

GREATER PACIFIC REGION
Embroiderers' Guild of America, Inc.

Ideas for retaining current members:

- Programs focused on stitching. Hands on, demonstration, slide shows.
- Chapter participation in Group Correspondence Courses.
- Plan workshops featuring knowledgeable teachers.
- Participate in Traveling Teacher program.
- Share teachers and workshops with adjoining chapters.
- Plan a retreat if you have not done so already. If you have already attended a retreat, chances are it will become an annual event. Be sure to write up a glowing report for your newsletter to let people know how much fun you had so that they will want to plan for the next retreat. You can decide to go back to the same place, or choose a new location. Great bargains can be found for rental houses, and the cost per person can be surprisingly low.
- Region representative should maintain close contact with Region and share all important information with chapter members.
- Make members aware of seminar planning and coming events. Talk about benefits of attending. Encourage budgeting so members can afford the trip.
- Maintain historical notebooks with chapter history. These should include photographs of workshops and special events, newspaper articles, mementos of chapter and region functions, etc.
- When it is noticed that long term members do not renew, before they are just crossed off the list someone from chapter membership should call them to find out what is going on.
- Members should be made aware of their renewal date. A list of current renewals can be included in newsletter or the Membership committee can call or e-mail the member.
Share chapter newsletters and glean membership ideas from others.
Encourage members to receive other chapters newsletters electronically
- Publicize your programs! Work with your local needlework and fabric shops to entice potential new members to your meetings by printing up an information sheet about upcoming programs and displaying them at the shop. Describe the project with a picture, if possible, add a materials list and directions to the meeting with contact information. This would work well with small projects, and the shop would benefit when they help people purchase supplies for the project.
- Have fun with your “Show and Tell.” Plan a special event with this, and include prizes! You could choose categories such as first project, oldest unfinished project, most challenging project, piece you are most proud of, piece you would most like to finish in this lifetime, most embarrassing project, and anything else you can think of to generate interest and prompt stitchers to go through their hidden stash.
- Give awards for finishing projects! Appoint someone to be in charge, and that person should keep track of the projects that would qualify for awards at year’s end. These could include workshops, petite projects, correspondence courses, projects from your programs, and others. Publish the list of project names, dates they were started, and what type of project it was in the newsletter to remind people that they will receive a special award if they finish these projects.

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- Reach “outside the frame” for programs and workshops! Try planning a beaded bracelet or necklace, an embellished jacket or tote bag, or a decorated box or gift bag. Something out of the ordinary just might entice someone to attend a meeting for the first time and discover the possibilities of the needle arts.
- ELECTIONS/OFFICERS Have accurate job descriptions on hand for your Nominating Committee; that way, they can tell candidates exactly what their duties are and what will be expected of them. Knowing what each job entails should make it easier for someone to know if the job is one he or she wants to do. This will also help officers and committees to work together more efficiently. You may use Job Descriptions from GPR Policies and Procedures, and also descriptions that your chapter has created for its own use.
- Vary the projects at programs and workshops during the year so that there are many different choices to try and to give everyone a chance to try something new.
- Sunshine outreach for members who are ill or just cannot get to meetings. A nice idea is to send each person a card with a skein of embroidery floss included on their birthday. Another way to reach out is to contact anyone who has not attended meetings in a while, let them know they are missed, and encourage them to attend an upcoming event.
- Board members move to various tables as soon as the business part of the meeting is over so that they can visit with different chapter members, instead of sitting as a group.
- Have stitch-ins at members’ homes, share a potluck lunch, and get to know each other better.
- Invite lapsed members to special events, and phone them occasionally to tell them how much they are missed.
- Plan day trips with chapter members to needlework events, such as the EGA National Traveling Exhibit.
- Region representative should maintain close contact with Region and share all important information with chapter members.
- Make members aware of seminar planning and coming events. Talk about benefits of attending. Encourage budgeting so members can afford the trip.
- Share chapter newsletters and glean membership ideas from others. Encourage members to receive other chapter newsletters electronically.
- Maintain historical notebooks with chapter history. These should include photographs of workshops and special events, newspaper articles, mementos of chapter and region functions, etc.
- Take advantage of Treasured Teacher Directory. Invite teachers for workshop and share expenses with nearby chapters.
- Fundraiser might be a beautiful beaded necklace. Sell a limited number of tickets for \$5 or \$10. Have pictures available, and number the tickets.
- Utilize the resources from National; for instance, “*One Woman’s Odyssey in Wearable Art*” is a slide show “retrospective of 30 years of Kate Doty’s original work in clothing embellishment”. This is from EGA’s slide library. Her stitch combinations and color choices are described as spectacular.

