

The Vermilion Bay Light

The Monthly Newsletter of The Vermilion Bay Yarn Company

YOUR Local Yarn Shop

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A word from Jason about renewing your passion...

When I was maybe 5 until I was almost 7 or so, my standard Sunday morning outfit from late fall to whenever the temperatures started getting warmer included a white Aran sweater my mother had knitted. As Arans go, the pattern was simple. Most of it, the sleeves, the back and two side sections on the front were seed stitch. But in the center of the front was an ornate cable panel of connected O's encircling small fields of more seed stitch. I was so proud of that sweater. It would vanish in the warmer months and reappear among the clothes laid out for me on my bed on cooler Sundays week after week. Each year, the ribbing grew longer and longer. You see, my mom was picking up stitches along the cast on and adding a few inches as I grew taller. Eventually, however, when the add-on limit was met, the sweater was retired. To a five year old, that simple Aran was perfection. Tracing my fingers along the cabled vines on the front, I wondered how my mom had ever made such a thing. It was mystifying how the raised portions could move in all directions. I could knit by then, but my awkward stitches stood in line like soldiers. They didn't dart and swirl like this. My first sweater was blue and had an eight-stitch cable up the front, flanked by smaller 4 stitch twists. After I finished it, having done my share of twisting and counting, I decided I would find the most difficult Aran patterns my mom had in her collection and play with them. I embarked on a mission to create swatches. Diamonds, multi-twist patterns, X's and O's, braids. Little cable swatches with marvelous patterns. I was discovering what I thought had been nothing short of wizardry. A bit of experimentation made what had seemed impossibly complicated quite ordinary and utterly approachable. It took a bit of rethinking what I already knew. Instead of a flat plane, the knitting was transformed into a canvas for painting, and the cables were the outlines. Move them where you need them to move. Rethinking, inventing, innovating, creating. With each new year, it's important to embark on similar adventures. New discoveries, new creative efforts, expanded horizons. Find a piece of fiber work you admire and study it. Figure it out. Learn how it's done.

Consider a different garment genre. If you're used to plain socks, knit some lace ones. If

your sweaters are usually all ribbed or stockinette, make an Aran. If you're an Aran fan, knit one in argyle. Think "outside the box" when it comes to this year's form of knitting creativity. Renew your passion for fiber art and challenge yourself *beyond what you think* you can do. Practice. Try. Master! It is my hope that you all continue to encounter the joy of creativity, encouraged by the fascination of discovery! And while working all these new and most wonderful things, work in love among your stitches too. Happy New Year!



Knitting Cruise!

It's become a tradition: the annual Knitting and Stitching Cruise from New Orleans! This will be our third journey onto the high seas with our knitting bags, crochet hooks, yarn, patterns, gadgets, ideas, and creativity! Knitters and crocheters from fibering communities between Houston, Texas and Jacksonville, Florida, and folks associated with local yarn shops throughout the Gulf Coast region will come together for a 7 night cruise aboard Royal Caribbean! A cruise experience like no other! Email Jane Hebert at Travel Machine: janetotrvl@aol.com.



Ask Stuart

Q: My Aunt Cleo told me she just ties a knot to start a new skein. I do that too. Is that really the best way to join?

A: Girl, it's like this: You can either run the water and take a shower in the morning, or you can dab your Chanel No.5 and hope for the best. Personally, I'd rather be petted by the clean chick. A knot is a short cut, a quick fix. Just like most quick fixes, they're not permanent. Eventually your knots will untie themselves, and your garment will develop unplanned vent holes in places where public visual access might be embarrassing. Weave in your ends. Don't tie knots. Also, avoid using that turpentine-soaked cleaning rag in the garage as a make-shift gas cap.

della Q

Della Delicious!

Organization spelled with a Q. Bags and pouches by the incomparable Della in fabulous silk prints and solids! The VBYC fav is the Agnes bag: fits everything. Knitters on the go love the Agnes. Grab it and head out. Wherever you are, you have everything you need. Have a smaller project? You need a Priscilla: colorful, rectangular, durable. Who's that stylish crocheter with the cute bag?



Who's Aenne Burda?

My dear, she's the one who revolutionized our ability to take high fashion home. In post-war Germany, Frau Burda had a fantastic idea: make fashion approachable by everyone by sharing the know-how. Those of you who sew are all quite familiar already with Burda patterns. Those of you who knit and crochet should know *Burda Verena*, the seasonal fiber fashion magazine with the latest European styles in knitwear and well-designed crocheted garments and accents. It's all about the fashions and less about the ads in *Burda Verena*. Your copy of the Winter *Verena* is waiting for you!



Romance on a hank!

A worsted weight yarn spun of silk and merino — Venezia. The closest thing a yarn can get to absolute perfection. "Never knit your man a sweater", you say? Throw notions of that blasted sweater jinx out the window. If your man bid adieu when that sweater was presented, it was probably because you didn't use Venezia. Think before you knit! Cascade Venezia: the Love Maker.



Knit Café: Tuesdays 6pm-8pm at VBYC. Always free. Always fun

Fibulae anyone?

That's what the ancient Greeks and Romans called them. Ornamental needles or sticks that fasten clothing together. The concept is as old as Homer, but that doesn't mean outdated. Nowadays, we call them shawl sticks, and take a look at these! Fine wood sticks topped with polished stones, glass, and metal accents that coordinate with your shawl or scarf — what a way to keep your wrap in place! A bit of color, a load of zip! Demure, sassy, elegant, or whimsical. Choose your favorites from the Shawl Stick Palm! Look for the neon ostrich plumes!



