

# TEXTILES AND APPAREL NEWSLETTER

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## Announcing

### Cornell Design League Lights Up the Spring

The 16th Annual Cornell Design League Show takes to the runway on April 15, 2000. Viewers will be informed, entertained, and amazed by the creative work of emerging fashion designers, all students enrolled at Cornell. Many of the League members are pursuing a major in TXA, but members come from all across campus.

For students to mount a show of their work is not unusual, but the Cornell Design League is highly unusual. All members join and participate voluntarily. They receive no credit for their work and participation is not a requirement of any course. In addition, the show has remained unjuried and noncompetitive.

Since its informal beginning with a handful of design students sharing their fashions for fun, the show has grown into a highly anticipated, professional event. Last year, the two sold-out performances featured the works of 30 student designers, modeled by more than 100 volunteers. Many designers exhibited full lines.

TXA faculty note that students see the show as a critical part of building their resumes and portfolios. They learn business and management skills as they put together the show and they create a wonderful portfolio of their work. TXA student, Erin Clack ('99) served as the group's recording secretary last year and presented a collection of children's summer apparel at the show. "I was working on the show the entire year and still frantically sewing on buttons the night before," she reported. "When it finally comes off, it's an incredible accomplishment." (Human Ecology News, Fall, 1999)

To see for yourself how that "incredible accomplishment" shapes up for 2000, join the audience on April 15, for the 4pm or 8pm show at The Ramin Room, Field House, Cornell University. Tickets are \$7 in advance or \$8 at the door. Contact Rita Choy @ [rpc8@cornell.edu](mailto:rpc8@cornell.edu) to purchase tickets for a group.

## ENGAGING YOUTH

### 4-H Fabric

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN AND PRISCILLA VANGORDER

Did you know that . . .

- the National 4-H Center has on display special fabrics that sport the 4-H logo?
- those same fabrics will be sold nationally by WalMart, Hancock, and Hobby Lobby stores, starting April 5?
- that Wrights has agreed to produce matching trims?
- that Simplicity and McCall's will feature the fabric in their Fall 2000 pattern books?
- royalties from this project will help fund the 4-H national advertising campaign, *Are You Into It?*®

Priscilla VanGorder, Oswego County, is the first person I know who has successfully ordered yardage. She plans to use the fabric at a textile weekend that builds sewing skills and focuses on community service. 4-H youth will make teddy bears for ambulance corps and police cars. They will make "Buckle-Up Bear" for the Oswego County Safety Board. These bears are donated to Head Start and daycare centers where youngsters practice buckling the safety belt on the 36-inch bears. The 4-H'ers also will make a bear for themselves—perhaps a "signature bear" that all the youth in attendance can sign.

In addition, the Oswego group will make premie hats and receiving blankets for the 100 plus infants who annually need clothing to go home from the hospital. All items will carry a sewn label that states, "Oswego County 4-H Cares About Kids."

A costumed Care Bear will visit for individual photos and publicity. Agency representatives will speak to the 4-H'ers, thanking them for their donations and explaining how the items will be used.

The 4-H yardage is available in four different patterns:

- green clovers on blue
- green clovers on white
- white clovers on green
- multicolored print that reminds you of the fair

They also offer two kits:

- a totebag using fabric printed with a jazzy design based on the 4-H pledge (sample found on pp. 3 of the 2000 National 4-H Supply Service catalog)
- locker caddy using the various fabrics

You can view the designs at this website:

<[www.fourhcouncil.edu/market/campaign/fabric.htm](http://www.fourhcouncil.edu/market/campaign/fabric.htm)>

### TXA Youth Program Retreat, May 11-13

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Nancy Breen, Beth Davis, JoAnne Baldini, Kaaren Hoback, and I look forward to working with you at the TXA Youth Program Retreat at the Casowasco Conference Center in Moravia and at Martha Van Rensselaer Hall, Cornell University, in Ithaca. Designed for 4-H Clothing Volunteers, Key Clothing Leaders, and Extension Educators, this inservice is guaranteed to be both educational and fun. The dates are May 11, 3PM to May 13, 5PM. Registration materials have been sent to each county but an extra set is enclosed with this newsletter. Registration deadline: Postmark of April 21, 2000.

