

KATHY'S KREATIONS
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FEBRUARY 2006 UPDATE

Dear Knitters,

What better way to ward off winter's chill and say "Happy Valentine's Day" than to celebrate the passion we share, making something beautiful from natural fibers by hand?

We've got spring yarn arrivals to whet your appetite for upcoming fashions. A bevy of knitting gadgets, exotic wooden knitting needles and new accessories will entice you to treat yourself to a small luxury. We'll help you reconnect with something old, made new again -- portable hand-held modular looms ("weavettes"), as charming as the "kids-looms" we remember from the past, but with more refinement and greater creative possibilities.

In the spirit of this tender, special occasion, it is fitting to focus on warm hands, warm hearts. It's an ideal time to do an item or two for charity, or for gift-giving as an unexpected surprise -- wow, we've got lots of warm, fuzzy stuff going on here at Kathy's Kreations. Hope you'll stop by soon to find out more!

"WARM UP WITH WOOL!"

All regularly-priced 100% wool yarns in stock
(all weights from lace to super-bulky)
are 10% off during February 2006

Hours: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm Monday through Saturday
Kathy is usually away on Wednesday, but the shop is open

We accept Mastercard, VISA, Discover/Novus, AX

Private knitting and crochet instructions are available by appointment
Finishing services available
Gift certificates available

Shopping at Kathy's Kreations has never been easier
COME IN - CALL UP - LOG ON
Telephone 724-238-9320
e-mail kathy@kathys-kreations.com
please visit our website www.kathys-kreations.com





*****GREAT NEW STUFF *****

It's official -- we're on the downside of winter here at Kathy's Creations, your "Knitter's Wonderland" headquarters. Knits rule the season, taking rich colors, softness and texture to the next level. There's an excitement that just keeps growing, and we're here to bring you the best products we can find, everything you need to keep your needles clicking away in blissful contentment...

You know what you like; you know how to make it. So, make it yourself (and make it fabulous) with inspiration from the winter 2005/06 VOGUE KNITTING (\$5.99). Editor Trisha Malcolm tells us in her editorial, "The humble stockinette scarf, in my opinion, is responsible for giving a whole new generation the confidence they needed to create their own clothing and accessories. Getting those first few stitches on the needles, choosing crazy yarns and proudly wearing their neck warmers taught this crowd of novice stitchers that they *could* do it: make something they would actually want to wear". The pages of this issue will provide the spark to keep you in the do-it-yourself mode. There are all sorts of modern classics -- intriguing cables, elegant office wear, funky ski sweaters, hat and scarf sets and more. "The designs chosen for this issue have a timeless quality, there's no need to beat the clock; just sit back, relax and enjoy the act of knitting".

One of Kathy's designs is featured, the cozy cardigan (shown upper left), about which VOGUE KNITTING says, "Kathy Zimmerman adds a bit of sensual shaping and a delightful mix of textured stitchery to a classic cardigan". Bundle up, but still look your best in cozy cabled knits. This issue has some beauties with a contemporary look.

We would like to highly recommend that all knitters and crocheters read the comprehensive article concerning copyright questions, "A Matter of Principle" by Lance Reich. We hope it will enlighten our customers about copy right vs. copy wrong. Our thanks to VOGUE KNITTING for continuing to champion this cause...

According to CLASSIC ELITE YARNS Spring 2006 trend report, "Each fashion season is unique, but each evolves from previous seasons. This season, we see trends that had roots last spring and fall and will bloom in Spring 2006. We see trends that seem permanent and trends that overlap. This season, more than others, we find 'Trend Plus'. For example, the safari trend (yes there is one), but it is a safari *plus* bows, *plus* stripes, *plus* leather accessories. Each 'plus' gives the trend a new direction and sense of uniqueness". See page six for more trends from CLASSIC ELITE.

