

CACTUS CABLERS

Winter/Spring, 2003

E-NEWSLETTER

Vol. 15, Nos. 1 & 2

Letter from the President



Did you ever have one of those days when it feels like everything is coming at you from all sides? Well, I've had one of those weeks! It started with a ROOT-CANAL on Monday and got progressively worse. Here it is Friday and things still aren't looking up. Just when I think I've got my priorities straight something else will pop up to shift my nerves and I have to reshuffle my priorities again.

I know it's a "stress situation" and everyone has them every day. I also know it's up to me to control it, so I think I'll take a nice long, hot "CALGON BATH" take one moment at a time and I know that it will end soon if I don't fight it

One of the things that happened is on Tuesday I received a call from TMC needing more gowns. Bad day to call because my gums were really hurting and stress was truly sinking in. (Funny how pain puts you on edge and makes you feel stressed out.) I only had eight finished gowns and no more that were ready to be smocked and I had only 10 blankets. I took them over to TMC and on the way home I realized that I had been scraping bottom, so to speak, too many times in the past year. I think we need to have more workshops.

When I e-mailed my letter to Linda, she laughingly asked for more than one paragraph (little did she know she was opening a Pandora's Box). I'm trying to oblige with thoughts that pop into my head. One of them is mostly aimed at newer members, when I was a new member our then vice-president (no longer with our chapter) called me and told me I had to present a lesson on the history of dots used in smocking. While I didn't like her method of telling and not giving me a choice, I now understand I learned more by doing the research than by having someone else give the lesson. So don't be shy in volunteering

to do a program. The older members are only too glad to aid and you learn so much more when you're the teacher. Try it and you'll understand what I'm saying is true.

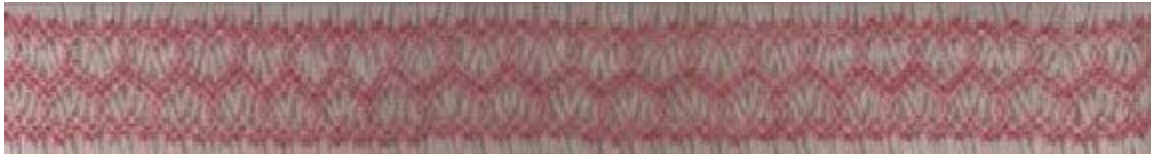
I have what I call a "Common Book". In it I write phrases or sayings or anything that means something to me. Whenever I get depressed or stressed out, I like to read the things I've gathered over the past 6 or 8 years I've been writing in it. In reading it this past week, I noticed a pattern developing and I wonder if the words have somehow altered my world or if it's just a window into the definition of me. At any rate, let me leave you with an excerpt from my Common Book.

Life is full of challenges. We can choose to accept them and learn the lessons they teach or we can stagnate in a puddle of our own fear. The choice is ours.

Personally I refuse to stagnate, and I will accept any challenge that will further my knowledge. I love a challenge! **Terri**

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PROGRAMS

March 19th Wee Care Workshop

Terri is in dire need of restocking our supply of gowns for UMC and TMC. This month we will work on making gowns and getting them into the packets for smocking. Come prepared to work and bring whatever you can from the following list:

Sewing machine
Serge
Pleater
Scissors
White thread
Iron + ironing board/pad
Fabric marking pen

Mini-lesson - no stitch this month due to Wee Care

April 16th Specialty Piping - Terri Kilgore

Terri has some clever trick up her sleeve for this month's lesson. If you know Terri, you know that you will be overwhelmed with her samples and technique. Don't miss this one for sure!

Mini-lesson - Pyramid Stitch w/ Ombré Shading - Linda Richards

We have many new members who need help with basic stitches. This stitch will cover stacking cables, wave stitches and color shading - a little something for everyone! Bring along a small pleated sampler, floss, thread scissors and smocking needles to each meeting this year. Our motto - "each one, teach one!"

This month bring a dk., med. dk., med., lt. and very lt. shade of one color floss + white. The graph for this stitch is at the end of this newsletter.

May 21st Madeira Appliqué & Embroidery - Loretta Paxton

This is a SAGA Chapter program featuring hand embroidery of a handkerchief using a Madeira motif in one corner with pin stitch technique to stitch colored fabric on white fabric and embellish another corner with embroidery such as stem stitch, lazy daisy, and granitos.

