Weave A Real Peace (WARP) — Zoom and in-person
September 14 @ 10:00 a.m.

presented by Kelsey Wiskirchen

Weave A Real Peace (WARP) is an international organization with the mission of improving the quality of life of textile artisans worldwide. WARP's Executive Director, Kelsey Wiskirchen, will share stories of connection and empowerment for women in weaving communities around the world. In Guatemala, India, Bolivia, Sardinia, Ghana, and many other countries, WARP members work to promote an appreciation of handwoven textiles, and a living wage for the weavers who make them. The program will be an inspiring look at the work done to support the future of handweavers and textile artisans in communities around the world. Kelsey will also share information about WARP resources that may be of interest to MAFA members, including WARP’s artisan resource guide, emergency relief grants, and free monthly virtual programs. You can learn more about WARP at www.weavearealpeace.org.

Kelsey Wiskirchen, is a weaver, embroiderer, indigo dyer, and teacher. She has volunteered with weaving cooperatives in Bolivia and South Africa, and has worked in a number of community outreach programs focused on textiles with art educators, underserved youth, and the refugee community. She holds an MFA in Fiber Art from Arizona State University, and now lives in Seagrove, North Carolina.
Greetings everyone! As summer edges to a close - it’s hard to imagine cold weather; but it’s coming! And wasn’t our June picnic a surprise - in the change of venue and the reason for that change - Canadian smoke! But, thanks to Linda’s quick thinking, we were able to pull off a great end of year gathering!

Summer for me has been busy - planning, volunteering and helping out and participating in our first in-person MAFA Conference since 2019! Two weeks later, that was followed by - the MAFA Virtual Conference. I learned a lot this summer! In August, I and several others helped Harmony prepare for our September Winterthur event by creating fiber bats for the bird pods. Of course, all along I have been planning and creating scarves and home goods for the Hagley craft show - I hope you are too!

We will still be using the hybrid (Zoom and in-person) meeting format in September and for the entire year. Our in-person meetings are still planned at the Red Clay Presbyterian Church. Although the CDC has loosened its Covid Guidelines, please feel free to wear a mask.

So, I am looking forward to greeting and seeing you all on Thursday, September 14 - the first meeting of our new year! Furthermore, I am looking forward to a year of great programs and Guild activities - so join us if you can for some fun times ahead.

Nancy Everham

Upcoming online classes and lectures:


- October 14, 15, & 22: Weaving Outside the Box: 12 Projects for Creating Dimensional Cloth - Denise Kovnat. Register here: lessonface.com/apply/Weaving-Outside-Box-12-Projects-Creating-Dimensional-Cloth


Save the Date:

- November 28: Craftivism - a FREE LECTURE by Hinda Mandell. Link to register coming in September.

NOTE: More virtual classes will be posted in September! Find class and lecture details, and registration on Lessonface: lessonface.com/mafa

MAFA Movie Night

Our next Movie Night is Wednesday, September 13 at 7 p.m. ET. A reminder email with details and the Zoom link will be sent one week before. Questions? Email movies@mafafiber.org.
The Hagley Fair is October is Saturday, October 21 and Sunday, October 22.

The Zoom meeting about the Fair was held in early August. And despite the storm which compromised a number of Guild members’ Internet connections, a goodly number of weavers were present. In the event you could not join the meeting because of Internet connections or your schedule, here is a rundown of what you should know.

The Guild has rented a double booth located on the lower level of the Soda House. Any Guild member may sell items in the sale as long as the item is fiber related — woven, knitted, spun, felted, etc.

We set up the booth Friday, October 20 starting at noon. We ask that all items for sale be delivered to the booth from noon to 1 p.m. Before delivery, you will be required to fill out 2 inventory sheets — one for yourself and one to remain at the Fair booth. Your items will be checked in on Friday to be sure that everything on the inventory sheet is present. Sunday at 4 p.m. when the Fair closes, you should return and pick up any items that did not sell. 20% of your sales will be deducted to help pay for the booth rental. That percentage will go up if 20% of the gross sales does not cover the rental fee. We have never had to do that. The inventory sheet is at the end of this newsletter.

Each item must have an attached tag listing your name, price, and a code with your initials and a number that corresponds to that item on your inventory sheet. For example — sls10. That would indicate the buyer is purchasing one of my items and it is listed as #10 on my inventory sheet.

Weave, weave, weave! Let’s make this the very best sale ever!

Sonnie Sperati

Harmony Weavers Guild Officers and Committee Chairs

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The Next Episode of the Felted Bird Pods Project

At our previous work session we determined that we need 50% dyed merino and 50% Leicester Longwool (commercially prepared roving) to get solid felted bird pods. So the focus of the mid-August session was to weigh out both wools and card batts using drum carders. We believe good blending will facilitate good felting so we are carding each batt three times.

Many thanks to Linda Brasel, Nancy Everham, Dinah Kirby, Karen Mason and Greenbank Mill volunteer Barbara Nelson, who all joined me at Greenbank Mill for the carding.

