

MAWS Newsletter: Summer 2026



President's Message

The MAWS 2026 Conference to be held at the University of Montana, Missoula, MT is right around the corner! The dates are June 16 - 21, 2026.

On top of the variety of classes offered, there will a wonderful event on Friday evening at the Montana Museum of Art & Culture (MMAC) on the University of Montana Campus viewing and celebrating the Museum's holding of the Bateman Weaving Collection.

The MAWS Living Treasures Award presentations will take place on Saturday at lunch time. This award is designed to recognize and honor MAWS members who have made outstanding contributions in the field of fiber arts. The award is bestowed biennially on fiber artists who have demonstrated excellence in craftsmanship, provided leadership or has been a source of inspiration and encouragement to others, or who have contributed to the betterment and development of the fiber arts at the local, state, regional or national level.

During Sunday brunch, nationally known fiber artist Tom Knisely will be responding live to questions submitted by participants throughout the conference. This "Notes from the Fell" will complete the sure to be fun-filled weekend.

During the conference we will have vendors selling their wares, an open show of fiber art, booths from the Montana guilds displaying their fiber work, a fashion show, book signings, a spin-in and more.

You may check out the full schedule here:
<https://www.montanaweavespin.org/workshop-descriptions>

I hope to see you in Missoula,
Dawn Ahlert

Montana Association of Weavers and Spinners
<https://www.montanaweavespin.org/>



MAWS Membership

MAWS is **45 years** and going strong!
Founded in 1981, we currently have a record membership of **358 members!**

Upcoming MAWS Board Meetings

June 20, 2026, MAWS Conference in Missoula, 8 am
October 3, 2026, Montana City School, 12 noon to 4 pm

Click the link to read the [April 25, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes](#).

Click these links to read the Treasurer's Reports:

[Balance Sheet](#) and [Income/Expenses](#)

2026-2028 Board Member Nominations:

President - Nancy Kaumeyer (Alpine)

Vice President - Syliva Smith (Alpine)

Past President - Dawn Ahlert (Helena)

Treasurer - Nancy Anderson (Billings)

Secretary - Ruth Terry (Billings)

Newsletter Editor - Sarah Smith (Bozeman)

Internet Coordinator - Lisa Brown (Bozeman)

2028 Conference Chair - Rudy Zulkiewicz (Alpine)

Past Conference Chair - Sharon Schroeder (Missoula)

Members-at-Large:

Billings - Heather Johnson

Bozeman - Sarah Smith

Alpine - Cindy Edstrom

Eastern MT - Laura Bennett

Great Falls - Marian Stratton

Helena - Mary Jean Martin

Western MT - Barb French

Upcoming MAWS Newsletter Deadlines

August 1 - deadline for submissions

August 15 - issue released

Send articles to **Sarah Smith**, MAWS Newsletter Editor



This year's MAWS Conference, A Thread Runs Through It, will be held on the University of Montana campus, June 16-21, 2026. Most workshops and events will take place at the University Center and James E. Todd Building next door. A special event to view the UM Bateman Collection Exhibit will be held Saturday evening from 5:00 - 7:00 at the Montana Museum of Art and Culture (MMAC).

Click **[HERE](#)** for links to all information about the conference.

Download a flyer of [events open to the public](#) to print and share.

We are looking forward to hosting you in Missoula this June!

Missoula Weavers Guild & Big Sky Fiber Arts Guild

If you have any questions prior to registration or need help while registering, please contact us. Email: missoulaconf26@gmail.com or Call: 406-610-2821

MAWS Conference Scholarships

There were 23 applicants for these scholarships with 12 being awarded in the amount of \$225 each.

A LA CART REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Can't attend the whole conference? Sign up for individual workshops! There are still openings in a number of exciting workshops in weaving, spinning, knitting, felting and basketry! A few workshops with openings are featured below and the full list of classes with openings is [available at this link](#). Check them out and sign up for your favorite.

There are also a few dorm rooms (doubles only) still available and if you would like to attend the Friday and Saturday lunches, Sunday brunch and special events, you can purchase a full meal plan. Be sure to sign up for the meal plan 2 weeks prior to the conference.

