



# THE KNIT STITCH

Okay, I give up! Weren't there flowers (weeds) everywhere just a few short weeks ago? Winter is definitely here. No excuses now, everyone should be knitting! Be it for gift giving or just for yourself, now is the perfect time to get some knitting done. A hot mug of tea, some great wool yarn (or your yarn of preference), and some 'quiet time' with the zip zip zip of the knitting machine.

Our December meeting was tons of fun and very laid back. Thank you to our Board and to Penny Spencer who provided food and beverage for our attendees. YUM!!!

Don't forget our knit-a-long for 2014. You know how much I like prizes; so for everyone who participates, you get one ticket if you make the trim for the month (has to be presented the month it's due) and 5 bonus tickets if you use the trim in an article of clothing, decoration, whatever – but not in a swatch. Item must be presented for that month's trim.

The December Fiber Exchange was a hoot. Took a bit for all of us to get the hang of it but we persevered! If you make anything with your exchange item, bring it along to a meeting so we can see your creative juices flow!

One last thing... we really need more volunteers for our events next year. Reach out to our Member at Large, Joanne Zutz, with any ideas you may have to help encourage greater participation.

*Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and most of all Happy Knitting!*

*Dee Kupka  
President*

## VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

November 2, found several of us in the Eisenhower Community Center demonstrating machine knitting at the Alpaca Fiber Fest. A CSM and mid-gauge machine drew much attention from experienced knitters and those who had never seen a knitting machine before. These events are so much fun! It's

a great opportunity to interact with other fiber enthusiasts and showing off our craft. Thanks to our volunteers.

Having become addicted to *Fiber Factor* an online knitting competition (<http://thefiberfactor.com>), I found the last challenge intriguing. The final four contestants have three projects to complete by the January deadline. The most interesting to me is the challenge to re-do one of their previous designs. The design can be changed, but they must keep to the rules of that original challenge and keep the original yarn and material challenge. The goal is to take this design to the next level or re-think it altogether. I have a knit a few things in the past that could do with redoing; this challenge gives me the impetus to join in to up my game.

As this crazy busy time of year comes to an end it is time to plan next year, make time for machine knitting and seriously give thought to entering either a County Fair or the State Fair.

Wishing you all the best and most of all Happy Knitting!

*Jane Niemi  
Vice President*

P.S. Thank you to my gifter! The fiber exchange was a fun way to end the year.

## Presentation Wrap-up 2013

In October Caroline showed us some magic with bits of wire and yarn. We got the opportunity to twist and turn and make a bead or two. The examples of finished pieces that Caroline brought were quite an inspiration for future endeavors in this area. The following is a list of the books that Carline referred to for fiber beads and Chinese knots and bead crochet: *Bead Crochet* by Bethany Barry; *Fiber-Wire Beads and Jewelry* by Lisa Vann and *Chinese Knots for Beaded Jewelry* by Suzen Millodot.

November brought Carole Wurst of Rocking Horse Farm who was gracious to bring a circular sock machine and a standard bed machine with her. She



showed us thrumming on those two machines as well as on our MMKC mid-gauge machine. I am lucky enough to have a wonderful pair of thrummed socks as a result. No cold winter feet for me!

Also in November, Calvin Stalvig shared his travel experiences and machine knitting adventure in Germany. He brought several pieces from his collection, many of which were done with plating, giving us a bit of inspiration to put our machines to work with a different technique.

THANK YOU to all who have shared their expertise with us throughout the year.

**Presentations 2014:**

We're looking for volunteers – schedule is fairly flexible after February if we need to switch things around a bit.

**\*\*\*Please send your favorite hat pattern, or title and source to Jane: [jsniemi@comcast.net](mailto:jsniemi@comcast.net) for the January 2014 Presentation\*\*\***

January through December – Kick off the a New Year with **50 Ways to Love Your Knitter** by Maryanne Oger. Join the knit-a-long! We will knit one trim per month. This book builds from trim to trim, so we will begin with the first trim and continue monthly. If you do not already have this book, please contact your dealer or check it out in the TC Library.

**RAMBLINGS OF AN EASILY  
DISTRACTED KNITTER**

2013 started out with a plan. If you remember, at the January meeting I showed a picture of my goal to knit 12 projects during the year. I had selected the yarns and patterns and had them waiting expectantly in a bin. I knew I would be more successful with them organized this way.

As the year winds down, I see my bin still contains yarns and patterns. But I am not disappointed. Even though I only completed 5 from my original list, I did actually complete 12 projects this year. Ravelry was probably the biggest factor that led me astray from my original list with new and exciting ideas. But anytime/anyway we are inspired is a great thing! Just keep knitting!!

Here is what I completed:

- 1) Mug Cozies – gifts
- 2) Chain Chomp Hat and Storm Trooper Hat – for daughter and son
- 3) Mouse in Socks ornaments – 2013 ornament for kids (made 6)
- 4) Pillow - for daughter
- 5) Hand dyed yarn into socks – for me
- 6) Destroyed Cowl – for me (and then several gifts)
- 7) Stanley the Zebra toy – for State Fair (and 2 more gifts)
- 8) Amethyst in the Rough shawl – for me
- 9) Hollywood Swag hat and scarf – gift
- 10) Barn Red Deep V pullover – for me
- 11) Thrummed mittens/hat – for me
- 12) Felted clog slippers – for me (and gifts)

I know 2014 will bring many more exciting projects. My personal goals are 14 baby kimono sweaters for Bundles of Love and 14 projects (made out of my stash yarn) in various colors of purple. And of course participating in the 2014 Trims Knit-a-Long.

