



Weavers Guild of Kalamazoo, Inc.
P. O. Box 2795
Kalamazoo, MI 49003-2795

Meeting of the General Membership MINUTES February 11, 2013

- I. President Martha Reeves called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm at the Portage Senior Center.
- She welcomed members and asked that all cell phones be turned off, and that folks put the chairs away after the meeting.
 - She requested those with announcements to form a line to her right.
- II. Announcements:
- **Martha** made the first announcement for Barb Giesen, our Michigan League of Handweavers (MLH) representative. Barb is responsible for table decorations for the dinner at the summer conference. She is requesting leftovers of colorful hand-woven fabrics or handspun yarn with which to cover small containers. She plans to put flowers in the covered containers.
 - **Nancy Crampton** brought the fabrics and hand-woven items from the Portage District Library fall exhibit held as a reminder to the community of our Wafa sale. She reminds members to pick up their materials this evening.
 - **Nancy**, as Chair of the Education Committee then asked members for help in planning our May meeting at which the study groups display and discuss their projects for the year. She would like members to let her know what they particularly liked or disliked about the meeting so we can try for a better year review.
 - **Kristi Chapman** noted she has some new books on the Library table. Since the increase of the Library budget, she bought two books on crackle weave, the topic of the March workshop. One of the books is by Susan Wilson, who is giving the March workshop. There are also classic weaving books which are duplicates from the Betty Dobbie estate and some that Mary Jane Kreidler donated from her collection. These are available for the taking. Kristi appreciates that she has fewer and fewer to take home each month.
 - **Helen Duffy** directed members to the display that she and Gretchen Huggett brought of their custom dyed yarn. Helen displayed the two knit shawls she and Gretchen designed and knit to use color gradations in yarn they had dyed.
 - **Anne Mehring** gave a short presentation on the 2013 Guild Scholarship program. Applications and the calendar are available on line, as printed forms or can be emailed out. There will be a session on writing the application on February 20 at the Portage District Library if there are several people who want to take it. If not, the session will be held at her house. Those interested should call or email Anne, 269-375-1639 or Mehring@net-link.net. *Post meeting note: Both the February 20 and an additional meeting scheduled the 26th were cancelled due to lack of reservations.*
- III. **Juanita Manning-Walsh** then introduced the speaker, **Letty Klein** and her topic, *Getting Fleeced*. Letty, a long time Guild member raises Karakul sheep at her Pine Lane Farm on North Sprinkle Road. She has been a sheep judge for 20 years, travels to the large national sheep

gatherings where she judges breeds of sheep and is a fleece judge, as she is locally at the Michigan Fiber Festival in Allegan. She is also the author of *The Shepherd's Rug*, a book on braiding and felting her karakul roving into lovely thick braided rugs.

Letty's presentation was like having a conversation with an expert. She got started raising Karakul sheep when she fell in love with a Karakul ewe and her new born lamb. She joined the breed registry and began to work with 4H sheep classes at our Fairgrounds. Soon she went to work convincing the meat sheep fellows that a large fleece is not necessarily a good fleece.

According to Letty, first impressions really count in looking at a fleece. It should smell like a sheep, be clean and smell softly of lanolin—not like shampoo, flea or tick dip, or be greasy. It should have a lustrous sheen, and feel alive when you plunge your hands into it. Letty gave an overview of the various breeds of sheep and introduced the Guild to a new vocabulary word: “rooing” or in the past tense, “rooed” which refers to the capacity of some Shetland sheep to shed their fleece cleanly at a natural break in the coat. Ideally, the shepherd can roo the sheep or peel it off the animal in the barn rather than finding the fleece scattered about the pasture or snagged on brush. See a video at <http://www.shetlandsheepinfo.com/HUSBANDRY/rooing.htm>.

A new breed of sheep, developed in the early 20th century in California is the Romeldale, a cross between the Romney and Rambouillet. The Romeldale sheep is usually a natural white or a natural colored brown. A third color variation that appeared in the 1960s is the California Variegated Mutant (CVM), a stripy badger faced sheep with a multicolored fleece. The Romeldale fleece is fine and very soft.

Letty brought samples of fleece and described crimp, wavy, pearled, double coated locks among the various types of fleece. She then fielded a number of questions, referring to the fleece samples she had brought.

At the end of her presentation, Martha Reeves invited members to look more closely at the fleece samples, Letty's braiding kit and her book, *The Shepherd's Rug*. The meeting concluded at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Mehring

Anne Mehring, Secretary