Mini-lesson - Rainbow Diagonal Cable Wave - Linda Richards

Diagonal stitching is a twist on the regular type of stitching we do. Add distinctive rainbow colors to come up with something truly special.

June 18th - Pat Allen To be announced

Pat has an idea for a program but hasn't given out the details yet. An e-mail will go out to inform everyone before the June meeting.

Mini-lesson - Smocked Scallops - Linda Richards

Scallops can add a delicate touch to your smocking. Learn how to position outline and stem stitches to create gently curved scallops. Bring a lt., med., and dk. shade of one color.

Note from Jacki: As program chairperson, I need to know what programs you would like to see us have and I would like it even better if you would VOLUNTEER to do a program - there is no better way to learn a new technique than to do a program on it - just ask Terri!



DUES

I still haven't collected dues from some members. Local dues are \$15.00. SAGA dues were paid by Cactus Cablers in December some still owe a portion of that amount that was not earned in the doll raffle. Please see me so I don't have to remind you!! Linda

Refreshments

March-Marion & Cathy K.

April - How about ordering sandwiches from **Incredible Edibles** again?!

May - Jacki & Terri

June - Linda & Loretta

July - ???????

The sign-up sheet is passed around by Gail each month at the meeting. Please sign up with a friend for a turn to bring lunch to a meeting. For the newcomers, we try to be vegetarian friendly. Several of our members either do not eat meat at all or do not eat various kinds of meat or fish so it is easier all the way around and actually cheaper to keep it vegetarian! If you plan to bring something with

meat or fish in it, either plan something without meat along with it or send an e-mail out so that those affected can bring something along for themselves. Cactus Cablers provides the plates, napkins, cups, and plastic ware. Those items are in the "lunch box" along with tea bags, sweeteners, instant coffee and paper towels. Please take the "lunch box" home with you from the meeting before your turn to serve lunch and bring it back the next month for the next person. Gail keeps the box supplied with everything - if you notice something is low, let Gail know.

Sit & Stitch (aka Stitch & Bitch!)

This is an opportunity for us to get together very informally (as if our meetings are formal!!!) in someone's home on the first Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. unless otherwise announced. We bring a project or problem to work on and a salad to share for lunch. The hostess provides a dessert and beverage. We always have lots of fun and laugh a lot (if

you don't show up, we're allowed to talk about you so you had better come!) If you need directions to any of the homes for the next meetings, get in touch with the hostess. If you want to volunteer your home one month, let Jacki or Terri know!

April 1st - Jacki Spatafore

May 6th - Linda Richards


June 3rd - ???????

Community Service Projects

I thought it would be a good idea to give an overview of the community projects with whom Cactus Cablers is involved. We have so many new members I'm not sure who has heard about what! Also, for all of the old-timers, it's nice to actually review all of the things we do!

UMC & TMC - Wee Care gowns in two sizes and hooded blankets

This is an on going project that Cactus Cablers has been involved in for many years. We added TMC to our list of recipients last



year and at their request designed the small hooded blanket to meet their special needs in addition to the gowns. We now also supply the small blankets to UMC along with their gowns. Both hospitals very much appreciate our donations.

Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind - "Joanie doll" and quilts

We were approached last year by the ASDB and asked if we could assist them with the need they have for supplying visually impaired infants with a specially designed soft sculpture doll and quilt that are visually stimulating. We readily agreed and have since worked with Linda Reed and Joanie Mauger; both have become members by the way, to digitize the doll's face for embroidery. One test doll with clothes has been made and is in the fine tuning stages. Terri is trying to get the first quilt done. As soon as the prototypes are finalized, we need all of you to jump in and help make these items!!

New Beginnings

Formerly Shalom House, New Beginnings is a shelter for abused women and children. This is the group we have selected to support at the holidays each year instead of doing a gift exchange among ourselves. We make or buy new clothing in all sizes, smocked or not, for girls, boys and moms. We also donate food certificates, and items not covered by food stamps (which are numerous!) and toys. Each member gives however she sees fit. The items are delivered to Terri before the Holiday lunch party and then Terri delivers them to New Beginnings where they are wrapped and distributed.

