

# Creative Gifts Calendar

- with a focus on ideas that encourage and promote creativity, embroidery, and/or literacy -



**Jen Funk Weber**  
**Needle and ThREAD: Stitching for Literacy**

The Blog: <http://jenfunkweber.com/>

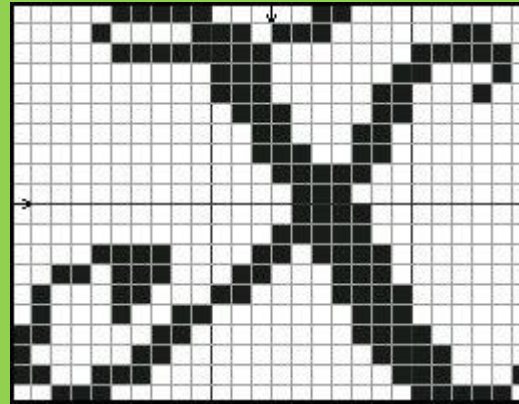
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S4L Book Club This Month:

## Creative Gifts Project 1

### A hand embroidered Bookmark



-How about the idea that books are treasures and X marks the spot—the spot where you stopped reading, see? Stitch an X on a scrap of fabric or a piece of paper and turn it into a bookmark

## Creative Gifts Project 2

### Party Markers /Mug Markers



You've probably seen wine glass markers. Well, they work on mugs, too, if you're more inclined to cocoa or tea, or if you're serving the under-21 crowd



The rings that attach the embroidery to the stem or handle can be earring hoops.

\*Make some with the initials of your frequent or repeat visitors

\*Make some generic ones for less frequent guests.

## February

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S4L Book Club This Month:

## Creative Gifts Project 3

### Embroidered cookies

Sugar cookies with holes poked before baking and licorice laces.

Actually, this could be nice for Valentine's Day. Hmm.

- Receptie of your own choice
- Licorice laces in different colours

## Creative Gifts Project 4

### Embroidered Stitchband For Hair



\* We can stitch a shortish ribbon (about 18 inches—or you can always measure the head) and sew a few inches (about 3 inches) of elastic between the two ends to make a stretchy headband.

\* Or we can stitch a longish ribbon (32 inches, or more if you want dangley ends) and tie it in a knot around the head.

I find backing the stitchband with Ultrasuede not only covers the back side of the embroidery but also makes it less slippery on the old bean.

If you're going with long dangley ends, maybe you'd like to add some beads to them.

## March

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**S4L Book Club This Month:**

## Creative Gifts Project 5

### An Entertaining Gift Wrap -Make a Puzzle

- 1) Choose a place where you will hide the gift card or coupons: under a lampshade or lamp, under the recipient's pillow after she has gotten up, anywhere at all.
- 2) Think of a clue describing the place you've hidden the gift. If you hid it under a lamp, you might say, "Got any bright ideas where I hid your gift?"
- 3) Now turn that clue into a puzzle. We're going to use a letter-substitution code to make a cryptogram. You can write out your own code or use this one:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
D	O	H	J	Q	C	Y	M	W	F	P	V	A

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
T	K	Z	I	E	X	U	G	R	N	B	S	L

Where there's an A in your clue, you write a D instead. Where there's a B, you write O. So "GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS WHERE I HID YOUR GIFT?" becomes "YKU DTS OEWYMU WJQDX NMQEQ W MWJ SKGE YWCU?"

- 4) Write the clue on a piece of paper along with instructions for deciphering the clue.
- 4) Seal the clue in an envelope

**Or stitch a bookmark to the  
2011 Bookmark Challenge  
March 17 – April 28**

## Creative Gifts Project 6

### Bottle Caps



For different moods and seasons we can make hats for bottles.

Wine, beer, soda, or water bottles—your choice.

what kind of cap are you in the mood for today?