Straight from the beast...

Eco Alpaca is so named because the fiber isn't dyed. It's just spun into amazing yarn for you to create garments of unparalleled softness and natural color. Browns, creams, black-browns. Eco Alpaca and multi color Alpaca Duo. Light to wear, cozy to feel, paradise to knit. Your next garment requires Eco Alpaca or Alpaca Duo!



Show 'em you mean BUSINESS!

Carry a Lime Green "Monroe"
(but wear black pumps)



Great Drape, Light Feel

Two of the most often sought-after attributes of "just the right yarn". Regardless of your garment project, Royal Llama Silk from Plymouth will work for anything requiring a worsted weight yarn. You just can't go wrong here. A slightly "tweedy" look with a light and breathable feel. Truly a yarn spun for the South.

"Cashmere and Cotton"

In other words: "class and comfort". The feel of cashmere with the sensibility and balance of cotton. This new yarn from the Plymouth line is the perfect choice DK weight for your spring and summer garments. Spun of recycled cashmere and cotton, "Vita" means life. Breath some Vita into your springtime knits!



Indisposed? We Ship!

Take home the Grass

If you thought linen was fabulous. Try Grass. The masters at Plymouth have combined Hemp and Cotton in a yarn that's guaranteed to make your stash buzz! 100% wow in each ball, guaranteed! You gotta try it. This is good stuff!

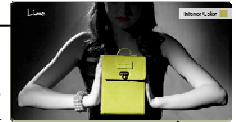


CLASSES IN JANUARY

Saturday, Jan. 15, 10:30am: The Taos Braid

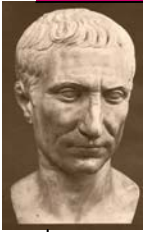
Saturday, Jan. 22, 10:30am: Magic Loop

Saturday, Jan. 29, 10:30am: Knitter's Tool Kit



Because every needle needs a case

We've all been there: circular needles thrown into the bottom of the knitting bag, a mess of cables and tips. Start the new year right by bringing a little order to the chaos. The needle case by Namaste. Be square. Get organized.



Men's Knit Club: Secrets revealed

Men knit at VBYC each Monday night 6pm-8pm. All you have to do is show up with your knitting (or crocheting) sit down, say howdy, work your project, talk a little, get up now and then, have a beer, eat a snack, knit some more. Don't know how to knit? Then you do all the same stuff, except at the project part, you learn to knit (or crochet, your choice). At 8pm, everyone caravans out together to grab a bite to eat. Not hungry? Then go home, be a slug and join us next week after. Since men usually forget half of what they're supposed to be doing most of the week, Men's Club folks get a Monday morning text to remind them to show up at VBYC by 6pm with their fiber gear.

Cool. Men's Knit Club. Mondays at VBYC. Pass the word.



The Taos Braid

Haven't learned to make cables? Here's your chance. Make the Taos Braid scarf inspired by this original piece created of handspun undyed wool from New Mexico. A great project for cable first timers! Saturday, Jan 15, 10:30am.

Confetti!

Lana Bambu by Cascade.

Because we all need a little color



VBYC ONLINE

So, you like the monthly newsletter? You enjoy reading and learning about new yarns, gadgets, getting knitting and crochet advice? You like inspirational pieces and motivational tidbits from YOUR local yarn shop? But you want to read, learn, and get inspired more than just once a month? You can! Visit

www.vermilionbayyarn.blogspot.com.

The VBYC blog is always current and is updated several times a week with new information and articles written especially for you! Can't wait for the next newsletter? Visit the blog! Stay connected, even when you can't make it in!

Useful Tip: When you're knitting, pay close attention to how exactly your stitches are formed. What happens to the loops from the needle after a knit or a purl? Where do they fall into the fabric? Take note of how they look. As you work, watch your working yarn. How does it become a stitch? Notice how stitches are connected to each other. Understanding these concepts is key to identifying mistakes and fixing them!

Vermilion Bay Yarn,
YOUR Local Yarn Shop,
Wishes you all
Happy New Year!



Do it right; Do it well.

"How do you do a...?" That's a frequently asked question in a yarn

shop. There are any number of minor techniques that make a major difference in knitting, from various cast on's, bind off's, odd hybrid decrease and increase operations, grafting live stitches, shaping, picking up stitches, short row operations, and, and. These things belong in the Knitter's Tool Kit. Do you have one? This class will help you fill the gaps in your collection. You will need two 2-4" stockinette swatches of 20 stitches each (worsted weight yarn, light color), one on a holder, the other on needles. Feel free to come with questions and ask how do to any common or uncommon stitch operation. SSK or SKP? TBL or KFB? Saturday, January 29 at 10:30am!

It just might make your chair hover

With a bit of fishing twine, a good dose of stage presence, and a spiffy suit, you can make a chair float in mid air. With a 32" circular needle, you can knit something in the round as if it were flat. Magic chair? Nope. All you need is a clever gentleman with a beard. Magic Loop? Not really. All you need is a creative spirit, a friendly disposition, a little patience, and a really long circular needle. It's a useful party trick, Magic Loop. It can get you out of a tight bind if you'd rather avoid double pointed needles or if the thought of knitting a round object on two circulars evokes the *frisance*. Come learn Magic Loop on Saturday, January 22 at 10:30am. It's all about the loop. The Magic part just makes it sound groovy.

