

The Conscientious Knitter

October 2008

Exploring Community, Social Justice, Environmental Respect and Spirituality through Knitting.
"We Get the Point"

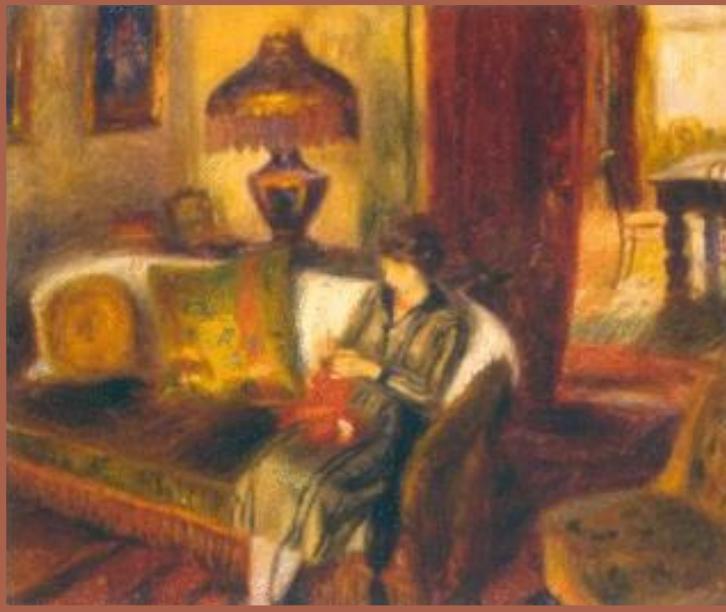
Lovely Grocery Bags

Do you have what you need in your grocery bag wardrobe? Sure, you may have bags from your local grocery store, and let's hope you got one of the "green" bags offered in the commons during September. Some of you may have even made the Turkish Stitch String Bag suggested by this summer's minister, Lisa Kemper (featured in our October 2006 issue). But really, are your aesthetic needs truly met by the bags you have now? Don't you need a full array of different designs to make your shopping experience just that much more enriching?

Help has arrived in the form of the Tip Nut web site. Check out <http://tipnut.com/35-reusable-grocery-bags-totes-free-patterns/> for some great suggestions of grocery bags you can knit. For those of you who are multiply crafty, the site offers grocery bags to sew and crochet as well. To get you started, we're including the free pattern from Plymouth Yarns on page 3 of this issue.

Perhaps it is your stash that's motivating you to knit a reusable bag for your foodstuffs. On Tip Nut you'll find totes to be made from hemp, organic cotton, linen, micro fiber, acrilan acrylic, old plastic bags and blends of most of the above. Most of the patterns are for a mesh or net stitch, but a few even offer a lace design.

While you're at it, you may want to check out Tip Nut for patterns to sew knitting needle holders, patterns to knit laptop covers, dish cloths and scrubbys, reusable Swiffer cloths, and socks.



Portrait of the Artist's Wife, Knitting
William Glackens (American, 1870-1938)

jUUstice NEEDles: Special Olympics Scarf Project

As fall is in full swing, it's appropriate to turn our attention to cold weather knitting, and the Special Olympics give us an excellent opportunity to do just that.

Begun in 2007, the Special Olympic Scarf Project was intended to provide a gift for each participant that was

reflective of the winter sports experience. Participants made hand-knit scarves that the Olympians could wear at the opening exercises and throughout the competitions. The program was so popular, it is continuing this year. For more information, knitters may go to the World Winter Games web site at :

<http://www.2009worldgames.org/volunteer/scarf-project>

Knitters are not required to use any particular pattern, but are asked to use Coats and Clark Super Saver delft blue (885) and white (311) yarns to match the athlete's uniforms.

Completed scarves should be sent to:

2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games Scarf Project
3150 W. Main Street
Boise, ID 83702

Please note, personal information cannot be shared with the delegation members and should not be included in the notes that accompany scarves. Please separate your contact information from the personal notes, so the World Winter Games can thank you appropriately for your support. Your scarf donation must arrived by **January 15, 2009** in order to be given to an athlete.

While it is not imperative, a general size of 4 1/2" X 50" is suggested. Coats and Clark is providing a pattern at www.coatsandclark.com. The yarn can be bought locally or through www.yarncollection.com. Sponsors say they will need around 5,000 scarves, so everyone, regardless of knitting skill level, is encouraged to participate.

Auction Action 2008

As many of you already know, this year's UUCF auction will be held in February. This is great news for the Conscientious Knitters, because it gives us more time to work on a project for inclusion in the fundraiser. The extra time is useful because we have some great ideas on how we can contribute, and we want to make sure we can carry at least one of them out. After all, we have big shoes to fill if we want to live up to our standards of the previous three years. In the past we've donated a beautiful afghan, a gorgeous kimono coat that raised over \$400, and a baby basket overflowing with an amazing baby trousseau.

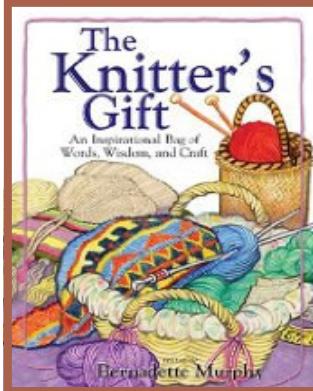
So far, we've narrowed the project down to one which would be done in conjunction with UUCF's caring committee. The idea is to knit a number of prayer shawls, caps for those going through chemotherapy, scarves for graduating seniors, hats for new babies: whatever the caring committee imagines they could use. Samples of these items would be made for auction night, and then bidders would sign up to sponsor an item. Volunteers among the Conscientious Knitters would make these pieces and give them to the Caring Committee to distribute as needed. The recipients would then be given a shawl (or other appropriate item) with the best wishes of the knitters, the Caring Committee and members of the congregation, all of whom helped the gift come into being.