LIBRARY

Cactus Cablers has an amazing library for members. However, it has grown too large to bring to each meeting. We have nearly complete collections of Creative Needle, Sew Beautiful, Australian Smocking & Embroidery, many books (some rare and out of print) and the old original SAGA News and

other items. We also have the Judi Rose Index Guide to Creative Needle and Sew Beautiful which is helpful in finding articles about something in particular. Any item except those that are out of print can be borrowed from the library and taken home for a month. You will need to put down a \$10 deposit check per item (the check is not cashed unless the items are lost or are not returned) Out of print items can be requested and viewed at a meeting. Terri is also our librarian (Terri wears a lot of different hats!) call her before any meeting and she will bring the items that you request or you can make arrangements with her to pick up the items at her home if that is more convenient. This is a great membership perk, take advantage of it!

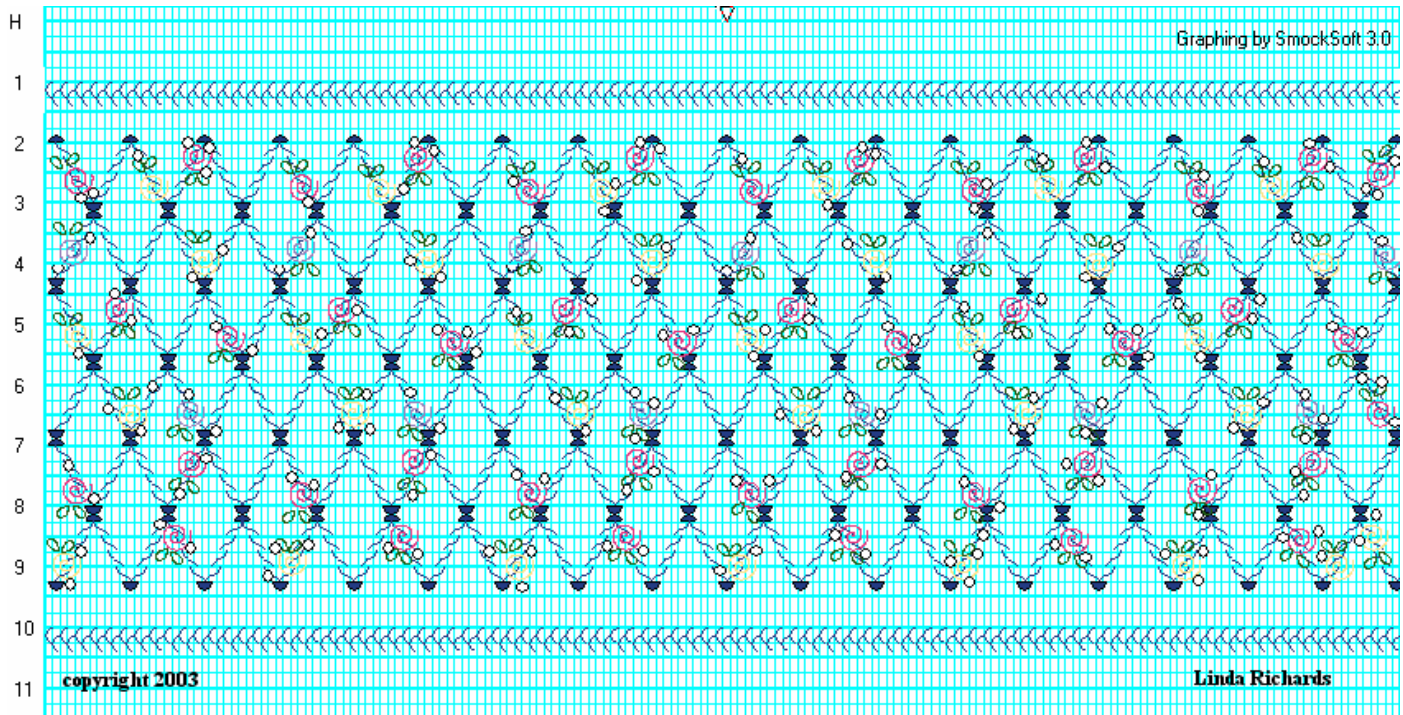
NEWSLETTER

Another freebie with your membership is this newsletter, published four times a year and posted on the website for your convenience.