REGISTRATION LINKS

If you want to register for individual classes only click here: [A La Carte Classes](#)

Print and **Share** a flyer about A La Carte opportunities: [Click Here](#)

If you'd like to register up for the full conference click here: [Full Conference](#)

To see the full list of classes with openings: [Click Here](#)
A few are featured below:

Buttons and Beads for your Knits/Handwovens

It is often so hard to find that perfect button or bead for your handknit and handwoven projects. Especially now that Joann's Fabric Stores are gone. Ordering online often leads to disappointment.

In this seminar we will make two-three buttons or beads (depending on working speed of individuals). I will also have some examples of other types of buttons that can be made.

Options will include:

[Resin buttons](#) (adding yarn to the button will insure a perfect match to your piece!)

[Woven yarn buttons](#) (sometimes called Yorkshire buttons)

[Paper beads](#) (with the addition of resin and eyelets)

INSTRUCTOR: Annette Swan Schipf

DURATION: Half Day

LEVEL: All skill levels are welcome

SUPPLIES THAT STUDENTS WILL BRING:

- Instructor will distribute a material list at a later date.

MATERIAL FEE: There will be a material fee distributed by the Instructor at a later date.

CATEGORY: Weave & Knit



Felting a Necklace

Make a felt necklace (or bracelet) blending colors of fine merino wool, tencel, silk, and bamboo fibers. Embellish the piece by finishing with beads and embroidery. We will add chains with a closure for ease of closing the necklace. Your necklaces will be quite the statement piece.

INSTRUCTOR: Judith Colvin

DURATION: Full Day

LEVEL: Beginner

SUPPLIES THAT STUDENTS WILL BRING:

- Old towel
- A good pair of scissors
- Special fiber colors-optional (19-micron merino is best)
- Special beads-optional (6mm-10 mm bead openings are best)
- Additional embroidery floss (to continue working after class)

TOOLS & SUPPLIES PROVIDED BY THE INSTRUCTOR:

- Fine merino and fibers for embellishment

- Bead selection
- Embroidery floss

MATERIAL FEE: \$15

CATEGORY: Felting



Double Knitting

This “needles-on” workshop is an introduction to Double Knitting. Patterns for a pixel gradient coaster, cowl, hat, and mittens will be used to explore techniques. The coaster will double as a gauge swatch and will be used to demonstrate casting on, reading a chart, knitting flat, and binding off. The remaining patterns will be: knit in the round, with the cowl used as the introduction to double knitting in the round: the hat used to teach decreases, and the mittens used to teach increases and picking up stitches. Patterns for the pixel-gradient gauge swatch/coaster, cowl, hat, and mittens will be specifically created for the class.

*Note - double knitting does necessarily result in a very thick fabric (see photos below).

INSTRUCTOR: Larie Smoyer

DURATION: Half Day

LEVEL: Advanced Beginner

SUPPLIES THAT STUDENTS WILL BRING:

- Bring yarn of the same gauge in two contrasting colors

- Knitting needles sized for the yarn

TOOLS & SUPPLIES PROVIDED BY THE INSTRUCTOR:

- Handouts with instructions for double knitting techniques
- Patterns for a coaster, cowl, hat, and mittens specifically created for the class

CATEGORY: Knitting



Learning to Weave on the Rigid Heddle Loom

The rigid heddle loom is the perfect blend of simplicity and functionality. The ease and speed of warping this loom make it ideal for the beginning weaver. This workshop will equip you with the knowledge you need to confidently prepare your loom for weaving as well as to choose your threads and begin weaving a successful first project!

Topics covered will include: warping the rigid heddle loom; weaving basics, including simple project planning; discussion of the types and uses of a variety of threads/yarns; general weaving practices; and some basic finishing techniques. Let the weaving begin!

INSTRUCTOR: Barbara French

DURATION: One Day

LEVEL: Beginner

SUPPLIES THAT STUDENTS WILL BRING:

- A rigid heddle loom with warping peg
- Stick shuttles, 2 or more
- Scissors

- Paper & pencil
- Optional: may bring yarns/threads and a darning needle

TOOLS & SUPPLIES PROVIDED BY THE INSTRUCTOR:

- Students will receive an instructional handout.
- A supply of a variety of threads and yarns.
- Students will have use of additional weaving tools to share.