Laureen Branting kindly offered to contact the Caring Committee about the idea, and the initial response is positive. The committee will discuss our offer, and decide if this would be something they'd like to pursue. There are a number of concerns we need to address as we discuss the possibilities. For example, where would the pieces be stored? What if we run out of shawls needed? How will they decide who receives items and for what purpose?



Due to these questions and others, our auction plan may not work out. (In this case, we'll move to plan B!) In the mean time, we'll be looking for people to coordinate communication with the Caring Committee, volunteers to knit samples for auction night, knitters to create items during the year, and of course, contributors to bid on these one-of-a-kind hand-made items at the auction. If you'd be willing to help out, please let Ann Richards know at Ann@BassetLane.com. Although we have lots of time this year, we don't want to let it slip through our fingers ~ along with our yarn!

Knitting in the Spirit: The Knitter's Gift



The Knitter's Gift: An Inspirational Bag of Words, Wisdom and Craft

Edited by Bernadette Murphy

Adams Media, 2004

As with any book, the story is only as good as the author. Since there are many who contributed to *The Knitter's Gift*, the quality of the reading experience goes up and down with the author's skill and the reader's interest in the specific topic. All in all, however, *The Knitter's Gift* is an attractively produced text, worth reading even if you only peruse some of the contributions.

I'm a sucker for a happy ending, so my favorite essays were the ones in which a woman shares knitting and belated motherhood with a friend, a twist on *The Gift of the Magi* involving knitted items, and an art critic's explanation of how he was introduced to color; through a wall of yarn in his father's shop.

Harder to read were the stories that brought tears: the meditation told from the point of view of a woman who is losing her short term memory and keeps reknitting a tea cozy, the story of a girl who connects with her long dead grandmother through knitted gifts, and the woman who knit her toddler's burial blanket preparing for the inevitable even as she watched her daughter sleeping. I defy anyone to read that last one without shedding a few.

Certainly the illustrations are a plus. The book boasts drawings and graphics of yarn and needles throughout, and there are photos in many of the stories. These pictures definitely add interest. In one case I loved seeing the same sweater appear on successive generations of 9-year-old girls. In another case, I enjoyed the Christmas photo of the author's parents both in bed knitting.

In addition to the stories and illustrations, a number of patterns appear between the chapters. They include directions for a baby hat, a tea cozy, a scarf that requires no standard of yarn or gauge, a shawl and a sweater among others. While I may not be using any of these patterns myself, they add a nice element to the collection, and make this book an even better candidate to be a gift to a friend (what with the title and all.)

Free Pattern: Fantasy Naturale Market Bag



Size: Approx. 16" high X 12" diameter.

Materials: 2 skeins Fantasy Naturale cotton, straight needles: size US 10½ for the base; 24" circular needle- size US 15 for the body of bag, 1 stitch marker.

Gauge: Approx. 2 sts = 1" over open weave pattern.

Gauge is not important. Loose open weave is desired.

Base:

With smaller (straight) needles loosely cast on 25 sts.

Work in garter stitch until square (about 42 rows). Square will measure about 7"X 7". Bind off loosely, but do not cut yarn. Change to larger (circular) needle. Pick up and knit 100 sts evenly around the base (25 sts on each side).

Sides of Bag:

Place a marker on the needle to designate the beginning

of the round.

Round 1: Knit.

Round 2: *(K2, YO, K2tog) repeat from * around.

Round 3: Knit.

Round 4: *(YO, K2tog, K2) repeat from * around.

Repeat the last 4 rounds until total length is about 15", ending with round 1 or 3.

Work top as follows:

Round 1: Purl.

Round 2: Knit.

Round 3: Purl.

Make handles:

Round 4: Knit 30, bind off 15, knit 35, bind off 15, knit 5.

Round 5: Purl 30, cast on 20 over the 15 bound off sts, purl 35, cast on 20 over the 15 bound off sts, purl 5. (110 sts.)

Round 6: Knit.

Round 7: Purl.

Round 8: Bind off all stitches loosely.

Weave in all ends.

Designed by JoAnne Turcotte. ©2000

Plymouth Yarns via www.TipNut.com

Conscientious Calendar

 November 6-9 Stitches East Knitters' Convention. Baltimore, Maryland Convention Center. For more information, go to the web site at www.knittinguniverse.com. A great opportunity to convene with the knitting community at large and find out about opportunities to knit for social justice.

 Monday, November 10 Regular Conscientious Knitter drop-in meeting. 7:30 p.m. UUCF Program Building. For more information contact Ann Richards at Ann@BassetLane.com.

Knitter's Knots

- For more information about Conscientious Knitting programs, contact Ann Richards at Ann@BassetLane.com
- For more information about UUCF Adult Religious Exploration, check out the web site at www.uucf.org.
- Want to register for Conscientious Knitters '08-'09? Dues are \$10 for drop-in sessions, workshops and social justice knitting opportunities. Call treasurer Wini Atlas at 703-938-5640, or come by a drop-in meeting on the second Monday of the month.
- For back issues of The Conscientious Knitter and an article index, check out www.conscientiousknitters.com.

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