

## **SHEPHERD'S CROSS SHEEP TO SHAWL TEAM @ WOOLLY WEEKEND**

Dear Sheep to Shawl Team Participants:

Thank you so much for taking the time and energy to make this experience a part of your life. I can assure you that you will learn a lot, have bountiful opportunities to teach folks with an interest in fiber arts, and build a unique memory and shawl, or shawls, that will mark a time in history and culture.

The Sheep to Shawl experience at Shepherd's Cross is unique, and may well be the only one of its kind in our nation. The cornerstone of meeting this objective is to encourage historical and nomadic cultural fiber arts. The objective of this event is education, the reenactment and encouragement of historical fiber arts and encouragement of participating artisans. In performing these tasks together, we tap into the history of the ages, passed down to each of us, through the generations, and then passed forward to future generations. We see the history of the generations woven in the finished tapestry of the artisans that participate. We will not personally see the future generations, but they will see us in the tapestry we leave them as an inheritance.

Our objective is completely different from any other sheep to shawl event that we are aware of. There are few sheep to shawl experiences in the world, and those that exist have a different focus than ours; that being quality and speed.

The work we do is a bit challenging because it involves some interesting factors:

1. We will be working together as a team, with team members you may never even meet.
  - a. This is a difficult but rewarding opportunity to build something together, that alone could not be accomplished.
  - b. We demonstrate the artfulness of each participant, and enable the memory of fiber artists from historical cultures to live on through to the future.
  - c. There will be around 30 team members this year
  - d. Team members are assigned to a particular area: spinning (warp, weft or for knit & crochet), weaving, felting, needle felting, washing, tumbling, skirting, carding, picking, dyeing, knitting and crocheting.
2. We encourage novice and experienced fiber artists to participate.
3. There is a strict time factor, in that the shawl must be made with the first shorn fleeces from Thursday morning (approx. 9:00 am)
  - a. Completely and totally (no pre-processed fiber is allowed)
  - b. All shawls are to be completed by 4:00 pm on Saturday April 30
4. We will be making at least 4 shawls this year.
5. This project involves using greased fleece for spinning, weaving, felting, knitting and crocheting. In our culture, we tend to be less experienced in working with greased fleece. Many cultures around the world still work with greased fleeces today. We simply do not have enough time to wash all of the fleece, and then begin spinning and making the shawls.

Most sheep to shawl teams are small. Our team is growing in number. We want to spread the work load out, so that we can have a wonderful time teaching the public what we are doing, and a wonderful time working together. We anticipate approximately 30 Sheep to Shawl Team Members. Thanks for helping us recruit. It makes the work a joy. Joy is the overture for this event. We want to joyfully work, joyfully give, joyfully live and joyfully teach. Yes, even when we find a cocklebur in our yarn! And we don't know what to do with it! Even when the

grease fleece leaves a stain on our own garments we will smile with joy and remember when we worked together for the greater good.

We want to joyfully impact as many lives as we can to promote and share historical and nomadic fiber arts. The nomadic and historical fiber arts section in the Farm Museum is growing. Be sure to visit this section while you are at the farm.

We will make at four finished shawls this year, within the three days of Woolly Weekend

We do not use fiber that has been previously processed. We strictly adhere to using the fleece shorn during the course of the weekend event.

Fiber artists are welcome to demonstrate without being on the sheep to shawl team. Simply bring your own project along for your shift.

### **Shifts Available**

**9:30 - 2:30** or **2:00 - 7:00** each of the 3 days (Thursday, Friday, Saturday)

### **Shawl Descriptions & Time Frames**

#### **1. Wet Felted – Rolling Machine**

- a. Picked & carded on Thursday afternoon
  - b. Rolled on Friday
- Location: wet wool mill

#### **2. Woven**

- a. Simple design
- b. Hand spun warp and weft threads
  - i. Warp threads from brown fleece
  - ii. Weft Threads from grey, brown, white & colored fleece
- c. Woven on a harnessed floor or table loom
- d. 24 inches wide by 48 inches long
- e. Weavers fringe finish on edges
- f. Warp the loom Friday AM
- g. Warping of loom complete by Friday at 2:00
- h. Weave the shawl on Friday from 2:00 – Saturday at 4:00

