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## Bond Buzz, Issue #28

July 18, 2006

Free from [Bond America](#)

Welcome to another issue of Bond Buzz!

Between the steady downpours and the 90 degree heat, Vermont seems more like the tropics these days, but looking at new yarns and the new direction in knitting has helped me forget the heat.

### *From Italy, with love . . .*

A week ago I returned from Florence, Italy where I attended the international yarn fair, Pitti Filati, where not only was it interesting to see all the new yarns



that are being offered for Fall 2007, but it was the displays showing the changing trends in knitwear design that were the most fascinating. While we haven't abandoned the cropped look, what we *have* abandoned is our fixation with skin, as all current looks are not only long but significantly oversized, covering multiple times what was hardly ever covered just last year.



The trends are definitely going toward the basic yarns (perfect for USM knitters), but hardly toward classic designs: lots of super-cables, chunky textured stitches, long ribbings – but also, something all Sweater Machine owners will like, sweater dressing. I have never seen more knitted dresses which could also double as long tunics. Yes, the 80s are back, so dig through your basement storage bin and pull out those leggings. You'll need them this year – and next!



### *Free Patterns . . .*

As promised, we've posted two new projects for the Ultimate Sweater Machine so you can keep your machine busy all summer long.



**New FREE projects!**

[see below](#)



### Stained Glass Lap Robe

Brilliantly colored yarn and an easy pattern make this project a joy to create. The results are beautiful and you'll find yourself dreaming of the color combinations for your



next version while you're still working on your first!

### [Man's V-Neck Pullover](#)

Classic lines and simple shaping make this man's sweater a stand-out. You'll find knitting this on the Sweater Machine quick work. You may find you want to stitch up several for the lucky guys on your gift list.



### [Pocket Knitter™ Beaded Purslet](#)

As a special bonus, we've also just added a new [Pocket Knitter](#) project. The beaded purse uses Simply Soft Quick and silver pony beads, which knit so easily on the Pocket Knitter. Note that for a subtle effect, use the knit side as the right side, but if you want the beads to really stand out, use the purl side as the right side, just as you would do for hand or machine knitting.

## *Rwanda Knits update...*

As most of you know, the Rwanda Knits project has grown from its inception in 2003, but, as with most sustainability goals, there comes a time when it's time to turn it over to the knitters. I thought that time was almost there: 17 groups have received machines, over 1,500 women now know how to use the over 700 machines now in country, the groups are selling their sweaters and other knitwear, I was able to secure a distributor in Kigali for the yarn made in Kenya especially for the machines (Rwanda doesn't make yarn – at the moment), the six Rwanda Knits teachers have traveled the country teaching (see photo of them with their teaching certificates on the [Rwanda Knits blog](#)) and they've learned the basics of design so they can now create their own projects without my assistance.



Learning the Sweater Machine at Women for Women, Kigali, Rwanda, May 2006

Additionally USAID Rwanda, who was once very skeptical about the whole knitting machine idea (let alone dealing with me and me with them) says that the Rwanda Knits program is one of their most successful in Rwanda. To celebrate this they have created posters of Esperance, one of the RK teachers and a victim of the genocide, using the machine and will be putting these posters up almost like billboards at various centers that have received the machines.



Cari teaching a new technique to the Rwanda Knits teachers, Kigali, Rwanda, May 2006

Just when I thought it was “safe” to turn over the program to the knitters, we were approached by UNIFEM (the United Nations Development Fund for Women) proposing to significantly expand the program to make Rwanda the knitting center of East Africa and a model for the whole region! The good thing is they would do all the, to me, hard work: administration. And the Business Council for Peace would do all the business training. Me? I'd have all the fun – teaching the teachers, working with the groups, helping in marketing, etc. When a country such as Rwanda has recovered as much as it has, this kind of proposal is not something to be turned down.

If you'd like to see additional photos and read more, visit my [Rwanda Knits Blog](#). And you are interested in learning more about Rwanda's history, I recommend seeing the movie “Shooting Dogs” or reading NYT/Imes Bestseller “Left to Tell” by my BPeace associate Immaculee Ilibigiza. Note these resources are not for the faint-hearted, but they are important in understanding what happened there.

I am also pleased to tell you about a unique opportunity to purchase something made by Rwandan craftswomen and benefit Rwanda Knits at the same time. These [needle and hook quivers](#) are woven entirely by hand from banana leaves. They come in two sizes, one just right for knitting needles (\$15.99 plus shipping and handling), the other perfect for crochet hooks (\$9.99 plus shipping and handling). Or purchase one of each for \$19.99. These quivers are very sturdy and will last a lifetime. The best part is, the good folks at ShopCaron.com will donate the proceeds of every sale to Rwanda Knits. Supply is limited, so you might want to order soon. At these prices, they'd make a great Christmas or birthday gift for your stitching friends, don't you think?



Purchase a Rwandan needle or hook quiver and benefit the Rwanda Knits project

See you next month!

Happy Knitting,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cari".

Cari Clement  
[Bond America](#)

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