MATERIAL FEE: \$5.00

CATEGORY: Weaving



BATEMAN WEAVES EXHIBIT

We are excited to share the Montana portion of the Bateman Collection with the public. Members of the Missoula Weavers Guild have been working with the Montana Museum of Art & Culture (MMAC) to create this exhibit. This exhibit will be hosted by the MMAC on the University of Montana Campus and available to view from May 8th to September, 2026. There will be a MAWS Conference Private Reception on Friday, June 19th, 5-7 pm with a no-host bar and hors d'oeuvres.

"Dr. Bateman's weaving samples demonstrate how an ancient technology can continue to inspire innovation. Long lost to dark basements, these samples are again seeing the light of day and becoming available to weavers and designers thanks to the MMAC and digital technology."

<https://www.umt.edu/montana-museum/>

Check out their [Facebook page](#) for a preview of the Exhibit

There's also a special category in the Conference Open Show: The Best of Bateman. There's still time before the conference to weave something for this category. Jackie Boshka has been involved win catalogueing the Bateman collection for 4 years and is happy to send interested weavers a Bateman Draft.



2026 Cabin Fever Report

We had a great Cabin Fever year in 2026 with record signups and 4 wonderful presentations. Signups by class were: Angie Parker (60), Deb Robson (33), Carol James (28) and Kim McKenna (31). Thanks to the following committee members for organizing this popular activity: Pamela Refling, Susan Lohmuller, and Bridget Hanebury and Linda Shelhamer.



Textiles and Tea - Joanne Hall

The Handweavers Guild of America, Inc.'s (HGA) program "Textiles & Tea" takes place every Tuesday at 2 PM (MT). Joanne Hall will be the guest featured on July 21, 2026. This episode is sponsored by MAWS. If you miss the live event, all episodes of Textiles & Tea are recorded and available on [HGA's Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#). This program has featured other Montana fiber artists such as [Dawn Ahlert](#), [Deb Essen](#), [Annetta Kraayeveld](#), and [Bonnie Tarsus](#).

Joanne Hall received her masters degree in Textile Design from the University of Minnesota and became an assistant professor at the University of Montana, where she taught weaving. Later she taught at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo California. Moving back to Montana, she wove tapestries, which she sold through galleries, exhibits and commissions. Her tapestries were large, up to 20 feet tall for a commission in Texas for a hospital. Importing her tapestry yarns from Sweden began another career of importing weaving equipment from Sweden. Her business, Glimakra USA is now in Eugene Oregon. She is the author of five books, *Mexican Tapestry Weaving*, *Tying up the Countermarch Loom*, *Learning to Warp your Loom*, *Drawloom Weaving* and *Weaving with Long eyed heddles*. All along, she continued to teach, with workshops in tapestry weaving plus subjects from Swedish weaving techniques to drawloom weaving. Joanne has been teaching weaving for over 50 year and continues to teach today.

Learn more about the program and featured artists at: <https://www.weavespindye.org/textiles-and-tea>



The Alpine Weavers and Spinners Guild

Alpine Weavers and Spinners Guild's 2026 theme is "Our Fiber Community". Within that, we've been exploring fiber arts treasures and techniques. We planned to close out 2025 with our annual holiday potluck scheduled for December 17. Alas, that was the day of "the big blow", so we canceled the potluck due to widespread power outages. Luckily, none of our members were harmed from the many trees and power poles that blew down in our area.

Since the new year, our fiber community has stepped up to elect another president when our incoming president resigned due to a family health crisis. We've learned a lot about each other and gained appreciation for the talents within our Guild. In February, our Guild program gave Guild members the opportunity to use drum carders to create one-of-a-kind batts for spinning or felting. The batts were all different, and they were all beautiful.

Our March Guild program was a show-&-tell of special heirloom textiles. Many pieces were shared, along with their stories. The purple coverlet pictured below is a friendship coverlet done by members many years ago. Sue Mendoza shared it with the group because her departed mother, Donna Carlson, made one of the blocks.

April brought members together for some good, clean fun as the created wet-felted bowls or bags. Shauneey Fisher, of Alpaca Montana in Libby, led this workshop.

As the season warms up, the spinners will meet at various farms to enjoy spinning close to the walking, breathing sources of beautiful fibers. People can follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/AWSGuild/.