We have limited space in the computer laboratory at Cornell on May 13, so **please carefully consider your options**. If you want to explore computer pattern making but do not yet want to invest in the program, please sign up for Session I ONLY. If you or your county own or are expecting to purchase DressShop, you should sign up for Session II (or Sessions I and II). If you are interested in learning DressShop at a later date, please note that on your form and Kaaren Hoback will offer a second workshop at her home in Dryden, NY.

DressShop sewing software drafts custom-fitted patterns. The basic program of 34 pattern styles costs \$199 and is available from LivingSoft for Windows or Macintosh. For more information or to try a demonstration, check out <<http://www.livingsoft.com/software.asp>>

*Last Chance: Submit your favorite idea for recycling garments or textiles for sharing at the retreat.*

### Career Explorations: Focus for Teens June 26-28

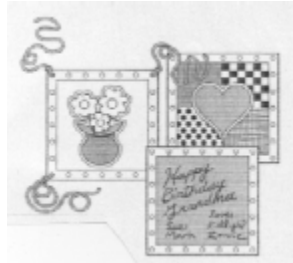
NANCY BREEN AND CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Once again, TXA combines forces with Space Sciences to offer *The Fabric/Flight Connection* during Focus for Teens. Only 18-20 youth can be accommodated, so remind teens in your county to sign up soon. Participants will explore the principles of flight, materials of airborne objects, fabrics and design of clothing for fliers, and careers related to aviation and textiles. Activities include making nylon, testing fabrics in the laboratory, constructing a model airplane, building a kite, and designing a parachute.

## ENGAGING YOUTH, cont.

### Watch for *Simple Gifts* Publication

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN



Many readers are familiar with the community service project Simple Gifts. Workshops were offered in Ontario, Jefferson, and Saratoga counties a few years ago and for the last two years the program was featured at the state fair. The publication is anticipated in June of this year so

watch your mail for a spring announcement. It will be distributed by the Cornell Resource Center. The anticipated price is \$15 or less.

The Simple Gifts program produces age-appropriate recreational items for persons with Alzheimer's Disease. These specially-designed items are made by 4-H youth and are donated to individuals or residential nursing facilities. The program encourages youth and adults to learn about the disease and to become more involved in intergenerational opportunities within their communities. Simple Gifts is derived from Simple Pleasures, a research project funded by the New York Department of Health and conducted by Dr. Doreen Greenstein, Cornell University, and Dr. Linda Buettner, Decker School of Nursing, Binghamton University.

### National Safe Kids Week, May 6-13.

A dramatic increase in the number of children playing basketball, soccer, and other organized sports has led to a rapid increase in sports-related injuries. Each year, more than one million children ages 5-14 are treated in emergency rooms for sports injuries. The National SAFE KIDS Campaign will launch a nationwide sports safety initiative — Get Into the Game! — during National SAFE KIDS Week 2000 (May 6-13).

The Campaign has developed an informative brochure for parents that highlights general sports safety techniques for active young people. The guide focuses on safety tips and protective gear. Copies are available from the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, Dept. NSKW, 1301 Pennsylvania Ave., NY, Suite 100, Washington, D.C. 20004. The brochure is also on the Campaign's website <<http://www.safekids.org>>

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

### Recent Textile Headlines

FRAN KOZEN

#### "Smart" Insulation Materials Regulate Temperature

Imagine wearing your own rechargeable heating system. The more active you are, the more body heat is stored for release later when you cool down. A new patented foam insulation material, ComforTemp, does just that with the aid of embedded tiny capsules of a material called Thermasorb. It absorbs and releases heat by changing from solid to liquid and back. ComforTemp offers particular advantages in extreme temperature conditions, greatly extending the length of possible exposure. ComforTemp foam is also non-bulky, breathable, and able to wick moisture away from the body, making it very versatile. It has found uses ranging from outdoor and extreme sports apparel, including boots and gloves, to dry suits for deepwater divers and thermal protective barriers for race car drivers and fire fighters. Look for it in ski clothing and winter boots next year.

*Apparel Industry Magazine, February 1999*  
*Frisby Technologies, [www.comfortemp.com](http://www.comfortemp.com), February 2000*

#### Do Your Feet Smell?

Lands' End has just introduced acrylic socks containing silver-coated fibers designed to prevent the growth of bacteria that cause those smelly feet. The socks were subjected to rigorous independent testing in which wearers walked or exercised in the socks for two days without washing. Sniff-testing (what a job!) detected only a slight odor in the new socks compared with cotton socks subjected to the same treatment.

