



EVENTS

Now - October 21

Chemo Cap Competition

Bring in hand knit and crochet hats for cancer patients at Hope Lives! and PVH. We want to beat Lamb-spun and Your Daily Fiber so area cancer patients win! All hats are due by 10/21 and so far we have only 3!

October 12

Adventures in Color, 5pm - 8pm

Learn more about choosing and using color and create a fabulously artistic and colorful pillow. \$30 + supplies.

October 16, 23 & 30

Top-Down Socks, 9am - 10 am

first session, 9am - 11am there-after

Knit a worsted weight adult sock from the top down with the help of Julie Conway. Experience knitting on DPNs required. \$55 + supplies.

October 19 & 26

Beginning Crochet, 5:30pm - 7pm

Learn the basics of crochet in 2 fun-filled sessions with Barb Gustafson. \$30 + supplies.

October 23

Beginning Knitting for Kids, 1pm - 3pm

Liz Luckasen will teach kids ages 6 and up to cast-on knit and purl in this two hour class.

Download the Full Schedule at <http://www.mysisterknits.com/files/MSKFallSchedule10.pdf>

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. In addition to our beautiful Colorado Fall colors; we seem to be awash in a sea of pink ribbons, pink labels, pink football shoes and pink cereals. That pink is a good reminder for us all to get out there and do something. But what?

My Sister Knits has challenged Your Daily Fiber and Lambspun to see which store can collect the largest number of beautiful and soft chemo caps by October 21st. Any pattern, any color -- you choose. Just go for soft to keep a head warm on cold nights or less obvious on a trip to run errands.

It would be easy enough to go out and buy a dozen hats, but the time, effort and love that is put into making these caps by you knitters and crocheters will be felt and appreciated by the person who receives your cap. All chemo caps will be distributed and shared by Hope Lives ! and Poudre Valley Hospital equally. Both are very much in need of more caps.

So get out your sticks or a crochet hook and create on a simple project. A little time

from you can do so much for someone else. Throughout this month's newsletter find links to help you choose a hat pattern and learn a bit about choose yarn too.

Thanks so very much in advance! Please drop off your work at your favorite shop on or before October 21st.

The 2010-2011 Be Local Coupon Book was recently released. Inside you'll find three 30% off coupons, plus over 260 coupons total for local business. Coupon books are \$15.00 and can be purchased at My Sister Knits and other local retailers in Fort Collins.

Positivity Bracelets from Alexa's Angels recently arrived and are available in packets of three, one to wear and two to give away. A nice way to share your positivity -- it's contagious!

Keep knitting,

Julie

PS- And after you've finished knitting go out for a walk in the lovely fall air and crunch some leaves!

RECENT ARRIVALS



The new 2010-2011 Be Local Coupon Books have landed! They are \$15 each with over 260 coupons for 176 local businesses, including us! There are three 30% coupons from My Sister Knits in each book.

Choosing Yarns for Chemo Caps



Choosing yarns for charity knitting can be a challenge, especially for chemo caps that get worn by extra sensitive heads. There are many characteristics of yarn that make up the perceived softness or itchiness of yarn. Fiber type, spinning method and processing all play a role.

Fiber Types

Not all yarn fibers are created equal. Animal fibers like wool, alpaca, llama and such are often softer than plant fibers like cotton, hemp and linen. Much like human hair, animal fibers come in a variety of textures and lengths. Finer textured fibers are going to feel the softest and thus are in most demand. Manufacturers charge more for them which means the labels of yarns using finer fibers list specific types to justify their pricing. Yarns just labeled as wool are likely not as soft as those labeled with merino, alpaca, kid mohair, cashmere and so on.

Synthetic fibers are made in many textures but a touch test is often required to judge their softness. Though some terms like microfiber are used to indicate finer fibers. Most are made with petrochemicals and some cancer patients wish to reduce their exposure to such products.

Spinning Methods

There are two ways to spin fiber -- worsted and woollen. The worsted method, which is not related to the yarn weight classification of the same name, aligns all the fibers in the same direction before spinning. This keeps all the fiber ends nice and tidily locked into place by the spin and ply of the yarn. It produces a relatively dense, smooth yarn that often appears to have a slight sheen to it. If the yarn is plied the plies are often quite distinct as well. This method of yarn making is often the least itchy.

Woolen spun yarns do not align the fibers. This produces a yarn that is very lofty and airy and thus more insulating. The ends are not all neatly tucked in which results in an



▲ Superwash Yarns

Clockwise from upper left: Cascade 220 Superwash, Sublime Extra Fine Merino DK, Spud & Chloe's Sweater, Lorna's Laces Shepherd Bulky, and Spud & Chloe's Outer.

