2012 opened with a bang and hasn’t stopped. We finished the new revised Pants for Real People, made a DVD on machine embroidery, did the Puyallup show, entertained Sue Neall and her Aussie ladies in Portland, did a rough layout and made a plan of attack for the revised Looking Good book, and then I went on a much needed 2-week vacation to Mexico with chef Paul!

Our fit classes are filling up. Every fit and pant fit through the summer is full in Philly and in Portland. Because of our presence at the Puyallup Sewing Expo every year, we need an additional NW location for workshops. So we have decided to add a new location in Seattle. The first workshop will be in August. Nancy Seifert is working with Pacific Fabrics at their headquarters store. We will limit it to six students due to the size of the room. I will be the first day to along with Nancy. The next day, leaving Nancy to fit, I will introduce Paul to the San Juan Islands.

Our fit reputation is growing, which means your fit classes should benefit. I hear all of the time that when people search the internet, we keep getting recommended as the best in fit. Nice! I think if you are really good at it, you are so much further ahead of most teachers. Teaching fit is not easy until you have had lots of practice. Then why not be “the best in your town?”

Remember, Marta and I are always here for you. Once you have taken fit or pant fit teacher training, email us questions and photos of anything you can’t solve. Many of you have taken us up on that. Please don’t hesitate. It means you are still humble enough to ask for help! Nothing wrong with that. Marta and I may not have all the answers, but we have had lots of experience that you might as well cash in on as PP teachers.

Be sure to check to see if your certification is still current so that you don’t miss our website presence. You can sign up or renew online at http://www.palmerpletsch.com/workshop_teachtrain.htm We will add your photo now if you send us one.

This newsletter is for sharing, so here are questions and ideas sent to me for sharing.

Happy Sewing,
Gail Palmer

News from Palmer/Pletsch

OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL JACKET CLASS!

This past November 2011 we had 13 students sewing a blazer in five days. It is the first time in the history of this workshop that everyone finished. And their jackets looked fabulous. We had a student from the Bahamas and one from Japan and elsewhere throughout the U.S. and Canada. Marta sewed on her own jacket every morning while all watched. One other reason for such success might be that everyone used the same pattern, the one Marta sewed for herself. It was McCall’s Palmer/Pletsch 6172.

The photo above is of a few of the students wearing their jackets and me toward the back in a sweater!

CURVY RULER FOR PALMER/PLETSCH

Pamela Leggett introduced me to a French curve that I actually like! It is small, so easier to use and carry around than the large ones used in the industry. We bought 50 to sell in Puyallup. The company even put the PP logo on it. They sell for $14.95. I have left from the show so thought I’d offer them to our teachers for $12 plus shipping. You might add one to your next order! If you want to lower a curve, match the curve to the original seamline and then drop and trace!
FIRST WORKSHOP HELD OUTSIDE OF PORTLAND, PHILADELPHIA WAS A BIG SUCCESS

We have added our first 4-day workshop location outside of Portland, Oregon. Last year we created “Palmer/Pletsch East” in Philadelphia. In October, 2011, we announced the first fit workshop there, scheduled for April of 2012. It sold out within two months of being on our website.

Pamela Leggett, who is bringing Palmer/Pletsch Workshops to the East coast, is a wonderful teacher as well as a wonderful human being. Steve’s Sewing, where Pamela has been teaching, has three classrooms with state-of-the-art equipment including a ceiling mounted digital projector and wall-mounted screen which makes using slides a joy!

Out of 16 students, 11 took teacher training, the largest teacher class I have ever had. It was pretty cool, especially since we had many “teachable moments” because there were so many pairs of teachers fitting each other in tissue. I truly feel this group will be able to teach fit almost immediately. They really got it. Some took teacher training because they have tried many methods and feel that tissue fitting is the best way to help fashion sewers fit their patterns. One success story is Susan Pfaff, at right.

From Susan Pfaff, Wadsworth, OH

Susan has been to Portland many times to take workshops and teacher training. She has also been educational manager for Janome and an educator for Pfaff. She felt more comfortable about going out and teaching fit after coming to Philadelphia than ever before. Susan writes………..

