

KATHY'S KREATIONS  
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MAY 2007 UPDATE

Dear Knitters,

KNITTER'S Magazine Spring 2007 reminds us that knitting is constantly evolving, always different but somehow always the same, always familiar. The classics are back in a big way this season, but with more emphasis on unconventional natural fibers, which are making a huge fashion statement this season.

Did you ever think in your wildest dreams that you would be making garments from organic products such as soybean, bamboo, corn or even milk protein? These fibers are also being blended with more traditional ones such as cotton and wool. Manufacturers have become more sophisticated with dyeing processes to create rich self-striping color patterns, and hand-dyed yarns are more beautiful than ever. In particular, long color repeats in variegated yarn are a popular option for spring.

Although the basic knitting and crochet techniques aren't new, the modern interpretation with fiber and embellishments provide a new take on what you've done before. Details can give a designer touch to the simplest of knits and add polish to more complicated styles. Discover your signature style with our collection of the latest spring yarns and patterns. Let's celebrate knitting with natural fibers this month, and,

**"KNIT A CLASSIC"**

**All regularly-priced CLASSIC ELITE Yarns  
in stock are 10% off during May 2007**

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

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

Fashion is seeing the return of complex stitch combinations, elaborate cabling and wonderful color work. Constantly seeking new ideas, the fashion industry has hitched on to a new trend -- natural fibers. The popularity of bamboo yarns and blends in particular has taken the knitting world by storm, even warranting its own fiber category. This environmentally friendly raw material is extremely durable and its breathability is top notch. Look for the impact of exciting natural fibers in the latest issues of your favorite magazines and explore the beauty of these yarns on our shelves. Here's a preview of what's new and what's happening...

"Natural Selections" is the theme of Spring 2007 *Knitter's Magazine* (\$5.95). Their approach to organic knitting is "not about nuts, berries, and sprouts, but more about celebrating natural influences and instincts. Logic and reason carry us through many knitting processes. Often we discover slick little tricks and techniques that make the most of our knitting, and this issue is full of them".

Inside the pages, you'll find beads, baubles and clusters (knitted jewelry), felted bags, clever tops from mitered rectangles, gentle openwork, cables & cords, color crafting and the very innovative filet knitting technique interpreted by editor Rick Mondragon. We are pleased that one of Kathy's classic mens' cardigan designs is featured (on the back cover, too!), a spicy stripe combo "Madras Ribs" (shown upper left), worked with JO SHARP "Desert Garden Aran Cotton". About this sweater, *Knitter's* says, "Your favorite guy will be happy to slip on this cardigan. The bold russet color and fresh stripes dress up a casual Friday or Saturday evening"...

VERMONT FIBER DESIGNS features classic knitting patterns in what we find to be the largest variety of sizes on the market today (XXS - 6X). Pattern 158 "Cable Panel Pullover in 2 Sleeve Lengths" (\$5.50, shown lower right) has an asymmetrical ribbed central cable panel -- easy to work, but the results are stunning! The cable is set off nicely by a panel of reverse stockinette stitch. The cable strands travel easily up the V-neck and around to the center of the back neck, which means minimal neck finishing. Instructions are given for both short or 3/4 length sleeves, but you can work to whatever length you prefer. Choose one of our many DK weight warm weather yarns for a handknit beauty destined to be your favorite season-spanning wardrobe essential...

FIBER TRENDS / NATURALLY "Dawn" (\$6.95, 25 grams, 171 yards, 50% NZ wool/50% silk) is a delicate, lovely lace weight yarn for knitting or crocheting feminine wraps for proms, weddings and enchanted evenings. NATURALLY pattern support includes two openwork shawl options # N1090 (\$4.50) and four lightweight lacy scarves #N1089 (\$4.50). FIBER TRENDS patterns for "Dawn" are:

- AC-83 "Hydrangea Lace Scarf" (\$5.50): large clusters of petals are surrounded by leaves on this rectangular lace scarf. Choose between a single row of flowers for a narrow scarf or a wider version with staggered blossoms
- S-2108 "Angel Lace Shawl" (\$5.95): small eyelet circles are surrounded by wings of swirling stockinette stitch to create a host of angels on this triangular shawl. This is suitable for an elegant prayer shawl...