However, **I need your help!** Please **contribute** pattern or book reviews, your smocking designs or projects, **anything** you can share with the group!



Flower Garden



Pleat 12 rows, design covers 182 pleats; DMC Floss 3325, 776, 745, 211, 368

Rows 1 & 10: Feather stitch, two strands #3325

Rows 2 through 9 1/4: Four step trellis, three strands #3325; work mirror image rows according to graph.

Embellish: Work pink, lavender and yellow bullion roses on trellis layer, add green leaves and white French knots as per graph.

SCRAP-BAG TIER-DRESS®
Sizes 1 through 6X
by Judy Johnson



NEW PATTERN

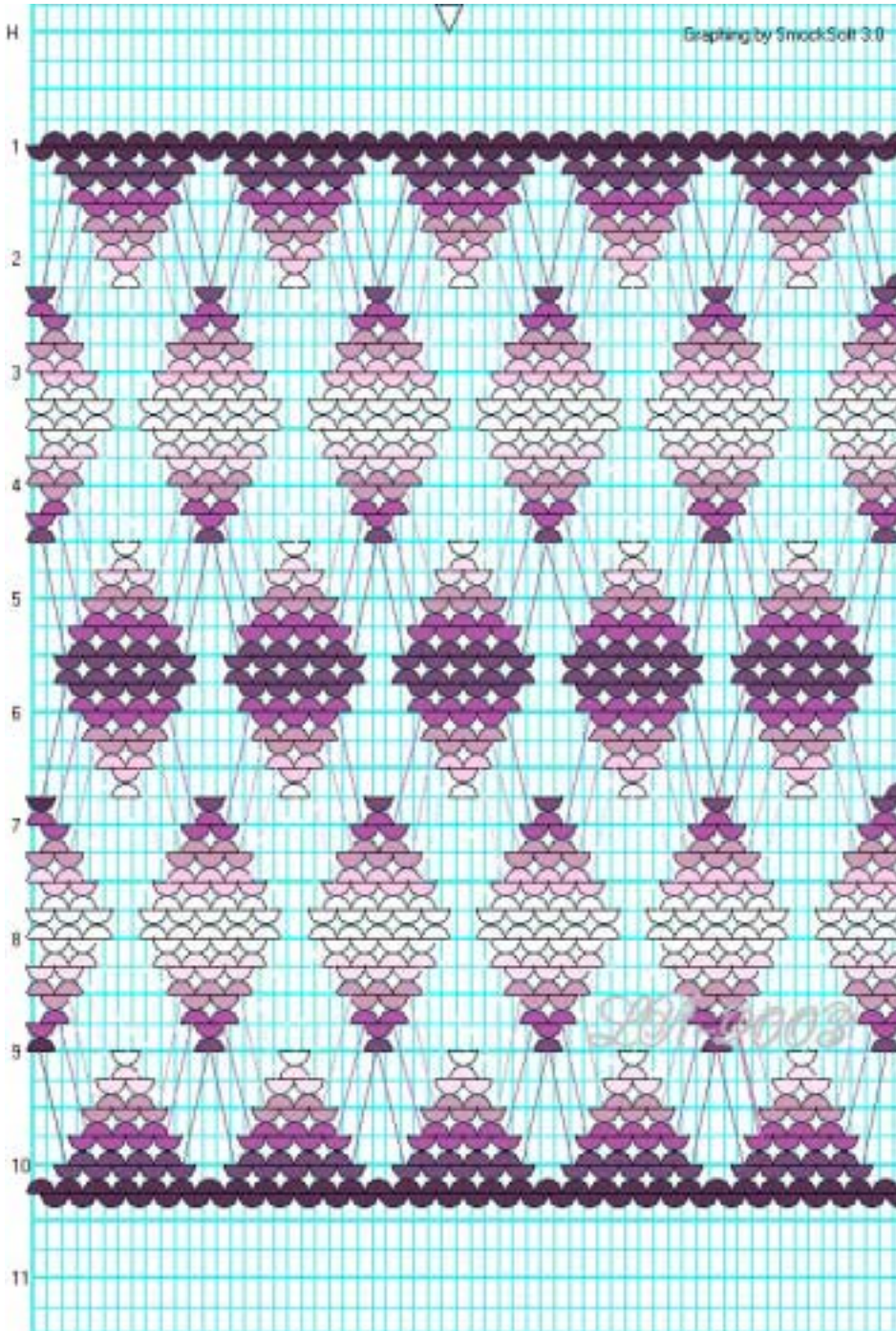
Scrap Bag Tier Dress (size 1 - 6x)

