



Volume 1, Number 1  
February, 2007

## ANNOUNCING

### A Merger: *TXA NEWS* and *topstitch*

With the department name change to Fiber Science & Apparel Design (FSAD) <http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/fsad/>, the time seems right to combine the two department newsletters into one online offering. Thus, *TXA News*, the extension newsletter, and *topstitch*, the apparel industry newsletter will henceforth be known as *topstitch* and will be available at <http://www.topstitch.cornell.edu/>. Links to the current edition and archives will also be found on the department website at <http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/fsad/outreach/downloadable-resources/newsletter-archive/>.

### Cornell Design League Show Set for April

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Cornell Design League Runway Show has been set for April 21, 8PM in Barton Hall on the Cornell Campus. In the past, some 4-H groups have attended. If a club in your county is interested, contact Charlotte Coffman at [cwc4@cornell.edu](mailto:cwc4@cornell.edu) for information on ticket prices and availability. To learn more about the Design League and past shows, check out <http://132.236.145.11/CDesignL/CORNELL4.html>

### Street Fashion Exhibit

Torn black stockings, beads and colorful appliques, torn jeans, and recycled military wear. . . these fashions from the street are part of a current display called *Street Fashion and Youth Subculture: An Ethnographic Costume Exhibition*. Assembled by FSAD students and apparel design faculty, the exhibit is on view at the Elizabeth Schmeck Brown Costume and Textile Gallery, Martha Van Rensselaer Hall, third floor, M-F 8AM - 5PM through May 9, 2007. For photos and details, read these news stories:

<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Nov06/streetfashion.exhibit.html>

[http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/news\\_events.cfm?id=Youth%20Culture%20Spawns%20Street%20Fashion%20Revolution&rec\\_date=&pagetype=news-story&related=>](http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/news_events.cfm?id=Youth%20Culture%20Spawns%20Street%20Fashion%20Revolution&rec_date=&pagetype=news-story&related=>)

## ENGAGING YOUTH



### Career Explorations 2007

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Once again, FSAD is participating in the annual 4-H summer program, Career Explorations. This year the Focus for Teens topic is The Fabric/Flight Connection. Youth will make a parachute, a tetrahedron kite, and an airplane. They will work in the laboratory to test fabrics for absorbency, flammability, and permeability and to make nylon. Encourage youth in your area to register soon as space is limited to no more than 20 young people. See details at

<http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/program/events/CareerEx.php>

## Sewing Publications for Youth

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Bunkhouse Books has four titles (see descriptions below) that might be useful for volunteers teaching sewing to 4-Hers. The written instructions are concise and easy to follow. The black-and-white illustrations are clearly drawn. The primary author, JoAnn Gagnon, is a former 4-Her and Home Economics teacher so she has a passion for sewing and a good sense of what young people like to make. She lives in Washington so some of the articles, such as hunting attire and vests, have a distinctly western feel but can be easily adapted to other locales. Also, readers can modify the few faith-themed items such as making a book cover instead of a Bible cover. FSAD has one copy of each of these publications. If you want to borrow or review them, contact me at [cwc4@cornell.edu](mailto:cwc4@cornell.edu) or 607-255-2009. To order your own copies or for more information, contact Bunkhouse Books, JoAnn Gagnon, 607 Lower Hogeeye Road, Waitsburg, WA 99361, Tel: 800-337-8845, Internet: <<http://www.bunkhousesewing.com>>

| <i>Catch The Sewing Bug</i>  | <i>Stitches &amp; Pins</i>  | <i>Buckles &amp; Bobbins</i>   | <i>Pins &amp; Needles</i>  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Beginner   | Beginner girls  | Beginner boys  | Intermediate girls   |
| 40 pages   | 68 pages<br>Spiral bound  | 80 pages<br>Spiral bound   | 80 pages<br>Spiral bound   |
| 25 simple projects, including fleece mittens, hair scrunchie, garment bag, and puppet. | 14 projects, including laundry bag, doll quilt, skirt, and pajamas, | 16 projects, including laundry bag, bound fleece blanket, vest, and pajamas, | 30 projects, including placemat, wall hanging, hat, jumper, and sweatshirt.<br>Girls sizes 8 - 16; Misses sizes 8 - 16 |
| Patterns included  | Patterns included   | Patterns included  | Patterns included  |

