



THE SEWING GAZETTE

NOVEMBER 2009

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 6

Home Decorating



There are so many ways to make a house feel like a home. If you have some sewing skill, your decorating possibilities are endless. I recently moved to a new city and have new space to decorate. I am accepting the challenge to incorporate my belongings in a new way and create a completely different atmosphere. Decorating a new space requires careful thought and planning. I have been looking through catalogs and

window shopping at the local shops. I would like my new home to reflect my personality and style, which means many of the things I choose will come from my sewing room. There is an endless list of projects you can create for your home. I have been looking for ideas for the following:

- window coverings
- bedding for a new guest room
- wall hangings
- kitchen linens
- throws for the living room
- matching or coordinating pillows

These projects are just the beginning. I can add fabric bowls, boxes and vases if I need minor change. Making a house a home is a never-

ending project. There are always little things to add to the decor.

My background is in garment sewing/quilting and translating my skills to home decorating skills will require some refining to accomplish all these projects. I am determined not to chicken out this time. I have been looking into the local classes to gather new ideas and have spent time discussing what I need to learn with friends. My only decision now is which project should be first.

Julie Peri
Editor

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The Clock is Ticking...



Daylight Savings Time for 2009 has come and gone. This year is winding down and the holidays are fast approaching. Are you ready? Are your holiday gifts finished and wrapped in pretty paper? Whether you are ahead of schedule or behind the eight ball the new year is only a few short weeks away. Is your 2009 resolution list unfinished? Have you run out of time to take all the classes you wanted? This time of year can get very stressful and hectic. Relax and spend a few moments planning ahead for next year. You will be giving

your future self a little gift. In today's world there are many ways to improve your skill, with or without your sewing machine. Here are a few ideas:

- Mark quilt shows on your calendar so they don't sneak up on you.
- List techniques you would like to learn. You can ask for classes at your local shop. They may need a little time to put a class on the schedule, but are usually willing to oblige.
- Ask your local shop about scheduling a private class with your friends.
- Mark any donation commitments on your calendar as well. Maybe next year they can be finished before your hectic holiday sewing begins.

- Read some of the amazing sewing blogs. They provide many helpful hints and project ideas (check out this months interview if you need help finding new blogs).
- Have you watched the internet TV quilting shows yet? Both The Quilt Show and QNN TV have great episodes.

Keep in mind your sewing resolutions are not a hard and fast to do list. It should be a list that brings happiness as you create it and as you check things off. Take a break from your hectic schedule. Sit down in your favorite chair with your favorite beverage and contemplate all the wonderful things you can work on next year.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Cold Weather Comfort</i>	2
<i>Sewing Online</i>	2
<i>Confused By Stabilizer?</i>	2
<i>Warm and Woolly</i>	3
<i>Button Up!</i>	3
<i>Cranberry Nut Bread</i>	3
<i>Quilting Gallery</i>	4

nee dle

Function: noun

Date: before 12th century

1 a : a small slender usually steel instrument that has an eye for thread or surgical sutures at one end and that is used for sewing **b :** any of various devices for carrying thread and making stitches (as in crocheting or knitting) **c (1) :** a slender hollow instrument for introducing material into or removing material from the body (as by insertion under the skin) **(2) :** any of various slender hollow devices used to introduce matter (as air) into or remove it from an object (as a ball)

2 a : a slender bar of magnetized steel that when allowed to turn freely (as in a compass) indicates the direction of a magnetic field (as of the earth) **b :** a slender usually sharp-pointed indicator on a dial **3 a :** a slender pointed object resembling a needle: as **(1) :** a pointed crystal **(2) :** a sharp rock **(3) :** obelisk **b :** a needle-shaped leaf (as of a conifer) **c :** a slender rod (as of jewel or steel) with a rounded tip used in a phonograph to transmit vibrations from a record **: stylus d :** a slender pointed rod controlling a fine inlet or outlet (as in a valve) **4 :** a teasing or gibing remark

Provided by the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary

Cold Weather Comfort



The temperatures are starting to fall. There is a cool breeze in the air which can get down-right nippy at times! Some of us have seen the first snowfall of the year already. Have you gone through your closet and sorted through your winter clothes yet? Have you hunted through the attic for those heavier quilts and blankets? It's the time of year to snuggle up in front of the fire, wrapped in a cozy warm blanket and sipping hot chocolate. For some of us, this is the perfect

Sewing Online

While my sewing machine was in for it's annual checkup, I have spent time surfing the web and enjoying many sewing related web sites. They have a wealth of information and tutorials to help improve your skills. Here are a few of the more popular sites:

Quiltshops.com
www.quiltshops.com

Confused by Stabilizer?