- \* With pompons or bells on top,
- \* with wings,
- \* with stars,
- \* with faces,
- \* with new learned stitches
- \* red-and-white Santa hat,
- \* sports caps.
- \* Easter Holiday Season patterns and Colours?

The idea can be twisted to make them as

- Egg Hats / Eggwarmers instead?
- "Fingerdolls" / Finger Puppets

## April

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S4L Book Club This Month:

## Creative Gifts Project 7

**Embroidered stitchbands and ribbons = hatband.**

Dress up and personalize a hat for a special gift - Sun protection, heat retention, and fashion: hats do it all

- \* a wool felt hat in winter.
- \* a wide-brim straw hat while gardening.
- \* a hat when hiking, canoeing, fishing,
  
- \* a hat for NaNoWriMo / writing

## Creative Gifts Project 8

**an oak tag holiday tag**

We need to prep the card before actually stitching, make it like perforated paper. That is, we put holes in it.

The pattern is posted:

<http://funkandweber.com/fw/oak-tag-tag.pdf>



The description is in the Blog at Creative Gifts day 14.



## May

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S4L Book Club This Month:

## Creative Gifts Project 9

### Embroidered jewelry



An embroidered necklace pendant.

I added beads to the necklace chain to give it weight, but adding beads to the embroidery is another option.

You can find the pattern as a pdf file posted December 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010 in Funk and Weber Designs



Embroidered Ear Rings derived from the idea of making gift tags:

Check out the tutorial: <http://funkandweber.com/fw/tags.htm>

## Creative Gifts Project 10

### An Hors d'Oeuvre Pick



A noodle + some wire + a pair of pliers = hors d'oeuvre pick

\*look into whether that wire is actually safe for insertion into food. A wooden skewer, a long toothpick, and a plastic coffee stirrer are some alternatives.

I just poked the wire through holes created by the edge stitch. First, from front to back through a bottom hole, and then back to front through a top hole. I bent the wire above and below the noodle to make sure it doesn't slip, though the fit is snug enough that I doubt it would. I'd still bend the wire next time anyway because I think it looks cool. I might also add beads.

\* party pins with stitched text or numbers  
Stick the party pin in the food container and have a poster with explanations nearby.  
We could even just do colors and have a list of what colors go together.

## June

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S4L Book Club This Month:

### Creative Gifts Project 11 An Embroidered Photo Frame Or An Ornament For Your Tree



The outer frame can be any kind of embroidery, any stitches, any colors.

There's a tutorial on the Funk & Weber site to get you started.

The corner bands are the key to the project, holding the picture and allowing it to be changed.

I can see making one of these every year to celebrate Baby's first holiday, Baby's second holiday, etc. Stitch names and dates on the frames, take a picture of that day/event, and put it in the frame to keep forever and ever.

Or you and your family could print or cut out images of gifts you'd like to receive and hang them on the tree as hints to Santa! Call them Wish Ornaments.

Or you artists out there could paint tiny pictures to go in the embroidered frames.

### Creative Gifts Project 12 Stitch Band Napkin Rings



Stitch bands are pre-finished on the long sides, so we have only the short ends to deal with. They're easy enough to finish or stitch together, but the edges of this baby are glued. The seam is tidy and flexible, perfectly respectable.

A few large stitches (I used whopperjawed eyelets for this one) will make short work of these.

Short Funk And Weber Bracelets would make great napkin rings, too.




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**S4L Book Club This Month:**

### Creative Gifts Project 13

#### Stitch Embellished Reusable Ribbons For Gift Wrappings



\* I envision using narrow stitch bands, grosgrain ribbon, and whatever else presents itself at the time.

\* Or we could make bows with our embellished ribbons, ones that stay made and get tied onto packages.

These embellished ribbons wouldn't be thrown away with the rest of the wrappings, but would be re-gifted year after year, traveling from person to person to person, and living a long stitchy life.

\* Not in holiday colors only, please, but in a hug array of colors.