*Fibernews, [www.fibersource.com](http://www.fibersource.com), March 22, 2000*

#### And While We're Talking Smells!

Trendy New York jeans manufacturer UFO introduced peppermint-scented nylon cargo pants at Vibestyle, a trade show that focuses on hiphop fashions. Rub the fabric to release the smell. It is supposed to last through a dozen washes.

*Jeanne Moos, CNN.com, March 29, 2000*

#### Spider Web Silk From Goats' Milk

A Canadian biotechnology firm, Nexia, plans to extract spider silk protein from the milk of goats genetically altered to carry a single spider silk gene. Spider silk is extremely strong, flexible, lightweight, and biocompatible, however it is not practical to farm spiders for their silk. Goats' milk can provide a large scale source of the spider protein, called BioSteel. These fibers are being developed for medical devices such as wound closure systems and tissue engineering, and also for aerospace uses and personal ballistic protection. Nexia expects to have a large enough herd to begin collecting milk later this year.

*CNN.com, April 28, 1999*  
*Nexia Biotechnologies Inc. Press Release, January 12, 2000*

## RECALLING TRADITIONS

### “Teasing” Was Serious Business

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Plants from the Dipsacaceae family have a dense head of concentrated flowers, each surrounded by bracts. The bracts are actually tiny spines that are stiff and prickly. We know them by the terms *thistle* or *teasel*. Teasels are found today in ornamental bouquets or viewed as a garden pest, but in the past *Dipsacus fullonum* played an important role in the production of woolen cloth. And the Finger Lakes of New York was in the thick of the thistle business!

The word *teasel* comes from the Anglo-Saxon *taesel*, to pull to pieces. In colonial times, wool fibers were carded or combed with teasels to separate, straighten, and remove debris. This natural carder was replaced by hand tools and machines, but teasels were still used to raise and smooth the surface of woolen cloth. This practice of *napping* or *teaseling* dates back to Roman times and was well known in the British fabric mills, from where it migrated to the Finger Lakes.

Teasel is a biennial crop maturing in its second year of growth. Burrs were cut by hand from the plant, dried in well-ventilated barns, trimmed, sorted by size, and shipped to the fabric mills in New England. Teasels were placed close together on a revolving cylinder (about 4-ft diameter), with their hooks facing in one direction. Woolen cloth was placed on another cylinder that revolved slowly in the opposite direction. As the cloth was drawn over the teasels, individual fibers were lifted and pulled in one direction creating the raised surface texture so important to fabrics such as flannel and broadcloth.

Skaneateles and Marcellus in Onondaga County were the centers of the teasel industry in the US from the 1840s to the 1950s. Dr. John Snook brought the first teasel seeds to the area; the first teasel grower was William Nipper. The crop sold for \$5 per thousand in the mid-1860s, but the price had dropped to 40¢ by the 1890s. Although not particularly profitable for the farmer, the industry was an important source of jobs for the processors.

#### Resources:

1. Channing, Marion L. *The Textile Tools of Colonial Homes*, Reynolds-DeWalt Printing, Inc., New Bedford, MA. 1978.
2. Ionta, Helen W. “The Teasel Industry,” *Skaneateles Sesquicentennial*, Skaneateles, NY. 1983.
3. Leslie, Edmund. *History of Skaneateles*, Press of Andrew Kellogg, NY. 1902.

## BROWSING WEBSITES

### What’s New

<<http://www.whats-new-mag.com>>

*What’s New* is the magazine for Family & Consumer Sciences, Health, and Guidance Educators. Although it is designed to serve classroom teachers, persons working with youth aged 10 or older in any setting will find useful information on these topics. Sample articles related to textiles that have appeared within the past year are “How to Select a Sewing Machine,” “Focus on Sergers,” and “The Latest in High-Efficiency Washing Machines.”

The website addresses a range of family and consumer issues such as money management, parenting, and nutrition. In the textile arena, it is most helpful in sewing, buying, and caring for clothing. For example, a buyer’s guide and reference directory include contact information for companies that sell educational resources, teaching aids, sewing machines, sergers, patterns, fabrics, and notions.

Lesson plans are available as are sample articles and recent reviews from the hardcopy magazine. Viewers also have a chance to participate in online surveys through the Question of the Month.

*What’s New* (ISSN 0043-4590) is published bi-monthly throughout the school year. A subscription in the US and possessions costs \$33.50 per year. To subscribe, sign up through the website, call 215-563-6005, or send request to *What’s New*, 1429 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

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