

Family Living

The Portland Observer

Knitting Makes Comeback As Pastime

Knitting, an activity that faded during the 1970s and 1980s, is coming back, especially among younger people.

In an age when people spend hours on computers, both working and playing, some people seem to long for simpler pastimes.

"We have definitely noticed an interest with many young professionals," said Carol Wigginton, president of the Knitting Guild of America. "It is a portable hobby, soothing to the mind and you wind up with a quality product."

The guild, which started with 550 members in 1984, now has more than 10,000, and has seen a 15 percent increase in attendance each year at its convention in March. Every year the convention draws a greater number of women in their late 20s and early 30s, Wigginton said.

In addition to attending conventions, many young knitters are coming together in small groups to share the pleasure of the craft and to form friendships.

In Washington, for example, eight

women age 26 to 34 gather once a month in Georgetown to show off the sweaters they have worked on since their last meeting. "That's so cool" was shouted from all corners of the room recently as one knitter, Tanya Ford, pulled out her handmade Christmas gifts from a shopping bag.

In Ohio, Pam Kelly, 36, said she valued her knitting group for the social contacts it provided. "At the time I joined the group, I was a stay-at-home mom," said the Rev. Kelly, now a Lutheran pastor.

The group gave her a way to meet people who share her interest.

In New York, where the Big Apple Knitting Guild has seen its membership jump to 176 this year from five in 1990, Lily Chin, a 33-year-old member who works in the fashion industry, attributes the rise to "a great deal more younger blood" in the group.

Knitting clubs are even appearing on college campuses. Lyndsey Wilkerson, 21, a junior at Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pa., helped start a group last year that has grown

to 60 members, from 25. Recently, the group held a knit-a-thon where 10 members made items to donate to a local homeless shelter.

Knitters can also find camaraderie on line, where there are more than 200 chat rooms and knitting-related sites. Knitting's origins are murky, said Anne Macdonald, author of "No Idle Hands: The Social History of American Knitting." What is known is that different techniques began in different parts of the world and were gradually introduced in the United States.

By the turn of the 19th century, Macdonald said, knitting became fashionable in the United States as people moved from simple garments to those with decorative touches. During the Depression, the number of knitters increased because it was often cheaper to knit clothes than to buy them.

Knitting lost its allure in the 70s and 80s as more and more women began to work outside the home, leaving them less free time.

While many of the new knitters are women, some men are also learning of its pleasures. Scott Overbay, 36, a member of the Eastside Knitting Guild in Seattle, said that his grandmother taught him to knit when he was 9, and that he started to knit again about six years ago when he was unable to buy the sweater he wanted. He is now teaching three male friends to knit.

A survey in 1994 survey by Crafts 'n Things, a magazine, showed that people enjoyed crafts like knitting - with its lulling, repetitious motions - because they relieved stress.

Yarn-store owners are hoping to entice younger knitters with items like novelty yarns - including those that glitter or have fake fur - in addition to classics like cashmere and Angora wool.

Many designers, including Donna Karan and Adrienne Vittadini, feature brightly colored yarns in patterns for clothing aimed at younger people, including cropped sweaters and knitted backpacks.



A Salvation Army official gives comfort to a little girl who tries on a warm winter jacket during the annual "Coats for Kids" event. The annual program, which provided about 2,000 coats for needy children, hopes to increase the number next year.

"Color of Money" Host Writes How To Guide

Kelvin Boston learned of a desperate need for financial planning in the black community the painful way - by watching his client, a 37-year-old widow, disregard his financial advice, squander \$350,000 in insurance money and end up penniless.

"Before her husband's passing, she was used to living from paycheck to paycheck. That's what made her comfortable," said Boston, now one of the country's most famous financial advisers. "At that moment, I knew I had a new mission: to help my clients understand and correct their attitudes toward wealth."

Boston, a Detroit resident and creator of a syndicated TV show about money matters, has spent two decades encouraging blacks to invest in stocks, mutual funds, real estate and their own businesses.