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- NEEDLEWORK-RELATED WEB SITES. Share these with your chapter members as they become available. Look for free charts that contain permission to reprint and share. Use free bookmark patterns and name tag patterns, being careful about reprint permission, for new members and community outreach.

NEWSLETTERS

- Be sure to put your advertising rates in your newsletter, and give a copy to shop owners in the area. Potential advertisers can be needlework shops, framers, fabric shops, and others.
- Clearly explain dues for primary members, plural members in region and out of region.
- Fill your newsletters with information! Remember, not every member attends all meetings, but they all pay dues and would like to receive the information that is shared at meetings. Encourage each officer and committee chairperson to write an article for the newsletter to let members know what is happening. Be sure to include the cutoff date so reports will be in on time. Include your meeting minutes, detailed program information for the next meeting, and anything else that you can think of to entice people to attend meetings. Encourage them to bring a friend! Your newsletter can be a great outreach tool.
- Consider including a “Table of Contents” on page 1, so that readers can easily locate items and articles they want to read first.
- Read other chapter newsletters! There is a wealth of information in them. If you see an interesting fund-raising project, contact the person in charge, or the chapter president, and see if it is something that your chapter can do. Do you see an interesting program presented by a local EGA member at a neighboring chapter? Contact her and see if she would be willing to teach it at your chapter. If you have e-mail, you have access to virtually all newsletters on line, so take advantage of that ability. Many chapters publish charts by designers who give reprint permission, so you might find your next project free of charge.
- Use your newsletter to remind members of the opportunities in *NeedleArts*. Write an article highlighting new projects, items for purchase, articles on designers, Designers Across America patterns, etc.
- Congratulate people *by name* in the newsletter when they finish a project and receive an award for it, or when they bring items in for Outreach. Each time someone is mentioned by name, it makes the newsletter more personal for everyone.
- Start a column for personal ads. Maybe you are looking for a particular out of print chart or hard to find fiber, need some help with a particular stitch, or want to start a study group for on some project.

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Acquiring new members

- Schedule needlework shows/displays in the area. Focus on needlework as art form.
- Publicity in newspapers (weekly and daily), public radio, public television, chamber of commerce, needlework and quilting shops; take advantage of display spaces in airports, libraries, banks, college art galleries.
- Chapter flyers, including meeting dates and information, in needlework, quilting, knitting, framing, beading, fabric shops.
- Carry chapter meeting information that can be handed out to new acquaintances, such as brochures or information printed on a bookmark, etc.
- Collect no-longer-needed issues of NeedleArts from members. Staple membership brochure inside. Leave issue at hairdresser, dentist, library, etc., where interested stitchers might find them.
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- Interview local needlework-related business owners, especially new shops, and publish in newsletter to introduce members to the shop. Ask questions such as how long in the area, where from, experience in field, future goals, classes being given, personal interests and hobbies. Encourage these shops to advertise, explaining the area the newsletter reaches.
- Invite shop owners/local teachers to meetings.
- Invite local teachers to teach a program. Publicize at retail shops.
- Teach children. Investigate possibilities of being invited to schools to teach basic needlework.
- Teach adults. Contact adult education, 4H, “Carnival of Learning” sponsored by county extension departments.
- Demonstrations at various locations. First Friday Art Night, galleries with fiber collections, historical society, outdoor art shows, friendship clubs, county fair, etc.
- Join with quilt guilds and sewing guilds to demonstrate use of embroidery with quilting and sewing, as in clothing and accessories. Invite to them advertise in newsletter, and offer to advertise in their newsletters.
- Wear embroidered and embellished clothing in public, and encourage admirers to attend meetings.
- Needlework displays in community – safely mounted at banks, hospitals, college art galleries, libraries, etc.
- Attend stitch-ins at needlework shops and encourage others to visit chapter meeting.
- Share chapter newsletters and glean membership ideas from others. Encourage members to receive other chapter newsletters electronically.
- Have a President’s Challenge to bring a guest to a meeting.
- Encourage members to subscribe electronically to GPR newsletter.

