

STITCHES Texas Showdown

Reported by Kellie Nuss

Last February, designers contributed one-of-a-kind knockers that were displayed in the Market at STITCHES West 2016 (find the story at www.knittinguniverse.com/k123). More than just showing off their work, the Designer Knocker Wall became a place of healing, laughter, and tears as thousands thought of their own experiences and those of loved ones.

THE IDEA

In keeping with an ongoing partnership with Barbara Demorest and KnittedKnockers.org, STITCHES organized another Designer Knockers challenge at STITCHES Texas 2016 in September. This time yarn companies, vendors, and sponsors helped raise awareness. Entrants were encouraged to create a fun, unforgettable knocker design that would showcase their company and bring attention to the cause. Each entry would be judged, with winners earning bragging rights and the satisfaction of helping cancer survivors in a very real way.

The Showdown We received 20 entries from 15 companies, including one that was a partnership between Skacel and the Seattle Seahawks. Each knocker reflected individual inspiration, creativity, and a commitment to help cancer survivors.

The knockers were displayed at the front of the STITCHES Market in Irving, Texas. Market attendees chose the People's Choice by voting with cash for their favorite. Additionally, each knocker was judged in the categories of Best Branding and Most Creative.

On Sunday afternoon, just before the Market closed, the winning knockers were announced, with awards going to Clover USA (Sheila Rolfer) and Universal Yarn (Amy Gunderson) for Best Branding and to Prism Yarns (Laura Bryant) and Tahki-Stacy Charles/String Yarns (Joan Forgione with "Cancer Sucks!") for Most Inspirational/Creative. Barbara and her team counted all of the donated dollar votes, with the People's Choice award going to Buffalo Wool (Lynette Meek).

Other participants (**companies** designers) were:

Bryson Distributing Mindy Garner; **Cascade Yarns** Carly Waterman; **Clover Needlecraft** Ella Jensen and Eloise Wagers; **Craftsy** Sunne Meyer; **Louet North America** Stacey Trock; **Prime Publishing** Mary Beth Temple; **Prism Yarn** Brigitte Reydam; **Red Heart** Marly Bird; **Skacel Collection** Hannah Mann, Chuck Wilmesher, and Katie Rempe; **Universal Yarn** Tori Gubisz; **XXR, Inc.** Myra Wood; **The Yarn Guys** Jeffrey Wall; **Yarnover Truck** Barbra Pushes and Marilee Nelson. See the complete story and all the pictures online at knittinguniverse.com/knockers_showdown.

In the final tally, 400 women benefitted directly from this effort, with over \$4,000 raised to cover the costs of getting knockers (always free of charge) into the hands of women who have requested them.

3 WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- 1 Make knockers** You don't need to stuff them; just send them and we'll do the rest. Or bring them to STITCHES: 1543 were collected at the Knitted Knockers booth in the Market at Texas!
- 2 Spread the word** Everyone knows someone with breast cancer. Every time we share, we reach groups—knitters and the women who need knockers.
- 3 Donate** **KnittedKnockers.org** is a 501(c)(3) organization, 100% volunteer-run. Postage is \$1,000 a month, but there are also printing costs.

Knitted knockers

soft, comfortable, knit prosthetics for breast cancer survivors



A buck a vote—each entry had its own Mason jar.

The Winners



First Blush **Prism Yarns** Laura Bryant
Most Inspirational/Creative



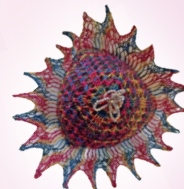
Lucky Trinity **Clover USA** Sheila Rolfer
Best Branding



Cancer Sucks! **Tahki-Stacy Charles Yarn/String Yarns** Joan Forgione Most Inspirational/Creative



Sparkle Nation **Universal Yarns** Amy Gunderson
Best Branding



Lady Jane **Buffalo Wool** Lynette Meek
People's Choice