## \*\*\*\*\* MORE GREAT NEW STUFF \*\*\*\*\*

Lisa Carnahan of LISA KNITS introduces four fantastic new patterns (\$4.00 each), all very knitter-friendly:

- HT-020 Stocking Cap: Worked in worsted weight yarn, this is the striped retro style that snowboarders and skiers are looking for! Pattern is written in three sizes and is a great stash buster (shown on page 6).
- HT-021 Neckwarmer Hat: Is it a hat or a scarf? It's both! Scarves hang down both sides of the hat, keeping the ears and the neck warm. Worked in worsted weight yarn and sized to fit an average adult (shown on page 7).
- SW-027 Fair Isle for Kids: Easy to knit Fair Isle patterns adorn this colorful sweater and cap (shown upper right). Worked in worsted weight yarn-- ask to see our colorful shop models knit by Betty Lou from NASHUA HANDKNITS "Julia" yarn).
- SW-028 Lotus Flower: Worked in Aran weight yarn, this sweater features a traditional lotus flower lace pattern border. Our shop model was knit by Joyce in RYC "Cotton Jeans"-- this yarn is perfect for spring and summer garments (shown lower left)



It's a cliché we've all heard before -- "good things come in small packages". It's a funny thing about clichés -- they hang around because they are generally true. For knitters, we've got some small packages that mean big fun. LANTERN MOON introduces "Sox Stix", soon to be on our shelves. Housed in an assortment of plaid tafetta-silk bags, the 5-inch double pointed needles come in sizes US 0 - 5 and are available in luxurious and sturdy blondwood (\$20.50), rosewood (\$21.50) and ebony (\$22.50)...

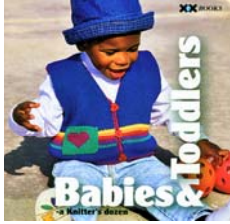
Finer gauge yarns are in vogue for knitting or crocheting wraps, shawls and sweaters. FILATURA DI CROSA "Luxury" (\$19.95, 50 grams, 160 yards, 100% silk) is a luxurious light weight choice for delicate stoles and summer tops. Kathy can't wait to knit this into the sleek, contemporary design from FDC S/S07 collection, a cable & rib sleeveless pullover. TAHKI/STACY CHARLES "Crochet, 2nd Edition" (\$14.50) features 21 designs in a variety of yarns, sure to inspire you and spark your creativity...

Oh, baby, baby! FILATURA DI CROSA "Adorable Baby" booklet (\$13.50) includes 25 designs for today's baby. There are sweet blankies for play time and nap time, fun sweaters for little ladies and gentlemen, and baby's first knits. FDC "Zarella" (\$7.50, 50 grams, 121 yards; 52% wool / 48% acrylic), used for several of the designs, is now available on our shelves ...

IRONSTONE YARNS presents Collection #7 (\$7.99), styles that include Oriental-inspired jackets, lacy wraps, shrugs, and summery tops. The designs feature "Sun" (\$36.00, 182 grams, 125 yards), a three-yarn combination of Felicia, Paris Nights and Streamers Ribbon, and "Sky" (\$5.50, 60 grams, 70 yards; 70% cotton / 30% rayon), with two strands Flake Cotton and one strand Stained Glass yarns. Combine these two yarns in the "Sky and Sun" jacket with deep lapels...



Recent arrivals in natural fiber variegated yarns are ROWAN "Tapestry" (\$9.50, 50 grams, 131 yards, 70% wool / 30% soybean protein) and PLYMOUTH YARN "Boku" (\$6.50, 50 grams, 99 yards, 95% wool / 5% silk)...



\*\*\*\*\* NOW ON OUR BOOKSHELF \*\*\*\*\*

XRX BOOKS "Best of Knitter's" series is well-known for projects you can count on for good design, knitting fun, and endless possibilities. Their latest, *Babies & Toddlers -- A Knitter's Dozen* (\$15.95, soft cover), is a delightful collection of 24 charming blankies, cardies, sweaters, hats, socks, accessories and toys for wee ones, with hundreds of possibilities.

In the introduction, *Knitter's* says, "The first gift we knit a baby is a welcome -- to a world we can shape and make warm, soft and colorful. Whether it's hearts or elephants, sunflowers or bugs, stripes or blocks -- we bring bits of the world into the shapes we knit. As babies and toddlers wear, curl up in, and play with them, their world grows. And as we knit, so does ours. We share a growing confidence as we try double knit, entrelac, lace, felting, stranded color and intarsia, sock, and shaped-leg stockings -- you'll find them all here". We highly recommend this selection as one you will use time and time again -- it's destined to become a classic...

