

Dear Karen,

The Aurora Colony Handspinners Guild (ACHG) would like to thank WeGO for their support of our Fall Workshops that took place on October 19th, 2024 at the United Methodist Church of Canby. Our thought this year was to offer classes that would appeal to a broad range of spinners either to help them learn how to spin or how to use their beautifully crafted yarns in new ways. The WeGO grant of \$500 helped fund an offering of seven classes (two full-day and 5 half-day) to 63 participants.

One of our main objectives of the ACHG Fall Workshops is to teach new spinners the craft of spinning. In an all day class, Christine Thomas-Flitcroft taught 12 new spinners the art of spinning on a wheel. With the help of three other guild members, Chris was able to get all twelve students well on their journey to becoming successful spinners. They were taught



Learn to Spin

the mechanics of the wheels and how to spin a “single” which in turn was plied to make a balanced yarn. Students proudly went home with their newly plied skeins.



Christine demonstrating technique.

Another class focused on spinning was a half-day class taught by Wanda Jenkins. She taught 11 students how to use a Turkish drop spindle. Many students were familiar with spinning on a wheel but a couple had never spun before. By the end of class, everyone was gleefully winding their singles into “turtles” (the balls of yarn) on their beautifully crafted Jenkins’ spindles. Wanda covered how to get started, good breeds of fleece for beginners to start with, what adjustments to make if you are spinning with cotton or silk and how to “ply on the fly.”



Spinning on a Turkish Drop Spindle



A tiny "turtle"!

In the kitchen, Suzanne Campbell taught 5 students how to card fiber in to batts and how to blend various fibers on blending boards. Students were then shown how to wet felt their creations into cloth. Their creations were stunning.



Carding and Wet-felting class with Suzanne

The other all-day class was Beginning Rigid Heddle Weaving with Diane McKinnon. With 50 years of weaving experience, Diane has a wealth of information to share. Because no two looms in the class were alike she had to MacGyver some things to get them to work. But she had all kinds of creative work arounds teaching students even more. Seven students were taught what fibers to use for warp and weft, and how to warp their looms.



Diane teaching Beginning Rigid Heddle Weaving

By the afternoon, students were busily weaving - learning how to keep selvages straight and manage color changes. At the end of class, students could be seen in the hallway twisting thread to make straps for their little bags that were about to come off looms. One woman in class was completely new to the world of fiber and walked away wanting to do more.

In the last classroom, Becky Smith taught 9 students Tunisian crochet which is almost a fusion of crochet and knitting. It results in a beautiful thicker fabric that can be used to make bags and blankets - a great way to use hand-spun fiber in a new way.



Becky teaching Tunisian Crochet



Sivia teaching Rooisimine and Vikkel

In the afternoon, Sivia Harding taught 12 eager knitters how to knit “Rooisimine and Vikkel”. Rooisimine is an Estonian inlay technique that creates an embossed texture and Vikkel braids look like horizontal knitting. They are frequently paired. Students were eager to learn and share their success amidst the laughters and camaraderie enjoyed by all.

The last class was a needle felting class with Joy Haynes where students take fleece and craft it into small felted pumpkins. They learned how to make a base from fleece and then overlay color onto the project. With different types of needles (and a lot of stabbing), students were taught to sculpt flat fiber into remarkable realistic looking wee pumpkins.



Needle felting with Joy Haynes

In the main hall of the church, we had a spinning circle where people were free to come and spin. It was a lively group all day with an opportunity to support a few vendors (all guild members and most shepherds) that sell fiber and fiber related products. By the end of the day, all left with smiling faces and the world has several new spinners!

Teachers were paid \$150 for each half day that they taught and the building rental was \$365. The \$500 grant from WeGO helped our guild immensely to be able to host this event. ACHG so appreciates the support from WeGO.

Sincerely,

Willemijn Ilcisin

Chair of ACGH Fall Workshops 2024