

# WARP



WEAVE A REAL PEACE

Volume 21, Number 3 - Fall 2014

## Tintes Naturales from Guatemala: A Project from the Heart

Rocio Mena Gutierrez

I float in between dreams, in a world full of joyful people, colorful textiles, nature, mountains, lightning bugs, and shiny stones!

I've been living the last two months in Guatemala! With a Mayan community located four hours away from the capital.



We have been working on a Mayan Hand's natural dye project called "Tintes Naturales."



These women have been trying to learn natural dyes for five years. But it wasn't until two years ago when Catharine Ellis and Donna Brown came down here that this project became a reality.

Since then, a group of volunteers have been working to make this possible: Brenda Rosenbaum, the founder of Mayan Hands; Sarah Jackson, in charge of the towel design; Catharine Ellis, Donna Brown, Diane de Souza and me in charge of natural dyes; Irene Schmoller in charge of marketing and selling kits; Liz Mrofka in charge of the package design; a number of suppliers of both equipment and dye supplies giving us discounted prices and outright donations; and others. And of course Deborah Chandler, who made all this possible!



It has been a long learning journey for the women, but they kept trying and learning with an incredible persistence!

I arrived here not knowing what to expect. A special treat turned out to be that I would be living 12 days with each one of the women!

The group is composed of five women: Fulgencia, Berta, Abelina, Elvira and Gilberta.

These women are all skilled backstrap weavers, they have been weaving for years,

*continued on page 8*

*Creating A Connected Textile Community*

### **Mission**

*To foster a global network of enthusiasts who value the importance of textiles to grassroots economies*

### **Purpose**

*Exchange information*

*Raise awareness of the importance textile traditions to grassroots economies*

*Mobilize textile enthusiasts*

*Create conversations that result in action*

### **Core Values**

*Textiles are an important component of the human experience.*

*Networking and sharing information creates an environment for constructive action.*

*Making Connections between textile artisans worldwide promotes positive social change.*

*Interacting with people who have similar values enriches our lives.*



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## Continuing a Weaving Tradition in an Indian Community

Jeffy John

*This article was written last November by wandering traveller, 27 year old Jeffy John, and edited by WARP member Alessandra (Chandra) L'Abate, textile activist and founder of the Weavers Wheel network. After spending a couple of years in the corporate world, Jeffy left the city, travelling throughout India to learn about different kinds of people and the many things that they have which he doesn't. In August 2013, he started his journey, hosted by Chandra in Goa.*

One of the many things I've noticed is the complete involvement of the family in the art of weaving. The fact is that they



love what they are doing and they enjoy talking about it as well. Prakash Siju is one such person. In 2006, at the age of 23, he chose weaving over any other career, not because he was forced to but because he loves to weave. He is the fifth generation in this family to make this choice.

Before the earthquake, the weavers in Prakash's community made simple items—stoles and shawls—which had little market outside the area. None of the artisans had tried the sales path, because most of them remained in and around the community and state. However, Prakash's family wove carpets and rugs. It was a much more time consuming and difficult task, and the raw materials weren't in abundance. Still, they

*"In this globalized era in which weavers, spinners, farmers are losing their original skills and identity and looking for better job options, coming across an enthusiastic young weaver who can inspire other youth is a great blessing and joy, not only for me but for the many other textile activists who are struggling for dignity and identity with the handweavers left in India. Thank you Prakash for being what you are, and thanks to Khamir for the constant inspiration and support given to the weavers of that area. Chandra (textile activist, Weavers Wheel network)*

chose to do so and are the only family that makes rugs and carpets.

In the earlier days, Prakash went to exhibitions to showcase the products woven by him and his community. He learned that



the response was low, and quickly realized that the pain-staking effort of carrying their entire inventory all the way, selling hardly any, and then getting all the left overs home wasn't worth it.

In 2007, Prakash took a professional course at Khamir—an NGO that supports the weavers' community. (Learn more about Khamir Artisan Development at their website, <http://www.khamir.org>.)

Both pit and frame looms are used by Prakash's family. Prakash mostly works



Prakash's handwoven cotton fabric

on the frame loom as the pit loom takes more time to set up. Though his family gets lots of orders, they hardly manage to

*continued on page 8*

## Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez Receives Artisan Hero Award

submitted by Marilyn Murphy

Founder and director of the Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco (CTTC), Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez received the Artisan Hero Award 2014 from the Aspen Institute's Alliance for Artisan Enterprise\*. This honor was bestowed for her tireless effort in the fostering and safeguarding of the Peruvian Highlands' traditional textiles, which in turn created strong social and economic impacts. The award was given at the Alliance's annual meeting which took place in Santa Fe, NM this July.

