

Regina Weavers and Spinners Guild Information Sheet for New or Prospective Members

What is the Regina Weavers and Spinners Guild?

The Regina Weavers and Spinners Guild (RWSG) is a registered non-profit organization that formed in 1977. Our members share a common goal: to act as stewards for the arts of weaving and spinning, so that we might keep these incredible art forms alive in a world where so much is industrially manufactured. We take every opportunity we can to engage our community of Regina and surrounding area, to learn and to be inspired by the history, practicality and beauty of spinning and weaving.

Why should you join the RWSG?

As a guild, we offer our members meetings, classes, workshops and other occasions for interaction, discussion and inspiration. We help facilitate connections between members so that newcomers can develop the techniques they desire to learn.

We have ten meetings per year, most of which begin or end with a demo or workshop program. We also have a large guild sale in the fall for members to sell their creations, we often host a dye day for members, and we organize a variety of weaving and spinning workshops throughout the year for members to enjoy. We also bring in skilled weavers and spinners from around Saskatchewan and out of province to teach methods and techniques to increase our skills. Additionally, there is the option of one-on-one learning from other members - all you have to do is ask!

In addition to the interactive learning, the RWSG has a number of resources including books, tools and pieces of equipment items such as looms and spinning wheels that are available for members to borrow from September through June. The library catalogue is on the RWSG website (website information is noted at the bottom of this fact sheet).

What do you need to do to join?

You do not have to be an experienced weaver or spinner to join the RWSG. All you really need is an interest in learning about spinning and weaving. If you are reading this, we know you have that covered!

Some of our members were here at the founding of the guild, but many have joined within the last three to five years. Our members have varying degrees of experience in particular aspects of weaving, spinning and fibre art, and many of us dabble in a wide range of techniques and art forms that run parallel to spinning and weaving. What brings us together is that we know the importance of preserving these art forms and teaching them to people of all ages. If you have a passion for learning how garments and fabrics are made, and how they have been made throughout history, and you want to learn to make them yourself, then you have come to the right place.

Anyone is welcome to come to a meeting as a guest to see what the RWSG is all about. To officially join the RWSG, you will need to pay an annual membership fee. The membership fee for the RWSG is \$25.00 per year.

How do the membership dues work?

The RWSG year runs from September to June; we take July and August off. Membership dues are \$25.00 and are due at the first meeting of the guild year, or if you are new to the RWSG they are due at your first attended meeting. Payment of dues makes you an official voting member of the guild from the date you pay until August 31 of the current guild year. If membership is not paid/renewed by December, you will no longer receive minutes and notices of upcoming meetings and events. Our library resources are only available to paid members, and only members can sell their wares at the annual sale.

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We accept cash or cheque payments for membership dues in-person at our meetings, or e-transfers (send to: weaversspinnersguild@gmail.com).

You may also choose to mail in a cheque to:

Regina Weavers and Spinners Guild
Box 1052, STN Main
Regina, SK
S4P 3B2

Once you have paid your dues for the year, you will be added to our mailing list provided that you share your email address with us! Once you are on our mailing list, you will receive informational items regarding our monthly meetings including minutes and agendas, open fibre night (OFN) reminders, workshop information, as well as equipment opportunities and other informational items from the public or members.

When are meetings and events?

We meet on the first Thursday of each month from September through June. Most meetings are held in the weaving room at the Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre (2420 Elphinstone Street, Regina SK). The door is open at 6:30pm and we usually begin our meeting at 7:00pm. Once the meeting is adjourned, there is often a demonstration or mini-workshop, show-and-tell, and visiting with fellow members. In December and June we have a Holiday Party and a Windup Party, respectively, at an alternate location. We have no programs on these evenings, but still have our regular meeting and show-and-tell at these special gatherings.

Our annual events include an annual sale as well as a dye day.

- **Guild Sale** - occurs in late October or early November, with the bulk of preparation beginning first thing in September. Of course, members work on sale items year-round!
- **Dye Day** - we organize a dye day where our members can gather with some of their stash to put gorgeous colour to natural fibres. We pack our lunches and make a full day of it. The guild provides the dye for this event.