These new-fangled sewing machines are so automated, they can almost make coffee for you. Your imagination can run wild with the ability to sew and embroider. Embellishments have a whole new meaning when you add embroidery to your choices. If you are new to the world of machine embroidery you will soon realize the stabilizer you choose is just as important as the embroidery design and the item being embroidered. Stabilizer holds the fabric stable and steady as those thousands of embroidery stitches are sewn. The purpose is to prevent the fabric from stretching and puckering. Match the stabilizer with the type of fabric you are sewing on

motivation to get back to work on that hand sewing project. For others, it's time to plan the next project, browse fabrics online or peruse the latest sewing/quilting magazines. It is also a great time to explore sewing with warmer fabrics like wool or polyester fleece.

Wool felt has become very popular for applique because the raw edges do not need to be finished. Nonwoven fabrics are created from the fibers as opposed to fibers spun into a yarn and then woven into fabric. The edges of wool felt do not ravel. It is great for table runners, coasters and Christmas ornaments. Be aware that wool felt colors may have a tendency to bleed. You may not want to use the felt for items that will need to

Sewing.org
www.sewing.org

Pattern Review
<http://sewing.patternreview.com/>

Quilt.com
<http://www.quilt.com/>

Quilting 101
<http://www.quilting101.com/>

and the density or stitch count of the design. Use a more dense stabilizer for a heavier stitch count design or heavier fabrics. You may want to use multiple sheets of stabilizer for the best results. Here are a few hints on when to choose a particular type of stabilizer and why:

Cut Away: Use this for thin fabrics, knits and synthetics. These stabilizers are permanent and help prevent the design from stretching during washing.

Tear Away: Use with medium and heavy weight fabrics. The best match for Tear Away is a stable, woven fabric.

Wash Away: This is frequently a film that disappears when the fabric becomes wet. It is used

be washed frequently.

Polyester Fleece is a nonwoven fabric that is warmer and lighter than wool. It dries very quickly. The raw edges of fleece also do not need to be finished. The No-sew blankets with 2 layers of fleece have become very popular. Making a scarf is as simple as cutting a length of fleece in the width you would like the scarf to be. You can then cut a fringe into the ends. No sewing involved. Have you tried fleece on the back of a quilt instead of backing and batting? The fleece does not need to be quilted as closely together as batting and backing do, and it provides a wonderfully warm blanket. Keep in mind fleece does stretch. Take extra care not to stretch it when adding your binding.

SewingPatterns.com
<http://sewingpatterns.com/>

Embroidery Online
www.embroideryonline.com

Dakota Collectibles
www.gonutscreative.com

Embroidery .com
www.embroidery.com

as a top layer to prevent fabric loops from showing through the embroidery or to prevent the design from sinking into a thicker fabric like fleece.

Heat Away: Use this stabilizer when the fabric is too sheer for a Cut Away and too delicate for a Tear Away. You can use Heat Away as a topping if your item cannot get wet. I have also seen it used to create a design that extends beyond the edge of the garment, as on a collar. These are just a few tips. Take the time to make sample stitch-outs and become familiar with your stabilizers. It may seem like an extra step but well worth it when your \$40 sweatshirt turns out exactly the way you intended.

Warm and Woolly

Is that a wolf in sheep clothing? More likely it's a person wearing a wool sweater. Some think of wool as being scratchy and itchy but that is not always the case. Wool is fleece that has been sheared off sheep, and has long been prized for its warmth. Wool has many other positive, but lesser known features. It is comfortable in any weather. It has the ability to absorb moisture up to 30% of its weight and then release that moisture back to a drier environment. These properties allow wool to absorb perspiration and keep a dry layer of air next to the body.

