



eNewsletter

The nation's largest sewing show, tailored for novices and experts alike!

www.sewexpo.com

Issue 78, June 2016

2017 Expo Dates - March 2-5, 2017 Puyallup, Washington

Dear Expo Attendees,

The 2016 Expo was a huge success and we thank you all for attending. We are now planning for 2017 and hoping to incorporate your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas. It looks as if this coming year will be another big year for the Expo with many new vendors, speakers, style shows and events. I hope you have it on your calendar because it is never too early to plan for this big event.

One very important part of the Expo is our sponsors and their most welcome generosity. They help us to keep prices down, promote the Expo, and provide wonderful door prizes every day and at special events. Those sponsors include Baby Lock, Quality Sewing, Fashion Sewing Supplies and Janome for the bags; Baby Lock for Friday Night Live; Coats for Quilters Night Out. Also a big thanks to our donors for the Grand Door Prizes including Brother International/Quality Sewing, Pfaff Sewing Machines/Quality Sewing, Viking Husqvarna Sewing Machines/Quality Sewing, Janome America/South Sound Sewing, Bernina of America/South Sound Dealers, Elna USA/South Sound Sewing. And thanks to all of you who made and donated a total of 4920 beautiful pillowcases to Mary Bridge Hospital. You are to be commended!

One big change for 2017 is the end of the collection of pillowcases. Ann Sagawa has searched far and wide for hospitals and/or nursing homes that may want them. They have told us that it is too much of a challenge for them for several reasons including the need to sanitize them, storage, and handling. So, we are

changing our focus for 2017 and looking at a new venture for your involvement. We will be talking more about that in the future but it will be something you can do at the Expo rather than at home.

Now let me answer your questions, concerns, and suggestions about 2016. Your feedback is very important to us and you may email me at any time with those ideas. We get many good comments so please know that we appreciate those too.

ADA

I do sympathize with those of you who need scooters during the Expo. The rent is expensive but unfortunately our choices are limited within the area. Janet will be looking at the alternatives.

ADMISSION/4DAY PASS

We understand that some of you don't like the wristband for the 4-Day pass. When we started the 4-Day pass we committed to a three year trial period. So we will be reviewing this option after next year's Expo.

Some think the entry fee was up and the show was smaller. That just isn't true. We have not raised prices in the last two years and have no intention of raising prices in the near future. The show is not smaller but we have shifted seminars around to utilize the facilities better. And we will do more shifting in 2017 as we are trying to put seminars in better places.

AV

Trying to find the right combination of AV equipment for classrooms is a never ending process. Ann works very hard to put speakers together with what they ask for in terms of equipment. Then we have the challenge of the rooms at the Fairgrounds which don't always lend themselves to what is going on within them. Please know we try our best within our means to arrange for the best we can get in AV. We have AV specialists on the grounds to tweak what needs fixing and we apologize if you have had a bad experience. I can tell you it is a juggling act to have 98 speakers per day in 15 different rooms and fit the AV to all of them. That's a lot of options! We continue to work on this and appreciate your suggestions.

CHARITY SEWING

As I mentioned above, we will no longer be collecting pillowcases at the Expo. We are hoping to offer a sewing area at the Expo again. More on this later in the year.

CTA/VOLUNTEERS

Yes, I agree...a huge shout out to all the volunteers who work for 4 long days at the Expo. They not only work at the Expo, they work for months before the Expo. Volunteers made the fabric bags to put threads and small waste fabrics in for the classrooms, they help to process and mail all the seminar and admission tickets, they work on the style shows, and provide manpower whenever needed for everything from mailing brochures to keeping our mailing lists up-to-date. We thank them!

Sometimes a volunteer may be tired and when working has been less than friendly. I apologize for that as we don't condone rude behavior. I hope you understand that being a volunteer hostess is not always easy.

CLASSROOM TOPICS

Your suggestions for topics and seminars are wonderful. You had other suggestions we are also going to share with presenters like the colors they choose to wear which interfere with seeing samples, instruction sheets, etc. We will try to do a better job of repeating popular seminars as well.