We now have all the wool weighed out, and we have seven batts finished. We may be able to finish the carding at our next session at the end of the month.

We'll also make a couple more bird pods, applying all we've learned from our previous sessions.

As a reminder, the end “product” of this initiative is a Mastercraft workshop at Winterthur on Sunday, September 24, 1:00 p.m. We'll be teaching up to 15 participants to felt their own bird pods.

Carol Ireland
Downstate Group visits alpaca farm

The Downstate Group ended the 2022-2023 season with a visit to Four Acres Living alpaca farm in Frankford, DE. Four Acres is a breeding farm, with about 30 alpacas, mostly female and a few males. When we visited them in June, there were both adults and virtually new-born babies, some of were still quite young. One or two were only a bit over a week old – and looked to my untrained eye to be quite large.

During our tour with Elaine, we learned a great deal about alpacas and their breeding, much more than I can report in this brief article. For instance, did you know that alpaca have no upper teeth in the front of their mouths. That means they can’t pull grass up by the roots and can graze in the same pasture for a while. It also occurred to me that, if you owned an alpaca and a very large property, you might have a living lawnmower!

Another interesting fact about alpacas is that they are “induced ovulators” – in other words, the act of mating causes the female to ovulate. I had never heard of that attribute before and I would think that trait would give the female alpaca more control over the process. They are also herd animals, who always stand very close together. And they seem to be very neat! Apparently, several alpaca will go to the same location to “do their business” – a practice which makes for a much neater and cleaner farm yard than you might expect!

But, of course, for us the most important thing about alpaca is their fleece – which is soft, warm, hypoallergenic, water and odor resistant. As a breeding farm, Four Acres maintains the genealogy of all their animals and carefully mates them to improve the breed. So, for example, they will mate a male with a very thick fleece to a female with a very soft but thinner fleece in the hopes that the baby will have a soft, thicker fleece. But there is no guarantee. They have mated 2 white alpaca – and baby was black!

I recommend Four Acres as a great field trip visit for anyone who wants to venture to the beach. One final note – as we left to go to my house for lunch we spotted the proverbial barn cat, happily curled up amid warm cuddly alpaca fleece.

Deborah Lewis-Idema
Harmony Weavers Guild members Pam Sapko, Karen Mason, Elisabeth Schelp, Theresa Hill, Linda Brasel, Pat Field and Dinah Kirby all helped at the event. We had a nice selection of demonstration to hands on weaving for the Children to try. We had spinning, Kumihimo, card weaving, rigid heddle, inkle and a floor loom.

Many thanks to all the Guild members who helped out. Patrick Wetzel-Scott from Winterthur is very grateful for our participation.

Karen Mason
A couple of weeks ago, as the indigo was just starting to put up flower spikes, Linda Shinn, Carol Ireland, and Sue Balascio set up a Guild Dye Day at Linda Shinn’s house.

The day started out by stripping indigo leaves off of plant stalks. There was a wheelbarrow full of stalks that had just been picked out of Linda’s “Indigo Patch”. (pic 1) With plenty of indigo leaves on hand, Carol Ireland began processing leaves in the blender with ice cubes to make an indigo ice dye slurry solution. The resulting solution produced some very nice turquoise blue items. The slurry of leaves was also used to dye some silk scarves and fabric samples with interesting results. (pic 2)

Next up, was the production of a Queen Anne’s lace dye pot, using just the fresh flowers. This dye pot produced some beautiful, bright yellow colors on silk scarves and yarns. (pic 3)

Carol also rejuvenated her indigo pot from last year with the addition of pre-reduced indigo. This produced some nice over-dyed experiments on cotton napkins using shibori techniques: arashi and Ne-maki. Some yarns were over-dyed with very interesting results!!

Lastly, the remaining indigo leaves were chopped finely and placed in a big pot to simmer to about 130 degrees F. Once the pot came to temperature, it was cooled and fixing agents were added. Then the pot had to be aerated by pouring the vat back and forth between big pots. (pic 4) Finally, it was ready for the dyeing to begin. Having patience definitely paid off, as the color was beautiful!! Carol commented that this was the best cooked indigo pot we’ve ever created! Carol dyed an ikat warp among other items. (pics 5)

It is always a treat to participate in the Guild’s Dye Day!!! Thank you, thank you to Linda, Carol, and Sue for setting up this wonderful dye day! Every year, I learn more about the craft of textile dyeing! Next year, don’t miss it!

Linda Brasel
thoroughly enjoyed the 2019 Weave A Real Peace Annual Meeting and eagerly awaited the 2020 meeting in Montana. That meeting didn’t happen — COVID. The 2021 and 2022 meetings were virtual, but finally, this year the annual meeting was live, at Kent State U. in Ohio. It was good to be “back”!

What’s the appeal of the WARP meetings?