The Spring 2006 CLASSIC ELITE Pattern Collection has already arrived, the first on the scene. There are four pattern booklets (\$12.95 each), three with a water theme: Boathouse, River, Canoe and Complements. We are pleased that one of Kathy's designs was chosen for "Boathouse". The original, allover lace and cable combination relaxed V-neck pullover, shown right, was knit from luscious "Premiere" (\$6.25, 50 grams, 108 yards, 50% pima cotton / 50% tencel). This yarn has a deliciously soft hand and provides great stitch definition. It is well suited for office, weekend and special occasion garments. Tencel is environmentally friendly, and pima is the world's finest cotton. We think you'll love this collection of classic designs, worthy of the time it takes to make them, and the yarns used throughout are equally fabulous. The "Complements" book is full of fun accessories for knitters and crocheters alike...



***** MORE GREAT NEW STUFF *****

Cables are cropping up everywhere -- nothing says classic design any better than cables. LISA KNITS introduces "Braided Cable Pullovers" (SW-018, \$4.00, shown right), worsted weight pullovers with set-in sleeves, adult uni-sex sizing and your choice of turtleneck, v-neck or crewneck shapings. We think this sweater would work equally as well for office as for leisure time and envision it with jeans for casual wear Saturday night dinner & a movie. Lisa's models were made with NASHUA HANDKNITS "Creative Focus Worsted" -- you gotta feel this yarn -- it's a knitter's dream!



TRENDSETTER YARNS "Mosaic" (\$XX, 50 grams, 45 yards, 58% polyester / 34% cotton / 8% polyamide) is a fun, textured yarn that is as exciting to knit as it is to wear. This soft, thin tape is cut on the diagonal and then alternates as loops on each side of the center chain along with a natural spun thick/thin cotton. Textures and color abounds in this wonderful yarn, suitable for shawls, wraps, necklaces, scarves as well as cropped jackets and cardigans. We think it is great for trim and also can't wait to do flip flops! However you use Mosaic, you will be in love with this yarn...

KNIT 'n STYLE April 2006 (\$5.99) features an introduction to spring 2006 (see page six for details). Our favorite article is Leslye Solomon's "Important Crochet Finishes Knitters Should Know", which is worth the read and makes this issue a keeper. The scarf knitters of last season are evolving in their skills and trying more challenging projects. The ponchos and wraps craze of the previous season seems to be usurped in popularity by shrugs, boleros, cardigans and jackets, great for transitional wear on chilly mornings. Vests and openwork patterned pullovers round out the sweater collection, and there are several cute bags. For felters, there is a great hostess gift bag from WOOL IN THE WOODS, who will be presenting a workshop for the Laurel Highlands Knitting Guild this month (see page eight)...

KNIT IT! Spring 2006 (\$5.99) has 45 inspiring patterns in today's hottest yarns and take-along projects you can't put down. There is an interesting article on mixing yarns together -- boucles, furs, variegated, ribbons -- for rich, dynamic one-of-a-kind looks. Our favorite style from this issue is the simple elegant shawl in wool/mohair (we suggest TRENDSETTER "Dune" for this project), for quick transitions from office to spur-of-the-moment evening wear. There are some cute baby project items -- we think the Rainbow Blanket would look and feel great in BERROCO "Plush" pastel shades. There are some savvy felted items including mittens with braid fringe (very clever) and a large "book bag" tote...

The little honeybee (below left) is not the new Steeler mascot, although it is wearing its black and gold with pride. This is a tape measure from LANTERN MOON artisans (\$9.25), and is sure to brighten up your knitting bag. We have received more LANTERN MOON 10" straight ebony, rosewood and blond hardwood needles. In response to the requests for circular needles, we are pleased to announce that we expect our first shipment of ebony circular needles in March. No snags, tangles or hassles with superior craftsmanship, just what you have come to expect from LANTERN MOON. These needles are lightweight, strong and smooth as liquid silk with a cord that swivels. The needles will be named "Destiny" in honor of the Vietnamese family who makes them...