Submitted by Sylvia Smith



Bozeman Weavers Guild

Susan Hellier 1945 - 2026

Bozeman Weavers Guild lost a treasured member, Susan Hellier, in February. For years Susan had contributed her energy and organizational skills to our guild. She had served variously as Secretary, President, and Vice President, and organized several workshops taught by widely recognized instructors. Susan housed our guild's weaving equipment and hosted several holiday celebrations at her home. Susan's most significant contribution was her advocacy and leadership in establishing BWG's recurring, successful Beginning Weaving class. For all this and more, Susan will long be remembered.

BWG's Events and Programs

At our November meeting, Pam Refling taught us how to make Bento bags using our handwoven or store-bought fabric. Also in November, our guild had another successful sales booth at the Gallatin County fairground's Holiday Sale.

Our December meeting was a celebration of the holidays that included a potluck luncheon, gift exchange, and our first-ever shuttle race. The competition was fierce and so much fun!

Teema Loeffelholz shared her experience and techniques of record-keeping for our January meeting's program. Then in February Pam Refling taught us how to identify those mystery yarns that we all have by burning the tips of the yarn and analyzing the resulting ash or globule.

Michele Borboa Stafford from Eagles Wings Ranch of Montana was our special guest at our March meeting. She shared her love of Angora goats, mohair fiber, and felting. Most special of all was Capella, Michele's yearling angora goat who calmly ate hay in the midst of our group during her presentation.

Beth Backen and Patty Hunt provided an overview of rigid heddle looms and weaving at our April meeting. Also, on April 25-26 a couple of our members taught our two-day Beginning Weaving class to several new weavers.

We look forward to May when once again a number of BWG members will participate in a day of outreach at Whittier Elementary School's Artfest event. Children will explore various fiber-related crafts with the guidance of our volunteers. The May meeting will end our eventful year with a potluck celebration.

Submitted by Wendy Fedock



Prairie Handspinners Guild

The Billings fiber community mourns the loss of Marge Ferrin, a guiding light for so many years. Marge died March 1, 2026, just short of her 90th birthday. She was a long-term member of MAWS and became a Living Treasure in 2010. She has also been a member of the Billings Weavers Guild. In addition to numerous guild activities, she has also written articles for Spinoff Magazine. The Montana Arts Council asked Marge to represent Montana with an ornament for the White House in Washington D.C.'s display. Marge worked with others to recreate the bobbin lace curtains for the

Moss Mansion Museum in Billings. MAWS has received Memorial Gifts in Marge's honor.

In Memory of Marge Ferrin,

Reflections on Marge Ferrin's impact on the fiber world in Eastern Montana. In the late 1980's, Marge and a friend attended a wool prep class at a local high school and they were instantly hooked on "everything" fiber. Shortly after she joined Prairie Handspinners Guild, a guild that continues strong to this day! She went on to become the Chair for 13 years and was truly our Living Treasure, an award she received from MAWS.

After moving to Billings in 1988, I found a note in the Billings Gazette about this "fiber group." Marge was Chair at that time and was very welcoming as well as many of the group members were, taking me under their wings. I really appreciate her leadership in helping to provide teaching, mentoring, encouraging and helping to influence (and improve) my spinning. Looking back, I appreciate her impact in building a lasting fiber community in our area.

Thank you Marge,
Heather Johnson

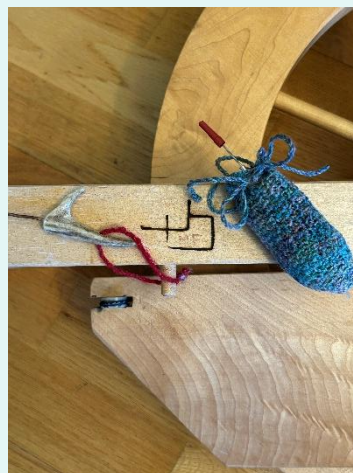


In Loving Memory of Marge Ferrin

By Maryann Morgenstern
(Typed by Reece Morgenstern)