Location – Hearth & Fiber

#### **3 & 4. Knit Block Shawl & Crochet Block Shawl**

- a. Blocks of 12 inch square knit or crochet with each square made by a different artist
- b. At least one knit square made by many artists – throw a row of stitches on in the museum
- c. Minimum of 6 blocks long for one shawl
- d. If enough participants, then one crocheted shawl & one knit shawl
- e. Blocks must have square edges
- f. Any stitch may be used in the artists design of their square
- g. Recommend larger needles and hooks because of the larger yarn size (sport to bulky weight)
- h. Recommend plastic or metal needles and hooks due to lanolin in the grease fiber
- i. Made with greased fleece hand spun – begin Thursday morning
- j. Some washed and dyed hand spun will be available by Thursday afternoon for some of blocks
- k. Spun fiber made throughout the course of the 3 days

## **Completion & Pictures**

When the shawls are complete, we will take a group picture with each completed shawl by the sheep pens. Let Dr. D. know and she will coordinate the group picture taking, including all participants that are on site at the time of completion for that particular shawl.

Be sure we get your picture while you are on site participating.

## **Taking Sheep to Shawl Work Home**

If you would like to take your project home to continue working on Thursday or Friday, you may. Please notify Dr. D. what project you will be working on at home. In the early years of our Sheep to Shawl experience, when there was only one or two artisans working on the project, we always took home assignments! Thank you for growing our team!

## **What to do Before Coming to the Farm**

- Gather your tools, for your particular team assignment, or let us know what tools you would like to borrow.
- Read through the rules & regulations for visitors & bring a signed waiver with you.  
[http://www.shepherdsross.com/files/Rules\\_and\\_Waiver\\_2014.pdf](http://www.shepherdsross.com/files/Rules_and_Waiver_2014.pdf)
- What to wear? Here is an excerpt from our training guidelines to help with your decision making:
  - Country style attire
    - Visitors are here for just a few moments in time, and we want them to experience the “country howdy.”
  - No Bees
    - No bare belly, bare thigh, bare shoulder, bare bust, bare back, etc.
    - Modest attire; including “body wear”
  - T-shirt or Country style shirt and jeans or capris/long skirt.
    - Blue jean apparel is the best choice
    - Apparel – try to be “country style”
- Bring that smile along!
- Name Tag & apron or vest provided ( or bring your own apron or vest or country style shirt)
- Be ready to interact with the public. They are so anxious to learn and want to know any small details about fiber arts that you would like to share. We want them to have a positive learning experience.

## **What to expect when you arrive:**

- You will be stationed upstairs in the demonstration area (north side) unless assignment is in the dry or wet fiber area.
  - You may stop at the front of the barn to unload equipment, and then park in parking lot
  - You may leave your equipment at the base of the stairs, out of the walkway, while you go to park
- Before going upstairs with your equipment, please stop at the front desk to:
  - Fill out the volunteer log
  - Pick up a name tag
  - Pick up a sheep to shawl tag
  - Sign waiver & get “prayed in”.
- Find a chair labelled “demonstrator” and stake your claim
- Upon arrival, if you do not know your team assignment, please ask Dr. D. She is the team leader and coordinator. If during the course of the day you have any challenges with the assignment, please speak personally with Dr. D.

- Snacks and lunch are provided for our Sheep to Shawl team
  - These will be available at the worker lounge area in the front of the new addition; adjacent to the shop.
  - When eating, please find a quiet corner; picnic area; 4<sup>th</sup> floor silo; table in worker lounge area; bench outdoors etc.
    - When the crowd around you lulls in your area, simply sneak away for a few minutes of respite

## Team Assignments

### Wool Skirting

- Fleece will be heavily skirted
- Take off the dirtier parts of each fleece (retain only the prime backline for the Sheep to Shawl event) and place in a labelled bag, in the wool washroom, in a box labelled Sheep to Shawl fleeces – Extra
- After heavily skirting & removing dirtier parts of the fleece
  - Tumble all of one light colored fleece for washing.
  - **Golden Fleece** – take about 1/2 of this fleece and give immediately to Thursday AM spinners for warp spinning & knitting/crochet spinning
  - **White Fleece** with longest fiber length – to be washed & dyed and then given to spinners for weft spinning & knitting/crochet spinning. Can be slightly damp.
  - **Brown Hairy Fleece** - will be washed & used for the wet felted shawl; remainder may be spun after the shawl is made
  - Place each in a well labelled bag in the wool wash room until needed.
- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA

### Wool Tumbling

- All fleeces will be tumbled except for the 1/2 golden that is spun in the grease.
- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA

### Wool Washing

- All fleeces will be washed, except for 1/2 of the golden fleece that will be spun in the grease.
- Dry in the drying machine; lay thin on drying racks.
- Objective: dry by 1:00 pm Thursday
- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA

### Wool Dying

- The majority of the washed fleece will be dyed immediately after washing.
- Two colors – (green and pink)
- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA

### Pickers

- Picking begins as soon as some fleece has been washed and spun to dry.
- All Picked fleece will be carded
- All washed and dyed fleece will be picked when ready – Thursday afternoon at the latest
  - All washed and dyed fleece will finish being picked on Thursday
- Pickers and carders will be located downstairs in the dry wool mill
- As wool is picked BE SURE TO LABEL THE BIN with what it is
- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA

### Carders

- All picked fleece will be carded
- Carding equipment will be in the dry wool mill downstairs
  - Use electric carder or hand carder
- Weigh picked fiber before carding; standard 2.5 oz per batt
- As wool is carded BE SURE TO LABEL THE BIN with what it is

- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA

**Carders will teach the groups as they tour thru to the shearing floor.**

### **Spinners**

- Each spinner is asked to make at least one bobbin full of yarn. This can be readily accomplished in a single 5 hour shift.
- **Spinners – you will be asked to make one of the following yarns – if you do not know your assignment please ask Dr. D., the team coordinator**
  - Warp thread – spun thin enough to be a 1 ply lace to sport weight yarn (approx. 14 WPI)
    - If time and volume production allows we will 2 ply and set the twist
    - If time and volume do not allow we will use single ply and set the twist overnight
    - Spun from the grease golden fleece
      - no picking or carding on initial spun
  - Weft Thread – spun thicker – farm stead style – larger than a worsted weight (approx. 4 - 5 WPI)
    - Spun from all colors
  - Knit or Crochet Thread – Objective: sport weight yarn – single ply or 2 ply
    - 2 plied as time allows
- Spinning in the grease requires a different skill set. Be patient and enduring
- Please pick out debris as you go
- If the fleece is too dirty to be spun please advise Dr. D. We will acquire another fleece and start over if we need to do that.
- There will be a minimum of 8 spinners on the team

### **Setting the twist for the yarns**

- This year we will set the twist of the yarn
- Yarn will be dampened with spray bottle or washed if it is twisted to set overnight.
- Yarn will be swatted, and if time allows, hung tight to dry
  - May be spun in the wool dryer to get out excessive water
- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA

### **Knitters**

- Blocks of 12 inch square knit or crochet with each square made by a different artist
- At least one knit square made by many artists – throw a row of stitches on in the museum
- Minimum of 6 blocks long for one shawl
- If enough participants, then one crocheted shawl & one knit shawl
- Blocks must have square edges
- Any stitch may be used in the artists design of their square
- Recommend larger needles and hooks because of the larger yarn size (sport to bulky weight)
- Recommend plastic or metal needles and hooks due to lanolin in the grease fiber
- Made with greased fleece hand spun
- Some washed and dyed hand spun will be available by Friday afternoon for a small number of blocks

## **Wet Felters**

- Base for the wet felt shawl will be from brown
- Shawl width is the width of a batt
- Shawl length – the length of two batts
- Thickness – the same as mulch mats
- The team participants will be workers from Shepherd's Cross TBA
- Batts will be ready to make this shawl on Friday AM
- Shawl complete on Friday Afternoon

## **Time Table for Completion of Shawls**

Friday Morning complete Washing & Dyeing & Drying
Friday Afternoon Complete Wet Felt Shawl
Saturday Afternoon Complete Knit/Crochet & Woven Shawl

*Exodus 28 talks about those who worked with “skilled hands” to spin and weave fabric for the priests garments. Thank you for giving of your talent today. May your labor be blessed.*

I am so looking forward to working with each and every one of you. Thank you for the privilege of spending time together, and passing down a heritage for future generations. Friends that do fiber arts together are woven together in the tapestry of life. Let us weave a beautiful tapestry for the flock.

Weaving for The Great Shepherd,

*Dr. Diane Dickinson*

Sheep to Shawl Coordinator & Team Leader,