

# KENTUCKY

CLOTHING & TEXTILES PROGRAM  
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## MASTER

## CLOTHING

## VOLUNTEER

## PROGRAM



*"extending clothing  
knowledge and skills"*

April  
2007  
Newsletter

VOL. 16  
NO. 1



## *Bobbin' along with Marjorie*



It looked and felt like spring only briefly last week, and then the cold wind and snow returned. Cold weather aside, spring will surely return in the next couple of weeks. I love the colors that come with this season. I hope that they inspire each of you to capture them in your sewing projects. Many of you have been busy with 4-H sewing project groups. The fruits of your efforts will be evidenced come August when the State Fair comes around. For this, I thank you for your dedication to passing your skills on to our youth.

In 1986, the Charles E. Barnhart Fund for Academic Excellence was established to support activities which enhance excellence in agricultural programs. Since its inception, the fund has awarded numerous grants in such areas as student enrichment and development, programmatic initiatives, workshops and conferences. I am pleased to announce that the Master Volunteer in Clothing Construction Program is a 2007 recipient of one of these grants.

This funding will allow us to feature a guest speaker at the mid-rotation training in October. Karen Maslowski, nationally known presenter and author of *Workroom Design: Space Solutions for Sewing Workrooms* and *Sew Up A Storm: All the Way to the Bank!* Karen will present two lectures; one on "Secrets of Pattern Drafting Software" and the other is called "Fabric Royalty." I hope everyone will enjoy learning from Karen as she shares her wealth of sewing knowledge. Mark your calendars for October 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Barnhart passed away April 1, 2007. Please remember the legacy he has left behind.

I'd like to congratulate two new members and welcome them to the steering committee. Emma Caswell, is filling the CMV position vacated by Sandy Davis and Coetta Combs, is filling the County Clothing Leader position vacated by Mary Jean Grief.

Wishing everyone a happy spring,

*Marjorie M. Baker*

Marjorie M. Baker, M.S.

Extension Associate for Clothing and Textiles

## SPOTLIGHT



**Alice Newman**  
**CMV Henry County, Class of 2000**

My mother made most of my clothes through my high school years with the exception of formals. She was one of those people who could copy an outfit perfectly. In fact, she carried a small notebook and pencil in her purse so that she could make quick sketches of dresses I liked. (We got caught once while I was trying on a very expensive Lanz dress and asking in an evidently too-loud voice, "Mama, can you make it?"). She made all my maternity clothes without, as far as I know, a pattern. My point is, while I didn't sew, I knew good construction.

I became interested in sewing after my husband began his dental practice in 1963 and we had a few dollars for me to spend on new clothes. I enjoyed shopping, but was disheartened at both the price of outfits and the substandard construction quality, compared to what I was accustomed to. I decided that the sewing factory workers were no smarter than I and therefore, I could do as well or better. I had made curtains and a few things for our infant son, but nothing really complicated. My mother had presented me with a machine as a reward, I think, for producing a grandchild. What else did I need?

I began my sewing journey by calling my friend Thelma, a real expert, to ask her advice on how to begin. She told me that I should decide on something I really wanted. Then, I should find a pattern and fabric which I loved. She offered her help as needed. Well, I wanted a velvet suit in the worst way. Taking her advice, I went to the old Stewart's Department Store in Louisville,

bought an Yves St. Laurent Vogue pattern, a length of maroon velvet, thread, zippers, interfacing, etc. Returning home, I called Thelma to tell her what I'd done. Amazingly, she didn't turn a hair. She just reminded me to be sure to have the nap running in the same direction when cutting out the pattern pieces. Later, she admitted to being appalled at my having undertaken such a project. To everyone's amazement, my suit turned out beautifully. (I was not among those amazed, which only goes to prove that ignorance is truly bliss.) In retrospect, I think the good result was more a tribute to the pattern's excellent directions than anything else.

Anyway, that project, undertaken with what I now see as an excess of hubris, was the beginning. Since then, I have made almost everything imaginable--coats, suits, dresses, pants, skirts, blouses--you name it.

I have taken various classes, have a library of sewing books, read *Threads* magazine faithfully and am a sucker for any gadget or method which promises to improve my skills and/or save me time.

As a Master Clothing Volunteer, I am enjoying encouraging 4-H'ers to learn to sew. While sewing for one's self no longer means financial savings as was once the case, it remains the best way, in my opinion, to obtain well-fitting clothes which express one's individuality and creativity. I am thankful to have been given the opportunity to pass along what skills I possess to young people and try to do so with enthusiasm all the while remembering Thelma's advice--make something you want in a fabric you love.

### “Adopt a Room” Project

The MCV Steering Committee met in March and decided to adopt two sleeping rooms at the KY Leadership Center. We will be decorating Room 201 and a lower level room when it becomes available. Be sure to look

for our plaque on the door! Donations received at the Needlework Retreat have been earmarked to fund the decorating of one room. Silent Auction money will cover the cost for the second room.

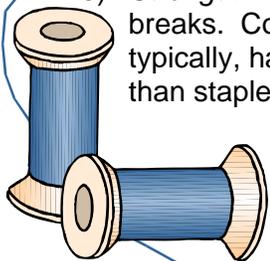


## ✓ DOROTHY DO RIGHT ✓

**Sandy Davis**, CMV from Jefferson County shares some tips about the selection of high quality sewing thread and its construction:

All “better” quality threads yield better sewing results with better seams. Better decorative threads give a richer, more pleasing result. How do you know which threads are “better?” Several factors must be considered, such as:

- 1) *Elongation* – the breaking point as the thread is stretched. Higher elongation yields better elasticity.
- 2) *Uniformity of thread* – does it have knots, slubs, dropped ply, dropped filament? The fewer of these characteristics, the higher quality the thread.
- 3) *Ply security* – do the plies of thread separate during sewing? If so, the thread is more likely to break.
- 4) *Lubricity* – is the amount of friction as the thread passes through a sewing machine and is stitched into the fabric.
- 5) *Strength* – at what point the thread breaks. Continuous filament threads, typically, have a higher breaking point than staple fiber threads.



