

TEXTILES AND APPAREL NEWSLETTER

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Announcing

2002 Centennial Quilt: Celebrating 100 Years of 4-H

Although the 2001 New York State Fair has not even begun, many in the state are already looking forward to the 2002 event. The 2002 New York State Fair will feature a 4-H centennial quilt made from squares contributed by 4-H clubs in every county. The plan is to assemble the quilt, place it in a frame, and do the quilting during the fair. In addition to the actual quilt and enthusiastic quilters, the exhibit will include an explanation of quilting styles and a demonstration of high-tech sewing machines and computer-aided quilting.

Many thanks to the organizers, Betty Heitmann, Seneca County, and Carolyn Gauvin, Monroe County. Betty reports that "squares are arriving in the Seneca County 4-H office and look wonderful! Every square is creative and unique, and shows the enthusiasm that people have for the 4-H program across the state."

To learn more about the quilt-in-progress, check out the website <<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/4h/About4-H/NYCentennial/NYCentennial>> The website can also be reached from the 4-H Office page <<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/4h/>>

ENGAGING YOUTH

Hands-on Activities at the 2001 NYS Fair

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

TXA will offer \$75 to counties willing to promote In-Touch Science, The Fabric/Flight Connection, or Simple Gifts through experiential activities at the 2001 New York State Fair.

The Fabric/Flight Connection engages visitors in building tetrahedral kites, rockets, flying saucers, parachutes, and more. Awards to 4 counties

In-Touch Science targets children in grades 3-6. Select activities from any of four titles:

- *In-Touch Science: Chemistry & Environment*
- *In-Touch Science: Plants & Engineering*
- *In-Touch Science: Fibers & Animals*
- *In-Touch Science: Foods & Fabrics*

Awards to 10 counties

Simple Gifts provides instructions for 16 recreational items, designed for persons with Alzheimer's disease.

Awards to 4 counties

Applications were mailed from the 4-H Office. For more information, contact Celeste Carmichael, Tel: 607-255-2233, Fax: 607-255-3767, Email: cjc17@cornell.edu. To discuss program activities, contact Charlotte Coffman, Tel: 607-255-2009, Fax: 607-255-1093, Email: cwc4@cornell.edu.

TXA Youth Workshops for Fall 2001

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Beyond Tie Dyeing - September

A dyeing workshop for adults will be held on September 22 at the Canandaigua Middle School as part of Textile Expo and More. This annual CCE event is sponsored by Cayuga, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties. The workshop focuses on resist techniques for making designs on cloth. A resist (such as wax, thread, or starch) covers part of the cloth during the dyeing process. Uncovered areas of the cloth accept the dye to create a design. The aim is to teach instructors who work with youth.

In-Touch Science - October

Two workshops from In-Touch Science will be offered at the Association of NYS Youth Bureaus 31st. Annual Conference scheduled for the Chautauqua Institution this fall. Activities from In-Touch Science: Fibers & Animals will be led on October 15; activities from In-Touch Science: Plants & Engineering are scheduled for October 16.

Fiber Science - November

Fiber science topics are planned for the South Central 4-H Volunteer Leaders' Training scheduled for November 3 in Broome County. Watch the September issue for details.

SUPPORTING INDUSTRY

New York as a Fashion Center

FRAN KOZEN

If you are considering a trip to New York this summer, take some time to explore part of the apparel industry that makes New York unique. New York City is the center of the U.S. Fashion Industry. It maintains its preeminent status despite movement of apparel production to the south or out of the country. As many as 5000 apparel manufacturers maintain showrooms there, as do major fiber and fabric producers and fiber promotion groups. The editorial offices of fashion and consumer magazines are also in New York. Many apparel manufacturers maintain their design facilities in New York. For women's wear, a considerable amount of production still goes on in New York, to enable quick delivery of high fashion items.

The traditional Garment District, renamed the Fashion Center, is located from 9th Avenue east to Avenue of the Americas, and 33rd Street north to 41st Street. Entire blocks are devoted to wholesale fabric shops, shops full of buttons and trims, hat making supplies, and other fascinating items. Many of the wholesale shops will sell retail as well. Stop at the Fashion Center Kiosk at 39th and Seventh (Fashion) Avenue for information on the traditional New York fashion world.

