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ANNOUNCING

Please Welcome Madeline Miles

by Charlotte Coffman

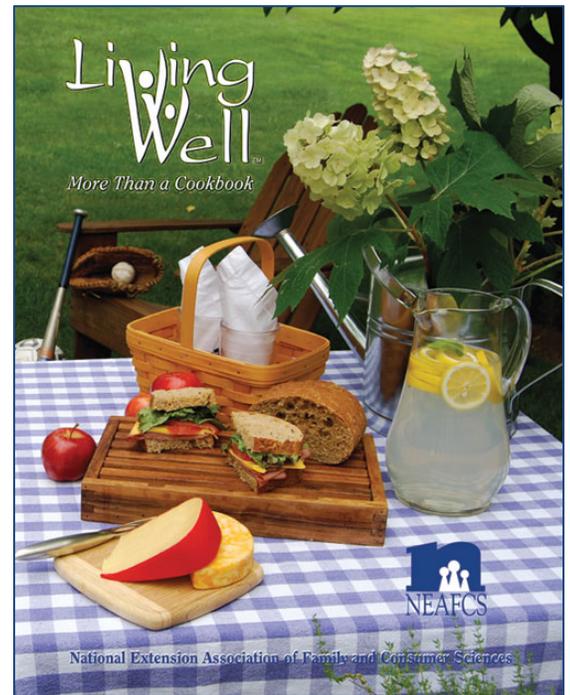
Madeline Miles, FSAD '14, is our new Administrative Assistant for the FSAD Extension program for the 2011-2012 academic year. As a member of the Cornell Fashion Collective and a ten-year 4-H veteran in her hometown of Grand Haven, MI, she is interested in working with both the Youth and the Personal Protective Equipment extension programs. She hopes to share textile arts and applications with 4-H and other Cornell youth outreach programs, perhaps incorporating her interests in costume and athletic apparel. She is also looking forward to researching new textile topics and supporting FSAD outreach events. Watch for her articles in *topstitch*, beginning with her description of the Kuhlman Exhibit in this issue.



Support NEAFCS and “Live Well”

by Charlotte Coffman

Misplaced that recipe for the famous Cornell Chicken Barbecue Sauce? Looking for a special gift for a friend? Interested in tips on financial management, home safety, living green, textile care, and more? Then, the *Living Well — More Than a Cookbook*, published by the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences to commemorate their 75th anniversary is for you. To purchase a copy, send a check for \$20 (made payable to NEAFCS-NYA) to Charlotte Coffman, Cornell University, HEB T-51, Ithaca, NY 14853. You will receive your book via return mail. The price includes shipping and handling. All proceeds go to support the New York Affiliate.



6th Annual Kuhlman Exhibit

by Madeline Mills

Perfectly bleached white paper cut into fragile pieces, tiny working figurines surrounding a half-made garment, and a red silk beaded dress were but three of the eight Kuhlman fiber art projects on display this fall in the Jill Stuart Gallery of the Human Ecology building.

The 6th Annual Kuhlman Foundation's Fiber and Wearable Arts Exhibition, "Membrane," explored the many facets and complexities of ‘membranes’ that immerse people and nature. Such membranes included concepts such as in junior Caroline Delson’s piece, “Utopia.” Using tiny figurines and a half-dressed manikin, Delson was able to create a scene that combined a garment with the work that goes into making it. This exploration of complexity references numerous pieces of literature and popular culture, and portrays the inner and outer membrane of the making of a garment.



Utopia, by Caroline Delson '13

The long process to create a piece in the exhibition also seems to be reflected in Delson’s work. Beginning almost a year before the actual show, the selected FSAD students go through an application process led by several faculty members, put together a proposal, create samples, and are eventually funded by the Barbara L. Kuhlman Foundation. The Kuhlman foundation is a non-profit organization that supports the fiber arts and hands out several scholarships each year to deserving students.



Genealogy, by Lulu Mu '13

The pieces this year included many different types of fiber manipulation ranging from hand beading to industrial art. Junior Lulu Mu chose the art of hand paper-cutting in her project, “Genealogy.” Using bleached paper, she hand-cut images that were inspired by mythology, film, and her Korean heritage. The result is a fragile yet complex piece that stretches from the floor to the ceiling of the new gallery.