His 5-year-old show, "The Color of Money," reaches an estimated two million viewers nationwide through PBS and Black Entertainment Television. He has written financial plans for hundreds of clients. His new book,

"Smart Money Moves for African Americans," recently went on sale in bookstores nationwide.

"Smart Money Moves" is a 300-page how-to book that emphasizes reducing debt and investing wisely. In it, Boston urges black people to build wealth and live "with financial dignity."

The black community, Boston said, needs his advice. Just because people have better jobs and more education than their parents doesn't mean that their balance sheets are sound.

"Businesses finally respect African-American purchasing power, but not our economic clout," Boston said from his New Center office. "We have little net worth in banks, mutual funds, real estate and businesses. As America's No. 1 minority, we have the opportunity to put our financial house in order."

Boston's own financial house - or, more appropriately, his media empire - is in tip-top shape. He's chief executive officer at Boston Media,

which publishes The Color of Money Journal, a companion magazine to the show. He also publishes Corporate Detroit magazine, a monthly for local entrepreneurs and executives.

Did he mention he's also director of the Detroit-based investment group Calvert New Africa Mutual Fund? "I'm pretty busy," Boston said with a shrug. Boston says "Smart Money Moves" is the first "holistic" book on black investment because it is the only financial guide that incorporates cultural, political and religious nuances. The target audience is anyone who lives in a household making \$25,000 to \$50,000 a year.

Boston, a quiet man who pals around with New Age friends, describes himself as "more spiritual than religious." In his book, he tries to dismantle the idea that blacks should be content with poverty or postpone prosperity until they reach heaven.

"The majority of African-American churchgoers were taught that money was the root of all evil and to

store their treasures up in heaven," Boston said.

He points out that on average, a white household owns \$3,420 in stock mutual funds, but a black household, on average, owns \$115 in these investments. And while the interest income at white homes averages \$7,308 a year, black households average \$872 annually.

The crux of Boston's wealth-building plan, he said, is confidence: African Americans must believe they can play the stock market and win. That they can open businesses and profit. That they can buy a home and watch it appreciate.

"We can all rattle off the names of 10 or 20 white entrepreneurs, from Bill Gates to Ted Turner, but many of us can't name one black entrepreneur or millionaire," Boston said. "By not knowing who our financial heroes are, we tell others that we don't have any."

Jefferson High School Class Of 1956 is planning its 40 Year Reunion. If you are a class member or know of one's whereabouts, Please contact: Dale Hing, 644-7179 or Marlene (Goebel) Iverson, 690-2037.

Birth Announcement

LaTasha Marie Harris

LaTasha Marie Harris, the daughter of Debra Van Valkenberg of Portland and Antonio Harris of Vancouver, was born New Year's Day, Jan. 1, 1996 at Emanuel Hospital in Portland.

She weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 19 and a-half inches tall. Baby LaTasha has three brothers and sisters, Antonio, Taneshia and Bridgette.

BACK TO BASICS!

Prices Effective January 17 through January 23, 1996 at your nearby Safeway store.

THE Budget GOURMET LIGHT AND HEALTHY DINNER
LOW FAT • ONLY 440 mg SODIUM

THE Budget GOURMET LIGHT AND HEALTHY DINNER
ONLY 240 CALORIES • LOW FAT • ONLY 440 mg SODIUM

Red Flame Seedless Grapes
• SAVE TODAY AT SAFEWAY

98¢ lb

Budget Gourmet Frozen Dinners

- 11-Ounce
- SAVE UP TO 1.82 EACH

77¢ ea

Fresh Pork Roast

- Bone In, Blade Cut
- SAVE UP TO 80¢ LB

99¢ lb

Look For Your Safeway Weekly Shopping Guide In Your Oregonian FOODday in the Portland Metro Area ...And Save More Shopping At Safeway!

Enjoy Extra Savings With The **SAFEWAY EXTRA In-Store Savings Guide** Available at your Safeway store.