## CONCERNING CONSUMERS

### Detergent Update

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Detergent manufacturers change their products often and for a variety of reasons. Some highly publicized changes that you might have noticed recently on the store shelf are: 1) incorporation of fabric softeners, 2) new formulations, and 3) increased use of “green” ingredients/packaging,

To save the time and money of using a detergent and a separate fabric softener, some detergents now include the softener. *Consumer Reports (CR)* tested seven of these combination products along with 22 conventional detergents for cleaning, keeping dirt off, keeping dye off, and cost. They found that Tide with a Touch of Downey, the best performing detergent with softener, ranked behind at least five of the conventional detergents in cleaning efficiency and preventing the re-deposition of dirt and dye. CR also compared the post-washing softness of cotton fabrics washed multiple times with the combination product to the softness of the same fabrics washed multiple times with a regular detergent plus a separate fabric softener. They found that using separate products did a better job. Finally, the cost of using the blended detergent-softener was 8 to 31 cents per load while the cost of using a separate detergent and softener was 6 to 61 cents per load.

Long accustomed to powders and liquids, consumers are now being introduced to different formulations such as the Droops gel pack and the OxiClean ball. Droops sells a pre-measured amount of a gel detergent in a water-soluble package. Just drop the packet in the washer and you are done. OxiClean sells a slow-dissolving ball of detergent encased in a mesh sack. Drop it into the washing machine for the wash cycle. Retrieve it for use in up to 25 loads. The presumed advantage of these products is convenience — the consumer doesn’t have to measure the detergent. Unfortunately, the CR tests placed both the gel pack and the detergent ball at the bottom of the list for cleaning and prevention of re-depositing of soil and dye. Other bad news — they cost about 52 cents per load.

The push for “green” detergents is coming from both the public and some corporations. Because laundry detergents are used by so many, a little improvement of the product can yield big payoffs in the environment. The three hot issues are detergents engineered for use in cold water, surfactant choices, and reduced packaging. A Procter & Gamble (P&G) advertisement notes that if everyone in New York City did their laundry in cold water for just one day, the energy saved would be enough to light the Empire State Building for one month. P&G makes Tide Coldwater which ranked third among the conventional detergents in the CR cleaning tests. Purex, manufactured by Dial, also has a detergent recommended for cold water but it wasn’t tested by CR. Cold-water detergents are engineered with modified surfactants and enzymes in order to accomplish cleaning at 60 degrees F compared to the usual laundry temperature of 90 degrees F. For ordinary wear, cold-water washing should be sufficient, but FSAD faculty member S. Kay Obendorf noted in the Environmental Science & Technology Online that cold water from the tap in winter in upstate New York might very well be colder than 60 degrees F. She also reminded readers that heavily soiled items should still be laundered in hot water.

Surfactants are critical to the cleaning action of detergents, but recently the surfactant class nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs) has come under attack. The European Union has banned these chemicals in down-the-drain applications, and the US Environmental Protection Agency claims that they are toxic to aquatic plants and animals. Manufacturers Dow Chemical, Huntsman Corp., and Rhodia maintain that the chemicals are safe to use. The number of detergents containing NPEs are decreasing, but the chemicals are still found in some detergents sold in the US including Sears Ultra Plus Stain Fighting Formula 9835, Sears Advanced Formula Plus with Oxi-Clean Ultra HE 9820, Dropps gel packs, and ShopRite Ultra Free’N Clear. At about 12 cents/load these products cost less than most detergents, but their cleaning power is also less. Knowledgeable consumers might chose Arm & Hammer Clean Burst (17 cents per load), Wal-Mart’s Great Value Ultra Glacier Breeze (12 cents a load), or Costco’s Kirkland Signature Ultra 38722 (12 cents per load) as all are comparable in price, clean better and do not contain NPEs.