***** NOW ON OUR BOOKSHELVES *****

Kathy's Creations is always on the forefront of "what's new" in fiber and Weaving is hot! Weavettes are currently featured in the winter issue of *Spin Off* magazine (\$7.99, now in stock) -- chenille and wool roses from this issue are on display now. Kathy and Tracey have been invited to do a weavettes demo at Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Greensburg on February 7, 2006, 7 - 8:30 pm (see page 8). How-to's will be demonstrated on HGTV with Carol Duvall, and the February issue of *Martha Stewart Living* has several warm and wooly design ideas for woven squares and rectangles made from these hand-held Weavette looms. There are numerous possibilities limited only by your imagination -- and they all begin in the palm of your hand. The larger squares, when worked with wool, may be felted and sewn together for blankets & patchwork quilts. Weavettes come in 2"x2" , 4"x4" and 6"x6" squares (\$16.75, \$21.75, & \$30.75 respectively) and 2"x4" , 4"x6" , and 4"x6" rectangles (\$18.75, \$20.75, and \$24.75 respectively). The looms are easy to use, and are a great fun project for parents and kids to do together.

Licia Conforti's companion book, *Modular Textures: Patterns for the Weavette & Weave-It Looms, Volume 1* (\$22.50, spiral bound, shown upper left) offers additional textured patterns. A zippered canvas carrying case is also available (\$21.75)...

Create lovable, handmade dolls and animals to treasure for a lifetime. *Toys to Knit* (\$19.95, softcover) includes over 25 patterns for making a collection of soft, cuddly dolls, teddy bears, elephants, fish, kangaroos, rabbits, penguins, soft nursery blocks and other knit toys for toddlers and pre-schoolers. There is a wardrobe of doll's clothes patterns such as sweet little tutus, skirts, pants, coats, sweaters, tiny hats and shoes, purses, and other precious must-have accessories that belong in every doll's closet. These adorable projects will charm children and adults alike...

The tones of beautiful and historic African carpets, baskets and textile arts inspired Danish designer Marianne Isager to create *Knitting Out of Africa* (\$24.95, hardcover), a collection of 16 sumptuous and sophisticated handknitted sweaters. Traditional European techniques including Fair Isle, double knitting, domino and intarsia are used for the complex geometrics echoing cultural textiles, wildlife and landscapes. Experienced knitters will enjoy trying some of the more involved shapes and techniques, and may be inspired to take up the challenge of designing their own African-inspired garment...

Who can resist the sight of a baby with tiny, plump feet tucked inside knitted booties? And, who wouldn't want to wrap their little one in a soft, bulky wool sweater to keep out the chill? Baby knits are perhaps the most adorable projects you can stitch, as well as the most fun to create. In *Cozy Knits for Cuddly Babies* (\$19.95, hard cover), you'll find 27 projects, from garments to afghans, that everyone will coo over.

Experienced knitters will fall in love with the well-constructed, eye-appealing designs and appreciate how quickly they will work up because of their small size. The projects are arranged in order of increasing complexity. Beginners will learn the basics and then progressively build their skills with each project. One thing for sure -- everything you knit from this book will become an heirloom...

***** TEXTURED STRIPE SCARF *****

Spring may be on the horizon, but here's an easy scarf for the last blast of winter. This scarf is so quick-knitting that you can knit one for your Valentine in just a couple evenings...

MATERIALS: CLASSIC ELITE YARNS "Paintbox" two balls (yarn weight classification 5, 109 yards per ball); knitting needles size US 10 and US 11; tapestry needle for finishing

GAUGE: approx. 3 sts = 1" in pattern stitch

FINISHED SIZE: 6" X 60"

DIRECTIONS: With smaller needles, cast on 19 sts. Work in garter stitch (K every row) for 3", end WS. Change to larger needles.

Row 1 (right side): K1; *P2, K1; repeat from * across.

Row 2: P1; *K2, P1; repeat from * across.

Work these 2 rows for 3", end WS. Change to smaller needles.