Using different techniques, but also including ideas from film, is senior Katie Elks. Her piece, “Francesca,” uses surface design techniques such as hand beading to showcase mafia family values and reflect such works as “The Godfather.”

The “invisible membrane” of the stereotypical mafia family is only one example of a membrane in this exhibition. Other artists included Katelyn Ridgeway '12, who used beading and crinkled chiffon to create a box-like structure that emulates a wave; Matilda Ceesay '13, who looked at the validity of African items worn by African women; Elizabeth Wheeler '12, who expanded on the conflicts between nature and society; Margaret Dimmick '12, who used plastic grocery bags to create a hand-knitted sea creature, and Anuradha Lingala '13, who used yarns to create a massive spider web.

For other photos and information, check out the Cornell Chronicle article, *Student fiber arts exhibit opens in Human Ecology Building* <<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Sept11/FiberArtsExhibit.html>>

Perfect Barrel, by Katelyn Ridgeway '12



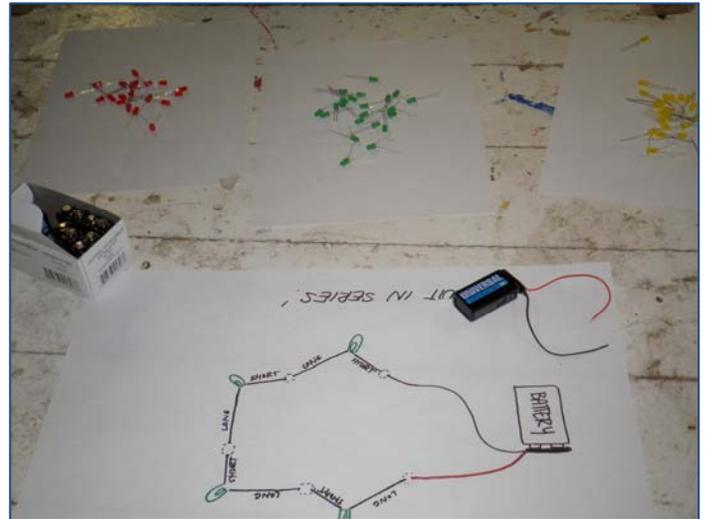
Death of Glory, by Matilda Ceesay '13

ENGAGING YOUTH

4-H Smart Clothing Goes to Camp

by Emily Parkinson

My first task as the summer intern working on the 4-H Smart Clothing Project was to research existing programs involving e-textiles and smart clothing, adapt these ideas, come up with my own activities, and combine them to create a four-day comprehensive program with the intention of introducing middle school girls to principles of design and engineering, and applications of smart clothing/textiles.



After researching a variety of activities and projects, ranging from waterproofing fabrics with various materials (crayons, glue, oil) to complicated smart textile projects where designers created musical hats or bike shirts with motion-detecting, light-up turn signals, I began to hone into specific projects that would form a cohesive curriculum. While I got great ideas from websites like <http://www.fashioningtech.com/profiles/blogs/musical-hats> and discovered really cool companies like British Cute Circuit, I had to adapt these wild examples of smart textiles to a project that middle school girls could accomplish in a camp setting in only a few sessions.



I decided to theme the program to bags so that even though the girls would be doing three separate activities, there would be overall cohesion throughout the week. The first day we would focus on materials and fabric properties in a variety of shorter activities. This introduction would serve to help me get to know the group, capture their attention, and hopefully engage them in the topic. The second lesson would focus on design principles and emphasize the role of design in functional and aesthetic products. The final two days, the students would spend on designing and creating light-up bags. They would experiment with simple LED circuits and combine this new knowledge, along with their knowledge of materials, design and the engineering process, to create a unique electrified bag!

I led this curriculum four times over the summer at two different 4-H camps. At the Bristol Hills 4-H Camp in Canandaigua, NY, I facilitated the course with a specialized group of girls from the Young Women's Adventure Camp. At the Hidden Valley 4-H Camp in Watkins Glen, NY, this session was offered to the general camp population as one of many activities that campers could choose.

The structured set up of the first situation resulted in a more focused experience—their counselor was very enthusiastic about the project, we had a dedicated work space, and we had two-hour blocks of time. This was a great environment to begin testing the program and the campers were fairly successful with the projects.

The second environment was a little more challenging, but having led the program twice before and gotten feedback on the strong and weak elements it ran as smoothly as possible. Despite shorter blocks of time, an unconventional workspace, and a much less structured environment the students produced really great projects and came up with a lot of creative approaches to problem solving.



