

Hello everyone! (feel free to forward this to your friends!)

Happy Labor Day!

Summer is drawing to a close here, and as is typical, our weather is starting to get really hot! 109 in the valley last week – hot, hot, hot! As I am watching the weather and Katrina and all the damage in the SE, I am thankful that we are only having heat right now. I hope all of you that are affected by this horrible hurricane are safe and sound. This newsletter will be for August and September, as September is going to be a busy month! Hopefully I will see many of you in Nashville at the SAGA National Convention – I always have so much fun, especially catching up with everyone I have not seen in a year. I will also be traveling to Houston at the end of September, beginning of October to teach for the Midnight Oil Smockers. I am really looking forward to this trip too, as my first job out of college was at Texas Instruments in Houston.

This month I am going to touch on some embroidery threads! I learned how to smock and embroider with the basic 6 strand embroidery floss, but I have branched out to try different types of threads and this has enhanced my stitching.

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Don't use the off brand, 12 for \$1.00 skeins of floss. The cotton used is a short staple cotton, so it pills and fuzzes easier and the dyes used for these are inferior. Truth will tell when you wash your work!
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DMC and Anchor are the most popular 6 stranded floss, with DMC being the most readily available. I personally prefer Anchor – the floss is a bit softer and the colors are all colorfast*, and I have it available to me. I also have all the colors of DMC floss too, and I do use both. Before I started smocking, I did a good bit of counted cross stitch and ran across an add for all 360 colors (this was a while ago!). Since I like to be able to start a project at night and know I am going to have everything on hand, this seemed like a must. I sent off my order and anxiously awaited for my package to arrive. When it finally came, I sat down, opened it up and listened to my husband laugh so hard he couldn't stand up straight.

My kit included a sheet of 360 stickers in numerical order, 360 cardboard bobbins, and 360 yd pieces of floss that were held in place top and bottom by masking tape. I had to take a bobbin card, put the first number on the bobbin and take the first piece of floss and wrap it on the bobbin. The threads were not numbered at all – they were only put in numerical order. If I accidentally put the wrong floss on the wrong number.....OOOOOPS! I did not find this as amusing as my husband did!

*DMC is manufactured in France (unlike Anchor) and they have different environmental rules that they have to follow. Because of this, there are several colors of DMC floss and floche that are not colorfast. They are:

304 310 321 349 497 498 606 666
814 815 816 817 900 902 939 946

To do set the colors, simply soak the floss or floche in a bowl of water, mixed with a little bit of vinegar or epsom salts. Rinse thoroughly and pat dry in a paper towel.

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FYI – soaking bright garments or garments that will get a lot of harsh wear (bathing suits, blue jeans, red shirts, etc.) will help set the colors. I get the gallon jug of vinegar from Costco and keep a bucket next to my washer and soak these types of garments before I wash them for the first time.
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DMC floss comes in 472 colors and Anchor floss comes in 460 colors. I have a conversion chart that I am in the process of putting into a word doc. If you would like a copy, email me and let me know and as soon as it is ready. Keep in mind that retail for each of these flosses are 60 cents per skein. Please don't think that your local independent thread or fabric shop is pulling one over on you. I know Joanne's and Micheal's have them for 29 cents (and often for less when they run them on sale), but these are considered loss leaders to get you into the store. They are actually losing money on every skein that they sell, but it is worth losing a few cents on floss if you buy lots of other things!

One of my special for this newsletter is the color charts for the floss. Each color chart includes actual floss of each color to match your work.

Anchor Floss Color Chart

reg \$17.00 Special this month **\$14.00**

DMC Color Chart

reg \$20 Special this month **\$17.00**

Anchor Floss of the Month Club

\$25

I also am offering an Anchor Floss of the Month Club. If you are like me and like to have one of each color, then this is for you! Each month, you will receive 38 or 39 skeins of floss, along with the plastic bobbins to wind them on. I also include the plastic storage boxes that are perfect for storing the wound bobbins. At the end of the year, you will have a complete collection of all of the colors of Anchor floss.

After I had been smocking for a while, I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to the island of Madeira with Julia Golson and study at the Imperial de Bordados. While I was there, I discovered **floche**, a wonderful embroidery thread. Floche is a 5 ply, soft twist cotton embroider thread. It is not stranded like floss is – one thread is one thread. It is made from long staple cotton and has a high luster. It is thicker than floss – one strand of floche is equal to about 1 and ½ strands of floss. If I am smocking on a medium weight fabric, I use 2 strands of floche instead of 3 strands of floss. If I am smocking on a fine fabric, such as voile or Swiss flannel, sometimes I will use only 1 strand of floche. In Madeira, they use floche for all of their cutwork, granitos, padded satin

stitch, bullions, and shadow work. Floche is made by both DMC and Anchor, but in the US, the DMC floche is typically what you will see. It comes in 87 colors (I sure wish it came in all of the floss colors!) – if you would like me to email you a color chart, send me an email and let me know. The floche colors correspond to the DMC floss colors. For example, 321 red floche is the same color as 321 red floss.