During the month of April, the Alliance traveled to Lima, Peru for the Katoomba XX conference, sponsored by the Katoomba Group, a global organization which charts a course for a sustainable development between climate, forests, water, and people, and to visit CTTC in Cusco. Nilda and CTTC weaver, Maribel Quispe, shared their artisanal work and cultural history during a reception at the opening of the conference, emphasizing CTTC's drive to use only natural dyes in the weavings, lessening the harmful environmental impacts.

During the conference, the Alliance hosted a round table discussion, "A Sense of Place: Sustainability and the Artisan Sector." The round table featured notable guests from the craft and sustainability

### Int'l Folk Art Festival a Great Experience

Many WARP members were able to attend, volunteer, and shop at the 11th Annual International Folk Art Festival in Santa Fe, NM in July. Plan now to attend next year's Festival from July 10-12, 2015. Pictured above are Mary Ann Wise and Reyna Pretzantzin in the successful Guatemalan Rug Hooking Cooperative's booth, where all but two carpets sold. To keep up with the latest, go to <http://www.folkartalliance.org>



sectors in Peru including Nilda. Topics of discussion included the relationship between the artisan sector and the environment, creating sustainable value chains in the artisan sector, linking women entrepreneurs, leveraging sustainable design as an advantage in the face of globalization and securing the basic humanitarian needs of artisans.

After leaving Lima, Peggy Clark, director of the Alliance for Artisan Enterprise, and a few Alliance members, visited the weaving community of Sallac, participating in a natural dye workshop, and to the weaving center in Chinchero, Nilda's home village.

*\*The Alliance for Artisan Enterprise, launched by Secretary Hillary Clinton in 2012 and hosted by the Aspen Institute, is a collaborative effort of 45 organizations, corporations, and individuals who are working together to promote the full potential of the artisan sector. The Alliance works to support the power and potential of artisan enterprises to developing economies, communities, and women entrepreneurs all over the world. For more information go to <http://www.allianceforartisanenterprise.org/>*

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### Weave A Real Peace

[www.weavearealpeace.org](http://www.weavearealpeace.org)

#### Membership Information

**2014 Annual Dues**  
\* \$35 - Individual, U.S. and Canada  
\* \$40 - Individual, international and sister memberships  
\* Simple living - Choose an amount you can live with  
\* \$50 - Group/supporting  
\* \$100+ - Patron/donor

All memberships are based on the calendar year and expire on December 31. Members receive access to all publications for the year joined.

Members have access to annual Membership Directory through a secure members only section of the web site, a quarterly newsletter, and can participate in the WARP Yahoo Discussion Group.

Dues are used for printing, mailing, and office expenses. Weave A Real Peace (WARP) is designated a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization by the Internal Revenue Service. All donations to WARP are tax deductible in the United States.

For membership or additional information, please send your name, address, telephone number, and email address with appropriate check, money order, or Paypal information in US funds payable to WARP to:

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## From WARP's Board President....

Cindy Lair

Have you ever noticed that WARP members are special? It seems as though they never rest, always a million and one irons in the fire.

WARP members volunteered with several member projects exhibiting at The Santa Fe International Folk Art Market, in Santa Fe, NM. We are pleased and proud of the success these artisans experienced while in Santa Fe. Of course, some of us, who shall remain nameless, just went to SHOP!!!

On behalf of the Board I would like to THANK Judy Allen for her service to WARP as the Administrative Coordinator. The Board gifted Judy a pledge for the Pan Mass



Judy Allen, leading the pack!

Challenge, where she rode 25 miles on a bicycle to benefit the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

*"After seeing such tremendous support for cancer research yesterday, I am more than ever hopeful and optimistic that one day there will be effective treatments for all cancers and as a disease it can eventually be eliminated." Judy Allen*

The WARP *Resource Guide* is coming SOON! I would like to offer a special THANK YOU to Jackie Abrams, Chair, and her hard-working committee Philis Alvic, Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland, Marilyn Murphy and Judy Allen, with a capable assist from Liz Gipson (who spent time getting married this summer and moving to NM).