Click on yarn names to be taken to suggested hat patterns for that yarn on Ravelry. A free Ravelry membership is required to view those pages.

▼ Handwashable Yarns

Clockwise from upper left: Rowan Lima, Frog Tree Worsted Alpaca Singles, The Fibre Company Road to China, Cascade Venezia Worsted, Blue Sky Alpaca Alpaca Silk and Frog Tree Alpaca Sport Weight Plied.



itchier finish. The loose ends can also contribute to more pilling on items that are exposed to much friction. Woolen yarns often appear a bit more rustic with a matte finish to them, and are usually a bit livelier and elastic.

Processing

Some animal fibers, including sheep breeds, are from animals that have a soft layer but then have a coarser outer layer often called guard hairs. If not mostly removed before spinning, these otherwise soft fibers may be scratchy and irritating. Closely examine those types of yarn to see how many guard hairs made it into the final yarn as it is impossible to remove it all. Fibers that may contain guard hair include cashmere, camel, llama, yak, opossum and qiviut.

Other possible irritants in yarn include how well the fiber was scoured and washed to remove dust, vegetable matter and lanolin. Some fiber is prepped for spinning by adding a light oil to help it flow through the machinery more smoothly and is not always removed. If the yarn is dyed, any unabsorbed dye particles that were not fully rinsed could cause irritation as could any fragrance in cleaning agents used. For these reasons it is recommended that you always wash charity items in unscented wool wash such as SOAK or Eucalan and keep washed items away from smoke or pets.

Softness of a yarn is subjective and it is not possible to just hand out a list and say these yarns will work for everyone. For that reason it is best to provide a variety of items to choose from. To test the itch factor of a yarn you can rub it lightly against your neck or along the inside of your arm. These areas are more sensitive and should give you a fairly accurate assessment.

To learn more about fibers types and choosing yarns check out Clara Parkes' *The Knitter's Book of Yarn* and *The Knitter's Book of Wool*.

Fit To Be Tied

BY KRISTI SCHUELER | PHOTO BY KRISTI SCHUELER

Make the most of precious skeins - use an easy to memorize 4-row repeat in a pattern that can be adjusted to nearly any size! Knit from tip to tip, simply work the increase section until nearly half the yarn is used then begin decreasing. 50 grams of fingering weight yarn will yield a nice head scarf or neckerchief as shown. Knit a shawllet or scarf size with 100 grams. If you have more than 100 grams, keep going for a generous shawl. By using needles 2-3 sizes larger than recommended on the yarn's label a nice drape can be achieved with the garter stitch and lace patterns.



Yarn

ArtYarns Cashmere Sock; 67% cashmere, 25% wool, 8% nylon; 160 yds per 50 g; 1 skein. Shown in color 2292.

As shown, it takes exactly 1 skein. The pattern can easily be adapted for a shawllet by using 100 g.

Needles & Notions

- US 5 / 3.75mm needles as shown, or 2-3 sizes larger than suggested on yarn label
- 1 Stitch marker
- Tapestry needle

Gauge & Size

Shown at 26 sts and 36 rows per 4" / 10 cm in garter stitch knit flat after blocking with a final size of 30" / 76 cm across and 6½" / 16.5 cm long at center tip.

Gauge and size not critical.

Special Instructions

Abbreviations used follow the standards at <http://www.craftyarnCouncil.com/knit.html>.

To ensure minimum yarn leftovers without fear of running out, weigh yarn before starting and make note of weight. Increase as instructed until nearly half has been used, ending as indicated in pattern then begin decrease section.

For well-matched CO and BO edges, use a crochet cast-on (not the provisional version).

Stitch Guide

Edging

Row 1 (RS): *Yo, k2tog, (k, p, k) in nxt st; rep from * once more -- +4 edge sts.

Row 2 (WS): *K3, yo, k2tog; rep from * once more.

Row 3: *Yo, k2tog, k3; rep from * once more.

Row 4: *BO 2, yo, k2tog; rep from * once more -- -4 edge sts.

Rep rows 1-4 as directed.

Increasing

CO 11 sts.

Row 1 (RS): K1, k2tog, yo, k2, pm, work Edging Row 1.

Row 2 (WS): Work Edging Row 2, sl mrkr, k1, kfb, k to end of row -- +1 body st.

