

What Can You Create with Cat Hair?

By Kathy Stanko, Chair – Fiber Committee

It was the final afternoon of the Sneffels Fiber Festival. We were all tired. One of the festival volunteers came up to me and introduced me to Wayne, a gentleman who spends his summers in Ouray, CO and the winters in Florida. He travels with his cat, Charlie.

Wayne presented me with a bag of hair from his cat. We are talking grams of fiber, not ounces. The question was: can I make him something from Charlie's hair. I said 'of course' but I would need to figure it out and probably get a spinner involved. I also said I would need a deposit and his contact information. The deposit was to make sure he was serious.

The cat hair was very short, maybe $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch, with no crimp. It would need to be blended with a spinnable fiber. The color of the cat hair was mostly off-white with a bit of orange/apricot. I had some white llama that would match and I managed to snag some apricot alpaca from a friend.

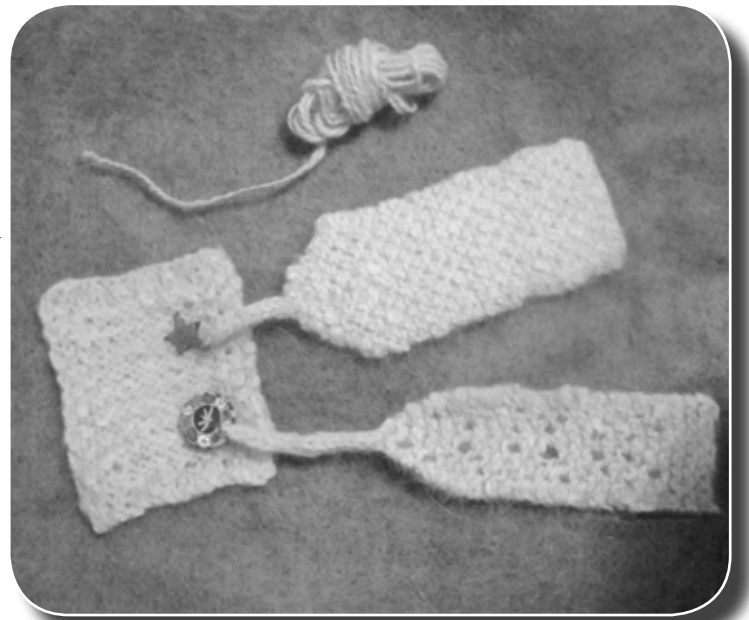
First I blended the cat hair on my drum carder to get the blended color. Then I carded the white llama and began adding the apricot alpaca until I had the same color. Wow, now the huge leap of faith; no turning back: I began carding the llama/alpaca blend into the cat fiber. A little at a time so as to not lose the 'cat', but to create a carded blend that could be spun. The resulting batt was about 40% llama/alpaca blend and 60% cat hair. Strong enough to be spun. Now I had just about an ounce of fiber.

I sent the blended fiber off to my hand-spinner and asked her to spin it about a fingering weight to

ensure that I had enough yarn to knit something. While the spinning was happening Wayne and I traded ideas on what he would like me to make. We agreed on bookmarks

The yarn came back; it was a 2-ply Fingering #1 (19-22 wpi) spun worsted. I began knitting. As you can see, I was able to get two bookmarks which I embellished with a couple of charms. Also a small coaster and a little yarn left over just in case something needed to be fixed.

In the end, I sent the package off to Wayne, including his entire deposit. Everyone involved in this project did it out of love. Wayne was overwhelmed with the gifts. He questioned the return of his deposit and I suggested that he donate it to the local animal shelter, which he did.



Additional Resources on Munge continued ...

Second Side Note: Triamcinolone acetonide is the active ingredient in Nasacort®, an allergy nose spray available over-the-counter at your local pharmacy.

3. Zinc supplementation may also benefit with the use of 2g of zinc sulfate/day or 4g zinc methionine (Zinpro)/day given for multiple months with everyday minerals.

Mike Safley, Northwest Alpacas, posted a munge remedy that has been used over the last 30+ years. It is called 'Witches Brew' and you can find it on-line. Here is the recipe:

- ...2/3 pint mineral oil
- ...1/5 pint DMSO
- ...8 ml Ivermectin
- ...5 cc Gentamycin (50 mg per ml)

If you purchase the over-the-counter items, most veterinarians can provide the Gentamycin. Put the mixture in a spray bottle. Avoid any eye contact.