Although many wool garments

are labeled dry clean only, wool can be washed in cool water with little agitation. You should be very careful when washing to avoid accidentally felting the wool. Felting occurs when the wool is agitated with a combination of heat and moisture. The fibers mesh and the resulting fabric has a completely different texture and feel than woven wools. Once a wool item has been felted, the process cannot be reversed.

Did you know that wool is flame resistant? The fabric will char, but the moisture contained in each fiber prevents it from continuing to burn once the fabric is

removed from the flame. For this reason wool blankets have been recommended for putting out small fires.

Have you noticed the vibrant colors of wool? Wool absorbs dyes well and yields deep, uniform results without the addition of other chemicals.

The nature of the wool fibers help wool clothing retain its shape and resist soil better than other fibers. The clothing items will look new for much longer than items made from other fibers.

"After all, the wool of a black sheep is just as warm."

Ernest Lehman

I KEEP MY END
TABLES FULL OF
NEEDLEWORK
AND QUILTING SO
I DON'T HAVE TO
DUST THEM.

~AUTHOR
UNKNOWN

Button Up

Does your current outfit have decorative buttons? Do you or someone you know collect buttons? Have you managed to accumulate a collection of buttons unintentionally?

Buttons have been decorative their entire 3000 year history and long before they became useful. The name "button" started to appear in France and around 1250 a Button Makers Guild was established. While laws were passed to keep peasants from wearing buttons, the aristocracy loved them for both fastening clothes and for decoration. By the mid-1300's, France

had become the button capital with variations for every thing imaginable. Buttons became such a craze the church denounced them as "the devil's snare".

During the 17th century the United Kingdom, Germany and America started making inroads into the button market. Military uniforms began sporting metal buttons on the front of the coat as well as on sleeves. By the 19th century, Buttons were being mass-produced. Every household had a button box to keep old buttons until they could be reused.

Today's home sewing machines can sew on the button as well as

make button holes. Many people have a stash of buttons kept in the button box until a project requires the perfect button. Today buttons come in an never ending array of shapes and sizes. Who can resist the dragonfly button to add charm to a garden motif project?



Cranberry Nut Bread

This bread has become a staple at all of our family gatherings. Some recipes are so good you are asked to bring them time and time again. If I bring bread to an event it is understood that this version will be included. I make this at least three times a year (Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter).

You can use regular cranberries instead of the dried cranberries. The dried cranberries are more sweet. I add fresh orange zest occasionally. Be careful when zesting to add the orange rind

only and not the white pith. The pith can be very bitter. Please don't use the orange zest from the spice aisle. It can also be very bitter.

1 c. sugar
1 T. grated orange peel
¾ c. water
⅓ c. orange juice
2 T. oil
1 egg
2 c. flour
1½ t. baking powder
1 t. salt
½ t. baking soda

1 c. dried cranberries
1 c. chopped walnuts

Combine sugar, orange peel(optional), water, orange juice, oil and beaten egg in a medium bowl. Mix well. Sift together flour, baking powder, and baking soda in a separate bowl. Slowly add wet ingredients to dry ingredients. Mix until all dry ingredients are incorporated. Add the dried cranberries and nuts. Pour into a greased loaf pan. Bake at 350 for 50-60 min

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How long have you been sewing/quilting and what got you started?

My first sewing experience would have been the mandatory home economics class taken in high school. We made ruffled pillow cushions. Oh what a disaster those were. Really, are ruffles the first thing one should learn to sew? Shortly after high school, I took several community college classes in seamstressing and pattern making. I loved them. There were hours and hours of homework every week, but worth every minute. I still have my sample binders and while I rarely sew clothing anymore, I love to open them to see what I created. Thinking back on those first classes -- taken some 20 years ago -- makes me realize that the joy I experienced then has now extended into my daily quilting life. Every project I learn something different, try a new technique, product or tool and gain more experience.