I met Marge one Saturday in the Yellowstone Art Museum. It was going to be a new retirement journey for me that I had no experience in! I walked in the side door with fear and trepidation and sat in the closest chair I could. It was next to Marge Ferrin! Marge was amazing, welcoming and hospitable to a new comer. As the meeting went, everyone there kicked off their shoes and began spinning, introduced themselves, and shared the newest project they were working on. I stammered out, I was new to spinning and this was my first visit, but they knew that. Marge explained what the Prairie Handspinners Guild was all about. I loved hearing her story and love of all things fiber. She was encouraging and there was pure joy for her to learn new techniques and make new friends. Marge said that she was at the point in her life that her sight was not very good and wanted to sell her tools of the art. I indicated that I was interested in getting started. Later that week my husband and I went to her home and got to hear her story of spinning, the joy of weaving and other areas of fiber. I was blessed to purchase the items from Marge that got me started on my fiber journey. I found that her husband had added a brand with MF in the middle to the bottom of her Lendrum wheel and made her a unique hook that had a piece of horn from an animal he hunted. Marge also made a small pouch from beautiful fingering yarn to hold her oil container. Thank you Marge for sharing the love of fiber on. I am honored to be the receiver of your gifts!

In Loving Memory,
Maryann Morgenstern



Fiber and Clay

A member of the Prairie Handspinners Guild, Hallie Lindal knitted this piece she then soaked in clay, fired, and glazed. It is a beautiful blend of fiber and art.



Classified Ads

60" FeltCrafts Rolling Machine

In excellent condition. A real work horse if you are interested in production felting. Can deliver to MAWS Conference in Missoula. Priced to sell at \$1,500.

judithcolvindesigns@gmail.com



Leclerc Mira Floor Loom

This 4 shaft counterbalance loom has a 45 inch weaving width, 4 shafts with 6 treadles and a 45 inch 12 dent reed. The loom utilizes a fixed frame design and hardwood construction. This gives the loom stability when firm beating is required (ie. rug weaving) but also performs equally well with fine threads and a gentle beat. The counterbalance shed is generous and clean and the heavy duty cloth beam ratchet mechanism and warp beam friction brake enable the weaver to put a high tension on the warp. Just a good all around loom! \$500.00

Contact: annette.cade12@gmail.com



40" Norwood Solid Cherry Loom

Jack style with double, sectional back beams. It is a lovely loom, used but maintained and babied! It does come with a matching bench and 4 reeds: 6, 8, 10 dent (40" long) and one 12 dent (27" long). \$900.00 obo.

Contact annette.cade12@gmail.com



Glimakra Standard

My husband and I are looking to downsize in the near future and I have a floor loom that I will be selling. It is a Glimakra Standard Horizontal Countermarche. It has a footprint of 53" x 53" and a weaving width of 47". 10 shaft, 12 treadle

Includes: Bench
4 reeds - 8, 10, 12 and 15 dent
1600 12 1/2" heddles
Sectional warp beam
2 sets shaft holders
Lease sticks
Warping sticks and catcher
Belly board
Pins, hammer
Tie up cord and beads
10 extra short lamms
2 extra beater sides

I have owned and woven on the loom since 2019. It was built in the mid 1980s. Asking \$3500. OBO negotiable

Nanette Harris
nitronan@bresnan.net



Do you have a fiber-related item to sell? As a member of MAWS you are able to post your items for sale. (Non-members will be required to pay a fee of \$10 per classified ad along with one photo). Please send the information, along with any photos to Lisa Brown (lisa.brown@montana.edu). Items will be posted for 60 days. Also, please let Lisa know if your items sell so we can keep the website and newsletter content page current. We appreciate your cooperation!

Montana Association of Weavers & Spinners (MAWS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

The annual membership fee is \$10 and is due by October 31st. The membership year is January through December. You can join through your local guild or as an individual if you do not belong to a member guild. Dues include your newsletter

subscription. To join MAWS, please send dues to MAWS c/o Linda Shelhamer, 446 Tabriz Drive, Billings, MT 59105. She can be reached at 406-259-9160 or by emailing lindas5252@yahoo.com. You can also pay dues via PayPal at <https://www.montanaweavespin.org/join-us-membership>

MAWS accepts memorials and other donations for our educational programs.

They can be mailed to Linda or made online using this link <https://www.montanaweavespin.org/donation>

QUESTIONS?

Linda Shelhamer
446 Tabriz Drive, Billings, MT 59105
406-259-9160
lindas5252@yahoo.com

Meet Your Board (2024-2026)

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Nancy Kaumeyer

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Linda Shelhamer

Secretary

Susan Lohmuller

Newsletter Editor

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