

# Piedmont Fiber Guild Newsletter

January, 2016

## Contents:

### Pages 2-4: Business

- a. A note from our President, Gail Boyles
- b. The PFG Board: a list of our current Board members (with contact information)
- c. A Note on the Upcoming Meeting
- d. Dates for This Year's Guild Meetings
- e. A Notice from Our Equipment Manager, Vivian Brenner: terms for equipment rental

### Page 4: PFG Library

- a. PFG Library News: from our Librarian Christine Dunlap

### Page 5: Workshops

- a. An Upcoming Workshop on Naalbinding: taught by Julia Roskamp

### Pages 5-6: Associated Groups

- a. Note from the PFG Weaving Study Group, from Maurice Blackburn
- b. News from Carolina Handspinners: from Christine Dunlap

### Pages: Other

- a. New York Times Obituary Honoring Alden Amos
- b. Shirley Young's Cheese Dip

## PFG Holiday Celebration

December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

This year's PFG Holiday Celebration was festive and enjoyable for all. We had lots of great holiday treats, fellowship, handwork completed, wonderful Show and Tell and a gift exchange. Christina Oliveri hosted a Silent Auction to benefit the PFG Scholarship Fund. Items were donated by Carol Serwint. We thank Carol for her generosity and thanks also to all members who bid on and purchased these items.





## 2016 – The Year of the Monkey

Welcome to 2016 – the Year of the Monkey if you follow the Chinese calendar. Persons born under the Monkey sign are said to be witty, intelligent, and have a magnetic personality. Personality traits, like mischievousness, curiosity, and cleverness, make them very naughty. Monkeys are masters of practical jokes, because they like playing most of the time. Though they don't have any bad intentions, their pranks sometimes hurt the feelings of others. Monkeys are fast learners and crafty opportunists. If you or someone you know was born during 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, or 2016, they are a monkey. Ironically, it's also the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my favorite “young girl crush” band, The Monkees. If anybody symbolizes The Year of the Monkey, it's The Monkees!

Every New Year is a time of re-birth, resolutions, taking on new challenges or finally accomplishing old ones. Many of us have personal goals on these lists but, I hope some items on your list are fiber related.

To help with those who have a resolution to learn a new fiber technique, the guild has you covered. Julia Roskamp will be teaching Naal Binding in January and February. In February, Carol Wertz is hosting a cotton dye class that renowned dyer Katherine Webber will teach. Our Workshop Coordinator, Shirley Young is looking into more classes. If you have an idea of a class you think is interesting, contact Shirley.

Want to learn firsthand from an expert in the fiber world? The guild is on it! Michiele Elliott has done a tremendous job booking presenters at our guild meetings. In January, we'll be hearing from Caron Wilson of Freehaven Farm about her experiences with llama and alpaca and their fibers. In February, Edwina Bringle currently of Penland School of Crafts will talk to us about silencing our inner critic and valuing the work of our hands.

If you have a resolution to be more charitable, the guild has you covered as well. Our charity coordinator, Julia Roskamp is taking donations for Knitted Knockers ([www.knittedknockers.org](http://www.knittedknockers.org)). She is also taking donated toiletry items for St Michaels to help the less fortunate make it on their own.

Does your fiber resolution involve using a piece of fiber equipment? Maybe that equipment can be rented from the guild. Our equipment manager, Vivian Brenner can hook you up with a drum carder, picker or other fiber equipment.

[Continued from previous page]

There are also many events the guild is participating in where you can show off your fiber skills and possibly have a one on one learning session with other guild members. In February, the guild will be participating at the Carolina Alpaca Celebration. There is also the Lincolnton Art and Wine Festival in April. More events are always popping up especially with shearing season just around the corner. If you find an event you think the guild should participate in, please send the information to our Marketing coordinator, Sallie Olson so she can look into it.

Happy 2016 everyone!

-Gail Boyles, President

## The PFG Board

**President: Gail Boyles**

[E-mail: [gboyles44@gmail.com](mailto:gboyles44@gmail.com) ]

**Past president: Sara Munday**

[E-mail: [sarat11970@gmail.com](mailto:sarat11970@gmail.com) ]

**Monthly Programs: Michiele Elliott**

[E-mail: [michielere Elliott@yahoo.com](mailto:michielere Elliott@yahoo.com) ]

**Membership: Dick Kistler**

[E-mail: [dickkist@hotmail.com](mailto:dickkist@hotmail.com) ]

**Library: Christine Dunlap**

[E-mail: [dunlap\\_b@bellsouth.net](mailto:dunlap_b@bellsouth.net) ]

