

Handmade

Love for fiber survives a rough start

Deborah Vinson of Detroit learned to knit the hard way — from a true novice.

“I learned how to knit for a Girl Scout badge, and for me, that was a nightmare,” recalls the Detroit resident. “Years later, I realized our Scout leader didn’t know how to knit. She had just learned herself.”

JOCELYNN BROWN



It was during her early 20s that Vinson “got reacquainted with knitting” at the hands of someone highly skilled — a woman at the church she attended. “She said, ‘Pick something you like, so, I picked a floor-length sweater coat with pockets and raglan sleeves. It was completely lined,’” she says. “In hindsight, I think she should have said, ‘Are you serious?’ but that’s what really got me going with knitting.”

Vinson later tried her hand at crocheting; something she learned from a woman she once babysat for. The experience was far less challenging, leaving her with an even stronger passion for creating with fiber. And when it comes to yarn (or yarn substitutes), she’s not at all picky. “I use

whatever I can get my hands on,” she remarks. “I will even try knitting or crocheting with wire or straw. I’ll try anything. I’ve never gotten into the logistics of fibers, where I have one preference over the other. I just like the process (of knitting and crocheting).”

These days, as an avid knitter and crocheter, Vinson, a special events coordinator and elder adviser at the Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State University, shares her skills with other members of the Detroit Knitting and Crochet Club, which meets every third Saturday from 1-3 p.m. at the main branch of the Detroit Public Library, 5201 Woodward in Midtown. And she also shares the fruits of her labor with local charity groups by donating some of her work.

Featured here is Vinson’s original crochet pattern for making a stylish headband designed with the crocodile stitch, a technique she saw several years ago but never learned until she purchased a copy of “Crocodile Stitch Fashions” (Annie’s Attic) by Lianka Azulya.

Detroit News Staff Writer Jocelynn Brown is a longtime Metro Detroit crafter. For more news and giveaways, visit her blog at detroitnews.com/crafts. You can reach her at (313) 222-2150.



Todd McInturf / The Detroit News

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Bejeweled Crocodile Headband

Level: Intermediate

Estimated time: 3 hours

Tools: Size H crochet hook, sewing needle, scissors

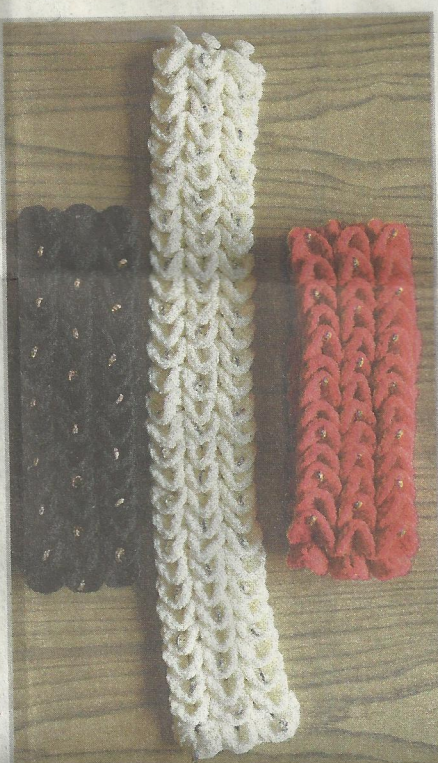
Supplies: 5-ounce skein of worsted weight yarn, 50 10 mm rhinestone rondelles, 3 ¼-inch buttons, thread

Finished size: 4 inches wide by 21 inches long (or length to fit head)

Abbreviations: st(s) stitch(es), ch chain, sc single crochet, dc double crochet

Instructions

1. String beads onto yarn.
2. Ch 14 sts
3. Sc in second ch from hook and each ch across. Then ch 3, (13 sc) turn work
4. Work first row of crocodile sts across



5. Work second row of crocodile sts across, sliding a bead between groups
6. Do sts in first and last crocodile st. You should have 3 crocodile sts, 4 dc st (one between each crocodile), 2 beads on first and third crocodile st at each end
7. Repeat steps 4 and 5, making crocodile directly on top of previous ones, and be only second or middle crocodile st. You should have 3 crocodile sts, 4 dc and bead.
8. Repeat steps 4-6 until band is desired length. End with one row of sc sts (13 sc) Bind off.
9. Sew a button in middle of each of last crocodiles, and use spaces in middle of crocodiles at opposite end as button holes. (Note: This headband can also be worn neck warmer.)