



An Artist Newsletter

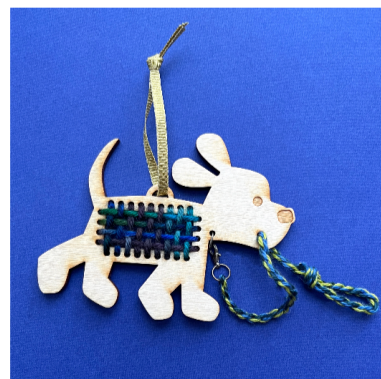
by Becca Rahn



As I am writing this, I have my fingers and toes crossed that if you have a comcast email address that this actually arrives in your inbox. Last month, I had something of an email disaster. The IP address that actually sends out these emails is something that I share with thousands of other users; that's how most email newsletter senders work. Someone on that same server sent out some major spam and got all of the rest of us flagged as spammers. And do you know what you can do to fix that? **Absolutely nothing.** So comcast was blocking all of my emails and Gmail did something crazy to my website emails, and I was literally crying with frustration. A really kind tech support guy talked me through everything and double checked it was nothing I had set up wrong. You can get your own private IP address to keep that spam splashover from happening, but it costs more than my cellphone bill, Adobe subscription and webhosting combined.

Tech guy says that their algorithm that decides who gets assigned to which group of IP addresses is always adjusting to try and put like accounts together, so maybe by this month I'll be back in the company of other lovely small businesses who don't send spam. Shout out this month to the other artists and small businesses who are trying to just make the algorithms like us. I thought I was done with popularity contests in highschool, right? -- Becca

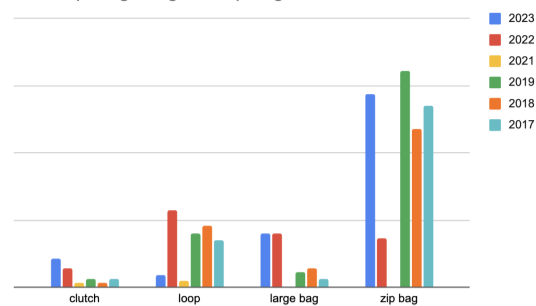
what's new?



I'm teaching three classes on **December 16 at Warm & Woolly Yarn Shop in North Branch MN.** They just opened in October and I met Kaitlyn, the owner, at the Knitters Guild conference marketplace. We decided it would be fun to do an ornament making day, so I am doing these three: an embroidered sheep, woven puppy, and wet felted snowman. [Check out the website for all the details.](#)

on the blog

clutch, loop, large bag and zip bag



On my blog I shared a [behind-the-scenes peek at the unpredictability of being a small business](#). I see way too many too-good-to-be-true stories of overnight success and I think it's helpful to share some real stats with the other artists & makers out there.

And wrote a little about the design process for my [Security Detail and Safety Supervisor designs that were new for this season](#).

Both the dogs and cats were made from different security envelopes, the black and white patterned envelope linings that come with your bank statement. Their collars are all colors from the recycled pages of an office supply catalog.



on the studio table



On the studio table this month:

Materials: These window stars are samples for a class I am teaching in a few weeks. They are made from [glassine or "kite" paper](#), which is a crispy translucent paper that folds really well.

Notions: [Clover Hot Press Ruler](#). I made some new napkins this weekend with fancy mitered corners and I love this tool. You can fold a perfect 1/2 inch over it and iron with the ruler in place.

Sparkle: [Savannah Sequins on Etsy](#) has some really fun unusual shapes. So many flowers and stars. I've used a lot of these in the past month or so.

get in the game



Last month I switched it up and added a section to the newsletter talking about my favorite board game of the moment. Playing board games has been a favorite hobby for decades! We have several of the Tiny Epic Series but [we have played Tiny Epic Dungeons so many times!](#)

It's a dungeon crawl where you explore a maze and stomp some monsters, but the map is made from cards so it changes every time. You can play one of a dozen characters and it's cooperative so you all work together to beat the game (or not!) You find dead-ends, fall in traps, get ambushed by too many goblins, and sometimes the door you need is the very last card you turn up. That link above has a great tutorial about how you play if you want to see more. We just got Tiny Epic Crimes (where you play detectives solving a murder) to play this weekend so I'll let you know how that one is too!



I've seen a dozen versions of these folded star ornaments, but [Betz White's version made from metallic felt is really neat](#). I've gotten some of that [metallic felt to use in some projects recently](#) and it's really fun.

Ever wondered how they store ballet tutus? [I loved this Royal Opera House video](#). So clever.

Loved this article: [Jane Jacobs, Georgia O'Keeffe, and the Power of the Marimekko Dress](#)

I made brunch this year instead of Thanksgiving dinner and we had two outstanding new recipes, both from Smitten Kitchen. I made the [Baked Brie with Balsamic Onions](#). My version had a camembert because the grocery store was out of brie and it was so good. I love this [Perfect Blueberry Muffins](#) recipe but this year instead of blueberries, I did one batch with raspberries and one batch with chopped cranberries and orange peel. Both were delicious.

I have a new yarn love and it's called [Spincycle Yarns](#). Their wool is grown, dyed, processed and spun all in the USA. I ordered a "mystery bag" of their seconds as a Black Friday treat and the "Plump" that they sent me all comes from sheep raised in Wyoming and South Dakota, which is where I grew up. That delighted me even more.

Those same security envelope animals became a [2024 tea towel calendar that you can find in my Spoonflower shop](#).

I'm really don't celebrate Christmas, but here's nothing I love more than making ornaments. Tiny sparkly bits of nonsense that are just there to make you smile. Here are some fun ideas I found for cute ones made from scraps. [Geodesic Balls from recycled paper](#). I love how she painted the edges with just a touch of gold. The [furry cuffs on these mini mittens](#) is just the perfect touch. And these [tealight "baskets" are so simple and pretty](#).

I discovered artist Renea Thull on Threadless, even though she's from Minneapolis. [I love her style - I had to buy a t-shirt of that goldfish!](#)

I don't know if I agree that this would power up your creativity every day, but this was an interesting read: [4 Phrases Every Creative Person Uses](#)

I'm having fun reading this "[Weary Dragon Inn](#)" series of cozy, fantasy mysteries and now I need to bake some rosemary bread. You will too.

Becka Rahn

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1714 LINCOLN ST NE, MINNEAPOLIS, 55413

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