Cont to alternate 3" garter stitch on smaller needles and 3" rib pat on larger needles until piece measures 60" or desired length, ending with 3" completed stripe of either pattern. Bind off all sts in pattern. Cut yarn. Weave in ends with tapestry needle.

***** KNITTING TIPS FROM OUR ARCHIVES *****

For weaving in ends, Kathy uses a bent tip tapestry needle (CLOVER Chibi) and works duplicate stitch on the wrong side. This follows the stitches and is neater than skimming under the stitches.

Kathy prefers the long-tail cast-on method and recommends winding the tail around a yarn bobbin to keep it securely out of the way until needed for seaming.

Joan Walsh recommends freezer bags for storing odds and ends of leftover yarn. She writes the weight, fiber content and brand on the outside. Joan also organizes her patterns according to yarn weight and children's patterns according to size. She saves all pattern design notes just in case she wants to work the pattern again.

Shanta Moitra simplifies row counting when working circular knitting by weaving a contrasting color of the same yarn at the increase point as you work. For example, if you are increasing every 4th row, keep contrast yarn toward you and take it to the back of work after increasing. After 4 more rows, bring the yarn to the front. You will know that the increase was done and also how many rounds have been worked.

Peggy Dailey uses double-pointed needles for working a separate vertical buttonband. Work about 2" and attach to the front, stretching slightly for a good fit. Not only is the smaller length easier to use, but this method eliminates the guesswork of how long to make the band. Peggy also works both sleeves at the same time, using separate skeins of yarn. Not only will the sleeves be the same length, but the increases will be at the same points. Always complete the entire row of **both** sleeves before putting away your work so you will know where you have stopped.

Ever get those tell-tale line when going from one double-pointed needle to the next? Aimee Levenson suggests bringing the empty needle which you will be knitting onto **behind** the right-hand needle with the live stitches to tighten up your work.

Ruffled and lettuce edges are in style. To get a ruffled edge on your bind-off, Pat Del Castello does a double bind-off. Simply knit into the back of the stitch on the left-hand needle and bind off, leaving on needle. Then, purl into the same stitch on the left-hand needle and bind off, taking stitch off needle .



***** SPRING TRENDS FROM KNIT 'n STYLE *****

"This season, your knits should be special. They should be anything but basic", according to the February 2006 issue of *Knit 'n Style* magazine (\$5.99). The article on Italian knits is very informative. Their prediction for must-haves include shrugs, felted bags, sweaters that tie around the body, upscale handbags, and sophisticated knit coats. For spring, yarns are generally back-to-basics with smooth twists.

Sweaters that tie, drape or are softly gathered are a recurrent knitwear theme. Edgy details such as rosette appliques, flirty ruffles, embroideries and understated fringe add girly-girl touches on everything from dresses and sweaters to belts, hats, and even shoes. The "Choice Italian Knits" trends article tells us, "When it comes to choosing what yarns and textures to work with, keep in mind three over-riding trends: openwork crochet, multi-color tweeds, and fine-gauge jerseys". Stripes will be on the scene, in every width from pencil thin to wide awning stripes. Metallics will be with us, as a smart trim or subtly worked through the body of knits.

The keyword for color right now is subtle. After a couple of season of intense colors, designers are working with low-key, sophisticated palettes. Nature-inspired neutrals are always flattering color choices, while delicate pastels perpetuate the feminine look...

***** COLOR FORECAST FROM CLASSIC ELITE *****

CLASSIC ELITE YARNS, always as classy as their name implies, reports, "The need for self-expression is still with us, but now we're used to the idea. For spring '06, there is lots of patterning and embellishment, especially in accessories, and handcrafted, crocheted looks with vintage elements, but which end with a new, modern appearance. But the look this spring is about **COLOR** as much as anything else. Using and combining colors is as important as the shape and style of the garment (perfect for us handknitters!).

