

Notes from the Chair...

2008 has been quite a year for the Midwest (and other parts of the country and world).

I know that fiber activities have been very therapeutic for me through all the challenges Mother Nature has presented.

During the long winter of severe cold and deep snows that caused guild meeting cancellations and kept us indoors for days on end, weaving was a constant joy: researching and sampling for a swatch exchange and designing and weaving warm throws for our children using our own home-grown llama wool filled many hours with happiness and contentment.

When the floods came in June, my looms were empty and I couldn't seem to concentrate enough to design and plan any projects, but spinning a lovely green and blue dyed wool roving was somehow comforting and helped to lift

my spirits when much around us was devastating.

Getting away from the flood waters at the end of June to attend Convergence was just what I needed to transport me to another "world."

There is nothing like total fiber immersion for 3 or 4 days –inspirational speakers, enthusiastic and knowledgeable teachers, vendors with new yarns, books and equipment to fondle, peruse, try out and purchase, exhibits of incredibly wonderful textiles and encounters with other like-minded individuals. It is energizing to say the least—stimulation overload!

The conversations began on the shuttle from the airport to the hotel where everyone was headed for Convergence. One attendee had escaped the flood waters in the middle of the night wading through waist-deep water with nothing but their pets. We marveled that

she was there, but she said everyone told her to "just go."

When you hear stories like that, you truly count your own blessings and want to reach out to help.

As flood waters recede and people can assess their damage, perhaps we can reach out to other weavers less fortunate than most of us and help in some way.

If you lost weaving and spinning supplies to the flood waters, perhaps you could let us know through the MWA website or a note to one of the board members, and I'm guessing individuals and guilds would respond with generosity.

I'm so grateful this year was not our conference year as I don't know that Iowa would have been able to pull off hosting a conference in the midst of such devastation, but we are working together and meeting challenges to make the MWA "in

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Notes from the Chair...continued

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the HEARTland” a great experience for all next summer.

We hope other guilds are thinking ahead to 2011, 2013 and beyond to keep this wonderful experience available for all of us in the years ahead.

Let us know how we can help you.

Vicki Tardy

Midwest Weavers Association Web Site

- Want to know about upcoming fiber events that are taking place near you?
- Read past MWA newsletters?
- Join MWA? Or renew your membership?
- Change your mailing address with MWA?

Learn about the 2009 MWA conference *In the HEARTland?* Answers to these questions and more can be found on MWA's web site www.midwestweavers.org. We hope you'll visit it often!

We also hope you'll send in info about fiber activities happening in your area, so that we can post the details on the web site and others will be able to participate in them.

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2009 MWA Conference

The Great Flood of 2008 might have been the big story in Iowa and the U.S. this past June, but next year the buzz will be all about the great MWA conference of 2009, In the HEARTland.

The steering committee has been busy engaging the services of a stellar group of teachers

and arranging the usual great array of tours, evening events, and fantastic fiber shopping.

The list of conference workshops and seminars include a broad range of fiber subjects. Course titles include: Weaving with Space-dyed Yarn, Exercises in Color Blending and Texture, Bodacious Boas, Sampling is NOT a Dirty Word!, Designing Yarns, Netting with Shuttle & Gauge, and Freeform Knitting. Among the 30 instructors are Ruby Leslie, Kathe Todd-Hooker, Betsy Blumenthal, Jenny Dowde,

Robin Spady, and Heather Winslow.

We are also pleased to offer classes by Iowa fiber artists: Amana basket weaver Joanna Schanz, tapestry weaver and collagist

conference is seeing what our fellow members have been working on over the past two years. The member's exhibit, guild exhibits, and fashion show are the perfect showcases for EVERYONE'S handiwork.

Please consider entering one or more pieces of your work for

display. The themes for the exhibits can be found in the last issue of the MWA newsletter.

So, make plans now to join us next year on the lovely campus of Grinnell College. The preconference runs June 22–24, and the conference will be June 25–27.

Be sure to check the MWA website later this summer for a link to the In the HEARTland website.