Check out this adorable little dress pattern by Judy Johnson. It is designed to use all the pieces of fabric in your stash that aren't big enough for any one thing but that are too big to throw away!! Combine them into this mix and match dress for summer. You all know my penchant for combining prints and gingham - this will be so much fun to make! Check it out online at [Creative Smocking](http://CreativeSmocking.com).



April Stitch of the Month

Pyramid Smocking w/ Ombré Shading (based on Chela Thornton's pyramid stitch)



This is an exercise in stacking cables, wave stitches and color.

Floss - 5 Shades of one color + white:

Dark
Medium Dark
Medium
Light
Very light
White

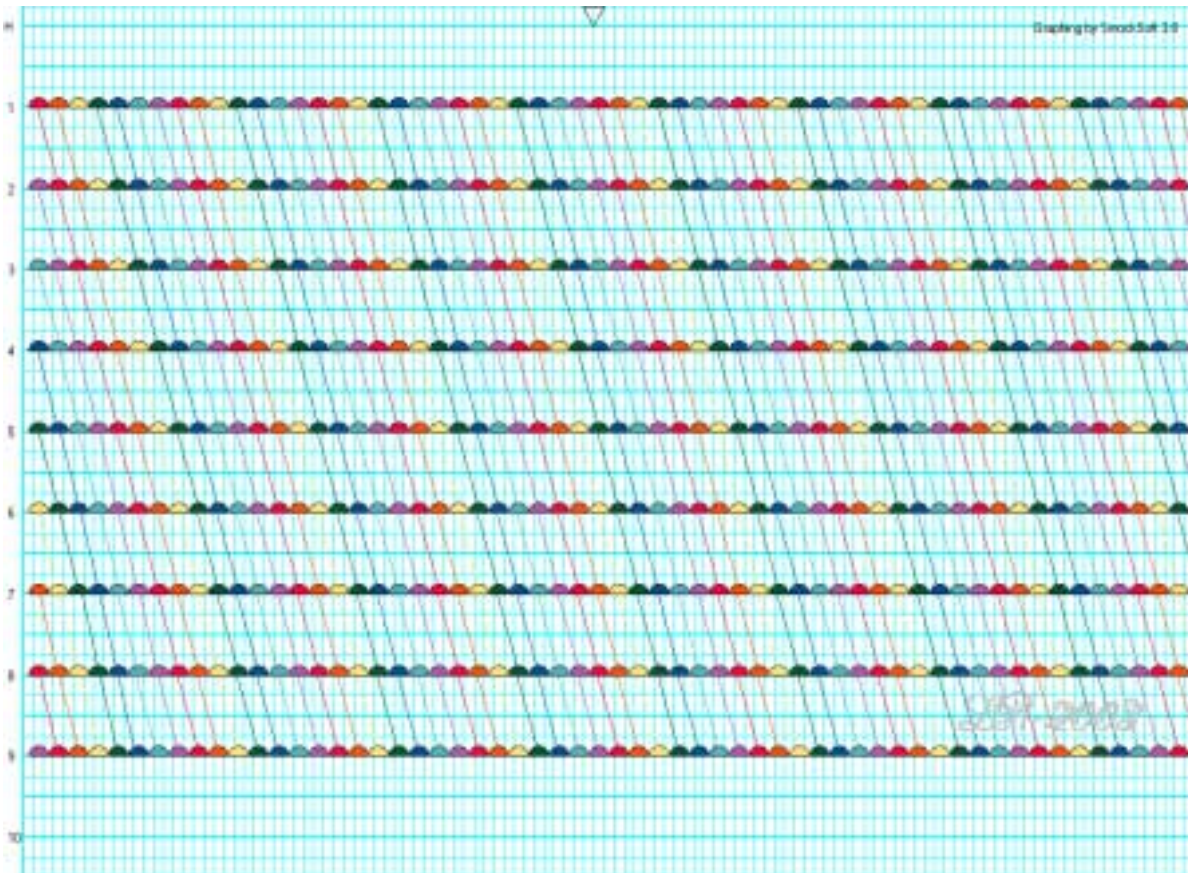


May Stitch of the Month

Rainbow Diagonal Smocking (diagonal cable - wave combination)

Do you remember good old **ROY G BIV** from science class? Those are the colors of the rainbow - red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet - and that is where this vivid and playful color combination comes from. This would be great on a summer play outfit!!

