



JANUARY 2023



Message from the Executive Director

Phew. The holiday rush is over, and you're packing the lights and decorations back up for the next holiday season. Often at this time of year, many of us experience a post-holiday letdown. Now is the time to think about self-care. You might even consider how The Sewing Labs can support you with self-care sewing.

According to Anna-Lisa Greenwade, a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner at Mental Health Partners in Colorado, in an article with SEW NEWS magazine titled Sewing for Mental Health-How Sewing Can Improve Your Mood:

"Essentially, crafting can reduce the amount of time and brain



Eileen Bobowski
Executive Director of
The Sewing Labs

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experience, this can serve as a bridge to allow more space for healing ideas, such as optimism and gratitude."

At The Sewing Labs, we experience this boost in optimism, self-confidence, and gratitude every day with the people in our room. When you are sewing, you are focused and concentrating on what you are doing; the benefit is that all your worries fade away, and the finished piece brings a tremendous sense of accomplishment.

Research demonstrates that the act of sewing affects both your brain and your emotional health. Sewing lowers your blood pressure, reduces your heart rate, lowers your risk of dementia, enhances creative thinking, reduces anxiety, and puts you into 'creative flow,' which some say is the key to happiness.

SEW, please take some time for yourself this month by signing up for a workshop or registering for Basic Sewing classes or attending a free Open Stitch session on Fridays. Register by clicking here.

In kindness,

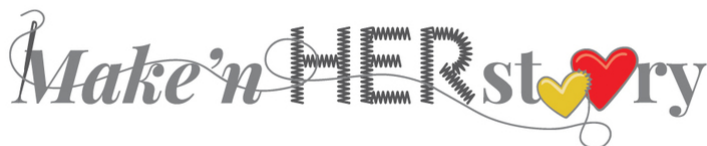
Eileen



Sewing for Mental Health

Creative outlets such as sewing can be extremely beneficial for mental health—but for the days you're feeling unmotivated, the idea of sewing something new can be daunting, especially for beginners. Try out these five simple, soothing projects when you find yourself in need of a patchwork pick-me-up!

1. Coffee cozy
2. Heating pad
3. Sleep mask
4. Re-usable makeup remover pads
5. Throw pillow



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SAVE THE DATE! – More Pressing Matters

Maken' HERstory is sooner than you think! Our signature fundraising gala is held annually to raise funds to support the students in our programs. It will be held this year on Friday, March 24, 2023. The Sewing Labs needs volunteers for all sorts of different tasks—many before the event and some others during the event. Ask how you can help!



Sew Powerful Purses

For the past couple of years, Chris McMullen has spearheaded locally a project called the Sew Powerful Purse program. Not only does Chris craft the purses herself, but her outreach includes giving classes in which women learn to make the purses, thus extending the sewing circle for this mission.

The project began in Zambia, where adolescent girls miss as much as six weeks of school due to inadequate feminine hygiene supplies. The Sew Powerful Purse provides the sanitary products they need to stay in school during those days each month—and not just the products, but also a wonderful way to carry them. The girls themselves take a pledge to stay in school when they receive a purse. And the local production of these purses—as well as the efforts of sewists nationwide—helps the moms in a respectful, strategic way.

The project goes a step beyond by training and supporting women in Lusaka, Zambia, whose fabric craft yield includes reusable feminine hygiene products. They also produce soap and farm-fresh food—all designed to keep kids in school.

Due to her dedicated involvement, Chris has been selected as the national Service Coordinator for the Sew Powerful Purse Project.

Chris implores us all to participate. The pattern can be downloaded at www.sewpowerful.org and

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can be dropped off at the Sewing Labs, 526 Campbell St, Kansas City, MO., to be packaged and sent to Washington.



Image Credit: [Threads Magazine](#)



Current Project: A Surge of Aid

Did you know that a person loses 30 percent of body heat through the head? Through the Warming Centers and homeless camps in KC, we at The Sewing Labs provide warm hats and scarves to help others stay warmer on colder days. Volunteers prepare ready-to-stitch fleece kits with fleece that is provided by many generous supporters. Each kit contained materials make sets of hats and six scarves along with instructions.