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- Have fundraisers and exhibit the items at public locations and displays. Items might be a quilt made by the chapter members, ornament tree with hand embroidered ornaments, etc. Sell opportunity tickets.
- Have your chapter meeting information available to the public in as many locations as possible. Some of these would include Chamber of Commerce, Visitor's Bureau, all local and weekly newspapers, fabric and needlework stores, bead shops.
- For Community Outreach, stitch bookmarks for your local literacy council and libraries.
- Get involved in your local county fair, outdoor art festival, First Friday Art night open gallery evenings, local art museums.
- Find new places to demonstrate embroidery. Look for art shows and galleries that exhibit fiber arts.
- Include a membership form in each of your newsletters. This will make it easy for a person who is thinking about joining to do it easily, and for current members to renew. Just half a page is enough to put lines for name, address, phone, email address, whether or not they would like their newsletter sent by email or post office, month and day of their birth date, membership # (for renewals), and the various membership amounts, with information on where to send their check made out to your chapter name.
- Use Outreach as a valuable venue to locate potential needleworkers. We all love putting together the toiletry bags, lap blankets, personal items, and such, and we should continue the generous donations of those items that may bring comfort to someone in need. Our main focus, however, in order to maintain EGA's tax-exempt status, is on education in needlework related activities, and we should make a special effort to get out into the community and introduce needlework to others. Try to reach out to a 4H group, a class in elementary or middle school, scout group, home school groups, and others. The next generation of embroiderers is out there, and they need us to show them the way.
- You may even offer a ride for more than one chapter gathering. Be sure to tell them about special interest groups, too.
- A first-time visitor may feel more comfortable in a less formal setting, such as an informal stitch-in, and that may be offered as an alternative to a chapter meeting for the first visit.
- Whatever method works to entice potential new members to visit, be sure to make them feel welcome by taking the person under your wing, offer desserts and beverages, and take time to get to know them. These may be your next new members!
- Exhibits. When you put up an exhibit, at a library, gallery, or other space, be sure to write up a short history of your chapter, telling the reader about what your group does to promote needle art, outreach projects that you work on, and related information. Be sure to have contact information handy at the exhibit.
- Use fundraisers to attract guests and potential members. If you are planning a boutique or other fundraiser, invite friends and acquaintances, even those who do not [yet] participate in the needle arts. Perhaps seeing the items that your chapter has created will inspire them to want to learn about needlework.

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- If you have a Barnes and Noble bookstore in your area, you might want to contact them about having a stitch-in there, or even if they will let you do a holiday gift-wrapping fundraiser. Some chapters have found this to be successful in raising funds, not to mention exposure to potential new members.
- Create small needlework kits for patients at military hospitals in your area. Kit should include pattern, fabric, threads, and needle.
- Think about finding a public place for stitch-in/sit and stitch. Several chapters have their stitch-ins at Barnes and Noble, so if there is one near you it might be worthwhile to ask them. What a nice thing for them to do, and you might just find a new member for your chapter.
- Needlework shows. Plan a show/boutique around a holiday and publicize it well. Needleworkers will flock to it if they know about the event. See if your local needlework frame shop will sponsor a show.
- Congratulate people *by name* in the newsletter when they finish a project and receive an award for it, or when they bring items in for Outreach. Each time someone is mentioned by name, it makes the newsletter more personal for everyone.