Row 3: K1, k2tog, yo, knit to mrkr, sl mrkr, work Edging Row 3.

Row 4: Work Edging Row 4, sl mrkr, k to end of row.

Cont in est patt, incr 1 st every 4th row as follows:

Row 5 (RS): K1, k2tog, yo, knit to mrkr, sl mrkr, work Edging Row 1.

Row 6 (WS): Work Edging Row 2, sl mrkr, k1, kfb, k to end of row -- +1 body st.

Row 7: K1, k2tog, yo, knit to mrkr, sl mrkr, work Edging Row 3.

Row 8: Work Edging Row 4, sl mrkr, k to end of row.

Rep Rows 5-8 until pieces measures roughly 12" for pictured model or nearly 1/2 of yarn has been used. End on Row 8.

Decreasing

Row 9 (RS): K1, k2tog, yo, knit to mrkr, sl mrkr, work Edging Row 1.

Row 10 (WS): Work Edging Row 2, sl mrkr, k1, k2tog, k to end of row -- -1 body st.

Row 11: K1, k2tog, yo, knit to mrkr, sl mrkr, work Edging Row 3.

Row 12: Work Edging Row 4, sl mrkr, k to end of row.

Rep Rows 9-12 until 11 sts rem, ending on Row 11. BO in garter st.

Finishing

Weave in ends and block as desired.

Laying flat to dry after a gentle soak in cool water results in a fuller look.

To achieve a larger finished scarf and a more open and lacy look, use blocking wires and pins to block.

Vicki Square

One of the first knitting reference books many new knitters purchase is *Knitter's Companion*, written by Fort Collins' own Vicki Square. Coveting the Barbie clothes her maternal grandmother was making, Vicki was taught to knit at the age of 6 so she might make her own. While she is most known for her knitting, she has a Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking and also takes pleasure in mixed media drawings utilizing as diverse materials as paper, paint, oil or charcoal pastels, and fiber.

"As an artist, I've been creating art to adorn the human figure for much of my life," says Vicki. Historical fashion and theater is a favorite source of inspiration for her designs. She specializes in designing outerwear with timeless appeal. Her 2007 book, *Knit Kimonos* was a huge hit with its simple shapes and attention to detail. A follow-up volume, *Knit Kimono Too* is coming in early December. This collection of patterns is more contemporary; the projects a realistic commitment of time and yarn with many

being only hip length. Her *Knitter's Companion* title is also being re-released in early December with 2 companion DVDs comprising more than 4 hours of learning - a great gift for newer knitters on your gift list. Besides authoring several knitting titles, Vicki has also contributed to many collections and magazine publications.

Sharing her vast knowledge and experience in knitting is a joy for Vicki. Teaching is an opportunity for her to connect with others who are passionate about both knitting and exploring something new. On October 12th Vicki will be teaching an *Adventures in Color* workshop here at My Sister Knits. As part of the class students will learn some of the foundations of color theory and the accompanying vocabulary. Then Vicki will demonstrate how to develop a color palette which will then be used to knit a mitered square pillow. Past students have raved about the class and left with increased confidence in working with color. It is definitely a not to be missed class!



Vicki Square on Ravelry:

<http://www.ravelry.com/designers/vicki-square>

Knitting Daily Interview:

<http://www.knittingdaily.com/blogs/daily/archive/2008/10/22/vicki-square.aspx>

Books:

Knit Great Basics
Knitter's Companion
Folk Bags
Folk Hats
Knit Kimono
Knit Kimono Too (December 2010)
Knitter's Companion Deluxe Edition with DVD (December 2010)

Free Hat Patterns

From finest gauge to largest gauge, a Ravelry account may be required for some:

- Wurm by katushika - <http://bit.ly/bbHEE1>
- Slouch Tuva Hat by Turvid - <http://bit.ly/bEb2el>
- Lina by Joko - <http://bit.ly/cK45Uf>
- Meret Beret by Woolly Wormhead - <http://bit.ly/bH5ary>
- Felicity by Wanett Clyde - <http://bit.ly/d6887U>
- Divine Hat by Rheatheylia - <http://bit.ly/9cJGNf>
- Star Crossed Slouchy Bere by Natalie Larson - <http://bit.ly/armCdZ>
- Robin's Egg Blue Hat by Rachel lufer - <http://bit.ly/cYkO2e>
- Chunky Slouchy Hat by Missa Hills - <http://bit.ly/9zlGVX>

October Sale

40-50% Off
 Clearance Items
 Restocked Daily!

My Sister Knits

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