Thank you to Kelsey Viola Wiskirchen for her hard work and fantastic annual meeting. Congratulations on your new job at the Appalachian Center for Craft. I asked Kelsey to send us a picture of Tonia Dee Martin, our fabulous graphic designer for our new postcards and the resource guide, we are so excited by her beautiful contribution to WARP's public image (see pages 10 & 11).

I would like to extend a personal thank you to the other board members for working so hard to make WARP successful.

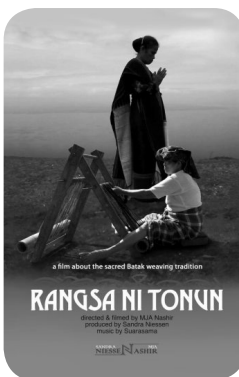
Just an update on the Administrative Coordinator search, we have received some excellent applications, and are still in the process of deciding what the job/s should entail. If you are still interested please feel free to email me at laircowgirl@msn.com.

## Rangsa ni Tonun Documents Weaving Techniques in North Sumatra

The Batak people of North Sumatra have one of the oldest weaving traditions in the Indonesian archipelago. Their weavings were believed to protect the body and the soul.

*Rangsa ni Tonun* is about the production of these textiles. The film medium was selected for 'translating' the text. The film was made between 2010 and 2013, directed and filmed by MJA Nashir, a Javanese artist, and produced by Sandra Niessen, a Dutch/Canadian anthropologist and former WARP member. The set, dvd plus book about the

film, entitled *Rangsa ni Tonun*, is available in both Indonesian and English from the film director/filmer, MJA Nashir, mja\_nashir02@yahoo.com; and from the producer, Sandra Niessen, sandraniessen@sandraniessen.com. A Google search yields many references to the film.



## Member Profile

### Susan Weltman: Weaver and Activist

Candy Meacham

Like many of us, Susan Weltman's family history has a thread of textiles running through it. Her grandmother was a dressmaker who worked in factories. Susan says, "It is sad to me that my grandmother worked in sweat shop conditions that caused her to be shamed by her profession, rather than proud of the beautiful, important work she did." Since she felt it was a degrading trade, she refused to teach her daughters to sew. They snuck out and learned to sew anyhow, but they were never as proficient as their mother. Susan's mother did teach her to sew and knit and she enjoys both. "But I seem to have always known that I was meant to weave."

Susan is a retired family therapist whose professional life was devoted to working with families with children and adolescents. She says, "When I began to weave, in 1985, I felt the enormous relief that came with beginning and finishing a project, while as a therapist I felt I was never 'finished.'" Susan also experienced great pleasure in an activity that was for herself rather than a responsibility to others."

Susan now lives in Brooklyn, NY and considers herself lucky to have enough room for a 48" floor loom in the guest room. She took her first weaving class in 1986. Thus began her other 'career,' which includes not only weaving but also traveling with her husband, often visiting countries where she can observe and learn new

things about weaving and textiles (more about their travels at <http://www.stevenjervis.com/travel.html>). Her weaving education has included many workshops in weaving and natural dyeing, a newer interest. For 20 years Susan studied at the Newark Museum Arts Workshop until that program sadly closed down this spring.

She joined WARP many years ago and went to her first annual WARP meeting in South Carolina in 2005. She says, "the combination of location, political talk and fabulous, committed women made it clear to me that I had found a new 'home.'"

WARP is a good fit for Susan whose family has always been politically engaged. She grew up hearing her parents talk about peace and poverty. She has walked countless picket lines and attended more rallies than she can remember. Now she is active in the anti-fracking movement and volunteers at the local Arab American Family Center.

*"I see weaving and fiber arts both aesthetically, as an art form, and as a means to connect with people around the world. Everyone wears cloth! Some people weave their own. Some people sew their own. People should not be dying to produce cheap clothing for us!"*

You can read more about Susan's textiles and travels on her website at <http://www.susanweltman.com>

*Candy Meacham is an educator, a weaver, and a former WARP board member. She can be reached at [candy.meacham@earthlink.net](mailto:candy.meacham@earthlink.net)*

## WARP on the Web - <http://www.weavearealpeace.org>

features WARP history, annual meeting information, member access to the directory, and past newsletters. You can join or renew your membership online, and sign up for WARP's ListServ.