**Publicity/Marketing: Sallie Olson**

[E-mail: [sallieolson@carolina.rr.com](mailto:sallieolson@carolina.rr.com) ]

**Newsletter: Beth and Will Dunlap**

[E-mail: [dunlap\\_b@bellsouth.net](mailto:dunlap_b@bellsouth.net) ]

**Webmaster: Maurice Blackburn**

[E-mail: [mblackburn1@carolina.rr.com](mailto:mblackburn1@carolina.rr.com) ]

**Secretary: Tammy Diener**

[E-mail: [tdiener27265@yahoo.com](mailto:tdiener27265@yahoo.com) ]

**Hospitality: Christina Oliveri**

[E-mail: [miukat@msn.com](mailto:miukat@msn.com) ]

**Workshops: Shirley Young**

[E-mail: [syoung4@carolina.rr.com](mailto:syoung4@carolina.rr.com) ]

**Treasurer: Pat Williams**

[E-mail: [pedmonds001@carolina.rr.com](mailto:pedmonds001@carolina.rr.com) ]

**Equipment Manager: Vivian Brenner**

[E-mail: [SockLady@aol.com](mailto:SockLady@aol.com) ]

## A Note on the Upcoming Meeting

We would like to thank Burgl Pruett, Vivian Brenner, and Tammy Diener for volunteering to bring refreshments for this month's meeting, and Pam Perkins for providing Opportunity items. If you are interested in bringing food, drinks, or Opportunity items to subsequent meetings, please contact our Hospitality chair, Christina Oliveri.

This month's program comes from Caron Wilson, owner of *Freehaven Farm*. She will speak to us about her beautiful llamas and alpacas, and using these luxury fibers. Caron teaches spinning, felting, weaving, and all manner of fiber arts.

We hope that you will join us at this month's meeting. Guests are always welcome.

## This Year's Guild Meetings:

- **October 18, 2015**
- **November 15, 2015**
- **Dec. 5 [Christmas party, time TBD]**
- **January 17, 2016**
- **February 21, 2016**
- **March 20, 2016**
- **April 17, 2016**
- **May 15, 2016**

**All regular meetings 2-4 pm at Arts on Main, 212 West Main Avenue, Gastonia, 28052. Visitors are welcome.**

# **▲ Notice from Our Equipment Manager, Vivian Brenner**

## Terms for Equipment Rental

The Guild has equipment to rent to members in good standing (dues paid for at least one year).

<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Rental Fee</u>	<u>Security Deposit</u>
Drum Carder	\$30	\$50
Cotton Cards	\$5	\$20
Elbee Picker	\$30	\$100
Warping Board	TBA	TBA

If you would like to rent any of this equipment on a month-to-month basis, please contact the Equipment Manager, Vivian Brenner, at 704-841-1624. There is a brief contract you will sign at the time of the rental.

If you have any fiber equipment you would like to donate, please contact Vivian or Gail, our most esteemed President.

## **DFG Library News**

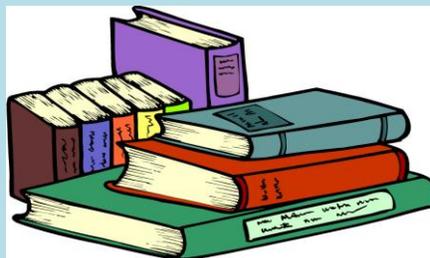
From Our Librarian, Christine Dunlap

At long last and thanks to Gail Boyles, my Christmas wish has come true. By this weekend we should have a second PFG Library Cabinet installed at Art on Main in the storage area near our monthly meeting area. This will allow us to better organize our PFG Library and include all the items we have recently acquired from generous donors.

The checkout process remains unchanged. Simply locate the item you wish to check out in the Library Log and date and initial the "out" box. When you return the item, date and initial the "in" box.

If you have seen an item you think should be included in the PFG Library, please email me a request ([dunlap\\_b@bellsouth.net](mailto:dunlap_b@bellsouth.net)). I'll present this request to the board and after approval will purchase item to be included in the PFG Library.

We'd love to have folks write a short review of a book they have recently read or acquired. Nothing fancy: just to let others know that a great fiber book is out there that others might enjoy reading. Send submissions to the PFG Newsletter Staff ([dunlap\\_b@bellsouth.net](mailto:dunlap_b@bellsouth.net)).



## **An Upcoming Workshop on Naalbinding**

Taught by Julia Roskamp

Do you like to learn new fiber arts? How about very, very old ones? Naalbinding is knitting with one needle, and is thought to precede both knitting and crochet. Articles of clothing made with this technique have been found mostly in the Scandanavian countries. Come to the naalbinding workshop taught by Julia Roskamp on January 25th and learn the Oslo and Mammen stitches. You will practice these stitches to make fingerless gloves. No one should leave with only a circle of stitches - let's make our practice practical!