### Creative Gifts Project 14

#### De-stash. Wrap it up. Give it away.

Put it in a box and give it to a fellow or would-be crafter.

A box of random craft and needlework supplies is a fantastic gift for kids and crafters alike—kids are natural crafters.

In sorting through our stash, we see what we have, remember what we planned, and become inspired.

In off-loading some, we are better prepared to acquire what we'll actually use.

The recipient will see the stash as brand new and come up with all kinds of brilliant ideas for using it.

Maybe even better is to host a stash-exchange with fellow stitchers. Refreshing our stash gives us fresh ideas.



## August

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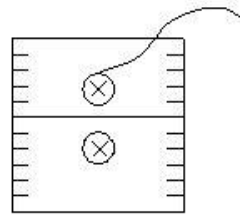
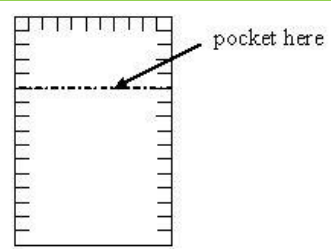
S4L Book Club This Month:

## Creative Gifts Project 15

### a stitchband jewelry pouch

Sterling silver tarnishes simply by being exposed to air. Jewelry pouches help reduce tarnishing.

Sketches and descriptions is listed in Creative Gifts Day 14 in the Blog (you know...)



They're also great for traveling and probably a dozen other things...

- \* Pocket for stamps
- \* As a pocket for Charity donations, gift certificates/cards, and coupons. (see November in this calendar)
- \* As 1-24 pockets (in different sizes) on a X-mas wall calendar to family members for gifts / house cleaning certificates

## Creative Gifts Project 16

Make a special gift extra special with the duplicate stitch or Swiss darning.

If you're giving away any knitted garments—hats, socks, scarves, mittens, etc



Not a knitter? No problem: You know all those cross stitch charts you have? Put them to use here. Look for borders and small motifs you can isolate. Borders can be stitched around hat brims, sock or mitten cuffs, and scarf edges. Motifs can be stitched on a mitten palm, on a sock instep, or anywhere on a hat.

You can use six-strand floss, pearl cotton, metallics, yarn, specialty fibers (oooooh, Rainbow Gallery's Fuzzy Stuff springs to mind!) or a combination. If you happen upon some beads, buttons, or charms as you root through your stash, grab them, too.

## September

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S4L Book Club This Month:

### Creative Gifts Project 17

#### A Re-Usable, Customizable Holiday Gift Tag.



You know how to find a gazillion little holiday motif patterns online

Then stitch your bands which will hold the card stock with printed names. These bands are 1/2 inch tall, and the

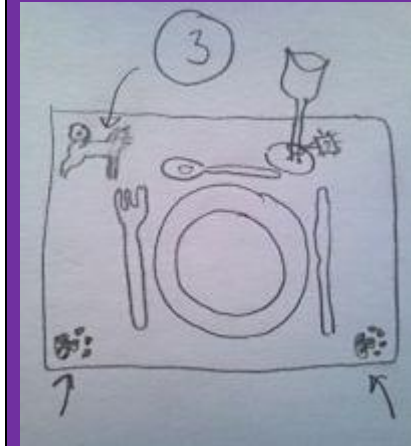
yellow card stock is cut slightly smaller.

You can design your own T, O, F, R, M letters or use an alphabet from another pattern or online. Or eliminate that stitching to make a smaller tag, and include similar words on the card stock.

The hanger is two strands of size 8 green pearl cotton and two strands of size 8 red pearl cotton twisted together into a thicker pearl cotton. You can always braid fibers for a hanger, or how about using a narrow ribbon

### Creative Gifts Project 18

#### Place Mats/Napkins



\* speed things along by using readymade placemats

\* Use a tiny pattern in a corner (here a sketch of a Shiba Dog Pattern)

\* If you're not comfortable with freehand embroidery, you can use a counted thread pattern with waste canvas—either the stuff sold as waste canvas or any piece of linen or congress cloth or canvas from your stash

## October

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S4L Book Club This Month:

## Creative Gifts Project 19

### Holiday Noodle Tags



"Noodles" are needlework doodles. Any noodle can become a tag.

