

Fall 2018 Threadbenders Guild Report

Threadbenders of Eastern Oregon were fortunate to be involved with the "Color Gone Wild" WeGO show at Carnegie Crossroads Art Center of Baker City, Oregon in July and August of 2018. We contributed educational weaving displays and various demonstrations and activities for visitors to take part in. We would like to thank all of our members who participated and especially Pam Miller, who spearheaded and guided Threadbenders' collaboration with Crossroads Art Center. This was a large and successful endeavor that exposed Eastern Oregon's Weavers Guilds' vastly diverse projects and activities to the public. We were delighted to welcome new members into our fold from the many visitors who enjoyed the WeGO show. Thank you!

Descriptions of some of the programs follow:

Kirsten Badger

Kirsten taught a Japanese form of braid making called Kumihimo that uses ribbons and cords that are interlaced together. Kumihimo means "gathered threads." She also demonstrated old weave structures published in the U.S. in 1792. She worked extensively with Boise Handweaver's Guild learning a variety of old weave structures- interlacement at every thread, one over, one under which create the design on the fabric.

Denine Schmitz demonstrated how to weave on her loom.

Pam Petterson: demonstrating basket weaving

Five times I demonstrated the art of pine needle basket weaving at Crossroads Art Gallery in Baker City, Oregon during the WeGO exhibit in July & August, 2018. I use 15"- 20" Southern long-leaf pine needles that I order online, colored waxed linen thread from Ireland and various gemstones, beads, feathers, rocks, shells, baubles etc. The baskets are actually coiled rather than woven and measure somewhere between 8" to 15" in diameter. Approximately 90 hours are needed to complete each basket, which then is sold in galleries in Baker and Southern California. This I have been doing since 2012 and have completed about 45 baskets thus far. The process is relaxing and meditative for me and offers great pleasure in the production and creativity of each one. It is my passion.

Being at Crossroads was fun. We set up a small table in the gallery around which we placed 5-6 chairs. I began with a basket newly started, or one already in process or near completion. These show how to start a basket, how to configure the design, colors, beads or stones to use, and how to very carefully finish the process. Viewers sat around the worktable, asking questions and watching as I inserted stones, beads, thread stitches, and pine needles; at least 1-4 pine needles per stitch. Each stitch taken determines the shape and outcome of the basket. On average each basket is comprised of 18 to 20 rows of pine needles with 40-60 stitches per row; so there are approximately 750 - 1100 pine needles per basket. I begin a basket at the center after choosing the centerpiece, color(s) of beads, thread, and other objects to be used. I have various ideas of design in mind, but the basket seems to design itself as I go. Often the end product is only similar to what I initially thought as I allow myself the freedom of creativity. Usually other weavers from our Threadbenders Guild of Baker and Union Counties were demonstrating various techniques of hand weaving and fiber arts at the same time I was there, so it was a feast of fiber arts!

Pam Miller

Sheep to Shawl Display. While I **do** all the steps in taking raw fleece to a finished product, I had never verbalized it. Simplifying the process to fit onto 6 small signs and labels was the most challenging part, but gratifying in the end to stand back and know that a person without fiber experience could **feel and see** the differences at each stage.

Spinning Demonstration I was spinning a roving made by layering brown and white fiber, which produces a yarn that has a tweed look. One of the visitors took a video on her phone to show her daughter, who is learning to spin, that she will be able to make all kinds of yarn.

Needle Felting It was fun to team up 2 different styles for this demonstration. One style was whimsical and the other realistic. Elaine Wagner and I displayed several needle felted animals and pictures, along with many books as resources. We had small groups which made it easy to encourage them to try a little needle felting and let their questions lead the direction of the demonstration sometimes.

Overall, this experience helped each of us grow in the ways we share, got some of us out of our comfort zone, and enriched us with new acquaintances.

Pam Miller
Elaine Wagner

Elaine Wagner

Elaine and her granddaughter took two of her Babydoll Southdown Lambs for adults and children to pet and groom. These sheep are gentle tempered critters. Their diminutive size makes them perfect for hobby farms, mini farms or rural homes with smaller acreage, but they manage just fine on large farms too.

Linda Honeywell: Visitor and NEW member of Threadbenders Weavers Guild

I attended many of the presentations at Crossroads this summer. I watched Sara Burton show us how to strip willow to make baskets or Indian cradleboards. She had a great display of her work. I attended one that Mickey Edwards did showing me how to weave on her loom. I received some practice as I was allowed to work on her loom. The next programs were Kata Bulinski's saori weaving, Pam Miller's spinning, and Pam Petterson's pine needle basket weaving. I spent most of the morning watching Kata and Pam Miller show off their exceptional skills. Pam Miller also explained the hands on exhibit of the wool. I also attended the one that Sandy from Heppner presented showing the fleece and how to start cleaning it and how to spin wool. Sandy also had some beautiful examples of her knitting. I went back to watch Pam Petterson work on her basket weaving one morning. Each presentation was very informational and I felt well worth the time I was allowed to watch.

I was impressed with the time these ladies spent explaining different procedures to a beginner.

I was especially pleased that I was allowed to join Threadbenders and sign up for the upcoming beginning weaving workshop.

Linda Honeywell

Kata Bulinski

Kata demonstrated Japanese Saori weaving. Saori is a freeform weaving style developed in 1968 by Misao Jo, a Japanese weaver. In Zen vocabulary, Saori is the combination of the words, "SAI," meaning everything has its own individual dignity, and "ORI," meaning weaving. Saori weaving has been called "creating beauty without intention." The demonstration showcased a Rigid Heddle, or Simple loom.

Margaret Mead and Vicki Wares

"Branch out Your Creativity" caught the attention of six women and an 8-year-old granddaughter, all of whom had prior experience in creative endeavors. The first instruction was for the students to line up, leaving space in between each. The person at one end was directed to go in and out of the line, she being the weft and the stationary ones the warp. Thus, the first two words of several in a weaver's vocabulary were learned. Students were shown examples of a few branch weavings, then each chose a branch and a few colors of yarn from materials provided. With a few more instructions, including demonstrations of warping a branch and beginning to weave, the class was told to create as each chose. All learned quickly in the relaxed atmosphere. Finished weavings were all beautiful and well made. The enthusiasm and skills exhibited pleased Vicki and Margaret, the instructors, and gave us more confidence to offer a future class.





Carol Etchemendy

Carol gave many demonstrations during the show. She spun wool a few times and was accompanied by Carol Hall at least on one occasion. She demonstrated Japanese Saori weaving done in a free-form style. Carol also demonstrated wool grading and spinning following a sheep shearing demonstration. People who attended the sheep shearing, wool grading and spinning demonstration had a great discussion with the presenters.

Carol Etchemendy and Mickey Edwards

Carol and Mickey held an interactive Discussion called: "Traveling on a Thread--Fabric From Around the World." They shared some of their travels around the world and how fibers add to their adventures. They brought some of their collection of textiles for guests to touch and admire. They explained the advantages of fibers when you travel and how they can introduce you to unique experiences. It is a small world and fiber can lead you anywhere.

Mickey Edwards

Mickey demonstrated weaving on her 4-harness loom, giving help to anyone who wished to weave a few rows. Her young granddaughter helped by being her student.