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July 13, 2007

Knit one, purl two, play ball!

BY KEELY BROWN
Special to the Daily
July 11, 2007

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What goes better with baseball than hot dogs, peanuts and ... knitting needles?

It may seem a bizarre match, but if you come to the Rockies game on July 28, you'll see plenty of knitters and crocheters plying their craft, thanks to the second annual Stitch N' Pitch at Coors Field. Crafters are invited to come and work on their projects during the game, where the first 500 crafters will also receive a special goodie bag filled with yarns and knitting needles.

Kim Parker and Gail Cummer, co-owners of "What's Needling U," a needle arts supply shop on Main Street in Frisco, are hoping that Summit County crafters will be well represented at the Saturday game.

Sponsored by the National NeedleArts Association, Stitch N' Pitch games will be played throughout the summer at major league ballparks nationwide. Parker said that about 100 people from Colorado and Wyoming attended last year's inaugural Stitch N' Pitch.

"Everyone was knitting and crocheting and doing needlepoint during the game," Parker said. "We got quite a few looks from people who walked by."

One person who walked by for more than just a passing glance was the Rockies' giant purple mascot, Digger, who showed up toting a pair of 8-foot-long knitting needles and a huge ball of yarn, ready to join in the fun. Kathy Morrow, owner of The Yarn Studio in Minturn, knitted Digger a 10-foot-scarf, which he proudly wore throughout the game.

Morrow, who is on the board of the National NeedleArts Association, said that these Stitch N' Pitch games help spread the message that crafting is cool.

Knitting and baseball? Yes, it's time for the second annual Stitch N' Pitch at Coors Field. To join up with other local knitters for the July 28 Rockies game, contact What's Needling U at (970) 668-0381.

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“I thought it was a blast last year,” she said. “It was so much fun and made people realize that knitting is not passé. Most people look at needle arts as old fashioned and out-of-date — something that little old ladies do. But it’s hip today, and a lot of young people do needle crafts. For a long time, it had this stigma; people were ashamed to admit that they enjoyed doing it. But now, people are saying ‘We dig it and we want to stitch wherever we go.’”

Even at baseball games?

“Well, it really works because there’s a lot of dead time in baseball games,” Morrow said.

Parker agreed that baseball games are a perfect time to bring out the knitting bag.

“There’s a lot of down time in a baseball game, so there’s a lot of time for knitting,” she explained.

According to Cummer, while the majority of last year’s crafter attendees were also die-hard baseball fans, you don’t really have to be a huge baseball fan to enjoy a Stitch N’ Pitch game.

“I’m not a big baseball fan per se, but even with the 105 degree heat at last year’s game, it was an enjoyable experience,” she said.

Cummer said that 15 Summit County crafters have already signed up for this year’s Stitch N’ Pitch. To reserve your place in this year’s baseball knitting circle, you can call What’s Needling U at (970) 668-0381. The deadline for reservations is Thursday, July 19. Game time is 6:05, so bring your knitting, needlepoint or crochet, and come see the Rockies beat the Dodgers.

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