FAIRGROUNDS/FACILITIES

I can only tell you that we have nothing to do with the food offered by vendors. The Fairgrounds is in charge of that. And we do pass your suggestions on to them. If you can bring a lunch from home, do it.

We pass all your suggestions regarding restrooms on to the fair staff. The big problem for vendors is that they cannot leave their booth unattended and therefore have no time to wait in line. That is the reason for one or two stalls are reserved for vendors.

Many of you have asked for beer and wine. We did try that one year but unfortunately not enough people bought it to make it pay. Anyway, do you really want to buy fabric after a beer? Maybe then we would need beds for naps! Just joking!

The show closes at 6:00 PM and no food vendor will be open after that.

FOOD AND DRINK IN ROOMS

We know most of you can handle water and coffee just fine. However, water and coffee spilled is something we just do not have time for. And when some speakers want to pass those precious samples around, they don't want them back with stains. So, this policy will not change. I will continue to ask you to do your eating

and drinking outside of classrooms. And there are signs about this by all the seminar rooms. Thank you.

FREE STAGE

We will rethink the coffee booth near the Free Stage. Also, we will arrange for an easel with paper on the Free Stage for teachers to use.

FUTURE SEMINAR TOPICS & VENDORS

I cannot thank you all enough for the suggestions you have made this year. We will be sharing your ideas with vendors and speakers and hopefully be able to offer some of your suggestions. It is always hard to second guess what might be the hot topics each year and although we try, sometimes we miss. So keep those ideas coming, you really help us plan.

HOTELS

Some hotels have shuttles, some don't. We cannot provide off grounds transportation because of liability costs. We have looked into it many times over the years and it is just cost prohibitive.

We also do not endorse any of the hotels listed on our website. We list them as a favor to the participants. I suggest you arrange for hotel rooms very early as they sell out quickly. You might call and ask if they have shuttle service.

MISCELLANEOUS

Let me say we are not in the retail business. We don't sell anything other than a good time at the Expo. So, if you forgot your pen and paper, Aspirin, Tylenol, etc. I suggest you ask the hotel you are staying at for paper and pen. We just have enough to do without going into retail. Ann said she will put a list on our website of suggested things to bring to the Expo. You then have to remember to look at that.....before you get on the plane or in the car to come. On second thought, why don't you start making a list today on your phone under "reminders". I do this all the time so I remember what I need to take on trips. I too am forgetful at times and since the phone is usually in my hand a few hundred times a day, I can always add to a list without leaving my desk or chair.

We do have medics on the Fairgrounds for emergencies.

Some have asked for "theme days". This coming Expo will have a theme and you will be hearing more about it. There will be a contest connected as well. Something fun for all of us.

Expo maps are in the brochure and on the back of the At-Door Flyer. We hope you will become familiar with the map before you arrive.

ON-LINE REGISTRATION/SNAIL MAIL/WEBSITE

I have read all your suggestions regarding on-line registration. Sometimes, it is hard to second guess how fast classes will fill. Sometimes you are told a class is full and we try to have a wait list but unfortunately it doesn't always work perfectly.

Also, at the last minute there could be people who don't show up so then we will have stand-by people who get in. I know that is frustrating for those of you who tried earlier to get the class. If you are totally locked out of a class you want, I suggest you check with the ticket office the minute you arrive at the Expo and see if there are any "stand-by" tickets or if someone has cancelled.

If we add classes, we try to notify everyone on the wait list but if it is at the last minute we could make a mistake so it pays to check with the ticket office at the Expo.

I agree with the person who said, "stand by" pay at the door people should have cash rather than credit cards. It would make it go so much faster when trying to get people in before seminars start. Try to have a little extra cash if possible for that situation. We appreciate it!

ROLLING CARTS

Carts are a never ending problem. I actually did some enforcement this last year when appropriate. We do our best to accommodate those who truly need it and unfortunately there will always be those who take advantage of it.