Campers enjoyed the concepts and projects, and mostly produced successful outcomes. The pitfall of this program was definitely in the structure—some kids felt they needed more time to complete certain assignments; a few seemed disoriented by what they interpreted as “doing work” in a camp setting. Overall, I think the program, as an initial foray into programs with the intention of introducing girls to principles of engineering, was a success.

Emily Parkinson was a CCE/CHE 2011 summer intern working in the FSAD Department. Thanks to Bristol Hills and Hidden Valley 4-H Camps for hosting this experiment, to Anna Carmichael for assisting as a teen volunteer, and to the CCE/CHE Intern Program for financial support.

CONCERNING CONSUMERS

Children’s Clothing Gifts Can Be Practical and Trendy

by Charlotte Coffman

Toys are on every parent’s (and grandparent’s) holiday list, but in this day of economic insecurity it makes sense to include a few practical gifts such as clothing. The good news for today’s shopper is that buying children’s clothing is fun. In fact, it may be difficult to choose among or look beyond the trendy styles, athletic gear, designer outfits, and matching ensembles that scream “cute, cuter, and cutest.” Below are a few tips on how to curb your impulse to create the poster fashion child and, instead, give clothing that will be comfortable, safe, and attractive for that special youngster on your list. Your concerns should be dressing ease, softness, durability, safety--and then style.

COMFORT – kids just want to be comfy so forego stiff or scratchy fabrics, dangling jewels or buckles, and cumbersome designs. Cotton is the comfort fabric, but cotton-polyester blends and fabrics with a hint of Spandex for stretch are also good choices. Beware elastic at waists and cuffs, making certain that they will not bind or pinch. Pullovers are great for older children, but babies seem to prefer garments with front closures and easy access for diaper changes.

CARE – washable garments are a must. Read the care label as even some cotton garments may require special cleaning. Remember that all-cotton knits may look large when new, but they can shrink as much as 10 percent with repeated washing.

SIZE – purchase only a few items for the child’s actual size. Children grow quickly and it is convenient to have one or two outfits in the “next” size. Until a child is two, “double your baby’s age,” so that you are purchasing a 6 to 9 month size for a 3 to 6 month old baby. After the age of two, buy one to two sizes up depending on the child’s build in relation to the average for that age. For guidance, read the weight and length charts found on the back of the garment packages.

SAFETY – Avoid tiny buttons, bows, hooks, and other items that might be a choking hazard and loosely knitted items that might trap tiny fingers and toes. Do not purchase children’s garments that contain drawstrings. Drawstrings are a strangulation hazard because they can get caught on playground equipment and in other places, like bus doors. Although federal guidelines and an industry standard discourage the use of drawstrings, they are still found in the marketplace. If you already own sweatshirts and outerwear with drawstrings, the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends removing neck drawstrings and making certain that waist drawstrings (in pants or jacket bottoms) are stitched in place at the midpoint so they cannot be pulled loose.

On December 8, 2011, Bella Bliss of Lexington, KY issued a recall on their children’s pajamas due to failure of the federal flammability standards.

The two-piece Henley Pima Cotton sleepwear sets were available in sizes 2 to 12, and in white, blue, pink or red, with a "Bella Bliss" neck tag. They were sold through Bella Bliss' catalog and website as well as specialty clothing retailers and other online stores from January 2008 to June 2011. Consumers are urged to stop using the pajamas and return them to the place of purchase for a refund, exchange or store credit. For more information, consumers can contact Bella Bliss at 866-846-5295 or visit the company's website: www.BellaBliss.com



For updated recall information on baby and children products, visit the CPSC's website.

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/child.html>

Resources:

Consumer Reports. Baby Clothes.

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/babies-kids/baby-toddler/baby-clothes/baby-clothes-buying-advice/baby-clothes-safety-/baby-clothes-safety-.htm>

EXTENSION FACULTY AND STAFF

Charlotte Coffman - FSAD, Youth & Safety Issues, DEL	607-255-2009	cwc4@cornell.edu
Amy Galford - Water Quality, Septic Systems, Home*A*Syst	607-255-1943	aeg1@cornell.edu
Karen Steffy - Topstitch Website, FSAD Loan Library	607-255-8605	ks247@cornell.edu