Katie Simmons maintains a WARP presence on ravelry.com, the knitting networking site; on Weavevolution, <http://www.weavevolution.com>; and on Facebook. Please send her information a [ktd26@hotmail.com](mailto:ktd26@hotmail.com)

## New Members

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## Connections...

Katie Simmons and Kelsey Wiskirchen

Dorinda Dutcher moved to Bolivia as a Peace Corps volunteer in 2007, where she met local Quechua weavers who requested technical assistance in marketing their weavings. This project is called PAZA, and has expanded to include the revival of natural dye techniques, a Club de Chicas, and a volunteer program. We both met Dorinda through WARP and have traveled to Bolivia through the PAZA volunteer program. Katie made her first trip while a graduate student at the University of Akron in 2009, and has now been to Bolivia three times. Kelsey, in 2010, while a graduate student at Arizona State University.

Katie's experience:

I was a graduate assistant for WARP member, Teena Jennings, who told me about an amazing woman in Bolivia I should contact about volunteering, and after a few emails it was decided that I would go to Bolivia for a month. I arrived tired and feeling the altitude, but excited to meet Dorinda. Her smile put me at ease and we went for a stroll. When I mentioned Teena, she looked confused. "Who is Teena?" I had a moment of panic, thinking, "What am I doing here? I don't speak Quechua, I am still learning Spanish, Google maps doesn't even show where Independencia is..." It turns out Dorinda had emailed a WARP member who had forwarded it on to others, and so on. The networking potential of WARP's community had worked its magic. While there, I was able to assist in natural dye workshops, learn Andean weaving techniques, help read patterns, and sew with the girls and women.

Kelsey's experience:

When I met Dorinda, she warmly invited me to come to Bolivia and just a few months later, I was making my first trip out of the US, alone on a plane frantically thumbing through my Spanish-English dictionary. On a bus hurtling through the Andes, I realized the road was so close to

the edge that I could see straight down the side of the mountain. The bus honked to warn oncoming traffic as he flew around the curves, and I wondered what my mom would think if she saw me on that bus. The subsequent weeks I spent with Dorinda and the women of PAZA shaped



Katie Simmons, left, and Kelsey Wiskirchen at the 2014 WARP Annual Meeting

my comprehension of the importance of textiles and the direction of my thesis work. I gained confidence in communicating by teaching girls in the Club de Chicas how to use the sewing machine. I learned traditional Andean weaving from the women. I saw and experienced the impact of cooperative efforts to empower textile communities.

WARP has brought us friendship, enriching life experience, and direction in our career-paths. WARP has taken us on parallel paths that converge once a year at the Annual Meeting. In the experiences of our connection story, we have learned two basic governing rules:

1. Sometimes we don't need to tell our mothers the whole story.
2. Always trust a member of WARP. Lovely things come from meeting and knowing them.

If you would like to share your WARP connection story, please email Kelsey at [kelsey.viola.wiskirchen@gmail.com](mailto:kelsey.viola.wiskirchen@gmail.com) or Katie at [ktd26@hotmail.com](mailto:ktd26@hotmail.com).

For more information about PAZA go to <http://pazaboliviablog.com/about/>



Textile Techniques From Around the World

Deborah Brandon



## Haiti—Vodou Flags

Heavily beaded and sequined vodou flags hang on the wall behind the reception desk in the hotel lobby. The brightly colored images, fairly dancing with shards of light, tempt many a rich tourist to add to their art collections.

Many of us mistakenly associate the word "vodou" with voodoo, folk magic practiced in New Orleans, when, in fact, vodou, the primary religion in Haiti, is a combination of the West African Yoruba religion, the indigenous religion of the Caribbean, and Roman Catholicism. According to vodou theology, deities govern both the spiritual and the worldly realms, and act as intermediaries between humans and a higher power.

Vodou flags, or drapo, play a crucial role in vodou worship. Ceremonies in the vodou temples include dances and flag processions that invoke the spirits of the deities to provide the congregation with guidance both in their spiritual and their daily lives.

Drapo depict stylized images of the deities and other sacred objects. Most vodou societies have at least two flags, associated with the deities they worship. Because flags are so expensive, only extremely affluent congregations own six flags, one for each of the most important deities, Ogou, Danbala, Ezil Freda, the Gedes, Loko, and Ayizan.