Periodically, the workshops team also puts on a number of workshops for members to enjoy. These can range from spinning, to weaving (beginner to advanced), to dyeing, to other fun fibre activities that the membership may be interested in. If volunteers and resources allow, we like to release a schedule at the beginning of each guild year with exact dates and times for all events!

How does the RWSG run from year to year?

The RWSG has an executive with the usual positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as leader positions and committees. The operation of the guild is definitely a group effort, with everyone doing their bit when they can. Each person who occupies one of these roles can choose to do a one- or two-year term, staying on longer if they wish.

A rundown of each volunteer position:

- President - organizes and runs each member meeting
- Vice President - covers for the president when needed
- Secretary - keeps meeting minutes and makes them available to the entire membership
- Treasurer - oversees the financial administration of the guild
- Librarian - holds the keys to our book library case and storage cupboards at the Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre and keeps the library organized and available to our membership
- Communications Leader - manages the email account, Instagram and Facebook pages

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- Website Leader - keeps our website up to date
- Sale Leaders - books our venue for the annual sale, manages the advertising and organizes the volunteer help for the sale dates
- Program Leaders - arranges and books programs for each membership meeting during the months of September through June. Program planning mostly takes place during the summer months
- Workshop Team - researches possible workshops throughout the year and organizes these events according to guild member interests and possible community interest, includes booking of space, organizing instructors and registration of attendees
- OFN Leader - books space at our chosen venue and acts as a host for each OFN event, currently the fourth Thursday evening of each month
- Nominating Committee - forms each May and contacts individuals within the guild about standing for vacant positions. They also confirm which current executives are happy to stay on for another year. Members are free to volunteer for executive positions at will. Nominated executive members are presented for election at the final meeting in June each year

There are always opportunities for small volunteer jobs that have a specific beginning and end. When someone within the guild takes on the planning of some event (class, demo, community event, etc.) they will put out a call for member volunteers to work a short shift at the event or help with some aspect of it.

How does our library work?

Our meeting room at the Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre has a large wooden cabinet that houses our book and magazine library. We also have a large inventory of various spinning and weaving tools and equipment, stored at one of our member's homes. Our library resources are available to you immediately after you have paid your membership dues, and paid members can sign out resources from September through June.

Our library is usually open 30 minutes prior to each meeting that takes place at the Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre. To arrange to pick up or drop off items, you can speak to the Librarian or the member who stores the equipment inventory.

What is OFN?

A few years ago, it became clear that we needed another regular gathering to work on projects together, a casual meeting that would give members of the community a place to find us and join us for some down-to-earth fibre fellowship; OFN was born!

We currently meet year-round on the fourth Thursday evening of the month, in the Weaving Room at the Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre. You will receive reminders about OFN in our regular mail outs. As well, you may visit our Facebook or Instagram pages for dates, times and locations as they sometimes deviate due to booking variations.

This monthly gathering is open to the public. Anyone with an interest in handmade crafts is encouraged to bring their portable works in progress to work on as we visit, or if you have nothing to bring, just come to visit and be inspired! There are often snacks and sometimes door prizes!

What is the RWSG annual sale all about?

Every year, the RWSG puts on a sale in late October or early November. The sale gives us another chance to engage our community and raise funds to continue doing so. We ask that all our members participate by putting their handwoven or handspun items into the sale. A small commission on each sale goes to the guild to pay for the cost of putting on the sale and build the funds to provide learning opportunities for our members and the surrounding community.

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Each participant sets the price of their own wares. The sale is always an enjoyable event where the guild gathers to demonstrate our art and talk to customers about our processes and finished pieces.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the RWSG. We are glad you found us!

You can always contact us through our various channels:

- Email - weaversspinnerguild@gmail.com
- Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/ReginaWeaversAndSpinnersGuild>
- Instagram - <http://www.instagram.com/rwsguild>
- Website - <http://www.reginaweaversandspinnners.weebly.com>