May 2, 2012

Hi Pati,
The seminar last weekend that I gave for my ASG chapter went well. We had more than 30 in attendance (last count I had was 17). I wasn’t able to try gingham shells on everyone, but I did measure everyone, give them their suggested adjustments and a brief explanation why they needed said adjustments. I was able to measure several ladies prior to start of the seminar and that seemed to keep them all paying attention during the PowerPoint. I used a few of the in-between sized gals to demonstrate size differences with the gingham shells. I had two gals who were sewing with a size 18 bodice who both needed size 14 bodice. I think we’ll most likely fill the hands-on bodice and pant classes that I’ll be offering at our chapter sewing retreat in June. All in all, a good day. I sold books, DVDs and all of my Pattern Paper and the chapter made a tidy profit for the treasury. By the way, I had to laugh….I had the scripts with me during the PowerPoints (both bodice and pant) but never looked at either one. Never dawned on me that I’d seen the slides enough times to have the script already memorized. :)

Thanks much!! I’ll keep you updated.

Susan
I wish everyone who took teacher training was teaching and that those actively teaching would join the CSI program and be included on our website so people could find you in more locations. If you have taken one 4-day Workshop and Teacher Training, you can apply for certification. The application is on our website with the list of ways to earn points for renewal. It’s worth it!

A NOTE TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND TEACHERS

We have transitioned to putting certified instructors into just one master list on our website. This month, the change will be finalized and the separate “down under” list will go away. Many of you Aussie and New Zealand teachers have decided to become certified with the “mothership,” as Sue Neall would say. I really hate to lose the separate list, but it does tell me that those who are certified are the ones teaching the most. It is not fair to consumers to contact people listed on our website only to find they are not teaching, so formal certification is the way to ensure that will not happen.

IF YOU ARE TRAVELING AND TEACHING

WOULD YOU LIKE US TO PROMOTE YOU?

You just read about Susan Pfaff teaching an ASG seminar. If you are doing a major program, can we help you promote it? Do you schedule consumer shows as a speaker; ASG groups; or any other event. We have a Where’s Pati button on our website. We could add a Find Palmer/Pletsch Teacher Speaking Events. (Or, a better title for the button?) I would foresee you sending us the dates, your photo, location of the event, a description, and registration information which could be a link. As long as my design director doesn’t get overwhelmed and you make it as easy as possible, we could do this. It would help you and us if you are promoting PP products.

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

I have always known that if you do a good job, people will talk about you, which is FREE advertising. Never has that been so true as today. I am so glad that Palmer/Pletsch has a reputation for being good, as praise is always better than criticism of what you do. We certainly have been receiving a lot of praise lately, more than I can imagine. It is the true meaning of “overnight success.” I have never asked people to do a review of a workshop or seminar, but more are doing it than ever. Is this happening for you too?

I think this trend could certainly impact your teaching business too. I will be putting in future ads we run that Palmer/Pletsch has teachers around the world. They are in 23 states, 64 cities in the US; two provinces in Canada, four states in Australia, as well as in England, Guam, the Bahamas, and Puerto Rico. Just go to our website to see our Certified Sewing Instructors.

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I feel the annual fee is reasonable and helps cover my design director’s time updating the website and my time sending you a CSI certificate and maintaining my master lists. We also on occasion refer people to the list on our website in ads and press releases to help drive consumers to you. Also, Palmer/Pletsch comes up at or near the top on Google searches on sewing or sewing teachers. We are also on the McCall’s site as a link. The teacher list we will keep separate is for those teaching the Winky Cherry System to young children. It is a free listing to our CSIs who want to be there also, or $25 per year for non-CSIs.

FIVE NEW PALMER/PLETSCH PATTERNS

M6571
M6564
M6513
M6512
Melissa Watson for Palmer/Pletsch
M6464
**NEWS FROM YOU!**

**Mary McCarthy**  
Rockledge, FL

Hi Pati,

I am working with a student on your 6355—it’s great. Nice and simple for first time fitting. So we were wondering why the armhole is the same depth for sleeve and sleeveless views.

I know a sleeve armhole needs to be close to the body for movement, so why don’t we just keep that shape for sleeveless?

Thanks!
Mary McCarthy  
mmsewing@bellsouth.net

Pati responds:

Good question. I assume it is cost savings for the pattern company to have just one body for both sleeveless and sleeve styles, so they probably compromise and go somewhere in between. A higher armhole for sleeveless hides the bra. But, in the end, it depends on the person’s proportions. Since you are tissue-fitting, you can create whatever depth you want.

**Barbara Covey:**

Marta and Pati,

I am trying to fit McCall’s 6076, the Oprah shirt. I’ve made a 1.5” FBA [full bust adjustment], high round, and shortened the dart. The dart can’t get much shorter but is not right. I am wondering if it would be better at more of an angle. Any suggestions are appreciated.