In the nineteenth century, most flags were simple blue, red, or white banners embellished with embroidered images. Contemporary flags, on the other hand, are extremely ornate works of art, made of beads and sequins.

Before taking on the laborious task of sewing sequins and beads onto the fabric, flagmakers draw or transfer the basic design onto the fabric. Each flag contains a central motif, a background, and a border.

The central motifs represent images of deities and ritualistic objects used in the ceremonies. Common motifs include colorized lithographs of Catholic saints

and ritual designs representing deities. The background is used to frame the central design. In older flags the sequins and beads in the background are widely scattered, adding sparkle to the fabric without covering it. Nowadays, the background, like the central motifs, is completely filled with sequins and beads, usually all of the same color, though some divide the field into simple geometric shapes such as triangles and squares. Border patterns, though originally practically non-existent, have become more prominent and ornate.

The quality of a flag is not only judged by the design, but also by the tightness of sequin and bead arrangement, the evenness of the pattern lines, creative use of color, and the clarity of the image.

The tradition of flag making is passed on through apprenticeships to established flag makers. Some of the more famous Haitian flag makers focus only on creating new designs and patterns, leaving the rest to their apprentices. Once proficient at sewing, apprentices move on to design, and later to open their own flag making businesses.

Haitians, living in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, are ever practical, resourceful, and quick to adapt. The constantly evolving central motifs on the vodou flags reflect this adaptability, targeting a broader market—Haitian vodou initiates for use in ceremonies, and art collectors, usually foreigners, who are ignorant of the ritualistic use of the flags.

### Resources

Padilla, Carmella, the *Work of Art—Folk Artists of the 21st Century*, distributed by Museum of New Mexico Press, 2013.

Brett Smith, Clare (ed), *Artisans of Haiti*, Aid to Artisans, 2003.

Deborah Brandon is a multi-talented mathematician and former board member. She can be reached at 412/963-7416 or at [brandon@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:brandon@andrew.cmu.edu)

At the entrance of the International Folk Art Museum in Santa Fe, NM:

"The art of the craftsman is a bond between the peoples of the world."

Florence Dibell Bartlett

### WARP Presentation Ready for Viewing

Helen Brotherton, a WARP member in Leicestershire, UK, presented the new program to a local guild, the Lancs and Lakes Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, and the response was enthusiastic. The current version is a PowerPoint with written narrative. Later this year an audio narrative will be laid down with the images. For now, the contact for the presentation will be Judy Newland, newland.judy@gmail.com. She can send the presentation via drop-box or DVD.

## Tintes Naturales from Guatemala

*continued from page 1*

but they are looking for another way to increase their income.

So we have been dyeing cotton yarn with indigo, cochineal, osage orange, and madder in order to make thread for towel kits to sell to weavers, who can buy this "Friendship towel kit" and weave four beautiful towels.

The women are in charge of the whole deal: dyeing, winding, and packaging!

It has been a real challenge! The conditions are not ideal, but they seem to sort things out, always with a smile.

They move things from one place to another with baskets on their heads, crossing rivers and mountains!

Against all probabilities, they finish everything on time!

They keep saying: "It's a promise we made, and we need to commit (to respond

to the commitment)." That's what they told me when we divided 106 pounds of yarn to wind in four days.

I'm very impressed with their work ethic and their ability to work in a team. They are very responsible, honest, and hard-working women.

But most of all, they do everything with their hearts! In Achi (Mayan dialect) they call it: Ruk' rajb'al ak'ux What a great phrase to sum up this Project!

To learn more about the women and my adventures while living and dyeing with them in Guatemala, visit my blog at: <http://naturaldyeproject.wordpress.com/rocios-blog-english/>

To order Friendship towel kits, visit Cotton Clouds website <http://www.cottonclouds.com/> and search for Friendship Towels with Tintes Naturales.

## Continuing a Weaving Tradition in an Indian Community

*continued from page 2*

make ten carpets a month. Prakash weaves many traditional designs and, as time passed, he customized them to meet the requirements of the modern world.

The 2001 earthquake resulted in complete devastation of the homes in this village, among others. After the earthquake, there was no weaving community. There were no homes and definitely no looms to work on. Once the NGOs came to aid these people they realized that it wasn't just houses that the community needed, but they needed to get their traditions back. They had no idea how to survive; weaving

had been in their blood and allowed them to be self-sufficient.