Bring your own wool (not Superwash) and a naalbinding needle if you have one. If you don't, Julia has some for you to try, and buy if you want to keep them. Join us for some adventure!

DATE: Saturday, January 23 or Saturday, February 27 (your choice of dates - the workshops will cover the same information)

LOCATION: Arts on Main, Gastonia

TIME: 11 am – 5 pm

PAYMENT: \$35 per student

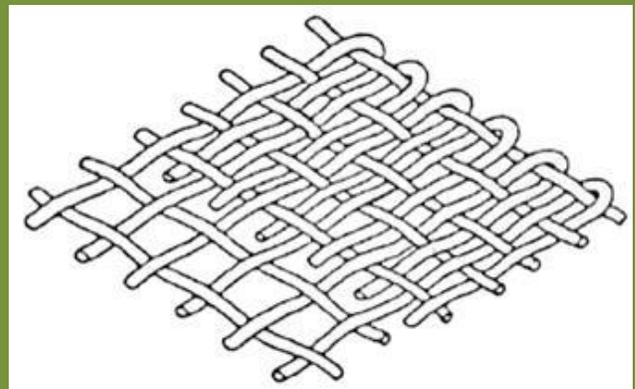
### **▲ Note from the DFG Weaving Study Group**

Our next meeting will be on January 20th at Sue Hemlken's studio in Clover SC. This will give us an opportunity to see Sue's brand new studio.

Alice Harrill and Sue are listed as the presentation weavers for this meeting. This year's project is a shadow weave pillow (or cushion) top.

All weavers or aspiring weavers are welcome. Please contact Sue at: - [barefootweaver@earthlink.net](mailto:barefootweaver@earthlink.net) for directions if you plan to attend.

– Maurice Blackburn



# News from Carolina Handspinners

From Christine Dunlap

The next regular meeting of Carolina Handspinners will take place on Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2-4pm at Lowell Community Center. This event is open to the public so please invite all fiber-interested friends to attend. Our next Bimonthly Saturday meeting will take place on Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 10am-4pm at the home of Peggy Hood in Oakboro, NC. Please contact Peggy directly if you would like to attend. Be sure to let her know what you would like to bring to share with the group for Potluck Lunch. We thank Peggy for opening her home to our group for this meeting that allows folks who can't attend our weekday meetings to enjoy the fun that is Carolina Handspinners.

We had a great Bimonthly Saturday meeting on Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup>. Great food, wonderful company, and lots of great conversation. We thank Catherine Sullivan for hosting this get-together in her beautiful home.



Our regular monthly meeting in December was a holiday celebration. We decided on a Potluck Lunch for this meeting only and the City of Lowell graciously allowed us to have our luncheon as well as our usual meeting at the Lowell Community Center. Our celebration included a gift exchange as well as great food and wonderful company for the day.



## New York Times Obituary Honoring Alden Amos

# Alden Amos, Whose Spinning Wheels Gave Craft a Brighter Fate, Dies at 77

By Margalit Fox, Dec. 18, 2015



Alden Amos, a master wheelmaker and teacher, helped spur the modern revival of the traditional craft of handspinning. [Credit via Interweave]

Alden Amos, a Stradivari of spinning wheels who as a master wheelmaker, teacher and deliciously opinionated author helped spur the modern revival of the traditional craft of handspinning, died on Nov. 28 in Jackson, Calif. He was 77.

The cause was multiple organ failure, said his wife and business partner, Stephenie Gaustad. News of the death of Mr. Amos, who had long lived and worked in Jackson, southeast of Sacramento, was not made public until recently.

In the impassioned and overwhelmingly female world of contemporary handspinners — between 35,000 and 40,000 strong in the United States — Mr. Amos was renowned as a builder of wheels that spun like butter, so sought-after that to buy one entailed a five-year waiting list.

“In a community with so many matriarchs, he was one of the few patriarchs,” said Jacey Boggs Faulkner, the editor in chief of *Ply*, a quarterly magazine about handspinning, in a telephone interview on Thursday. “He had a deep understanding of the craft, and his tools reflect that, as did his writing.”

Mr. Amos's magnum opus, *The Alden Amos Big Book of Handspinning* (2001, illustrated by Ms. Gaustad), a work of some 500 pages that was more than a dozen years in the making, is widely considered the handspinner's bible. Mr. Amos himself, he liked to say, had been spinning "since Christ was a corporal."