Speaking of classics, what could be more classic than a traditional Aran sweater? Aran sweaters -- those heavily-textured cabled sweaters which originated off the coast of Ireland -- are delightful to look at and interesting to knit. Newly re-printed *Aran Sweater Design* by Janet Szabo (\$24.95, softcover) is an in-depth primer on how to create your own unique version of this knitting tradition. Included is information on knitting cables, picking combinations of cables which look good together in a design, drafting an Aran sweater pattern, and much more. The chapter on helpful knitting hints will make any Aran project go more smoothly. If you're not quite ready to attempt designing your own, follow one of the ready-to-knit patterns for a pullover, cardigan or vest. Whatever your level of knitting expertise, if Aran knitting fascinates you, this is a "must-have" book for your library. Be sure to check out our shelves for CRYSTAL PALACE "Aran", PLYMOUTH "Galway", BROWN SHEEP "Lambs Pride Worsted", and other wonderful choices for cabled and textured projects...

Mothers and daughters go through so much -- yet when was the last time a mother and daughter sat down together to write a book about it all? "Every Mother Is A Daughter" (\$23.95, hardcover) by Perri Klass and Sheila Solomon Klass explores the never-ending quest for success, inner peace, and a really clean kitchen. Together they compare thoughts on bringing up children and working, confess long-hidden sorrows, relish precious memories -- and even offer family recipes and knitting patterns. Although not a knitting book per se, many of you will recall Perri Klass for her articles in *Knitter's Magazine*, and will find this story entertaining. This is a wonderful Mother's Day gift idea...

Finally, a knitting book that's made to fit your head size and style. While most books offer patterns in a single size and type of yarn, *Hip Knit Hats* (\$24.95, hardcover) by Cathy Carron is a collection of 40 patterns and nearly 100 variations, each in adult medium and large sizes, and many alternative yarn choices. It's never been easier to make a hat that's perfect for you or that special someone on your gift list. Beginning with the basics of hat construction, knitting in the round, working with double-pointed and circular needles, and other fundamentals. These caps have unusual twists and trendy styling, for hats that are something different but definitely fantastic...

\*\*\*\*\* "KNIT A CLASSIC" DISHCLOTH \*\*\*\*\*

MATERIALS: CLASSIC ELITE YARNS "Provence" one hank; US size 5 knitting needles

GAUGE: 5.5 sts / 9 rows = 1" in seed stitch

FINISHED MEASUREMENT: 8" square

PATTERN STITCHES

Seed stitch (all rows, worked over odd number of sts): K1; \*P1, K1; rep from \* across.

Garner Stitch: Knit every row.

DIRECTIONS: Cast on 45 sts. Work in seed stitch for 9 rows.

Next row: Work in seed stitch across first 11 sts, work next 23 sts in garter stitch, work across rem 11 sts in seed stitch.

Repeat last row until piece measures approx. 7" from beginning. Work in seed stitch for 9 rows. Bind off all sts as if to knit. Crochet a loop or knit an I-cord for hanging, if desired. Enjoy!

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\*\*\*\*\* THE CLASSIC ELITE CHEMO HAT \*\*\*\*\*

FINISHED SIZES: 16" baby (17.5" toddler - 19" child - 20.5" adult small - 21.75" adult medium - 23.25" adult large in parentheses)

MATERIALS: CLASSIC ELITE "Star" [99% cotton / 1% lycra, 50 grams, 112 yards] 1 (1 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2) hanks; US size 8 16" circular needle; US size 8 double-pointed needles for crown; one stitch marker

GAUGE: 5.5 sts / 9 rows = 1" in stockinette stitch, after washing

DIRECTIONS: With circular needle, cast on 88 (96 - 104 - 112 - 120 - 128) sts. Place marker for beginning of round. Join, being careful not to twist sts. Knit every round (stockinette stitch) for 1". Work K1, P1 ribbing for 1". Knit every round until piece measures 3.5" (4" - 4.5" - 5" - 5.5" - 6") above ribbing. Begin shaping for crown, changing to double-pointed needles when necessary:

Round 1: \*K6, K2tog; repeat from \* around.

Round 2 & all even-numbered round: Knit.

Round 3: \*K5, K2tog; repeat from \* around.

Round 5: \*K4, K2tog; repeat from \* around.

Round 7: \*K3, K2tog; repeat from \* around.

Round 9: \*K2, K2tog; repeat from \* around.

Round 11: \*K1, K2tog; repeat from 8 around.

Round 13: \*K2tog; repeat from \* around.

Continue on remaining sts for 3.5" for I-cord, if desired. Bind off. Tie I-cord into a topknot. Weave in ends.

VARIATIONS: This may be worked in striped variations, changing colors for ribbing and striping as desired. Top of hat may be embellished with cords, spirals, strips, etc. (see child's version at lower right). One important sizing point to bear in mind when knitting hats for hair-loss recipients is that the head size is smaller than it would be with hair. Do not make them too large. "Star" is an excellent choice because of the cotton (natural fiber content), the elasticity of the yarn and washability.

