



LOCAL CLOTH

GROWING THE FIBER ECONOMY

2023 Annual Report

About Local Cloth

Sustained by a passion for fiber, Local Cloth is a volunteer-led, non-profit network of fiber artists, farmers, small-scale fiber processors, educators and fiber enthusiasts, dedicated to growing and supporting the local fiber economy in Western North Carolina and increasing awareness of and access to regional production and artisan practices.

Board + Leadership Team

Chairman: Judi Jetson
Vice Chairman: Joyce Tromba
Secretary: Denise Arcuri
Treasurer: Jo Ann Stanley

Board Members: Beth Sellars, Ann Brown, Peggy Newell, Elizabeth Strub, Mary Euler, Caroline Williford

Leadership: Kimber Gada-Steinauer, Courtney LaCaria, Susette Shiver

Resident Artists

Daniel Baron: Needle Felter
Kathy English: Dyeing, Bookmaking + Mixed Media
Judi Jetson: Spinner + Dyer
Beth Sellars: Needle Felter + Spinner
Jennifer Woodruff: Natural-dyed Clothing + Goods

Membership

In 2023, Local Cloth welcomed 189 new and renewed members, ending the year with 443 active members, which is 105 more members than this time last year!

Local Cloth Retail Shop

In 2023, 13 new vendors joined the Local Cloth Retail Shop, bringing the total to 59 fiber artists and farmers. The Retail Shop also ended the year with \$127,170 in sales. This reflects an increase of more than \$38,000 from last year! The Retail Shop represents multiple types of fiber materials and arts, including weaving, knitting, felting, crochet, eco-printing, paper, books, sewing, marbling, batik, quilting, garden products, roving and spun yarn.

Workshops + Interest Groups

Celebrating the third year in the Local Cloth Depot Street Studio, Local Cloth hosted 89 workshops, serving 631 individuals. In addition, 103 interest group meetings were held, including the launch of two Mending Matters Interest Groups, Blue Ridge Blanket Project Skirting Teams, and the return of the Textile Study Group.

Events

Fiber Farmer Listening Sessions (3) | March 2023

Hosted listening sessions with fiber farmers on needs and resources, sharing info about the Blue Ridge Blanket Project.

International Women's Day Drop-in | March 8, 2023

Local Cloth hosted free drop-in events including embroidery, quilting and mending demos. Coordinated by Peggy Newell.

Spring Fibershed Artisan Market | April 8, 2023

Fourteen fiber artists and farmers participated. Juried by Sherry Masters and coordinated by Paula Entin.

FiberFest | April 22-23, 2023

With 14 farms joining at the 11th annual WNC Farmer's Market Spring Festival. Led by Elizabeth Strub + Marilyn Pisani.

Cowee Valley Quilt + Fiber Celebration | May 6, 2023

Local Cloth hosted an information table and provided fiber demonstrations. Ruth Duckworth led a wet felting workshop.

World Wide Knit in Public Day | June 10, 2023

Coordinated by Peggy Newell, hosted several make-and-takes, placed knitters around the RAD, and did yarn bombing.

Anything. Fiber. Sale. | July 29, 2023

Led by Peggy Newell, the AB Tech Conv. Center was full again with 44 vendors; and raffle prizes and food truck added.

Sustainability Month | September 2023

Led by Joyce Tromba, the month-long slate of events included a "Bring Your Scraps" Open Studio and 5 sustainability-focused workshops; and finished with a community clothing swap, hosted by Kimber Gada-Steinauer.

Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands | Oct 19-22, 2023

An educational member of SHCG, hosted vendor and info booth featuring 9 fiber artists. Launched 2023 Limited Edition Blue Ridge Blankets. Led by Joan Berner and Judi Jetson.

Southeastern Animal Fiber Fair | Oct 20 - 22, 2023

Hosted an information booth, spotlighting workshops and the Holiday Market, and make-and-take table. Led by Judi Jetson + Rose Brinkmann.

Twelve-by-Twelve Textile Show Event | Oct 27, 2023

Hosted celebration and auction for inaugural Textile Show, featuring 26 Local Cloth artists and raising over \$1,200.

Community Holiday Make + Take | Nov 26, 2023

Coordinated by Joyce Tromba, held family-friendly drop-in event with holiday crafting workshops for community.

