent trip to Ester(!) to take a fantastic class given by Calypso Farms. I learned so much about color and design. I still have a ways to go on consistency of gauge but I'm getting there! And I completed a wearable cowl.

In between, I visited a few museums, attended a few week-long weaving classes, joined my sewing friends for a long weekend in a quilting lodge in Utah, and visited several sheep and wool festivals.

Here are some highlights.

[New York Sheep and Wool Festival](#) in Rhinebeck, New York

This is the biggest S&W festival in the US and it's fantastic. I always need two full days to get through all the exhibits. I've taken classes there in past years and again, it's top-notch instruction in a beautiful setting. Rhinebeck, NY is spectacular in the fall. There are big crowds and you really need to pace yourself but it's worth all the hype. I stocked up on lots of spinning fiber here.



[Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival](#) in Jefferson, Wisconsin

This event is an easy trip for me because I combine it with visits to

family. The festival is much smaller than Rhinebeck but still worth the trip. It has several large vendor halls, lots of animals, and equipment sales. Entry doesn't take credit cards so bring your \$20 in cash (or forfeit your driver license while you hit the cash machine in the vendor hall. Ask me how I know.)

[Sievers School of Fiber Arts](#) on Washington Island, Wisconsin

This place is near and dear to my heart. I love the islands of the Great Lakes and Washington Island in Lake Michigan is a beautiful place. I usually go there in late summer/early fall so the colors are just starting to turn. To get there, you take a ferry off the tip of Door County, Wisconsin. I stay in the onsite accommodations, a converted barn, and I have been going there for over 30 years. I have taken weaving, spinning, and basket weaving classes. It's a beautiful setting and class sizes are small, so you need to sign up early to secure your spot.

[Vavstuga Weaving School](#) in Shelburne, Massachusetts

This is another place I return to often. I usually take advanced weaving technique classes here. You are required to complete the first-year basic class before advancing and it is well worth it. Instruction follows a traditional Swedish weaving curriculum and is geared for Swedish-style looms.

I like to take the damask weaving classes there because I don't have damask equipment for any of my looms and this is a great opportunity to use the specialized equipment. I have also taken traditional Swedish classics classes which work well for my home looms.



[National Nordic Museum](#) in Seattle, Washington

This beautiful museum always has an interesting textile display. Some are permanent but many are from around Scandinavia. It's an easy stopover in Seattle on your way to other textile travel. They have a nice little fika restaurant, too.

[American Swedish Institute](#) in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Another easy stopover side trip if you are flying to the Midwest is the Turnblad Mansion now part of the American Swedish Institute. The building is an incredible work of art and the exhibits are fantastic. There are permanent fiber and glass exhibits. My history professor brother even got me a behind-the-scenes tour once! The local weaving guild may still meet upstairs and there is a great fika restaurant called, of course, Fika.

Hope this small list helps you think about adding a textile component to your future travels!

Kim

Silent Storytellers: The secrets

of spindle whorls, loom weights, shears and more

By Annika Mayer

Even the tightest-woven tapestry is ultimately a fragile artifact when exposed to the workings of weather and time. In extraordinary conditions textiles can be preserved for hundreds, even thousands of years, but these instances are rare and even then the items are likely to lose much of their original character. What, then, can archaeologists and historians use to reconstruct the fabric of the past? Thanks to advances in scientific technology and the efforts of researchers at institutions such as the [CTR \(Center for Textile Research\)](#) in Denmark, we now understand more about patterns of textile manufacture in the past than ever before.

Some tools used by ancient artisans would be intimately familiar to most members of the FSWG today. Shears were used to snip threads and needles to sew them then as they are now. Similarly, most hand spinners will know a spindle whorl when they see one, although ancient and medieval versions more commonly resemble beads rather than the wheel designs popular today. Other items are less recognizable to the modern eye, such as the decorated loom weights for warp-weighted looms. Tools made from durable materials such as stone, ceramics, and metal are not uncommon at archaeological sites.



A collection of [Loom Weights](#) from the 3rd to 5th centuries BC and a pair of Roman bronze [shears](#)

By analyzing the size and weight of spindle whorls and loom weights, researchers can determine the thickness of thread produced and draw some conclusions about the character of the finished cloth. Lighter whorls will produce finer yarns and are more suitable for use with short fibers such as wool or other animal fibers. Heavier whorls with wider diameters are more suitable for long flax or bast fibers, as they can better maintain momentum and the long fibers are less likely to snap under the pressure. Similar principles can be applied to loom weights, where lighter weights are associated with finer cloth and looser weaves. Archaeologists can also determine the function of shears by their form: left-handed shears with pointed tips are more useful for sheep shearing, as they allow the shearer to cut efficiently into the fleece while holding on with the dominant hand, while tailoring shears are more likely to be right-handed with blunted tips to avoid damaging the fabric.

These points of data become really significant when analyzed within their context to tell stories about the societies that made them. For example, loom weights in Iron-age Cornwall are commonly found in large, high-status settlements while spindle whorls are more common in small villages and homesteads. Both whorls and weights in this region are extraordinarily small compared to examples from other areas. These facts suggest a society where thread spun in smaller settlements was processed into cloth in larger ones, and the manufacture of a regionally distinct variety of cloth with a fine, open weave. In cases like this, textile tools can expose hidden narratives about the past.

Information from this article comes from the book Exploring Ancient Textiles: Pushing the Boundaries of Ancient Methodologies, by Dickey et al. (2022). Those interested in historical tools may also be interested in the CTR's [Tools and Textiles: Texts and Contexts](#) project, which has some great reference materials available for free online.



A variety of whorls from Bronze-Age Italy, demonstrating the complexity and variety of yarn manufacture at a village level. Read more about them here:

[Spindle Whorls from Terramare](#)

Interested in writing for us?

The FSWG comms team is currently looking for more contributors to our newsletter. Stories should be 300-700 words long and can feature any fiber related topic, such as a recent project, tales of fiber travel, a deep dive into a certain process or methodology, or anything else of interest to our community of fiber artists.

TO SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE:

Please email your text to comms@fairbanksweaver.s.org along with any accompanying photographs and attributions. The deadline for articles to be included in our June newsletter is **June 26st, 2024.**

Volume 45 Issue 1

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The Fairbanks Weavers' and Spinners' Guild is a 501-c-3 nonprofit organization founded in 1952. Our mission is to connect fiber artists across Interior Alaska and build community through practice, teaching and learning in the arts of weaving, hand spinning, and related textile arts.

The membership year goes from April 1st to March 30th of the following year. To become a member or renew your membership, please [download our membership form](#), print it out, and mail it to us.

Membership forms are also available at Guild events.

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