Floche retails for **\$5.25 / skein of 150 yds**

As always if you purchase 5, your 6th skein is **free**

Floche of the Month Club

\$35

Each month, you receive a collection of floche, needles, and/or designs so that at the end of 12 months, you will have the complete collection of floche. This is a wonderful way to add the complete set of floche to your collection of embroidery threads!

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Did you know that floss and floche have a grain? If you run the thread through your fingers one way and then the other, one side should feel smoother or softer than the other. Another way to check the grain is to pat each end of the thread with your finger. One end will bloom (making it harder to thread through the eye of the needle). The blooming end is the end that should be threaded through the eye of the needle.
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Several of my friends have studied at monogramming techniques at the Maison de Broderie R. Malbranche in Paris, France. They introduced me to an embroidery thread known as Coton A Broder. This thread is used for the exquisite French monograms that adorn fine linens and heirloom garments. Coton A Broder # 25 is a fine 4 – ply long staple thread and will take abuses through laundering and endure for the generations to come. It is finer than floche, and works well for making

tiny bullions. It comes in 18 colors (see list below) and retails for \$1.50 / 32m skein. It is also available in 2 finer sizes, but in white only.

#25 \$1.50 / skein
white/colors

#30 \$1.50 / skein
white

#40 \$4.00 / skein
white

#25 colors:

Blanc

352 Lt. Coral

368 Lt. Pistachio Green

471 Very Lt. Avocado

744 Pale Yellow

760 Salmon

776 Medium Pink

800 Pale Delft (blue)

3713 Light Pink

Ecru

353 Peach

369 Very Lt. Pistachio

472 Ultra Lt. Avocado

745 Lt. Pale Yellow

761 Lt. Salmon

799 Medium Delft (blue)

818 Baby Pink

310 Black

Special! Complete set of Coton a Broder #25

Reg. \$27.00,

Only \$24!

A few more things before I go – Most of us have heard of the no-call registry – this is a registry that you can put your phone number on to let solicitors know that you do NOT want sales calls. There is now a Cell Phone No-Call Registry. During the first week of September, cell phone numbers are being released to telemarketing companies and you will start to receive sales calls. IF YOU ANSWER, YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR THESE CALLS... To prevent this, call the following number from your cell phone:

888/382-1222.

It is the National DO NOT CALL list. It will only take a minute of your time. It blocks your number for five (5) years.

PASS THIS ON TO ALL YOUR FRIENDS

You can also do this online at: www.donotcall.gov

Another great idea that was passed along to me – in your cell phone under ICE (In Case of Emergency) enter your emergency contact number – if you are injured, someone can look at your phone and send ICE and whoever is your emergency contact will be called. If you are unconscious, this can save valuable time in trying to locate someone with information concerning you. We, as well as our child that actually has a cell phone, have all put an ICE in our cell phone book. This may save a life someday!

Final Special!

I have come across a fine washable marker that is made by Clover. It does not seem to run out of ink like the other fine washable markers that I have used. Nothing is more frustrating than trying to trace something and the ink won't flow. **Retails for \$4.75, only \$3.50!**

Fabric Store Find! Britex!

This month's fabric store is located in downtown San Francisco! It is in a 4 story building and each floor is dedicated to specific types of fabrics. The walls are filled from floor to ceiling with all kinds of fabrics. First floor is silks, woolens, French laces and couture fabrics. Second floor is home dec, cottons, polyesters, rayons, velvets, lycras, sequins, and metallics. Third floor is notions, yarn, ribbons, trims, tassels, patterns, books, bridal accessories and **30.000 Buttons!** 4 floor is remnants, faux fur, fleece, felts, nets, tulles, vinyl, and leather.

They have just reopend at this location after a year long renovation! If you call them, they will send swatches. You can email to subscribe to their newsletter.

Britex

146 Geary St. (between Stockton and Grant, just off Union Square)

San Francisco, CA 94108

(415) 392-2910

If you know of any great fabric stores, please let me know and I will pass them along! Have a safe Labor Day and a nice, relaxed September!

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