Another area in New York is worth a look. The area north of Little Italy on the Lower East Side has been dubbed Nolita. It is the up and coming center for new designers who often design, manufacture and sell from one location. Orchard, Stanton Ludlow, Eldridge, Mulberry, Prince, Mott and Elizabeth Streets, all just south of Houston, are loaded with designer-retailers.

While you are in New York thinking fashion, visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art this summer. They have an exhibit called Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years' Selections from the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum up until July 29. It features about 80 garments she wore as First Lady.



When soldiers in the Crimean War needed warmer clothing, Baron Raglan instructed his troops to drape potato sacks over their arms. Upon their return to England, the soldiers insisted on the same loose comfortable fit and this part of the upper garment became known as "Raglan Sleeves."

—Fashion Hand-Ups, Monsanto, NY, NY

CONCERNING CONSUMERS

Extending the Life of Household Textiles

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

A consumer recently called TXA to ask how to remove stains and restore color to chair upholstery, noting that the fabric was "less than 8 years old." A friend lamented that the living room draperies were falling apart after "only 15 years" of use. Perhaps you, too, have been surprised or annoyed to realize that household textiles need replacement. How long should these items last and how can their usefulness be prolonged?

The American National Standards Institute, Inc. approved the Fair Claims Guide for Consumer Textile Products, a standard that includes guidelines for determining liability and a life expectancy chart for household textiles (below). As you can see, both the caller and friend mentioned above received good service from their draperies and upholstery.

Life Expectancy Table

Item	Years
Bedspreads	6 years
Blankets	5-10 years
Comforters	5 years
Curtains	3 years
Draperies	3-5 years
Sheets and Pillow Cases	2 years
Slipcovers	3 years
Tablecloths	2-5 years
Towels	3 years
Upholstery Fabrics	5 years

The life of any item can be extended with proper selection and careful maintenance. Before purchasing any textile item, make certain that the materials are durable, suited for the intended use and location, and have been treated with appropriate finishes such as stain and soil resistance. Also be certain that you understand and are willing to follow care instructions.

Upholstered furniture may not include care instructions. It is not covered by the Federal Trade Commission's Care Label Rule but manufacturers often voluntarily recommend a cleaning method. The American Furniture Manufacturer's' cleanability codes, adopted in 1969, may be permanently attached or included on the hangtag. Those codes are:

- **X** - Clean only by vacuuming or light brushing to prevent dust and grime from accumulating. Water-based foam or cleaning agents of any kind may cause excessive shrinking, fading or possible distortion.
- **S** - Refer treatment to a professional furniture cleaning service. Use of water-based or detergent-based cleaners may cause excessive shrinking. Water stains may become permanent.
- **W** - Clean soiled areas only with the foam from a water-based cleaning agent, like a mild detergent or upholstery shampoo. Apply foam in a circular motion. Vacuum when dry.

- **W-S** - Clean soiled areas with a mild solvent or a water-based cleaning agent. You may also use an upholstery shampoo product or the foam from a mild detergent. With either method, pretest a small area. Avoid any product that contains carbon tetrachloride.

Attention to good housekeeping practices can also prolong the life of household textiles.

- Protect furnishings from sunlight, fumes, and pets.
- Rotate and "rest" textile items when possible.
- Repair tears and remove stains immediately.
- Vacuum, brush, or wash frequently.
- Follow manufacturer's cleaning instructions.
- Clean before storing.

The key to consumer satisfaction with household textiles is careful shopping, routine maintenance, and realistic expectations.

Resources:

1. American National Standards Institute <<http://www.ansi.org/>>
2. Cleanability Codes for Household Fabrics, Clothes Care Gazette, May, 2001.
3. Life Expectancy of Household Textiles, Clothes Care Gazette, May, 2001.
4. Upholstered Furniture Cleaning, Care & Fabric Protection <www.homefurnish.com/fabrcare.htm>

BROWSING WEBSITES

Hong Kong Polytechnic University Institute of Textiles & Clothing

CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

<http://www.apparelkey.com>

The Institute of Textiles and Clothing of Hong Kong Polytechnic University in collaboration with the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) developed this website as an apparel manufacturing portal. It links to a worldwide community of apparel experts and intends to provide information and solutions for the apparel industry.