COUNTY FAIR PARTICIPATION:

- Get involved in county fair judging. Talk to the fair board and explain EGA judging abilities. Invite EGA judges in your area to speak about judging standards at your meetings. Develop a good working relationship with your County Fair board and planners.
- Make sure that all displays are secure. Marin Golden Threads developed a picket fence system that works well and is even being used by other fair venues. Try to set up your table so that the entire exhibit is visible and can be secured.
- Be prepared to spend many person-hours to manage this Fair display, but the effort is well worth it.
- Have projects to work on as you sit at the table. This will give people a reason to stop, look, and inquire about what you are doing.
- Put up your chapter banner, so visitors will know who you are.
- Have a notebook of information at the table so that members can refer to it and answer questions from visitors about the chapter.
- Greet visitors with a smile and try to determine what part of the display might interest them the most. If you do plan an Open House later, invite them and have them sign up in a book so that they can be contacted later. Be sure to have your calling cards or bookmarks, contact information for membership, and meeting times available. Have a sample or two of projects suitable for children, and be prepared to explain your youth outreach program to visitors who have children.
- Have a signup book available for contact later. Ask visitors to write name, address, email and phone number, as well as what type of needlework interests them.
- Put up a secure display of a variety of needlework, not fair entries, that visitors can see and inquire about techniques and details.

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- Follow up on these visitors after the fair. Invite them to a meeting or special event you may have planned for the near future. Invite older children and teens as well. Emphasize that all skill levels are welcome. Consider having an open house after the fair and invite all the interested parties. Try to find a teacher who can offer a simple stitched project that they can work on and then take home.
- Another great way to follow up on the interested people who signed up is to call each person and actually offer them a ride to and home from the meeting; that way, nobody gets lost and they really feel welcomed. Be sure to have that person, or another designated chapter member, sit with each new person, offer them a small project to work on with the member, or assist the guest in a project that they are all working on. . . . kind of a mentoring program while the new person gets comfortable.

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Samples for New Members Notebooks

GPR SAMPLE NEW MEMBER WELCOME NOTEBOOK

The following are suggested guidelines for chapters to use in creating their individual New Member Welcome notebooks. You will want to add items that are unique to your chapter.

1. Welcome letter from EGA President. Update when new President takes office.
 - Overview of EGA including number of members, number of regions, number of chapters.
 - Benefits of membership including NeedleArts, Education Catalog and contents, philosophy and purpose.
 - Latest updates on National location.
 - Opportunities to volunteer.
2. Welcome letter from Greater Pacific Region Director. Update when new RD takes office.
 - Number of members and chapters in Region.
 - Benefits of membership including seminars, serving on Region board, Region Correspondence Courses, etc.
3. Welcome letter from designated person in your chapter, such as Hospitality chair or Membership chair. Explain what happens at meetings. This might include details such as
4. General chapter information.
 - You could include information such as when the chapter was founded, how many members belonged then as compared to now, highlights of past years.
 - Purpose/mission statement. [Many chapter newsletters have excellent ones to draw from if your chapter needs inspiration for this.]
 - Meeting information – times and locations.
 - Give facts about the newsletter – when published, how distributed, etc.
 - Nametag requirement.
 - Outreach projects.
 - Year-long chapter calendar with events such as meeting host/hostess volunteer, upcoming stitch-ins, special meetings, needlework shows, demonstrations, etc.
5. Membership benefits.
 - Subscription to quarterly NeedleArts.
 - Biennial (every other year) Education catalog announcing correspondence courses (local, regional, and online) and other educational opportunities from EGA such as slide shows, library, traveling exhibits. Any new correspondence courses and other educational opportunities offered after catalog is printed are included in NeedleArts.
 - Attend chapter meetings and programs.
 - Attend chapter workshops, nearby chapter workshops, and regional seminars.
 - Chapter library.

