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SEPTEMBER 2011

knitting Yarns



SEPTEMBER 21: NEW YARNS KICKOFF

In the finest DKC tradition, we proudly kick off our 2011/2012 season the only way we know how—with a celebration of yarn. Our favourite reps will showcase the most exciting new fibres, colours, textures and trends from their new fall collections. See (and touch) colour cards, test garments and pattern books usually available only to those in the knitting industry. As of press time, we have confirmations from Diamond Yarns and Kertzer.

It's a very fun and social meeting, also a great opportunity to catch up with fellow knitters you haven't seen in a while. Let's welcome the start of knitting season!

COMING UP IN OCTOBER

We're pleased to have knitting historian Shirley Anne Scott joining us at our October meeting—she is sure to take us on a fascinating journey. Full details will be available in the next issue.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome! 2011-2012 promises to be an exciting year for the DKC. I am thrilled to continue on as the DKC President. As always, I welcome your suggestions, comments and concerns regarding our meetings and special events. The Executive Team has been working very hard sourcing out new guest speakers and special events for our guild. It's been a busy summer.

Speaking of summer, I hope you had a great one as well. How did that "stash reduction" challenge go? I'm pleased that I've been able to reduce my stash by 10%! I finished a number of projects and only purchased a "few" new, but essential items.

I look forward to rekindling our friendships and welcoming new members to the DKC.

See you September 21st.

Yours in knitting,
Carole Adams, DKC President

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

Location

Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave.
NW corner of St. George St. and Sussex Ave.
on the University of Toronto campus.

TTC Access

Five-minute walk south from St. George subway station.
Parking available at several nearby locations.

Meeting Time: 7:30 p.m.

Doors Open: 6:45 p.m.

Admission

\$6.00 for guests and Newsletter Only Subscribers
Free to Full Members (please show card at door)

All Downtown Knit Collective meetings, functions and events are governed by the Rules of Conduct as determined by the Executive.
To read a copy of the Rules, please visit
www.downtownknitcollective.ca/dkc_conduct.html

The last meeting of the season drew a crowd of roughly 100 members and quite a few first-timers.

Announcements

Patrick spoke briefly about his fight with cancer, and how the get well card and wishes helped him through his chemo ordeal, and wanted to emphasize how support of any kind means so much to someone undergoing cancer treatment. He advises that acrylic not be used for chemo caps as it doesn't breathe and gets very sweaty on a bald head.

The results are in—the Toronto Spiders took first place at the annual Back to Back International Wool Challenge. There were over 15 teams this year, so it was no small feat. The Spiders' final time was 5:52:48, shaving three minutes off of last year's time and besting the second place team from Australia by 40 minutes. Next year they hope to beat the world record of 4:51:14 set in 2004 by an Australian team.

The executive is looking to the membership for opinions regarding fundraising initiatives. Carole said the DKC is often approached for various causes, and they are considering setting aside 100% of the proceeds from the monthly raffle draw for charity.

Special Olympics Canada has set up a scarf program for the 2012 games. They are aiming for 2,500 scarves.

Yarn: wool, wool blend, or acrylic blend
Size: 7 inches wide, 6 feet long
Colour: Blue and White (splash of red optional). Mail or deliver to the following address with your name and address on a 3x5 card before Feb. 1, 2012:

2012 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games
25 Sir Winston Churchill Avenue
St. Albert, AB
T5K 2S7

Show and Tell

Catherine showed absolutely charming watermelon and blueberry baby hats complete with little stems. She says it was a great way to use up leftover sock yarn.

Gloria Williams brought five panels of an afghan from Knit One Below, still on the

needles but nearly complete. She noted that the panels are not overly stretchy and with panels alternating knit and purl, completely reversible.

Raffle

Six skeins of Lopi with a pattern for a felted Crios hat and mittens was won by Elizabeth Hilton. One skein of Kami Bison yarn by Fibre-Isle Fine Yarns was won by Mary Moreau. 11 balls of Kertzer Tiara and a pattern book was won by Debra Latcham.

Guest Speakers

Alisa McDonald and Tamara Krievins
"Stylish Knitted Skirts"

Both of our speakers have been crafting for years—spinning, knitting, weaving, and even macramé. Last year, they set out to research knitted skirts and address common problems associated with their construction and care (including the dreaded "bucket butt" phenomenon).

Though often avoided by knitters, skirts are actually great because the fit tends to be less 'fussy' and the structure is quite simple—it's basically an enormous sock with no heel to turn or toe to graft. Skirts are also perfect for trying out new stitch patterns and colour combinations.

