

JANUARY  
2015

ROVINOS

## A Message from the President

Greetings to all Black Sheep and their friends!

Party time is upon us--I look forward with great anticipation to the visiting with our friends from other groups, the viewing of competition entries, the inspiration of demonstrations, the fun of purchasing of that must-have fiber, the food of course, and the excitement of the raffle that together make up the celebration that is Roc Day. We all, together, make this day work. Thank you!

I hope to see you there,

Sharon

## Last minute Roc Day requests

We are still interested in donated items for our Roc Day auction/ raffle. These can be given to Sharon or Ellie. Char is asking for contributions of scrap yarn for her circle loom weaving demonstration. If you are helping to set up on Friday evening, please be at the parish hall by 4:30.

JANUARY 10

ROC DAY!

10-4, All Saints  
Church Parish Hall,  
Myers Road, Lansing  
Spinning, dish to pass,  
demonstrations,  
vendors, raffles and  
FUN!

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The Black Sheep meet from 11am - 3pm on the 2nd Saturday of each month at All Saints Church Parish Hall, Route 34B, in Lansing, NY.

## 2015 Roc Day Vendors

Mary Miller/DearMary Handspun and Handwoven: Hand-woven and hand-spun towels, scarves, and placemats as well as hand-knit socks from my hand-spun yarns. Hand-spun skeins, from cobweb to chunky weight, from dyers such as Hello Yarn, Southern Cross, and Spunky Eclectic. [mmiller18@twcny.rr.com](mailto:mmiller18@twcny.rr.com)

Laurie Ament, glassmaker: Handmade drop spindles with glass whorls, other tools incorporating glass. [isinglassdesign@yahoo.com](mailto:isinglassdesign@yahoo.com)

Karey Solomon/Graceful Arts Fiber Studio: Dyed roving, hand-dyed sock yarns, knitting, crocheting and tatting supplies. [threads@empace.net](mailto:threads@empace.net) [www.Gracefulartsfiberstudio.com](http://www.Gracefulartsfiberstudio.com)

Holly Partridge: Teesdale fleeces and locks, other breeds to include Wensleydale.

Susan Sarabasha/Susan's Spinning Bunny: Hand-dyed fibers and yarns, wheels, patterns, kits, accessories and felting supplies. [susan@spinningbunny.com](mailto:susan@spinningbunny.com) [www.spinningbunny.com](http://www.spinningbunny.com)

Jim Johnson/Hilltop Woodworking: Hand-turned spindles, folding spinning stools, Spin'n Rides, wheels and other spinning accessories. [hilltoppaddles@earthlink.net](mailto:hilltoppaddles@earthlink.net)

Lisa Merian/Spinner's Hill: Hand-dyed roving, fiber blends, batts and yarns. Also fiber arts supplies. [www.spinnershill.com](http://www.spinnershill.com)

Margaret Flowers/Trinity Farm: Icelandic fibers, hand-made soaps, other spinning-related products.

Kelly Terwilliger/Llady Llama Fiber Co.: Hand-painted yarn and carded fiber batts, hand-turned drop spindles, niddy-noddies, diz and threader sets, orifice hooks and shawl pins. Project totes and needle cases. [www.lladyllamafiberco.esty.com](http://www.lladyllamafiberco.esty.com)

Robin Nistock/Nistock Farms: Roving, dyed locks, dyed sliver. Drop spindle kits, sheepskins. [sheepmom@empace.net](mailto:sheepmom@empace.net) [www.nistockfarms.com](http://www.nistockfarms.com)

## Fibery Events

For those who have registered, the 2015 retreat scheduled for the last weekend in February, please note that Stella Maris is closing in January, and the retreat will be held instead at the Watson Homestead in Painted Post. ). The new venue can be seen at [www.watsonhomestead.com](http://www.watsonhomestead.com)

Arrive Friday, February 27th and leave March 1st. Contact [ahfurman@yahoo.com](mailto:ahfurman@yahoo.com) for information.

## Roc Day Demonstrations

- 11:00 Char Sharkey  
Circle Loom Weaving
- 11:30 Bill Bartlett  
Weaving
- 12:00 Renata Brenner  
Hat Felting
- 12:30 Tammy Fazzi  
3D Printing of Spinning Tools
- 1:00 Carol Franco  
Rug Hooking
- 1:30 Wayne Harbert  
Great Wheel Spinning
- 2:00 Marjorie Inana  
Wool Combing



**Pictures from the December Meeting**



Lois found this wheel at the Salvation Army store



Alison showing us what a well-prepared project basket might look like



## Editor's Corner: The Thirteenth Day

There are, alas, only eight days of Hanukkah, and only twelve of Christmas. Then what? Are we really expected to wait all the way till February for another party? A consolation to spinners of course is that the day after the 12th day of Christmas is also holiday too, of a sort—Saint Distaff's Day, so called in commemoration of Saint Distaff, who, when she was a young girl, pricked her finger on a spindle and... No, that's wrong. There was no Saint Distaff. A distaff is a spinning tool, of remarkably variable shape, but sometimes looking like this. —>

(Please note, dear Disney friends, that this is NOT A SPINDLE).\* It is intended for holding fibers (generally flax) in good order while they are spun, and it is so named because *dis* is apparently an ancient word for flax.