Jan Friedman, braider Collyer Ekholm, educator/artist Becky Kobos, weaver Karen Homann, and ingenue entrepreneur Diane Fleshin.

In the HEARTland will also offer a new educational option for conference attendees. Several two-day workshops will be offered during the conference itself, allowing those unable to attend preconference an opportunity for in-depth exploration of a single fiber topic or techniques.

But the best part of any

**Only 11
months until
we gather
again at the
next Midwest
Weavers
Conference!**

You Just Need to Apply...

As you make plans for summer, 2009, consider applying for a Midwest Weavers Association **scholarship** to attend the Midwest Weavers Conference in Grinnell, Iowa in June, 2009.

This is a chance to speak 'weaver-eze', learn new weaving techniques and surround yourself with fiber for several days.

If you have been weaving for five years or less the **Jack Baker Memorial Scholarship** is available. This scholarship pays registration and housing for the 3-day conference.

Or you and others may apply for one of several **MWA Scholarships** that will provide your registration fee for the 3-day conference.

To apply, submit a letter explaining what role weaving plays in your life and why you would like to attend the Midwest Conference.

Send your application letter after January 1, 2009 to:

Judy Larsen
N67 W5349 Cedar Court
Cedarburg, WI 53012.

Letters must be received by March 1, 2009.

The next MWA General Meeting will be held at the Midwest Weavers Conference in 2009 at Grinnell, IA. However, you can always contact any member of the Board with your comments or concerns.

Future MWA Conferences

We're looking for hosts for the future MWA conferences.

There are a number of benefits of hosting a conference: your guild(s) receive an honorarium; free conference registration, room and board for up to two future MWA chairs/co-chairs; free registration to the conference immediately following the one you hosted for up to two chairs/co-chairs/committee members/their designees; and the positive impact the conference will have on your community-at-large, your guild, and you.

If you or your local guild(s) are interested in learning about what's involved in hosting a conference, please contact any MWA board member, who would be happy to talk with you about it.

We hope to hear from you soon . . . it's not too early to determine the location for the 2011 MWA conference.

Listen to what past conference hosts have to say:

From Dale Wilson, St. Louis hosting committee:

Having been blessed with the opportunity to help put on two Midwest Weavers' Conferences, I can say that, yes, it is a lot of hard work, but the payback in terms of new friends, and the feeling of satisfaction is well worth it.

From Judi Jetson, on the Convergence 2008 planning committee:

We are having one opening a week of Convergence Community Exhibits - very exciting time for fiber art in Tampa Bay. I was the Community Exhibits chair, and while we knew that we'd make a splash with 50 shows around the area, I frankly never thought about the effect of the "rolling opening" or the number of opportunities I'd have to show my work.

.....our Guilds often name us as chairs of this & that, but there is no

committee...and too often we operate as a one-woman band and feel put-upon. The reason my Convergence 08 task was manageable and fun (recruiting 50 venues for Community Exhibits for 75+ fiber artists) was I recruited people I liked to help me. I thought to myself, who would I enjoy getting together with every couple of months, learning more about, etc. and then asked them to join me in the task. Our group was richer for the variety of ideas and experiences, and we are still supporting each other (and proud of each other) as the Convergence 08 shows begin to open.

From the Milwaukee conference hosts:

The conference provided weavers with great opportunities to learn from and engage with weavers from the host region and around the country as well as providing an opportunity for guild members to teach others from the region.

New Awards Program: FIBER ARTIST OF DISTINCTION

We have many talented weavers in MWA and have established a new award to honor them.

This award is based on a point system, and when a weaver has accumulated 25 points, they will receive the Fiber Artist of Distinction Award.

Points will be earned by receiving awards at MWA conference competitions:

- either 1st place or a named award (3 points)
- 2nd place (2 points)

- 3rd place or honorable mention (1 point)

Once a person has received the Fiber Artist of Distinction Award, their name will be published in the next MWA newsletter and will be added to the honor roll that will be posted on MWA's web site.



Guild Corner

So folks know about guild activities, we would like to highlight a few guilds in each newsletter, but we need your help.