The knitting research team identified some key characteristics that result in successful, flattering skirts. These include good fabric density, yarn with bounce, and a sturdy texture. When swatching, be on the lookout for these attributes. They also had good results from knitting with a two-stranded approach. This technique adds strength and structure, as well as allowing new and exciting colour combinations—for example, using two balls of Silk Garden sock yarn together (both the same colourway, but at different stages of the colour transition) gave excellent results.

Tamara finds that many of the problems encountered by her yarn store customers are the result of misinterpreting gauge and ball band information. She wants to reinforce the simple truth that if gauge cannot be achieved, yarn choice must be reconsidered!

The team's first skirt experiment was the **Lanesplitter**, from the Fall 2010 edition of

Knitty. One problem area in skirts is the waistband—they quickly discovered you don't want to bulk up this area. The team experimented with different waistbands, including stockinette and a sewn-in one. They also discovered that a bit of felting could tighten up a garment that turned out a little on the large side with good results.

The team also highly recommends the **Bell Curve Skirt**, also from Knitty (winter 2007). This is a skirt that's knit in the round with minimal finishing and hidden increases. The shape is a slight a-line with a flared hem, which flatters a variety of figures.

A few more tips from Tamara and Alisa:

- Use a light diffusion grid (the kind used in fluorescent fixtures) to drip dry garments right over the tub. These can be found at home improvement stores.
- Skirts can be washed with minimal stretching by using water and wool wash in a spray bottle. Place the skirt flat on your home-made rack over the tub, then spritz.
- A lining is unnecessary when worn with appropriate undergarments (hello, Spanx Half Slip).
- The best way to store knits without stretching is laying the garment flat. Underbed storage containers with lids (plus a little lavender or cedar) are ideal for this.
- Check out Trinny & Susannah's book *The Body Shape Bible* to find out what styles of skirts best flatter your shape.

We'd like to thank Alisa and Tamara for their informative and fun presentation!



STITCH OF THE MONTH by Diane Martin

Astrakan Stitch

Reverse Stocking Stitch background, Multiple of 4, plus 2 edge stitches

Row 1 & 3 (RS): Purl

Row 2: 1 border stitch, *p3tog, then in the next stitch make 3 by (k1, p1, k1); repeat from *, end with 1 border stitch.

Row 4: 1 border stitch, *in the next stitch make 3 by (k1, p1, k1), p3tog; repeat from *, end with 1 border stitch.

Repeat from Row 1.

If this stitch seems familiar, it is also known as: popcorn, trinity, blackberry and bramble.

When this stitch is worked in the round on a stocking stitch background, it is known as the spider stitch. The make 3 is done as p1,k1,p1.



RELAY FOR LIFE 2011 by Joan Kass

We had an amazing night at Sunnybrook Park.

We cheered on the Survivors Victory Lap with DKCers Mary Pat McDonald, Patrick Madden, Wannietta Prescod and Rochelle Ribeiro leading the pack, all wearing their beautiful hand knit "Knitting for a Cure" scarves. The "Why I Relay" slide show featured many DKC survivors, bringing a tear to our eyes.

Julia, Barb and Diane were spinning in one corner while Dawn, the two Caroles, Wendy, Pam, Sandy, Drea and Pat knit or crocheted all night in our brightly-lit site. We all cheered on Donna as she taught the young man how to knit... he proudly showed his knitting to his macho buddies. Survivors Rochelle

and Wannietta along with her daughter Amanda stayed overnight knitting with us.

Our neighbours, the amazing Spandex Army, a group of teenagers, entertained us with their dancing in the middle of the night until they fell in a heap exhausted. Terrific neighbours... we'd love to have them back next year.

Our Toronto Spiders/Downtown Knit Collective Team won a Bronze Award for raising \$7372.00. In addition, we were recipients of Most Productive Award for not only fundraising, but also producing our marvelous knitted scarves, chemo caps and prayer shawls. Congratulations team... well done.



photos by Cari Miller

UPCOMING EVENTS

Maggie Jackson Weekend

Rose Haven Farm is fortunate to have Maggie coming to their Picton shop for October 7-9 . They will have a Fashion Show with Wine & Cheese and then two days of workshops in which Maggie will teach a number of her iconic design signature stitches. Visit rosehavenfarm.net for details.

CreativFestival 2011

October 21, 22 & 23

This massive fall event returns to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre for its 23rd year. Details at www.csnf.com.

A Celebration of Quilts XI

presented by York Heritage Quilters Guild, November 11-13 at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, 6 Garamond Court, Don Mills. Enjoy the show of members' quilts from traditional to contemporary fibre arts, fashion show, merchants' mall. Tickets \$5 in advance or \$8 at the door. Visit www.yhqg.org for info.

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