If you bring a rolling cart, you must have an ADA pass obtained from Janet McLoughlin, Show Manager, at least two weeks before the Expo. The number is in the back portion of the brochure. So, I am begging those of you who bring them to leave them home or check them at the coat check! Back packs should also be checked for the courtesy of all. We will try to do a better job of policing.

RVers

I am sorry but we cannot run a shuttle to the campgrounds. We do not have insurance for that. We have forwarded your comments regarding gravel in the RV grounds to the Fair personnel.

SEATING

The comments we get about seating are so varied. Some thank us for the extra seating, others say it isn't enough. Some want the benches remade with better backs, while we had good comments about the new chairs in the Free Stage area. I know it is hard to wait in long lines and I do sympathize. But we have used every piece of seating the fairgrounds has to offer ... benches, chairs, and concrete floors. If you can eat lunch early, do it. If you can eat lunch late, it will be easier. But don't skip lunch because you will get weary and then you won't have any fun. And sorry, we don't have any napping areas.

SPEAKERS

We do take all these suggestions about speakers starting late, infomercials, etc. to heart and do our best each year to correct them and let speakers know what you are saying. We also share your praises with them so they know you appreciate them as well. With only 15 minutes between classes, we cannot take time for comment cards in the rooms. You are welcome to send your comments to us directly through our website, email or snail mail.

Once again, any speaker complaints you share with us are forwarded to the speaker involved. Most speakers also have a website and email so you may send comments directly to them (see our web site for info). If you do not tell us what seminar, time, place, day, etc. you are unhappy about or leave us your name and phone number so we can follow up, there isn't much we can do.

If you are late to a class, your seat will be held for 10 minutes and then it will be sold if you are not there. That gives you a total of 25 minutes to get from one class to another before we will fill your seat.

We recommend to speakers that they offer door prizes but some choose not to give them out. And we do notify speakers ahead of time how many have registered for their classes so they can have adequate hand-outs. If you tell us what classes did not have enough, we will get you one. However, there is no requirement that hand-outs be given in one needle classes.

SEMINAR ROOMS

We hear you about being cold in some rooms. This is a fairgrounds that sometimes takes a long time to heat up in the winter. We have learned to wear layers and good shoes.

We are taking your AV and lighting suggestions to heart. We cannot do everything but we will try.

If you bring a child into a seminar and the child cries, please take him/her out of the classroom until the crying stops. It is very disturbing to others and makes it very difficult to hear the speaker. Thank you.

Remember If you have an 8 am class, you can enter the fairgrounds at 7:30 AM with your special pass sent with your tickets. The extra time allows your teachers time to set up for class.

We are looking at some room shifts to accommodate two and three needle classes so you have a better experience. And we are also looking for better needlework rooms for Wednesday classes. So please know, we hear your suggestions regarding room problems.

SPEAKER/VENDOR REQUESTS

Thank you all for your suggestions! We have contacted the vendors and speakers and given them your suggestions. We are also looking into some new speakers you have suggested.

Each Aisle is numbered very clearly (hanging from the ceiling) in the center of the aisle. For example, in the Showplex, the first aisle after the Food Court is the 200's, the third aisle is 300's, and so forth. There is a clear floor map in the flyer you receive when you enter the show. It also includes all booth numbers listed alphabetically for vendors. We ask vendors to make their booth numbers visible but some just do not.

The End

There you have it, another year and we think in 2016 we had much to be thankful for. The weather was excellent for the most part and the evening events were just wonderful. We received a lot of great comments from all of you on everything from our great volunteers to how courteous the information booth folks are. I want to personally thank all of you for coming. Your support, and comments to help us make the show better. Keep spreading the word about the Expo.

Tell your friends and loved ones that the Expo provides an opportunity to share what we all love about the world of sewing whether it is garment making, quilting, needlework, or just small fun projects.

I know 2017 will be the best ever and you won't want to miss it!

Joanne Ross, Director
www.sewexpo.com



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Director