This is a color exercise and working on the diagonal. Bring a sampler pleated with 11 rows and floss from the rainbow!! This smocking will need to be back smocked so that it doesn't twist. If you want to use your piece in a garment - you may want to do your back smocking ahead. You can see another color way of this stitch in AS&E [A-Z of Smocking](#) on page 52.



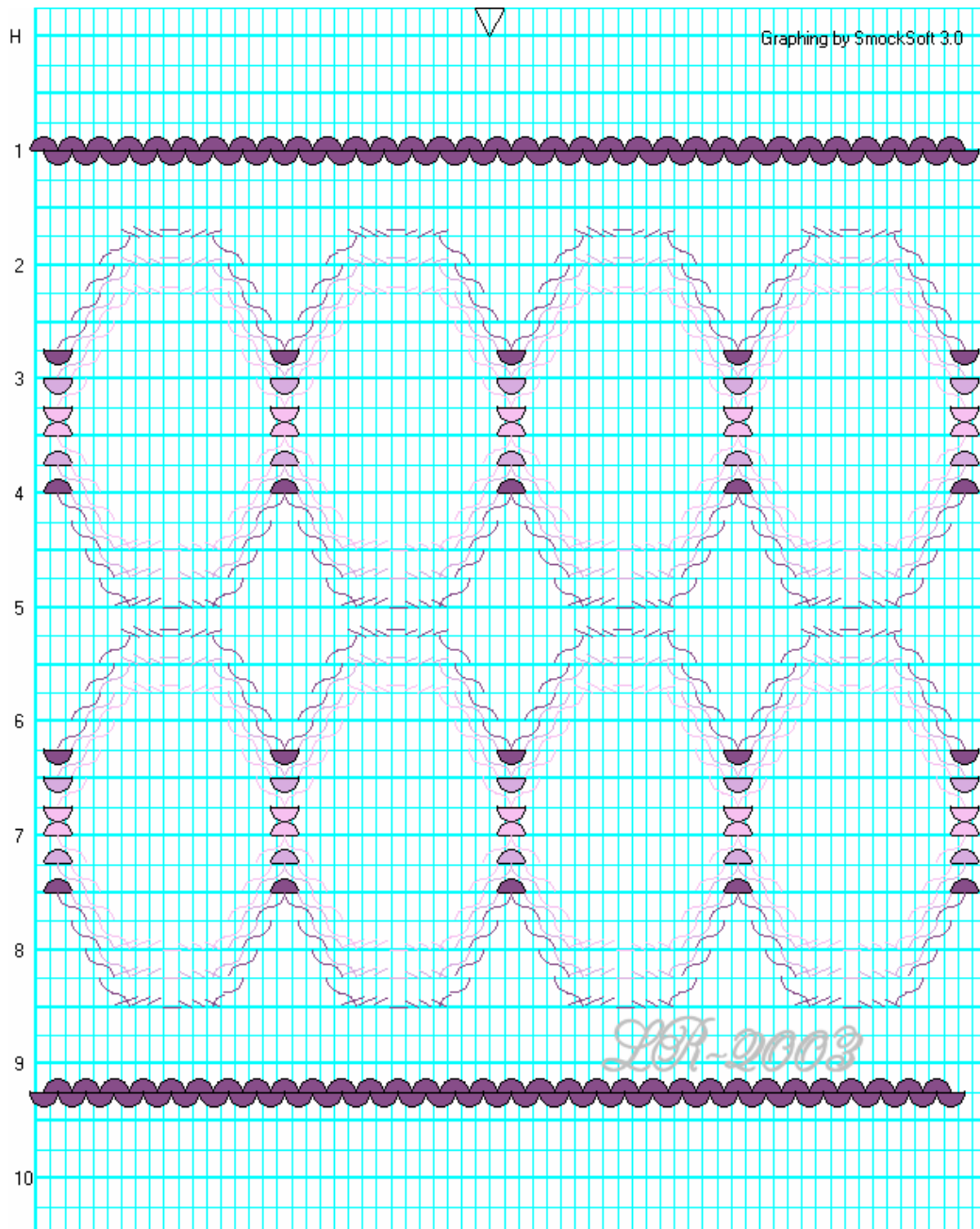


June Stitch of the Month

Smocked Scallops

(cable stitch, stem stitch & outline stitch)

This is an exercise in making gently curved lines. Bring a sampler pleated with 11 rows and three shades (lt., med., & dk.) of your favorite color of floss.





Salt Scrub

You are going to love this little recipe!! Have you ever indulged yourself and bought a jar of one of those expensive salt scrubs that make your hands, elbows and heels feel as soft as a baby's bottom? You can make your own now with a few inexpensive ingredients right from your pantry or the grocery store shelves!!

1 cup coarse salt (or sea salt)
1 T. lavender (or herbs of your choice)
12 drops essential oil, optional (your fragrance choice available at Wild Oats Market)
1 tsp. Vitamin E oil
Olive oil, almond oil (mineral oil or baby oil will work, too)

Mix salt, lavender, fragrance oils & Vitamin E. Blend together thoroughly. Pour enough of your oil choice over the dry ingredients to wet them and have a very thin layer of oil on top.

Store in an airtight container. To use, place a small amount in the palm of your hand and rub your hands together, massage all rough spots. Rinse under warm water and dry. You will have the softest hands ever - ready for that next project. No dry, chapped hands snagging the fabric or thread!