The last few seasons in the apparel market have been very colorful, which is not always the case this season. Sometimes apparel is about shades of gray and taupe. Handknitting does not always follow apparel colors, and for spring 2006, there are several color stories that work well for handknitting yarns and patterns:

Earth-- rich colors that make us think of roots and minerals: orange, terra cotta, beetroot, shades of brown

Wind-- clean, clear pastels reminding us of watercolors: vanilla, pale chartreuse, pale robins egg, light pink and lilac

Fire-- intense brights that evoke fireworks: camel, red, orange, magenta, berry

Water-- clear, clean, calming shades of blues and greens, yellow

In addition, the following colors and ranges will be important:

Vintage-- faded, muted middle range colors that remind us of antique fabrics: mulberry, blue, olive, rose, papaya, mauve

Preppy mid-tones-- pink, turquoise, green, yellow

Silver and gold metallic, also **copper**

Individual colors that will be important are: shades of **red, white, black and white, orange, berry shades such as fuchsia, purple, lilac and shades of green**

The spring knitwear scene will be dominated by the **cardigan**. There will be the regular cardigan, the cropped cardigan and the very cropped cardigan. This "style" is followed by the pullover, but distantly. There will be a few **jackets** and definitely some wraps, but no more ponchos. **The cardigan, pullover, jacket or wrap** should become the top, and most important layer of our outfit". Knitwear and yarn trends next month....



***** HANDJIVE MITTENS *****

Knitting for others is one of the things that makes the craft so rewarding. Tracey Earhart shared a New Year's resolution from her stitching and spinning group. Instead of stressing out in November frantically trying to complete all the handmade gifts on their holiday lists in time, the group resolved to "de-stress" by starting early and doing one gift project a month. The finished items will accumulate gradually over the course of the year, to avoid the last-minute rush. We're planning to help out with a mitten pattern, perfect for our "Warm Hands, Warm Hearts" theme for February. We hope that you will find these basic mittens helpful in planning your own original variations and design features. Look for more ideas in upcoming newsletters. Enjoy!



SIZE: Child's large / Ladies' medium (measures approx. 7" around palm)

MATERIALS: one skein BROWN SHEEP LAMBS' PRIDE worsted weight (190 yards, yarn weight classification 4); set of 5 double-pointed knitting needles (dpns) US size 5 and US 6; two small stitch holders; stitch markers; scissors; tapestry needle for finishing

GAUGE: 5 sts = 1" in stockinette stitch (knit every round) with larger needles

DIRECTIONS: With smaller dpns, cast on 36 sts. Divide sts evenly on four needles (9 sts on each needle). Join; being careful not to twist sts. Place marker (pm). Work in knit 2, purl 2 ribbing for 2.5" cuff. Change to larger needles. Knit (K) two rounds.

Shape thumb gusset:

Round 1: K1; place marker (pm), knit into the front and back of next st (inc), K1, pm, K around to end: 3 sts between markers.

Rounds 2 & 3: K, slipping markers on every round.

Round 4: K1, slip marker, inc 1, K1, inc 1, slip marker, K around to end: 5 sts between markers.

Rounds 5 & 6: K, slipping markers on every round.

Repeat rounds 4 - 6, inc after the first marker and before the second marker until there are 13 sts between markers.

Next round: K1, remove first marker, place 13 sts on small holder for thumb, remove second marker, K remaining 35 sts. Work even in stockinette stitch (K every round) until piece measures 5.5" from top of ribbed cuff. Shape top of mitten:

Next round: *K4, K2tog; repeat from * around. K one round.

Next Round: *K3, K2tog; repeat from * around. K one round.

Next Round: *K2, K2tog; repeat from * around. K one round.

Cut a long tail and thread through rem sts with tapestry needles. Pull up tightly and secure. Weave in ends neatly.

Thumb: Slip 13 sts from holder to larger dpns. Attach yarn, pick up 2 sts in gap: 15 sts. K 1 round. Work in stockinette for 2".

Decrease Round: *K1, K2tog; rep from * around.