His book's subtitle — "Being a Compendium of Information, Advice, and Opinions on the Noble Art & Craft" — is a window not only onto the text but also onto the author, a big, bearded, overall-clad, plain-spoken Burl Ives of a man known fondly in the spinning community as "the best curmudgeon in the world."

Handspinning is the art of turning fiber, like wool, silk, flax or cotton, into yarn. While people have been making yarn on small hand spindles at least since the Stone Age, the spinning wheel, which mechanized the process, was introduced only in the Middle Ages.

A spinning wheel is a twisting machine. The spinner takes a handful of loose fiber — think of the cotton in the top of an aspirin bottle — draws it out into a strand and feeds the strand into the wheel, whose revolutions impart twist.

The twist makes the yarn, turning an amorphous pile of fluff into a long, supple, durable string, which is then wound by the wheel onto the large spool known as a bobbin. The finished yarn can be used for knitting, weaving, crocheting — anything for which store-bought yarn can be employed.

With the welter of commercial yarn available, an epidemic that by the mid-20th century had sent handspinning into near-terminal decline, an empirical question arises: Why spin?

The answer, to hear spinners tell it, lies in the craft's tactile pleasure for the hands, visual pleasure for the eyes and, ultimately, restorative balm for the soul. To transform fiber on a wheel — with complete control over the color, thickness and texture that result — is, ardent spinners say, the real-world equivalent of spinning straw into gold.

Mr. Amos was, by all accounts, among the most ardent of them all.

Alden Scott Amos was born on Oct. 3, 1938, in Princess Anne, Va., a community within Virginia Beach. His was a distinguished family: His father, Marion, was a Coast Guard officer; a grandfather, also a Coast Guard officer, had accompanied Rear Adm. Robert Peary to the Arctic in the early 20th century.

From his mother, the former Betty Perham, a knitwear designer, Alden learned to knit at 4. At 8, needing a string for his yo-yo, he did his first spinning, fashioning a new, high-twist (and therefore high-energy) string himself, most likely by anchoring a length of cotton to a hook and twirling it by hand.

"I'd been playing with fibers and ropes and cords and yarns and threads ever since I was a little kid," Mr. Alden said in a 2009 video interview, in which he also took pains to explain the importance, for the handspinner, of drinking beer.

In the 1960s, amid his three Army tours of Vietnam, Mr. Alden built his first spinning wheel from a pattern in *Popular Mechanics*. "It was a terrible wheel," he said bluntly years later. "It didn't spin."

In the Army, he worked as a helicopter mechanic, and the understanding of the physics of rotary motion that the job gave him would stand him in fine stead as a wheelmaker.

Discharged in 1972, Mr. Alden “became a hippie,” he said, settling in the heady craft culture of Northern California. There he became both an impassioned spinner and a full-time wheelmaker.

“Northern California at that time had a cluster of people who not only got back into spinning but kicked it to a level that people are still aspiring to,” Deborah Robson, who edited Mr. Amos’s book for Interweave Press, said on Thursday. “Everybody else was pretty much spinning funky, lumpy gray yarns that didn’t perform very well. So Alden, out of a combination of curiosity and intelligence, went at the tools and technical aspects of it, in ways that were accessible to the other spinners around him.”

Mr. Amos’s first marriage, to Paula Giannini, ended in divorce, as did his second, to Linda West. Besides Ms. Gaustad, whom he married in 1983, his survivors include two daughters, Brandy and Rebecca Marie; a stepdaughter, Laura Anne; a stepson, Jan Christopher; a brother, Sheldon; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Today, mass-produced spinning wheels can be had from a spate of manufacturers worldwide, for prices ranging from a few hundred dollars to more than a thousand. Mr. Amos’s wheels, which sold for \$1,200 to \$2,200, were completely bespoke, taking into account not only each spinner’s physique, but also the type of yarn — wool or silk, thick or thin — that the spinner made most often.

The 600 wheels he completed over time were elegant, streamlined affairs, devoid of the mechanical bells and whistles with which some commercial wheels are endowed.

“We’re not rediscovering the spinning wheel each time we make one,” Mr. Amos said in the video interview. “If the wheel will produce yarn faster than you can, and do so with a minimum of hassle — it puts in twist, takes the yarn away and nothing else — that’s all you want. All the rest is eyewash.”

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Shirley Young’s Cheese Dip**

*This is the cheese dip I brought to the Guild party.*

1 pkt Hidden Vally Ranch dressing.  
1/2 cup Sour Cream  
2 Squares of Kiri Cheese (substitute 2 oz cream cheese)  
Mix well together  
Add 1 cup Lime or lemon flavour Greek Yogurt  
And 1 4 oz container of Feta crumbles, Tomato Basil flavor  
Stir and Serve.

