

Jay Sire was born in Great Falls , Montana and lived just a couple of blocks from the Ursuline Center school for girls. She graduated from college in Bozeman with a degree in Home Economics and taught for a short while before devoting herself full time to her husband and four sons. Jay was always more interested in the fiber arts than in the cooking aspect of Home Economics. Early on she was recruited by the Yellowstone Country to help set up the Home Economics Pavilion for the County Fair. Jay was the person who designed the program for all the different categories. Canning, baking, and especially the fiber arts including knitting, all sorts of needlework, spinning, machine knitting, and weaving. She literally wrote the book! In the beginning, she took in entries, judged all categories, and set up all the displays. All this was done on hot August afternoons in a barn that also housed the livestock for the Fair! This was a far cry from the facilities and categories that have mushroomed into existence at today's County Fair, the Yellowstone Exhibition.

Jay was an excellent machine knitter, and a master seamstress, which came in very handy for sewing together her tailored suits and coats made of material she wove herself. Jay enjoyed spinning, teaching interested friends how to spin.

Upon retirement from homemaking she devoted herself to taking all workshops offered by the weaving and spinning Guilds and usually excelled at the different techniques she learned. Her Friendship Coverlet was the first one finished after the squares were exchanged and she encouraged the rest of us that it wasn't so difficult to put it together.

Not one to extol her own virtues, Jay was always willing to share her expertise with Guild members with demos and encouragement. She was awarded the Living Treasures Award in 1998. She will live on in all of us when we pull out her samples or study how she did put that coverlet together. Weavers like Jay excite us all to take on new ideas, share results and welcome newcomers to this fascinating endeavor called weaving.