Holiday Artisan Market | December 9, 2023

Thirteen fiber artists participated, contributing to one of the top sales days for the Retail Shop! Coordinated by Marilyn Pisani and juried by Sherry Masters.



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2023 Annual Report, cont.

Blue Ridge Blanket (BRB) Project

In October 2023 following two years of work, Local Cloth launched the sale of the 2023 Limited Edition Blue Ridge Blankets online, in the Local Cloth Retail Shop, and at the Grovewood Gallery. One of our most ambitious ventures to date, the mission of the Blue Ridge Blankets project is to help revitalize the fiber economy in western North Carolina by connecting fiber farmers, processors, dyers, and weavers together to produce locally sourced and crafted blankets. Wool, mohair, and alpaca were sourced from 15 different farms in the region, and then hand-picked, spun into yarn, hand-dyed with natural, heritage colors (indigo, madder root, walnut, weld) and woven into 19 different designs. Based upon votes from around the region, five designs were selected for the 1st edition: Asheville, Barnardsville, Black Mountain, French Broad River, and Pisgah. We identified two major gaps in our region's supply chain: the lack of a mid-sized spinning mill and the need for a loom room (a place where weavers can store and work on production-sized looms). The Blue Ridge Blanket Project is intended to be ongoing, with proceeds from each year's sales supporting the purchase of wool, alpaca, and mohair to make the following year's blankets. We believe this small attempt to reconnect the parts of the supply chain will improve the income of our region's farmers and weavers. We are pleased that our project was featured in the Winter 2023 edition of Carolina Home + Garden Magazine and the January 2024 Our State Magazine.

Social Media + Newsletter Communication

20 Newsletters issued in 2023 via Flodesk
737 Total Social Media Posts on Instagram + Facebook

Newsletter | 20 issues

Gained 504 new subscribers in 2023, reaching 1,952 recipients by the end of the year.

Facebook | 327 posts

248 new fans with more than 2.6K total fans
Reached 175K users, up from 147K users in 2022

Instagram | 410 posts

764 new followers with more than 2.4K total followers
Reached 121K users, up from 78K users in 2022

[Facebook.com/localcloth](https://www.facebook.com/localcloth) | [@Localclothinc](https://www.instagram.com/Localclothinc)

Financial Information (January - December 2023)

Program Income

Workshops (<i>Int Grps, Studio Rentals + Scholarships</i>)	\$61,294
Special Events + Markets	\$16,303
Resident Artists	\$15,935
Retail Sales	\$135,113

General + Administrative Income

Fundraisers	\$1,255
Donations	\$1,423
Membership Dues	\$13,555
Interest Income	\$1,477
Grants (<i>non-Blue Ridge Blanket Project</i>)	\$4,500

TOTAL INCOME **\$250,854**

Programming Expenses

Workshops (<i>Instructors, Refunds, Fees + Expenses</i>)	\$28,476
Special Events + Markets	\$8,827
Rent + Utilities	\$49,650
Studio (<i>Cleaning, Supplies, Equipment + Insurance</i>)	\$6,157
Retail Shop (<i>Sales Tax, Inventory + Supplies</i>)	\$11,967
Retail Vendor Payments + Processing Fees	\$81,023

General + Administrative Expenses

Accounting, Bookkeeping + Tax Prep	\$5,045
Contractors (<i>Workshop, Retail, Marketing + Admin</i>)	\$16,175
Marketing, Fundraising + Memberships	\$5,765
Office (<i>Insurance, Supplies + Postage</i>)	\$1,836
Website + Wild Apricot	\$4,091

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$219,012**

Blue Ridge Blanket Project Income (<i>New Grants + Sales</i>)	\$17,525
Blue Ridge Blanket Project Expenses (<i>From Grants</i>)	\$31,487

Local Cloth was supported by ArtsAVL, Fibershed, WNC Communities and The Community Foundation of WNC.

ARTS AVL, GAP Grant, 2023 (*Operating Expenses*) | \$4,000.00
WNC COMMUNITIES (*Fiber Farmers Day*) | \$500.00
FIBERSHED (*BRB*) | \$4,500
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION of WNC Grant, 2021-2023 (*BRB*) | \$49,742.00