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\*\*\*\*\* COLOR FORECAST FOR SUMMER \*\*\*\*\*

After several seasons filled with bold and sometimes daring fashions, this summer is all about appearing calm, cool and collected. VOGUE KNITTING Spring / Summer 2007 encourages us " to color your world with knitted classics and tweak them to fit your personal style".

Color is supreme this season, with an emphasis on red, orange, yellow, and purple. Nothing spices up a classic like a dash of curry, eggplant, paprika or saffron, all deliciously divine.

If you would like someone else to make the colorwork decisions, there are plenty of self-striping yarns to simply pick up and knit. If you still can't decide, try stripes in varying widths, textures, patterns or fibers all in the same garment. There are yarns that actually do this for you, too.

In contrast to the summer brights, white knits also seem to be everywhere with lingerie looks, crisp-looking cables, sporty casuals, and shapely silhouettes. Try combining navy with summer brights or other shades of blue in stripes for trendy knits. From nautical looks for summer to accents in contemporary Fairisle styles, a bit of navy adds more than a touch of class, and provides a refreshing alternative to black.

Nothing interprets the "natural" trend better than neutral shades in organic yarns. Cream, taupe, and beige always work well for everything from officewear to lace to textures. Neutral color choices are always a versatile investment.

\*\*\*\*\* KNITTING TIPS AND TRICKS \*\*\*\*\*

Madelon Sheedy, our felted "critter knitter", runs a mesh dish scrubber over the stuffing seams of frogs, squirrels and hedgehogs to "faux-felt" and conceal the seam. This works well to "spot felt" areas that may need a little extra attention...

To wind yarn skeins into balls for knitting, wrap yarn around four fingers . Continue to wrap, sliding fingers out every 6 wraps or so to vary the direction of the winding. Continue in this manner, wrapping yarn around four fingers and the ball. This results in a nice loose ball, and the yarn will not be stretched from winding too tightly...

Kathy would like to pass along some tips, originally shared by Marlyn Ibele of the Western Reserve Knitting Guild. Here are Marlyn's tips for more successful knitting:

- 1) Leave a long tail when casting on to sew seams. Use look-alike cast on and bind off edges where possible.
- 2) Increase or decrease one stitch from the edge on side and sleeve seams to allow a selvedge for neater finishing.
- 3) Rely on row count rather than inch measurements -- it is more reliable. Use a stitch counter -- it comes in handy to find your place in the pattern, too.
- 4) Pick up all sts around the neckline if necessary for a neater finish, then decrease to the desired stitch count on first row of ribbing. This is a good tip when working with cotton, rayon, bamboo or slippery yarns.
- 5) Leave an extra length of yarn in the seam for repairs. It will be laundered with the garment and have the same appearance if needed later.
- 6) Duplicate stitch any "holes" along the front or back neck bind-off / pick-up areas. Duplicate stitch also works well for repairing holes.
- 7) When picking up the front band stitches for a horizontal buttonband, the first stitch picked up should look like it is almost falling off the edge of the sweater.



\*\*\*\*\* ASK THE DESIGNER \*\*\*\*\*

A group of knitters visited our shop in mid-March while on a bus trip hosted by Cathy Finley of "Finely, A Knitting Party". One of the ladies asked how she could adapt one of Kathy's V-neck designs to a crewneck styling. Here's Kathy's how-to for intermediate to advanced knitters:

Work the front of the sweater exactly the same as the back until the front measures 2.5" - 3" less than the total length of the completed back. For example, if your row gauge is a typical worsted weight gauge of 7 rows per inch, approximately 18 - 22 rows less than worked on the total back (another good reason to count those rows). Choose a stopping point in the pattern stitch repeat that is pleasing to the eye.

Take the measurement of the back neck. Allow approximately 2" worth of stitches for each front neck shaping, with the remaining stitches to be bound off for the front neck. For example, if your stitch gauge is a typical worsted weight gauge of 5 stitches per inch, and your back neck measurement is 7" , that is 35 total stitches to be decreased when shaping the front neckline. If 2" (10 stitches) are to be decreased along **each** side of the front neck (20 stitches total), 15 sts remain to be bound off at the center front neck. **OR**, deduct the number of stitches remaining for each shoulder shaping (hopefully, these numbers will correspond to your gauge & schematic, and the number will be the same as stitch gauge times neck measurement in inches).