Please send a brief paragraph to MWA board member Patsy Ek (patsy_fiberholic@yahoo.com) describing programs and other activities your guild is involved in, upcoming workshops, time and place of your guild meetings (who knows, one of us may happen to be in your neighborhood on the day of your meetings).

We also highlight Midwest area Guilds on the MWA website. Check out what we're saying about your Guild and let us know if we need to make any revisions.

What better way to spread the word about what your guild does?

www.midwestweavers.org

Helpful Tips from Weaver's Wisdom: 250 Aids to Happier Weaving (Monograph Two)

When warping, particularly with delicate yarn, add a few extra threads to the warp. Then when threading, let one of the extras fall to the back of the loom at intervals across the warp. Should a repair be necessary, the thread is already warped and ready to use.



For speed in winding a single color warp, wind two or more strands at the same time from as many cones of yarn. The warp will be wound twice as fast, and should the dye lots vary, the color change will not show in the warp.



When warping with more than two ends, place a reed across two chairs over the cones. Thread the ends through the reed to keep threads feeding vertically and to avoid tangling.



For sectional beaming with a very lumpy yarn, use warping sticks between the rows of pegs across the width of the warp.

Use metal (or wood) Venetian blind slats instead of paper between the layers of thread when beaming. They may be cut to any desired length with shears and the ends rounded and easily smoothed.



When using warp sticks, maximum support is achieved if the later layers are placed directly over the first group of sticks.



Beating after changing the shed tends to spread a fabric; beating before changing may cause excessive pulling in.



In order to weave a true 50-50 tabby, a fast beat will have more effect than a slower double-beat and cause less wear on the warp.



When sewing the ends of a woven piece to prevent raveling, the sewing machine should be set for short

stitches and the material should be stretched while stitching.



Silk thread, with its great elasticity, is best for tailoring yardage of handspun yarns.



A worsted cloth should be set by steaming before washing. This helps prevent contraction of the fibers and consequent shrinkage. The texture of the surface is also retained.



Fasten a small knitter's row counter to the castle for keeping track of repeats, etc.



A piece of 1/4" corkboard with adhesive backing fastened to the castle can be used for tacking up treadling notes and does not deface the loom.

If you have tips to share, we'd love to hear them. Please contact Patsy Ek to share!

These dues are for 2008-09. Dues are collected the first of January every even numbered year and run through the end of the next/odd numbered year.

To find out if you have already paid your 2008/2009 dues, please contact Amy Norris (see below).

MWA Membership Dues for 2008 and 2009

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Name and address of guild(s) you participate in _____

Please make checks payable to "Midwest Weavers Association".....\$10.00

Please send this form and your check to:

Amy Norris
8742 Teasdale Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63124

All paid members will automatically receive a 2009 "in the HEARTland" conference book at no charge.

Membership Dues

In 2005, the general membership voted for annual dues to help defray the cost of newsletter mailings and web site maintenance. Benefits of being a member of MWA include receiving a biennial MWA newsletter and automatically receiving a *free* registration booklet for the next conference.

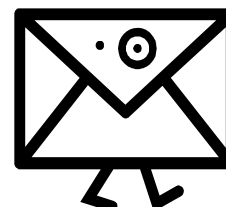
If you haven't already done so, please complete the enclosed form and return it with your check (\$10). These dues are for 2008 and 2009. Dues are collected beginning the first of January every even numbered year and run through the end of the next/odd numbered conference year.

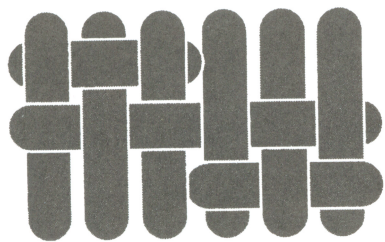
Address Changes

If you move, please let us know by sending your new mailing information to:

Amy Norris
8742 Teasdale Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63124

or send her an e-mail at: amy@amyfibre.com. Thank you!





Midwest Weavers
ASSOCIATION, INC.

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