- The other participants, with wonderful interests and experiences in so many different countries (about 70 participants, so it’s not overwhelming)
- Opportunities to learn new things (I got my first exposure to a laser cutter - see photo of a frame loom cut by a laser cutter and some bicycles cut from fabric)
- Hearing a variety of presentations covering a wide range of topics
- Seeing textiles by WARP members around the world in a local gallery and in the informal Fashion Show
- and more

The presentation about the Praxis Fiber Workshop ([https://www.praxisfiberworkshop.org](https://www.praxisfiberworkshop.org)) in Cleveland, OH was a fascinating look at a dynamic fiber arts center available to the community. The Workshop has invested in a TC2 digital loom and they offer 2-week residencies for weavers to use the loom. What a great opportunity — any takers from our guild?

Another presenter, a co-founder of the Rust Belt Fibershed ([https://rustbeltfibershed.com](https://rustbeltfibershed.com)), discussed sustainability and included this list of things we have control over, such as:

- mending
- washing less regularly if not needed
- clothing swap
- look for up cycling opportunities in your area
- donate quality clothing
- buy secondhand
- if buying new, buy natural fibers

One of my favorite textiles by a WARP member used old video tape very effectively (see photo).

Thanks to members who donated items for the live auction in Kent, and the online auction coming this fall. The live auction netted about $3000.

I’ll be going to the May, 2024 WARP meeting in Golden, CO, especially since that’s just a few miles from my daughter’s home! Perhaps you’d like to join me.

The WARP Executive Director will be doing the September Guild program — a chance for you to learn more about WARP.

Carol Ireland
Woolly Mammoth: Shearer Saves Hugely Overgrown Sheep

- By Laura Wagner
  September 3, 2015

Among the kangaroos and kookaburras, another creature trundled through the Australian bush.

Hooves barely visible, eyes mostly covered, the animal was the size of a refrigerator, the color of dirty snow.

A concerned hiker spotted the furry specimen days ago and raised the alarm. It was a matter of life and death — and this sheep needed a haircut.

News reports say the merino sheep had likely wandered from his flock five or six years ago and had been on the lam(b) in the wild ever since. While merinos are typically sheared every spring, rescuers think the sheep, named Chris, probably had never been shorn. His wool had grown to about four to five times the normal amount of wool for a merino sheep, resulting in some serious health problems.

Besides being partially blinded by the wool flopping into his eyes, his hooves were damaged from carrying the weight of all that extra wool. He also had skin burns from urine trapped in his fleece. Plus, had Chris fallen down, his mass of wool would have made it difficult to get back up, rendering him easy prey for dingoes or other predators.

The Associated Press quotes the head of a group that helped rescue the sheep as saying it could have died within weeks if left in the wild.

Death was not his fate, however, thanks to a conscientious hiker who alerted the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which swooped in to take over the woolly situation. Tammy Ven Dange, CEO of the Canberra RSPCA, immediately sent out a distress signal soliciting shearing help.

Luckily for the sheep, Australian sheep shearer Ian Elkins — a four-time national champion — answered the call.

After about 45 minutes and the administration of some sedatives (because the sheep was nervous around people after his time in the wild), Chris emerged, unrecognizable.

It must be one of the most dramatic makeovers ever. Elkins cut away 89 pounds, 3 ounces of wool, which if verified would shatter the previous world record of 63 pounds, 11 ounces shorn from a wild New Zealand merino in 2011. Chris' weight reportedly dropped by half.

"It's very exciting to be part of it," Elkins told The Guardian. "And it's quite pleasing that the welfare of this sheep was taken care of."

Wondering why the sheep was named Chris? According to the AP, the hiker chose the name after the sheep in the sitcom Father Ted.
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Please contact Nancy Bentley at 302-530-7028 or email fairweatherfarmfairhill@gmail.com to make an appointment to shop.

Membership News

NOW is the time to pay your Harmony 2023-2024 dues. Either mail a check to me along with a membership form (found on next page), or use the convenience of PayPal. PayPal link and the membership form can be found on our website, www.harmonyweaversguild.org

Thanks,
Linda Shinn, Membership Chair
INTERESTED IN JOINING THE GUILD? Please contact Linda Shinn at 302-655-9434 or e-mail info@harmonyweaversguild.org. Membership renewal for each year begins in June and ends by the September meeting in order to be included in the Membership List. Membership includes a monthly Newsletter available through the web site: https://groups.io/g/harmonyweaversguild or by e-mail attachment.

All monthly meetings are in person at Red Clay Presbyterian Church and by Zoom.

Membership Form for 2023-2024

Categories for Membership:  □ Active $35   □ Non Active (newsletter only) $15   □ Full-Time student $15

NEW MEMBERS ONLY:  Joining between January 1 and March 31 - $20  ●  Joining between April 1 through June - $40 (Includes next season's dues)

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AS YOU WISH THEM TO APPEAR IN THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

NAME: ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS: _________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

CITY: _____________________________________________________________________  STATE:_______________________ ZIP: ______________________

PHONE: (____________)________________________________________  E-MAIL: _____________________________________________________________

Checks payable to Harmony Weavers Guild.
Mail form & check to Linda Shinn PO Box 4458 Wilmington DE 19807