Decrease Round: *K2tog (knit 2 sts together); rep from * around.

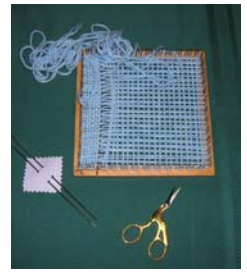
Cut yarn; leaving a tail. Thread yarn through tapestry needle and draw through rem sts. Pull up tightly and secure. Weave in end. Gently tighten the tail at the base of the thumb and weave in ends. Repeat for second mitten.

VARIATIONS: Use a self-striping yarns or work in stripes of contrasting colors. For larger size, work with bulky yarn (weight classification #5) and US 7 & 8 dpns. For smaller size, work with light worsted (yarn classification #3) and US 3 and 4 dpns.

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***** **READER'S KNIT NIGHT** *****

If you missed out on our recent Weaving Day or just didn't get enough of the weavettes (they're habit-forming), here's a second chance to learn to weave in the palm of your hand! Join Kathy and Tracey for an evening of knitting and a weavette demonstration on **Monday, February 7, 2006, from 7:00 - 8:30 pm** at Barnes & Noble, Route 30, Greensburg. The latest knitting and weaving books, and February 2006 "Martha Stewart Living" project ideas will be available to review. Weavettes in a variety of sizes will be available to purchase. All skill levels are invited, and volunteers will be on hand to help with knitting questions and how-to's, including instructions for beginners.



***** **CALENDAR OF EVENTS** *****

"Knit Knite" at Kathy's Kreations: Tuesday evenings, February 14, 2006, 7 - 9 pm and March 14, 2006, 7 - 9 pm (knitter's night out)

All skill levels welcome -- come, sit & knit! Hosted by the Laurel Highlands Knitting Guild...

Private knitting, crochet and hairpin lace lessons available by appointment. Students may pre-register for classes by calling Kathy's Kreations at 724-238-9320 or e-mail at kathy@kathys-kreations.com

***** **ANNUAL CHEMO HAT AND CAPS FOR KIDS DRIVE** *****

Tracey reports that "Chemo Hat Night" at Adams Memorial Library received an enthusiastic reception. Completed Chemo hats for donation to hair-loss patients at the Arnold Palmer Cancer Center should be returned to the Library or Kathy's Kreations before Wednesday, February 8, 2006. These "Hats With Hugs" (cleaned & tagged with a card, if you wish) will be donated to the Palmer Pavilion on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2006.

Students at Baggaley Elementary School and their knitting teacher (School Librarian Mrs. Lil Graber) are working on "Caps For Kids" cold weather items to donate for area children in need. We will gladly accept hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, slippers, etc. for this project as well...

***** **SHOW US YOUR STEELER PRIDE** *****

Congratulations to the Pittsburgh Steelers and their fans for an amazing season. Come into Kathy's Kreations on Friday, February 4, or Saturday, February 5, 2006, wearing a "Steeler scarf" or black & gold garment **made with yarn purchased here** and receive a free gift. We will be featuring free snacks and special clearance items on both days...

***** **UPCOMING WORKSHOP** *****

The Laurel Highlands Knitting Guild is hosting a "Design Your Own Summer Shell" workshop with Anita Tosten and Missy Burns of "Wool In The Woods" yarns. They are nationally recognized as contributors to *Basic Knitting* (our favorite beginner book) as well as designing their fabulous signature hand-painted yarns. The workshop will be held at the Ramada Inn in historic Ligonier, Loyalhanna Street, on Saturday, February 18, 2006, from 9 am - 4 pm. Cost of the workshop is \$35, which includes lunch. The day will also feature a mini-market with Wool In The Woods yarns and items from Kathy's Kreations. For more details, please contact Kathy Zimmerman at Kathy's Kreations at (724) 238-9320.

May the warm, fuzzy feeling of working with your hands to create something beautiful keep you cozy and blissfully contented all month-long. KEEP KNITTING! Kathy