STITCHING SERENITY 3

**With Mirella Arroyo (Drawn Thread Tea Towel)
& Vaune Pierce (Silk Clutch with Smocked and Beaded Insert)
Santa Barbara, CA
June 27 -29, 2003 \$295.00**

Are you looking for a weekend in the mountains with friends to learn new skills and improve familiar ones - smocking, heirloom sewing and embroidery - with nationally known teachers? Sponsored by Berry Good Smockers, registration fee includes Friday & Saturday night lodging at St. Mary's seminary, 12 hrs. of class and all kit fees; all meals from breakfast on Saturday to lunch on Sunday; show & share; market; white elephant fabric exchange and an optional Saturday evening visit to Santa Barbara's State St. for shopping.

A \$100 deposit will hold your place, balance due by May 15th, enrollment limited to 50. For more information or to register contact Roseann Saldinger, sewfine22002@yahoo.com, 818-340-7642 or Vaune Pierce, vaune@pinenterprises.com, 805-529-9423.



Make Your Own Doll Dress Hangers

By Linda Richards

I don't know how many of you have run into the same problem that I have when it comes to hangers for your doll dresses. It used to be that JoAnn Fabrics carried nice little hangers for dresses for the ever popular 18" dolls. Not any more or at least not that I can find them. So I resorted to making a jig (pattern for bending wire) so that I could make my own hangers. It turned out to be a fairly easy project and the hangers are great!

Materials:

5" x 7" wooden plaque (available at Michaels)

Photocopy of hanger in the size you desire (I made mine a 5 1/2" hanger)