Packaging is a good example of bigger NOT being better. At the Clinton Global Initiative, Wal-Mart announced its intention to favor suppliers that reduced packaging. Unilever was one of the first detergent companies to respond with its All Small & Mighty liquid, 32 ounces of a concentrated product that will wash as many loads of laundry as 100 ounces of traditional detergent. Dial’s Purex brand also has a concentrated product enroute to the market. The idea of concentrated detergents isn’t new. The detergent industry tried this approach about 15 years ago, but consumers felt they were getting less for their money when they went home with smaller containers. Maybe today’s activist consumers, corporate interest, and potential legislation will convince the public that smaller is better.

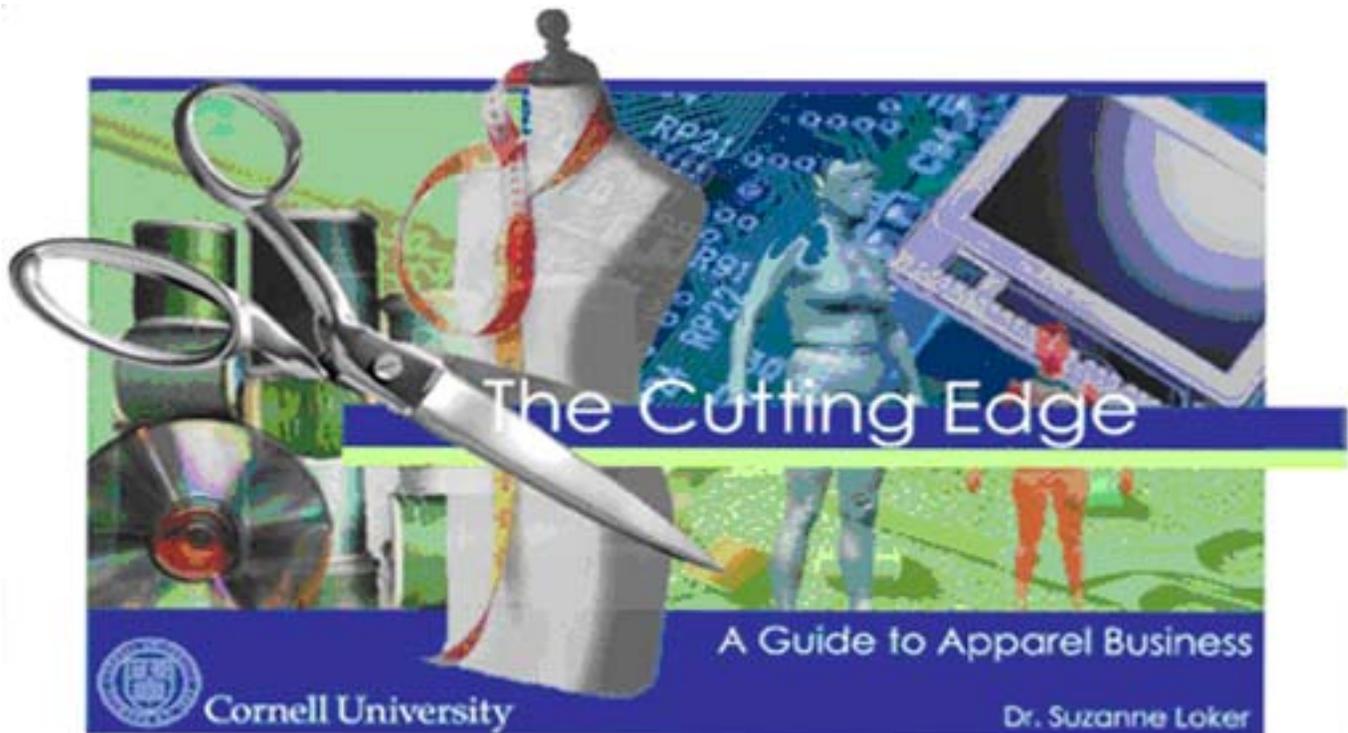
Fabric softeners - make fabrics softer and fluffier; decrease static cling, wrinkling and drying time; impart a pleasing fragrance and make ironing easier. They are added to the final rinse or in the dryer,

Surfactants - improve the wetting ability of water; loosen and remove soil; and solubilize or suspend soils in the wash until soils are washed away.