“Sew” many of these hats and scarves are made by volunteers and then distributed via City Union Mission and other organizations. Thank you to all of you who participate in this way. We have scheduled a Fleece

workday on January 31st from 10-3. You can come sew them up at The Sewing Labs!

Last year, volunteers stitched up tote bags for homeless persons. These roomy sacks were a

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locations of resources the person could access, and on the back of the bag, the names and contact information for those resources. These totes were the brainchild of Tiffany Buckley and were produced and distributed in collaboration with Volunteer KC.



Revere Revived

A much-more-than-vintage Revere sewing machine found its new home during the spring of 2021 Fabric Grab. A lovely metallic blue, it had been owned for most of its life by Leonora, mother of Renea and Rebecca. The following message from the daughters was with the machine when it was donated to The Sewing Labs, and it was sent on with the machine to its new home.

Her daughters reminisce. *"The first thing I remember Mom sewing after her sewing class were swimsuits for us. One had purple frogs on the fabric. I remember hanging around in the basement waiting for them. She made us quite a few costumes: Little House on the Prairie dresses with aprons and bonnets, poodle skirts, and a 'Flower' costume for the skunk in Bambi with a pink gingham bow on the tail. She was always mending clothes for one of us, including Dad. Mom was very artistic. She would tackle any project from curtains to quilting. And her machine could take on anything, from the slippery knits for swimsuits to the denim of our designer jeans. That powerful, well-built Revere machine rarely failed in a task. When I bought my own machine, I wanted something as strong and steady as hers so I invested in an industrial machine. Even it does not perform as well as Mom's little blue Revere. She took good care of it and had it serviced regularly. I am absolutely positive that Mom would be happy knowing that it's now blessing the home of another seamstress. Happy Sewing!"*

Kate, the buyer, herself a creative, active woman, was just as excited about learning to sew with the Revere. She said that her own mother had also been an incredible seamstress, but when she

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was younger, she'd been intimidated by her mother's skill in the craft, so hadn't learned. Now that is all about to change.

The Sewing Labs accepts donations of 'gently-loved' machines to re-gift them to a student in our program, which allows them to hone their craft at home. And sometimes the donated machines are offered during Fabric Grab for a donation that supports The Sewing Labs' programs. If you're interested in donating a machine, contact Linnca at 816-888-3051 or simply drop by 10-3 Tuesday through Friday.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Highlighting our Students and Volunteers

Margy Galloway

In early April 2020 when CoVid-19 rampaged through the area, Margy Galloway picked up a mask at her church and read the card with it. Until then, she didn't know about The Sewing Labs but did know about sewing. One of eight children, she grew up on a farm near Powell Gardens, and her mother frequently was stitching something or other.

Margy quietly became a TSL volunteer, taking fabric home and sewing masks herself, about 1500 in all, for both children and adults. When the current location on Campbell Street opened, she started coming weekly to see what else she could do, often bringing sisters Linda and Ann to help. She sorted donations and notions, categorizing and organizing hundreds of items.

When the annual holiday pillowcase project came around, she enthusiastically volunteered for it. This project provides area seniors at low income retirement and nursing homes with two pillowcases—one with a holiday theme and the other suitable for everyday use. Margy made around sixty pillowcases for that mission. Then she re-organized the rainbow of cubbyholes that house the donated fabrics, sorting them into usable, quilting, garment and Free Friday groupings. As with so many of our talented and dedicated volunteers, this isn't Margy's first time volunteering, nor her first time volunteering in a sewist's capacity. Recently, she and her sisters joined the librarian and others at Abraham Mallinson Elementary School [Sugar Creek] in a program teaching children to make their own masks.



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Volunteer Signups Made Easy

We're using SignUp.com to organize our upcoming SignUps.

Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

- 1) Click the button above to view Volunteer Opportunities.
- 2) Review the opportunities listed and choose the opportunity and spot(s) that best fit your schedule.
- 3) Sign up! It's easy - you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.com.

Note: SignUp.com does not share your email address with anyone. If you prefer not to use your email address, please contact us at VolunteerCoordinator@thesewinglabs.community, or Linnca@thesewinglabs.community, and we will sign you up manually.



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