The website is also useful for extension educators and persons interested in textiles and clothing. For example, clicking on Apparel Manufacturing and then Clothing Materials leads to the Fibers Trademark Directory. Here you will find charts that correlate fabrics with manufacturers. You might choose to read about a fiber like MicroSafe, an acetate with antimicrobial protection. Selecting Fashion Resources will give you information on 32 fashion magazines. Exploring the Coloration and Finishing section yields a variety of information about dyes, environmental concerns, and fabric finishes. In the Textile Finishing area alone, six functional finishes, eight textural processes, and three stabilizing effects are discussed.

RECALLING TRADITIONS

Dogbane: A Native American Fiber

LAURA CUTTER* AND CHARLOTTE COFFMAN

Dogbane (*Apocynum Cannabinum*) is an herbaceous perennial. It grows in fields and open woods all over North America. Dogbane is also called hemp dogbane, Indian hemp, and prairie dogbane. The genus name *Apocynum* comes from the Greek word for "away with the dog." *Cannabinum* means "like hemp" and *cannabis* is the genus of true hemp. The reference to hemp in the Latin and common names of dogbane suggest its use as a fiber source.

Stalks are harvested in autumn or early winter and stored in a dry place. The outer layer is removed by scraping with a knife or sharp object. The remaining stems are cracked by squeezing, and the woody parts removed, leaving the fibers intact. Fibers are cleaned, separated, and twisted into yarns or cordage for use in many items.

Though uncommon today, dogbane was an essential textile fiber in the life of early Native Americans. They produced a strong and long-lasting fiber, similar, but more durable than, the hemp known to European settlers. Native Americans used dogbane to make thread, cordage, bowstrings, fishing line, fishing nets, and ropes. The material was woven into fabric for pouches, bags, bedding, and clothing. The thread was stronger than cotton and used for sewing fine beadwork onto buckskin.

Remnants of items made of dogbane have been found in archeological sites dating to 1000-300BC. The records from the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1619 confirm that the colonists knew of dogbane's existence and its uses, probably because Native Americans showed them how to make cordage. David Zeisberger, a German missionary in Ohio, wrote in 1779:

The women make blankets of turkey-feathers [sic] which are bound together with twine made of wild hemp. Of such many are to be found even at the present day among the Indians, and these in winter are better protection against the cold than the best European blanket.

The Tuscarora are a Native American group originally from North Carolina. After a war with the colonists, they moved north to upstate New York and became the sixth nation in the Iroquois Confederacy. Most modern-day Tuscarora people live in northwestern New York. In the language of the Tuscarora, *Tuscarora* means "hemp gatherers." They used cordage made of dogbane for hunting and gathering, sewing, and making vessels. The Tuscarora were known as 'the people of the shirt', because of their extensive use of dogbane in fabric. Of course, you

won't find shirts made with dogbane in stores, but Native Americans are reviving its ancient uses. Today, commercial basket makers use dogbane in their work.

When the In-Touch Science team was testing science activities with students at the Tuscarora Indian School in Lewiston, NY, we were shown samples of dogbane plants, fibers, and items made from that fiber. This sparked our interest and led to this article. If you, too, are intrigued by dogbane, you will enjoy these websites:

<http://2bnthewild.com/plants/H174.htm>

<http://www.lib.ksu.edu/wildflower/dogbane.html>

<http://www.desertusa.com/mag00/may/papr/dogbane.html>

Resources:

1. ABOtech <<http://www.abotech.com/Articles/Edholm01.htm>>
2. Erichsen-Brown, C. Medicinal and Other Uses of North American Plants, Dover Publications, NY, NY. 1989; 1979.
3. Michigan State University Bois Blanc Island Rendezvous <<http://www.msu.edu/~oberg/boisblanc.html>>

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