#### Resources:

1. Consumer Union of US, Inc. Laundry Detergents Clean & Green Options, Consumer Reports, p. 43-44. January, 2007.
2. Consumer Union of US, Inc. Softergents for Double Duty, Consumer Reports, p.7. January, 2007.
3. McCoy, Michael. Going Green. Chemical & Engineering News 85 (5): 13-19. January 29, 2007.  
<http://pubs.acs.org/cen/coverstory/85/8505cover.html>
4. McCoy, Michael. Specialty Chemical Makers Seek Business both with Cleaning Product Innovators and the Companies that Follow Them. Chemical & Engineering news, 84 (5): 13-19. January 30, 2006.  
<http://pubs.acs.org/cen/coverstory/84/8405cleaning.html>
5. Soap & Detergent Association, <http://www.cleaning101.com/laundry/index.cfm>
6. Technology News. Cold-water Laundry Detergent Is a Hot Idea, Environmental Science & Technology Online, September 21, 2005. [http://pubs.acs.org/subscribe:journals:esthag-w:2005:sep:tech:rp\\_detergent.html](http://pubs.acs.org/subscribe:journals:esthag-w:2005:sep:tech:rp_detergent.html)

## SUPPORTING INDUSTRY



### ***The Cutting Edge Apparel Business Guide***

SUZANNE LOKER

#### ***The Cutting Edge Apparel Business Guide***

An open-access web site

<http://ifup.cit.cornell.edu>

The Department of Fiber Science & Apparel Design has launched an electronic book designed for entrepreneurs interested in starting or building an apparel or textile-related business. The guide focuses on the apparel and textile industry to complement all of the general entrepreneurial resources already available.

Content includes seven lessons:

- Entrepreneurship
- Product Development
- Product and Business Life Cycles
- Sourcing
- Production
- Intellectual Property
- Distribution

The guide captures the interactive power of the internet through audio clips of guest entrepreneurs sharing some of their adventures in apparel and textile businesses—both successfully and with challenges. These clips make the guide come alive and are complemented with links to on-line resources and many photos and graphics. Interactive activities in each chapter help the reader explore and apply concepts in scenarios related to their own business idea.

The web site is posted on a free-access server, so please recommend it to clients you work with, professionals teaching or consulting with small business owners interested in apparel and textiles, and your colleagues around the country.

If you haven't seen Cornell's e-clips web site, be sure to visit it as well at <http://eclips.cornell.edu>. This site houses video-clips from over 100 entrepreneurs, including the guest entrepreneurs from The Cutting Edges. It is a searchable by name and topic, such as product development, intellectual property, social responsibility, etc.

## BROWSING WEBSITES

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Those interested in health issues related to pesticide use will find these two websites useful.

The Turf Pesticides and Cancer Risk Database, <http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/turf> is maintained by the Program on Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors. The site integrates information on chemicals evaluated for carcinogenicity by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with 111 active ingredients found in turf and lawn care pesticides registered for use in New York. Users can search the database by product, active ingredient, or cancer risk category.

Agriwellness, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that coordinates and builds behavioral health programs for the agricultural population. The group is based in the Midwest and supports a variety of services such as crisis hotlines, conferences, and support groups. It also publishes two newsletters < <http://www.agriwellness.org/newsletters.htm>>. The *Healthy Farmer* is directed at agricultural producers and the broader agricultural community. *AgriWellness Partners* is for individuals, organizations, and agencies that have an interest in behavioral health, agriculture and related topics.

## EXTENSION FACULTY AND STAFF

|  | Phone        | Email             |
|--|--------------|-------------------|
| Charlotte Coffman<br>- FSAD, Youth & Safety Issues             | 607-255-2009 | cwc4@cornell.edu  |
| Amy Galford<br>- Water Quality, Septic Systems,<br>Home*A*Syst | 607-255-1943 | aeg1@cornell.edu  |
| Ann Lemley<br>- Department Chair, Water Quality,<br>DEL        | 607-255-3151 | at12@cornell.edu  |
| Karen Steffy<br>- Topstitch Website, FSAD Loan<br>Library      | 607-255-8605 | ks247@cornell.edu |