They're super-simple, quick, and can be made from tiny scraps. They can add color, interest, and a personal touch to a plain package. Wouldn't these look great with some tiny spruce cuttings and cones?

Check out the tutorial:  
<http://funkandweber.com/fw/tags.htm>

You might be surprised what recipients do with them. I've seen some of mine hanging on Christmas trees, picture frames, lamps, and—oh, yeah—ears!

So if you don't love the tag idea, how about a pair of earrings?

## Creative Gifts Project 20

### Stitch on felt/fleece

Felt and fleece don't fray, they're easy to stitch on, and lots of things can be made from them:



\*cut out an animal shape. If you cut the legs separately and attach them with buttons, they become movable parts.

\*cut out a three

Use a blanket stitch for decoration or to attach two layers to allow for a bit of stuffing inside.

\* white felt snowflakes: Treat a square of white felt like paper, fold in half and then in half again. Draw on a quarter snowflake pattern then cut out - a snowflake ready for embellishment. Then get busy with some twinkly thread and some pretty beads and embellish as time permits.

\*a felt origami tree

\*a snowflake bookmark

I have beads and sequins that would be perfect for snowflakes

## November

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S4L Book Club This Month:

## Creative Gifts Project 21

Stitch on readymade anything



We can personalize things and make them special with just a bit of embroidery:



Sweaters and shirts,  
Stockings,  
Purses,  
Handbags

Using the infamous Kreinik

braid #8, perle cotton #12 and hand-dyed silk floss, I managed to stitch some illuminated initials. The patterns were traced on the computer monitor and transferred to the cuff using a basting stitch through thin paper. Stitches included: stem, chain, whipped chain and Colonial knot. They worked up quickly and best of all (according to that Food TV host!), they were semi-home-made.

## Creative Gifts Project 22

Charity donations, gift certificates/cards, and coupons.

Some people have all they want and need and more. They don't *want* anything.  
\* Make a donation to charity in their names. Choose a charity that supports their interests and experiences.  
\* A gift certificate to your favorite needlework shop can be the beginning of a very long and fulfilling stitching addiction for a friend.  
\* a coupon good for "one room-cleaning without complaint"  
\* "an extra night of dish-washing provided with a smile"?  
\* Well, I think we should offer kids, friends, and relatives  
\* coupons for reading time together,  
\* trips to the library,  
\* shared craft time,  
\* and embroidery lessons.  
Giving your time is a wonderful gift: it tells the person, "I like you and want to spend time with you," and specifying an activity guarantees a quality shared experience.

## December

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S4L Book Club This Month:

### Creative Gifts Project 23 The Year-in-Review-Letter

- Recalling the year's events and activities is a gift to those who get to re-live them. It's amazing what we can accomplish in a year, and it can feel good to see in condensed form what we've done. The time spent reminiscing is a gift of quality family time.
- Sharing them provides entertainment for others and allows them to enter your world and feel included and closer to you. This can be important for distant and perhaps lonely family and friends.
- Keeping them as historical documents provides entertainment and valuable information for yourself and your family down the road. I love reading the family holiday letters from my childhood.

The year-in-review can take many forms:

- a photo-illustrated letter
- a photo collage
- a timeline/map of the year
- a chart, " that very briefly lists each person's doings during the years

### Creative Gifts Project 24 Fiber Scraps Ornament



A cardboard stocking form + some glue + fiber scraps + ribbon scrap = ornament.

The key is patience and applying several layers of scrap fiber.

I've decouped some of these, but I think I prefer the soft fiber as the outer texture, even though stray bits occasionally fall off.