Back in medieval times in Europe, people in general, but most particularly women, were compelled by custom and necessity to spend almost every spare minute spinning, with a distaff in the left hand, and a spindle in the right. It didn't matter if they were married or unmarried, young or old, or even rich or poor. So much a badge of womanhood was the distaff that the female side of family trees has come to be known as the *distaff side*. Unmarried women span (or spun?) more, presumably since they had more spare time and/or more dire need, and so they came to be known as *spinsters*. Only for one brief period, during the twelve days of Christmas, were they freed from the relentless chore of spinning. It was, in fact, forbidden to spin during those holy days. On the thirteenth day, though, it was time to pick up the spindle or other implements of labor once more. And so, distaff in hand and tongue in cheek the spinners christened that day *Saint Distaff's Day*—an instance of what one source calls “jocular canonization.” It's also known as *Roc(k) Day*, since *rock* is another old word for distaff. (Why we leave the *k* off is beyond me; no one has spelled it *roc* for 600 years.) The spinners eased their way back into their labors, and the day was nicely divided between work and play. Robert Herrick wrote a poem about it, entitled “Saint Distaff's day, or the morrow after Twelfth day” which suggests that some rowdy hijinks were involved in its observance:

Partly worke and partly play  
Ye must on S. Distaffs day:  
From the Plough soone free your teame;  
Then come home and fother them.  
If the Maides a spinning goe,  
Burne the flax, and fire the tow:  
Scorch their plackets, but beware

That ye singe no maiden-haire.  
Bring in pailles of water then,  
Let the Maides bewash the men.  
Give S. Distaffe all the right,  
Then bid Christmas sport good-night;  
And next morrow, every one  
To his owne vocation.

Very few of us still bother with distaffs (*distaves?*) anymore, and we no longer set fire to each other's flax or douse each other with water for the fun of it, but we modern spinners still observe the holiday in our own subdued way. This includes us Black Sheep, though our own celebration never actually falls on Roc(k) Day. We celebrate on the second Saturday of January, so our commemoration never comes earlier than the fourteenth day. Leave it to the Black Sheep to resort to such calendrical chicanery in wringing yet one more day of celebration out of the season. Oh, well. Party on! —Wayne

\*I'll use this accidental extra space on my editor's page to vent about a pet peeve; the Disney illustrators just can't seem to get their heads around this spindle vs. distaff business. The error in the original Disney animation, in which Princess Aurora pricks her finger not on a spindle but a distaff, is repeated in the new “Maleficent” film. How about hiring a spinner as a technical consultant, guys?

## Skein Competition Guidelines, Roc Day 2015

We look forward to receiving your entries for this event. You may submit 5 entries, which should be received by no later than 11 o'clock the day of the event. This year we will take one class at a time for judging, leaving the other entries on display, and return each class to the display table once judging for that class is complete. Awards will be presented at 3 o'clock. Participants may pick up their entries at this time.

There are no restrictions on the number of entries in any class, for a total of 5 entries.

Attach to each entry an envelope. The outside of the envelope should show the class, and information on the fiber, preparation and intended use. Your name and guild affiliation go on the inside please.

Classes are as follows:

- 1) Proficiency of spin: a two ounce skein 100% wool
- 2) Proficiency of spin: a two ounce wool blend or other fiber
- 3) Novelty yarn: 2 ounce skein, spun using any technique or fiber
- 4) Novice yarn: 2 ounce of yarn spun by a person new to spinning in the last year
- 5) Project basket: in a basket or container of your choice, artfully presented, (SEE PHOTO PAGE FOR AN EXAMPLE) provide the following:

The pattern for which the fiber is intended

At least 4 ounces of fiber spun for the project

A sample of the fiber unspun

A knitted, crocheted woven, etc., sample demonstrating the pattern.

PLEASE NOTE: For all classes, entries made on a drop spindle or charka may be submitted at weights half of those stated. Hence, for classes 1 through 4, one-ounce skeins will be accepted, and for the project basket 2 ounces will suffice. Be sure to identify these skeins, please.

We will be asking attendees to participate in our viewers'-choice selection. Vote on the submission you most like, for whatever reason. The entry with the most votes will be awarded a prize.



**Roc Day**  
**Come Celebrate**  
**A New Year of**  
**Spinning & Fiber Arts**  
**Sat. January 10, 2015**  
**10 - 4**



**Spinning, dish to pass, skein  
contest, vendors, raffles and FUN.**  
**Bring your spinning / knitting /  
crocheting & join the circle.**

**All Saints Church Parish Hall,  
Across from the Lansing Schools, Corner of 34B &  
Myers Rd, Lansing, NY. Pkg behind the church.**

**Need more info? Call 607-280-8726**

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FOR SALE: 1810 Great Wheel purchased from Bill Ralph. Miner's head, spins beautifully. For further info and/or to give it a spin, please contact [shelly@chezmyers.com](mailto:shelly@chezmyers.com)

In an effort to reduce my personal stash, I'd like to sell cotton warp, loop mohair, rug wools, fine wools, rayon and rayon chenille and other interesting stuff at prices ranging from low to ridiculous. I also have a Hansen e-spinner with woolee winder, two bobbins and kate for sale. Contact Karey Solomon at [threads@empacc.net](mailto:threads@empacc.net).

For sale from my own happy sheep and rabbits in Trumansburg: Navajo-Churro roving in a variety of natural colors

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Contact Sharon Berger

@607-592-4649 or

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### *To place an ad*


The cost for ads is \$5.00 per month for non-members.

Current members may submit one business-card sized classified ad per month for free. Send a check made out to BSHG to our treasurer, Vickie Marsted, 29 Lincoln Ave, Cortland, NY 13045. Send the ad in digital form to the newsletter editor,

[newsletter@blacksheephandspinnerguild.com](mailto:newsletter@blacksheephandspinnerguild.com). Black & white business cards are published free for current members.



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