So the pattern would read: work in pattern as established to center 15 sts, join 2nd ball of yarn, bind off center 15 sts in pattern, work remaining stitches in pattern as established. Kathy finds Ann Budd's *Handy Book of Sweater Patterns* formula to be a valuable guide for the rate of bind offs: Continuing in pattern as established, bind off three stitches at each neck edge once, two stitches at each neck edge twice, then dec 1 st at each neck edge every other row (on the public side of the work) three times. This accounts for ten decreases at each front neck, and should result in the same number of sts remaining for shoulder shaping as on the back. Work even until piece measures the same as the back to the shoulder shaping, and shape the shoulders the same as on the back.

\*\*\*\*\*EVEN MORE GREAT NEW STUFF \*\*\*\*\*

COLONIAL "Paint Box Wools" (\$10.50) are 100% wool fiber fleece kits for needle felting, packaged in harmonious color groupings like Misty Morning (pastels), fruits & berries, deep & rich, bright & bold, and earth, sea & sky. We have several varieties of felting needles and starter kits from COLONIAL and FIBER TRENDS available...

The sweetest new retractable measuring tapes in ladybug and birthday cake shapes from LANTERN MOON are here, too cute to resist (\$9.50 each)...

ADDI TURBO Lace Needles were designed with lace and sock knitters in mind. The sharp tips are perfect for knitting projects which require more intricate stitches than simple stockinette. The tips are a lightweight, hollow, coated brass, which allows you to control your stitches better when doing complex patterns. The soft, pliable red transparent nylon cord is thinner than standard circulars, and their smooth joins are tapered to eliminate snagging. Cord lengths are available in 24", 32", and 47" lengths in US sizes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 ((\$13.95 for sizes US 1-2, \$16.50 for US 3-6). These needles actually have the needle sizes in US and metric permanently imprinted on the cord to help you identify the sizing -- how cool is that?





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

Join Kathy and Tracey for an evening of knitting on **Mondays, May 7, 2007, June 4, 2007, and July 2, 2007 from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm** at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore, Route 30, Greensburg, PA. In May, we will review "The Natural Knitter" by Barbara Albright, which includes Kathy's popular "Girl's Night Out" design (shown right). June's gathering will feature "Party Knits" and in July "Back to Blossom Street" and other selected books for great knitting-related summer reading...

\*\*\*\*\* **"KNIT KNITE" AT KATHY'S KREATIONS**\*\*\*\*\*

**Tuesday evenings, May 8, 2007, and June 12, 2007, from 7 - 9 pm**

Join members of the Laurel Highlands Knitting Guild for an evening of knitting, lots of fun conversation and plenty of advice from experienced knitters. All skill levels are welcome -- come, sit & knit!

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

**Private knitting, crochet, felting and hairpin lace lessons available by appointment.**

**"FUN FRIDAY" with instructor Joyce Bischoff: Friday, May 18, 2007, 10 am - 2 pm**

It's fun, it's free -- join us to knit or crochet! Joyce is available for knitting help with your questions and skill-building. There is no charge to attend, but please call ahead to let us know you will be coming. Please bring your knitting, a snack if you wish, and a sense of humor. In the event of inclement weather, please check with us regarding possible delay or cancellation.

The Ligonier Valley Historical Society is planning a Sheep To Shawl Event for Saturday and Sunday, July 21 - 22, 2007, in association with the Loyalhanna Spinners and Weavers. Planned activities will feature rug weaving outdoors between the trees, an auction of shawls, spinning, weaving and other fiber-related fun. Stay tuned for more information in upcoming newsletters...

Here's another good reason for doing those pesky gauge swatches. When knitting your swatch, work a buttonhole using the method and size you plan to work in your project. When shopping for the perfect button to complete your garment, take your swatch along to try out buttons directly on the swatch. You will be able to match color, see exactly how the style of button will look with your sweater, and purchase the appropriate size you need to fit your buttonholes...

"Knitting is a way to reconnect with others" says Bernadette Murphy, author of *Zen and The Art of Knitting*. "It's a lot different than instant messaging and trolling through MySpace, a lot more genuine". The reasons that knitters stick with knitting are as varied as the stitches in each individual hand-knit sweater, and perhaps impossible to completely unravel. Knitting has so often been declared "the new yoga" that the original source for the phrase is obscure. But knitting enthusiasts agree that the needle artform is relaxing, stress-reducing and soothing to the soul. Kathy's Kreations invites you to visit our shop to experience some knitting zen in person. We're planning some special events to kick off the summer knitting and crochet season in beautiful Ligonier Valley, so you'll want to stay in touch.

KEEP KNITTING!

Kathy