My first venture into actual quilting was to make a quillow (a quilt that folds up into a pillow). I took a class at the local quilt shop where I lived at the time. I was fascinated by the colors and the intricate patterns. Of course, I picked the most difficult star pattern to use as my pillow cover, and cried many tears and ripped out many seams. It turned out beautifully in the end. I made a few other quilts after that first class: lap quilts with charm squares, wall hangings, stitch-as-you-go quilts and a full-sized bed quilt.

I then took a 10 year hiatus to start my own business and move to a new city. It wasn't until a couple of years ago that I realized how much I missed being creative, and got back into quilting. Oh my how things have changed. I've accomplished more in the last two years than I did in all the years since that first quillow.

I still consider myself a beginner, only this year trying free-motion quilting. I constantly push my own limits, and I love every minute. I doubt I'll ever finish all of the quilts in my head, but I can have fun trying. I've also recently started playing with Electric Quilt 6 software to draft my own ideas.

How did you come up with the idea for the Quilting Gallery and Quilt Shop Locator?

In December 2007, while enjoying a few beers on a casual Friday afternoon at the local pub, the question was raised, "If you could do anything you wanted, what would be your dream job?" My response, the same as it'd been for the last 15+ years, was, "Open a quilt store!"

Walking home later that afternoon, I starting thinking about owning a quilt shop. Where would I want it located? What would it be called? How much capital would I need to raise? How long would it take me to raise it? The list went on and on. After the beer wore off, reality set in. Number crunching revealed it would be many, many years before I could open a store. I wasn't willing to give up my travels and other life experiences to save the much-needed capital. I also came to the conclusion that I really wanted quilting back in my life on a regular basis.

So, what did I do? I created the Quilting Gallery [<http://quiltinggallery.com/>]. An opportunity for me to combine my two passions: quilting and web development [<http://wizardev.ca/>]. While researching for my new site, I very quickly discovered the huge quilt blogging community. The fabulous inspiration, wonderful tutorials, swaps, challenges and friendships sucked me in. I soon had a hundreds-long blog roll on my site, and realized this wasn't going to work. I needed a way to organize these blogs, not just for me, but for other quilters to find each other too.

In May 2008, I created the Quilting Bloggers [<http://quiltinggallery.com/quilting-bloggers/>] directory. It's searchable by country, state and province. There are more than 3,400 bloggers from 67 countries. I love to travel and I'm a very visual person. I like to plan my driving route based on all the interesting stops I can make along the way. This is my desire for the Quilt Shop Locator [<http://quiltinggallery.com/quilt-shop-locator/>]. Pull up a map of the state, province or country you are visiting and see exactly where the shops are located. It has also become a very cost-effective

advertising option for online-only retailers and other quilting professionals.

This year, I've organized four quilt swaps and several contests for quilters. I'll also be gathering recipes over the next month for the first Quilting Gallery Quilter's Cookbook to be available in early December. In addition to the recipes from around the world, quilters can submit a photo of their favorite quilt along with a short story.

What is your favorite technological quilting tool or resource?

The Internet. As a web developer running the Quilting Gallery site, I'm on the Internet for hours every day. Blogging, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr are fabulous sites helping quilters around the world connect in ways never before possible.

I recently wrote an article, The Virtual Quilting Bee: How quilters connect online, that was published in Canada's new quilting magazine. It can be found in the Press section on my site.

What are your favorite techniques and why?

There are still so many techniques that I haven't tried yet. I do love piecing and trying new patterns. I want to continue developing my piecing and quilting skills before I expand into complicated shapes, y-seams, etc. I love paper piecing small projects, too. I've done a small amount of appliqué, and while I love to look at it, it doesn't call to me like piecing does.

What is your "I can't work without it." sewing tool?

Besides the obvious rotary cutter, mat and rulers, my favorite new tool is the shape cutter that allows you to quickly cut strips of a particular width. I use it for every single project. I hope they come up with a ¼ cut version as well, to cut at .75", 1.25", 1.75" intervals. I also love basting spray -- can't live without it.

What do you see coming in the future of online quilting resources?

I think we'll see more online classrooms and video tutorials. There are some fabulous resources out there already, but there's definitely room for more. I have learned so much from just watching quilting videos, both paid subscriptions and free ones.