Craft glue

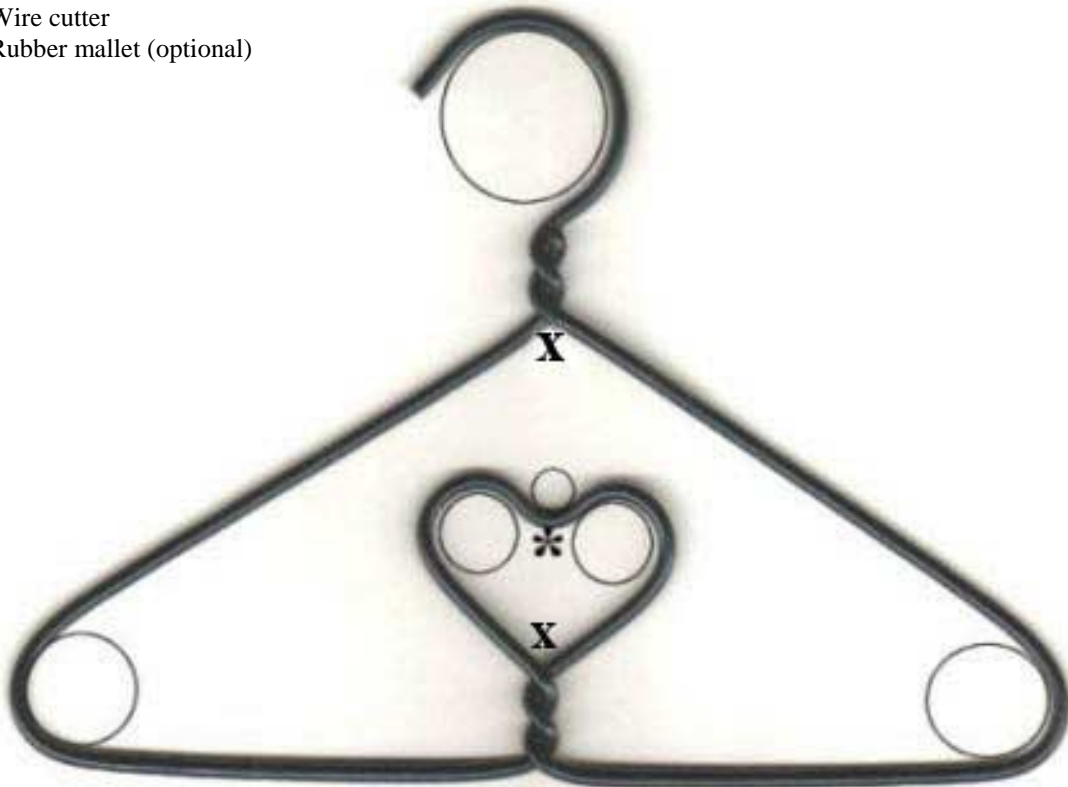
Various size dowels to cut into short pieces

14 gauge copper wire (Wild Wire from Michaels - 8 colors in 2' lengths in each pkg. for about \$7)

2 nails

Wire cutter

Rubber mallet (optional)



Start by enlarging this image to the size hanger you desire. Paste the photocopy directly onto the top of the plaque. Measure the diameter of the circles in the bends of the hanger. These are the sizes of dowels that you will need (there will be four sizes). Cut the dowels into 1" lengths - you will need 1 large, 2 medium large, 2 medium and 1 small. Drill holes the same size as the dowels where each circle is placed on the diagram. Drill the holes about 1/4" deep. Glue the dowels into the holes and allow to thoroughly dry. Hammer the nails into place on the "x" marks, at the point of the heart and top point of the hanger. Bend a piece of wire in half and place the bend under the smallest dowel at the star * on the drawing and bend the wire around the larger dowels. Bring the wires together below the nail at the "x" and twist a couple of times. Continue bending the wire around the next dowels and up to the nail at the top of the hanger. Twist the wire a couple of times above the nail, clip one wire end and bend the remaining end around the top dowel to finish the top of the hanger. Clip the excess wire off. Lift the hanger off the form and flatten if necessary with a rubber mallet.



Correspondence Course Review

Smocked Laces and Design by Nancy Malitz

Reviewed by Terri Kilgore

I thoroughly enjoyed this course once I stopped procrastinating. It was a challenge and it caused my creative thoughts to flow. To be able to achieve such depth and visual satisfaction was astounding. My mind kept running faster than my hands could keep up. Hence I made lots of mistakes.

I knew where I wanted to go with this course; I just wasn't sure how to go about getting there. Nancy gave me the know how to accomplish my desired effect. Now I feel I can go on to bigger and better projects.

Would I ever take another course from Nancy Malitz? You bet! I think it was worth every penny it cost. [That's hard to say these days.]

Now I think it will be hard to return to the way I smocked before, Nancy has shown me a more creative way. (Visit the [SAGA](#) site if you think you would like to register for this course.)

Cactus Cablers' Smocking Guild c/o Linda Richards

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Website: www.cactuscablers.org



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