

MEET NOTIONS SPONSOR: Clover Needlecraft

If you're looking for templates to create embellishments like Asian knots and kanzashi flowers, for sewing and craft tools that run the gamut from utilitarian sewing to embroidery and lace making, or for specialty items like bamboo-handle sewing tools and bow makers, Clover Needlecraft has them all—and more!

In October 1925 in Osaka, Japan, Toshio Okada, founder, along with his two sons Hidekazu Okada and Tomiji Okada, embarked on a journey to create a company responsible for the manufacturing, distribution, and exportation of high quality sewing needles, knitting needles, embroidery tools, quilting tools, and other handcraft accessories. In 1946, the company opened its first plant in Osaka. A year later the corporation was established. By 1948, the "Clover" name was acquired and the company's plants in Osaka and Kyoto were expanded. Between 1955 and 1962, three more manufacturing plants were built and two branches were opened in Sapporo and Fukuoka. By 1983 Clover Needlecraft, Inc. was opened in Los Angeles, Calif. to service North and South America and the Caribbean. Expansion in Europe was established in 2000 when Clover Euro was opened in Hamburg, Germany.

Clover Needlecraft, Inc. is now located in Ontario, Calif. where they continue marketing and distributing Clover products. Jan



Carr is COO and VP of sales and marketing. Yasuhiro Okada, the current president/owner of Clover Mfg. Co., Ltd., is a third-generation descendant of the founder.

Clover has five innovative engineers, all based in Japan, who create the company's popular products. These engineers are the first avenue for new ideas. Clover also works with teachers and designers throughout the world to uncover new ideas. Well-known Clover brands include Takumi Bamboo Knitting Needles, Mini Iron, and Nancy Zieman's Trace 'n Create Bag and Quilt Templates. Clover's relationship

with Nancy began more than 25 years ago; she works



with Clover both to design products that are unique to the industry and to improve upon existing products. Her 5-in-1 Sliding Gauge is on Clover's "Top 10" best sellers list. Their current best-selling product is Wonder Clips, a great alternative to pins, especially when working with vinyl, pile, and other heavyweight fabrics.

Reaching Out to the Consumer

With such a vast range of products, Clover has launched several initiatives to educate and inspire the sewers and crafters of the world. The Clover Web site (www.clover-usa.com) includes an active blog. Every Tuesday, look for Fran's Corner, written by Fran Ortmeier, Clover's knitting and crochet guru, or Carol's Sew-

ing Room by Carol Porter, Clover's director of education. Entries focus on their current projects and include helpful tips. Nancy Zieman appears occasionally as a guest blogger. On Thursdays, a blog entry features new Clover products. Clover also has an active Facebook page (www.facebook.com/cloverneedlecraft) where you can ask questions, submit photos of your projects using Clover products, and participate in occasional product giveaways.