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- Special interest stitching groups.
 - Opportunities to volunteer.
 - Retreats.
 - Discounts at some retailers.
 - Group trips to needlework events.
 - And many others!
6. List of basic stitching supplies for the new person to bring to each meeting, workshop, and stitching event.
 - Stitched name tag. Explain requirements, fines for not wearing after initial time period. Sample nametag charts and alphabets. Include a charted EGA logo
 - An assortment of needles.
 - Embroidery scissors, general purpose scissors.
 - Pen and note paper.
 - Small ruler.
 - Scraps of linen for practice and “doodles.”
 - A few skeins of floss and other fibers in various colors.
 7. List of stitching-related web sites.
 8. List of elected officers and committee chairs.
 9. Current chapter By-laws and standing rules.
 10. Current membership list.
 11. Current library list.
 12. Survey of favorite stitching techniques and ones the new member would like to learn. Complete and return to workshop chairman.
 13. GPR “GOOD MANNERS FOR WORKSHOPS”
 14. Chapter pin. Present each new member with a chapter pin as a welcoming gift from the members of the chapter.
 15. Information on how to use Region website and read other chapter newsletters and Region newsletter, plus a glossary of unfamiliar EGA terms, such as RD, ARD, ICC, GCC, Master Craftsman Program, CNJ (Certified Needlework Judges program), etc.
 16. Your latest chapter newsletter.

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SAMPLE WELCOMING LETTER

WELCOME TO OUR CHAPTER

Dear New Member,

Welcome, and thank you for becoming a member of _____ chapter of the Greater Pacific Region, Embroiderers' Guild of America, Inc. We hope you will be happy with the educational opportunities and benefits you will derive from being a member. We meet _____ [monthly, etc.] to conduct our business meeting and then enjoy educational programs. We also allow plenty of time to socialize and get to know each other.

Our newsletter is called _____ and is published _____ [monthly, bimonthly, etc.]

The purpose of the Guild is to encourage all textile arts, especially those created using a needle with an eye, and to encourage high standards in those arts, as well as to promote an active educational program of education and study to preserve the heritage of embroidery and needle arts.

Membership is available to anyone interested in textile arts. There are numerous benefits to membership, including a subscription to *NeedleArts*, a quarterly publication of Embroiderers' Guild of America, Inc. There are also opportunities to attend chapter workshops and regional seminars, participate in correspondence courses, and take advantage of the many educational materials provided by Embroiderers' Guild of America, Inc.

Stitching get-togethers are scheduled regularly, and the hostess or host may pick the date and time. We may just visit and stitch on a favorite project, or work on a current correspondence course.

The President may issue a challenge, and that may be anything from bringing a guest to a meeting, to creating your own small design starting with two or three stated colors of floss.

We have Community Outreach to help out in our neighborhoods as well as to introduce others to stitching. We are especially interested in teaching children to stitch, and may use a program created by EGA for that purpose.

There are many activities scheduled and opportunities offered, all in the effort to interest and encourage your creative abilities. We hope you will truly enjoy being a member of our chapter and EGA.

Sincerely,

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Welcome to the exciting world of the Greater Pacific Region of The Embroiderers' Guild of America, Inc. Your Chapter is one of 26 in this Region; you have joined some 1,600 fellow stitchers pursuing art created with a threaded needle...and even more fellow stitchers across this country and beyond.

There is so much to learn and enjoy in this organization; the list of techniques is long and the opportunities abound. There are Chapter programs, workshops, and stitch-ins. Our Region sponsors a week-long Seminar in the even-numbered years; both Individual Correspondence Courses (ICC) and Group Correspondence Courses (GCC) as well as on-line study courses can be undertaken throughout the year both through the Region and through National. There are many Master Craftsmen Programs in a variety of fields as well as Teacher Certification and Judging Programs. There is a National Seminar every year in a different part of the country and a touring National Exhibit every few years. The list goes on.

The best part of all this is doing these things with others who are also learning about and appreciating these skills, both traditionally and in a contemporary manner. The camaraderie is as much a part of EGA as the education and preservation of this precious art. Do make sure that you participate actively in the study, the sharing, and the fun.

Welcome!

Mike Swan, Greater Pacific Region Director