*Happy knitting to all!*

*Maria Ann Youngs*

**EVENTS & FUNDRAISING...**

Fundraiser – Saturday, February 15, Joyful Noise Knit In – Details will be announced in January

Fundraiser – Sunday, September 14, 2014, - Purl One Tea Too – more details to follow.

Workshop – Dates to be announced

**HAPPENINGS**

Now through December 28 – Holiday Show at the Textile Center in the Shop & Gallery

Saturday, January 4, Saint Distaff's Day – 10:00am to 6:00pm at Rocking Horse Farm. Bring a bag lunch, knit, spin and join the fun

Saturday, January 25, Circular Sock Machine gathering 10:00am to 6:00pm at Rocking Horse Farm

Saturday, February 1, Silver Tea & Knit Trunk Show 1:30pm to 4:00pm – Rocking Horse Farm

**✚ HAPPENINGS (CONT'D)**

Saturday, April 26, 2014, - Yarnover

Friday & Saturday, May 2 & 3, 2014, - Purls of Joy

**✚ WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE HEEL SPRING?... FOR OUR CSMERS**

When shaping heels, toes, any gussets, you may find the knitting too tight, the handle is tough to crank and you end up with one or more stitches that haven't knit and sometimes the yarn can break. The purpose of the heel spring is to keep the yarn flowing smoothly as you move the yarn guide back and forth around those needles where you are short-rowing. Without the heel spring to "take up the slack" you would have large loops of yarn and lots of dropped stitches in your socks or other items.

The solution? Loosen the tension a bit when you put on the heel spring. On the Erlbacher, I loosen my tension 2 clicks while the heel spring is on and this has solved the problem of missed stitches. Give this a try and let us know how this worked for you.

Also, I've tried using my heel spring to tighten the cuffs at the top of my socks. Couldn't get it right. Then I adjusted the ribber to shorten the stitch and tightened the v-cam (again Erlbacher) 3 clicks and my cuff selvedge looked so much better. I'll share when I find my perfect sock!

Here's a free download pattern on Ravelry for Lined Fingerless Cuffed Mittens on the CSM:  
<http://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/csm-lined-fingerless-cuffed-mittens>

**✚ MACHINE KNITTING LINKS & THINGS**

Have any of you seen the Spikey Scarf video on Youtube from Knit-1 Design? If not, I'd recommend watching it:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fv7F1dqwh8>.  
Also, if you email [minna@knit-1.com](mailto:minna@knit-1.com) Knit 1 Design will send you a free step-by-step tutorial in PDF format to make this scarf. I have got to make one!!!!



Check out Diana Sullivan's December blog posting with a video for a quick and easy pair of fingerless gloves (you'll need a ribber for these) <http://diananatters.blogspot.com/2013/12/decembers-video-fingerless-mitts.html>. These would make great stocking stuffers or last minute gifts. Below is a screen shot I took off one recently made on Ravelry. This is great practice for using the ribber and for trying English Rib – a.k.a. half fisherman rib. A 50g ball of sock yarn makes a pair!



And still one of my favorites... Yvonne Cadwell's Samburu Scarf. This is also a free Ravelry download and a fabulous way to use up all those bits of leftover yarn.

<http://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/samburu-scarf-machine-knit>



Visit Susan Guagliumi's website which has free downloads of previously published patterns and handouts she uses at seminars. There are too many articles and patterns to list here.

[http://www.guagliumi.com/pubs\\_freedownloads.html](http://www.guagliumi.com/pubs_freedownloads.html)

If you haven't been keeping up with Tanya Cunningham's **Bubble Pops** here's the link and photo of a recent example:

<http://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/bubble-pops>. Tanya goes by ItMakesYouSmile in Ravelry and this is a free download.



And one more... check out the machine knit wide cable done here on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNtshegB8O8>

### **✚ LOOKING FOR PATTERN WRITERS AND TOOL/YARN CRITICS!**

You are the best source of what's happening in the world of machine knitting – What's a great yarn? What's a fabulous purchased or self-made tool? What do you think of the latest hand or machine knitting magazine or book? Our newsletter gets better with input from our members. Also, if you've written a pattern or converted a hand knit pattern to machine, send it in along with the name of the original designer and contact information so we can be sure to get permission to share this with our membership.



## ◇ 2014 MMKC Membership Form

Dues are \$31.00 per calendar year - January through December

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Ravelry Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Options:

1. Check payable to: Midwest Machine Knitters' Collaborative

Mail along with this form to: (a) Midwest Machine Knitters' Collaborative  
3000 University Ave. S.E. #10,  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

(b) Debbie Reese  
5170 Jamaca Blvd N  
Lake Elmo, MN 55402

2. Email [mmkc.mn@gmail.com](mailto:mmkc.mn@gmail.com) requesting a PayPal invoice. Please bring completed form to January meeting.