

Green Mountain Rug School

RANDOLPH CENTER, VERMONT

by Pam Knights

"This was my 10th year...thank you for all the work you do to give us such an excellent Rug School. (My teacher) was wonderful and taught more than just rug hooking—it was also an art class!" —Cynthia Currier, NH

Imagine hooking in the heart of Vermont's Green Mountains at one of the oldest and largest rug hooking schools in the country, surrounded by amazing color, creativity, and the camaraderie of other rug hookers. Envision yourself in a greenhouse setting at the dye pot, exploring fourteen dye techniques, or working hands-on using fine-cut strips to create realistic looking flowers and leaves, or adding texture and dimension to one of your in-progress pieces, or discovering techniques for bringing animals and landscapes to life on your rugs.

With more than twenty classes and three sessions to choose from, a well-stocked rug supply shop, student rug exhibits, and a coffeepot that is always on, Green Mountain Rug School (GMRS) in Randolph Center, Vermont, has become a favorite getaway for rug hookers from across the country and Canada.

Every year during mid-June, more than 200 hooking enthusiasts of all ages and abilities flock to the Vermont Technical College campus to congregate in a picturesque and peaceful country setting. There, they expand their rug hooking skills, eat good food, and relax while renewing old friendships and making new ones.

A family-run business, director/owner Stephanie Ashworth-Krauss, a fourth-generation rug hooker, oversees the daily operations along with her dad, Wink; her sister, Pam; and her daughters Cecely, Lindsay, and Mariah. Now in its 28th season, GMRS, was cofounded in 1982 by Stephanie's mother, Anne Ashworth, a



Green Mountain Rug School is held at the scenic Vermont Technical College in Randolph Center, Vermont.



Students in Karen Schellinger's dye class at Green Mountain Rug School show off their work.

nationally recognized rug hooker, and Jean Armstrong.

GMRS's impressive roster of 18 or more teachers includes many regulars from across the country who return year after year, such as Beverly Conway of Middlebury, Vermont (Whimsical Primitives); Karen Schellinger of Louisville, Kentucky (Dye Pots in the Greenhouse); Nancy Claffin Blood of Owego, New York (Fine Cuts); and Roslyn Logsdon of Bethesda, Maryland, (Pictorials and People). Amy Oxford of Middlebury, Vermont, returns to teach punch needle, and Linda Repasky of Amherst, Massachusetts, offers mini-punch, while Susan Feller of Augusta, West Virginia, and Kim Dubay of

North Yarmouth, Maine, team-teach a class on mixed media. Jon Ciemiewicz of Litchfield, New Hampshire, who got his start in teaching at GMRS, returns to offer techniques on hooking animals and landscapes.

Two veterans, Patsy Becker, now retired, and Jule Marie Smith have taught at GMRS for over 25 years and were honored with 25-year gold pins in June 2006 and 2008, respectively. A GMRS tradition, gold and silver pins are awarded to returning students and teachers to acknowledge their attendance at Rug School after 5, 10, 15, or 20 years.

Outside of classes, students can always find a lot to do at Rug School. Evening fes-

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tivities usually include special lectures, a rug exhibit, and informal gatherings. Classrooms stay open until 11:00 p.m. so students and even teachers can return to their classrooms for relaxed hooking. Many students enjoy scheduling one evening dinner at the Three Stallion Inn, four miles down the road, or at the elegant Ariel's Restaurant by the famed Floating Bridge in near-by Brookfield. The VTC campus is also perfect for peaceful walks, and many area sightseeing and shopping opportunities are close by.

Stephanie Ashworth-Krauss, a dyeing specialist, also owns a well-stocked rug shop called Green Mountain Hooked Rugs in Montpelier, Vermont. Open year-round, she offers hooking supplies, wool fabric and finished rugs, rug repair and cleaning services, as well as rug hooking classes and hook-ins. Her online store can be found at www.GreenMountainHookedRugs.com. The Montpelier shop is closed during rug school when Stephanie moves most of its contents to the campus. Open daily otherwise, she offers more than 200 bolts of 100% wool fabric, a wide selection of hand-dyed wool fabric and yarn, as well as traditional rug hooking supplies. In addition, a special line of Vermont-crafted baskets is available, and GMRS teachers offer patterns and books for sale.

Comfortable and convenient, on-campus accommodations are provided in dormitories, all within easy walking distance of classes and meals. The cafeteria serves a wide variety of delicious foods, including vegetarian selections and a large salad bar.

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- Costs include a \$75 registration fee payable on enrollment, and tuition includes meals and accommodations. The week-long session, June 5-14, 2009, is \$475 double occupancy; \$595 single; and \$245 commuter. Weekend sessions, June 5-7 and June 12-14, are \$245 double, \$295 single, and \$140 commuter. Contact Green Mountain Hooked Rugs at (802) 223-1333 for a free brochure or visit www.GreenMountainHookedRugs.com for an online brochure and virtual tour.