Threads are constructed in various ways. Traditionally, cotton thread has been the standard, both for the home sewer and in the industry. Short fibers that are twisted together produce all *spun threads*. The staple lengths of the fibers used affect quality, strength and performance of the resulting thread. Generally, the longer length staple fibers result in a higher quality thread. YLI® Quilting threads and Mettler's® cotton threads are examples of long staple cotton threads. With the development of synthetics, manufacturers have tried to copy the sewing characteristics of cotton. Enter, *spun polyester thread*. Synthetic fibers are cut into varying lengths to mimic natural fiber lengths. All spun threads are made of staple fibers

and spun into single yarns. The single yarns are plied into sewing thread. Examples are Mettler's® all-purpose polyester, Maxi-Lock®, Elite Premium Serger Thread®, and Gutterman®.



There is a fuzzy appearance to spun threads. This surface creates a soft hand and more lubricity than continuous filament threads. Sewing performance of spun threads is excellent, but they are not as strong as continuous filament threads.

*Core spun* threads are made up of a continuous filament polyester core, which is covered with cotton or polyester fibers. The yarns are put through a twisting process which forms the thread. Examples of this process are Dual Duty® and Signature®.

Threads come in different sizes, or weights. Size is determined by comparing the thread's length to its weight, and all threads can be made in various thicknesses. The higher the number of the thread size; the finer (smaller) the thread is. A system of sizing, called the TEX System, which is calculated by weight in grams of 1,000 meters, is an attempt to standardize thread sizing for threads used in manufacturing. Confusion still exists in the home sewing market, however. The hope is that the TEX System will be adopted by the industry for home sewing.

(Source: YLI Corp. brochure “A Thread of Truth” and American & Efird, Inc.)

## NEW Report Forms

New guidelines and report forms were introduced and distributed at the fall training. If you need another copy, you may print one from the Master Clothing Volunteer Web site. The new guidelines are also there. **No reports** using the old forms will be accepted. Good news the new forms can be filled out on the computer.

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/fcs/MVP/forms.html>

# INTERFACING



## A note from Sue Perry:

Dear Master Volunteers  
What a surprise my quilt was. I had no idea you were working on it when you were here. How did you pull it off?  
Everyone at the retirement party signed it. I hope to collect more signatures before I leave in a few months.  
Thank you for my quilt and especially all you do for the youth of Kentucky.  
Thanks again  
Sue and Faith

## JUST SEW YOU KNOW

### SEWING "GREEN"

Once thought to be associated with only "hippies" and "tree huggers," organic fabrics are beginning to show up in local fabric stores (Hancock Fabrics) as well as on-line fabric sources (search for "organic fabrics"). In addition to organically grown cotton; hemp, soy, and bamboo are other fibers that are seeing growth in sales and use. Organically grown fibers are those that are grown without the use of harmful pesticides and fertilizers.

### What makes cotton wrinkle?

During wearing and cleaning, fabrics are temporarily distorted to accommodate the stress of use. If the fabric does not recover its

original shape, the results are described as wrinkling. Untreated cotton fibers do not have a permanent memory. The cellulose chains in the fiber move by breaking and re-establishing hydrogen bonds. There are no natural forces to promote the cellulose chains to return to their original configuration.

### What is wrinkle-resistant cotton?

This innovative fabric treatment works by strengthening the molecular "bridges" that connect cellulose molecules in a cotton fiber. The special process stabilizes the hydrogen bridges. This permits the fabric to retain its smooth surface, even after numerous washings. The finish does not alter cotton's durability, color clarity or natural absorbency.

### What fiber do consumers buy the most?

Cotton is the single best selling fiber in America today, outselling all man-made fibers combined.



The information above is from the **Cotton Incorporated** Web site. This site has a wealth of information on fabrics and fabric care:

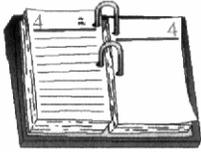
<http://www.thefabricofourlives.com/FabricSmart/>

## Special Thanks!

The Needlework Retreat held in March was a great success. The following CMVs provided leadership in teaching and assisting with classes: Ann Beard, Joyce Cox, Coetta Combs, Barbara Ketterman, and Marian Mulligan.

## State Fair Judges

A list is being compiled of interested CMVs for judging the 4-H Sewing Skillathon, Sewing, Knitting, Crochet, and Quilting projects at the State Fair. Anyone interested should let Marjorie Baker know by June 1<sup>st</sup> so that this information can be relayed to the superintendent.



## Calendar of Events

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**April 30 – May 3** KEHA Annual Meeting, Bowling Green, KY

**May 10** MCV Contact Agent Training, Hardin County Extension Office 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Eastern time)

**July 18** MCV Steering Committee, Fayette County Extension Office

**July 19–21** National Volunteer Outreach Network (NVON), Lexington, KY. “Gifts from the Heart,” Purchase Area MCVs

**July 26** – Princeton Field Day

**August 13–14** Kentucky State Fair 4-H Judging

**August 25** Kentucky State Fair 4-H Sewing Skillathon

**October 17-19** Mid-rotation Training, KY Leadership Center, Jabez.

**October 27** Kentucky Make it With Wool Contest, Clark County Extension Office