Thanks. (photos at right)

Pati responds:

You have a high left shoulder, which is raising the left dart. Let out the left shoulder, i.e., a square shoulder alteration. Maybe sewing a curved dart would be better since your bust shape is not straight.

**Verna Day**  
Spokane, WA

Hi Pati,

I’ve been learning to do a little digitizing and I digitized the design from the pocket for the jeans to do on my embroidery machine. If you think anyone else might like it, I’d be happy to forward the design to them. I would just need to know the format their machine uses.

Verna vernaday@yahoo.com

Pati responds:

I’m impressed!. By the way, we love Marta’s new embroidery DVD:
Roxann Benbow, Wasilla, AK

I had a team of 36 to accomplish the 158 costumes. There are 500 to 700 pieces, not counting the flowers, since each costume was completely lined, and most of the Munchkin costumes had a dickey-style shirt, or a shirt, vest, jacket, pants, shoes and hat. Many of the costumes were sewn by my sewing students ages 13 to 15. They are so jazzed that they cannot wait to do the next play. I’m so tired and glad it’s on stage at last and will be complete April 29.
Winky Cherry shares the following email exchange with Janine Dreckman. Winky suggests that those teaching her program create a group to get dialogue going for the children’s program and to help each other. “I am willing to mentor teachers and this information should be shared and encouraged.”

Janine Dreckman writes:
Hi Winky, I have been reading your manual about teaching young children to sew. I think you have developed a great way to teach children and I am very interested in using your program to start my business. I noticed on page 111 that you would be available to present training workshops. I called the number and left a message. Pati Palmer returned my call and suggested that I send you an email. I don’t really have any specific questions, since your book is quite thorough. However, I was wondering if you are available to do a workshop and where that might be. Also, do you have any manuals on your other books (embroidery, sewing machine, etc.)? I look forward to hearing from you.

Winky responds:
Just thought you should look on the TEACHER’s page on the Palmer/Pletsch website to contact others who are teaching children to sew using my books.

Just remember, it is a skill building process. Master the first book before you move to the second, etc. I cut out bunches of felt shapes and make dots on ALL felt shapes. It is important to know what is in the bags and baskets. Each week I added what was needed. You can ask one child to check the basket and tell you what you need to make such as: “We have only two bears and one shark.” That means you have work to do making more shapes.

I often make dots on shapes while teaching to show the work involved in keeping the basket ready with shapes to choose. Or someone will say, “Please make me a pink elephant.” So I do, for next week, and put it in their class bag instead of in the basket. They feel special and often surprised that I remembered to fill their request.

I use the presewing workbook at age 2-3-4-5. If you put all supplies for this in one basket, you will find that children not ready to thread a needle are interested in construction paper, sorting, cleaning, etc., and progress soon to actual sewing. I do not recommend presewing in classes. This is something to share with parents of younger children.

For example, my 2- and 4-year-old grandchildren are interested. I gave them both plastic kids’ scissors. The 2-year-old likes scissors that cut with shaped edges like pinking and scallops. She does not cut on the lines yet, but loves to cut.

The 4-year-old is cutting shapes out of construction paper. I trace the shapes onto the paper. He is a great cutter, very accurate. He says, “Take your time and do your best work” as he uses the scissors, and he enjoys the dinosaurs as the collection he made by himself. Then we spend time reading dinosaur books and acting like dinosaurs.

Janine writes:
Thank you for your prompt reply. I plan to start working with the children at my church for “practice.” I will only charge a small fee to cover supplies. I will also use that setting to do a video for promotional purposes. Any additional tips at any time would be appreciated.

Winky responds:
I started teaching Sunday School, having children make the animals for Noah’s Ark. That is in the teacher’s manual. The church may pay for supplies. In this case, limit the shapes to a small bird, star, heart, and make a cross pattern that is flat, to be used as a bookmark, not stuffed, and gradually add things that can be completed in one hour.

Or you can set it up as an after Sunday School class by subscription so you have the same students for 4-6 week periods. Working with the same children and skill building is the best way. If new children want to join, you need to have them wait for a new session, and of course limit the number of students to a group you can handle.

Confine yourself to the felt basket for the classes until you can evaluate skills for moving to the next basket: embroidery. It is very difficult for the teacher to have new students every week.