The NGOs donated looms to most families in the community. The ICA Domus Trust (<http://tinyurl.com/mstm9hb>) donated looms to most of the artisans so that they could carry on with their work and help sort out their lives. Caritas, another international NGO, fixed up most houses. In Kachchi, there is a saying, "Mani Dora" which means "Bread and Thread." Their bread was obtained from what they wove.

Prakash hopes to continue this tradition of weaving and to create a bigger market space for his products in the near future.

When Prakash was invited by WARP to share more about his life and history he sent the following note:

*"Hi, Namaste! I am Prakash from Kutch district - Bhuj taluk in Gujurath, India. In my village there are around 100 families [who have been] weaving for generations. We help each other in promoting the sales and maintaining this ancient tradition. As we have been supported, it is now our time to encourage new youths to learn and become the weavers of the future. Me, my family and friend Dayalal are honoured to interact with international weavers of WARP. Please do write or visit us!"*

Prakash Siju, Cell: +917874691645, [kutchicarpet@gmail.com](mailto:kutchicarpet@gmail.com);  
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## Call for Presentations or Workshop Proposals

Weave A Real Peace (WARP)

2015 Annual Meeting

May 28-31, 2015

Mercy Center, Burlingame, CA

**Proposal due date: September 30, 2014**

We are seeking presentation or workshop proposals regarding current research, experiences and/or practices relating to the theme of "Creating a Connected Textile Community" for the annual meeting of Weave A Real Peace (WARP). Founded in 1992, WARP has members from across the US, Canada, Central and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia. The organization serves as a catalyst for improving the life of weavers and textile artisans in communities-in-need, and our annual meeting provides opportunities for learning, networking, and fellowship. Typically 50-80 people from 4-8 countries attend the annual meeting.

Topics for presentations or workshops might include:

- The importance of textile traditions to grassroots economies.
- Ways to mobilize textile enthusiasts and create conversations that result in action.
- The importance of textiles as a component of the human experience.
- Creating an environment for constructive action.
- Making connections worldwide to promote positive social change.
- Hands-on workshops to share techniques and tools.

Proposals should include:

- The proposed title, 200-300 word abstract, presentation format, time requirement, and technology and equipment needs. Presentations will generally last no more than 20-30 minutes, including questions. Hands-on workshops can last 1-2 hours.
- Each proposal will be evaluated by a committee for inclusion based on timeliness and its contribution to a cohesive final program. This will be an anonymous review.
- On a separate page, which will be disassociated from the abstract upon receipt, include the title of your proposal, your name, telephone number, and email address.

Rules for submission:

- Email to Teena Jennings, [tj9@uakron.edu](mailto:tj9@uakron.edu), by **September 30, 2014**. Decisions will be made and presenters notified by November 1, 2014.
- If sending via regular mail, mail to Teena Jennings, 226 West Elm St., Granville, OH, 43023. Submission due date is the same as above.
- The Conference Committee will select the presentations. All decisions are final.
- Members and non-members are invited to submit a proposal.
- Presenters must register for participation in the meeting. No honoraria are provided. Material supply list and/or fees, if needed, must be provided for workshops.
- Presenters will be responsible for all personal expenses related to the meeting, including registration fees. Scholarships may be available for student presenters.
- For more information about WARP and past annual meetings, visit our website at <http://www.weavearealpeace.org>

## Volunteer Opportunity...

Partners for Just Trade is seeking a volunteer consultant to travel to Peru for 2-3 weeks to do technical training in both machine and hand knitting with artisan groups. Knitting machine and hand knitting expertise is a must; Spanish is preferred but not necessary. Travel and expenses are covered. If interested, contact Cheryl Musch at [cheryl@partnersforjusttrade.org](mailto:cheryl@partnersforjusttrade.org).

## Travel Opportunities...

The International Folk Art Alliance, sponsor of the International Folk Art Festival in Santa Fe, NM, is hosting the following trips in 2015.

- India - January 2015
- Cuba - January 2015
- Guatemala - March 2015
- Cuba - April, 2015
- Namibia & Botswana - July 2015
- South Africa - August 2015
- Uzbekistan & Kyrgyzstan - October 2015
- Mexico - November 2015

For more information about the trips, go to <http://www.folkartalliance.org/travel/>

## Celebrate *Learning to Weave*, by Deborah Chandler

Linda Ligon

Nineteen eighty-four was a good year for weaving in the United States, and a highlight was the publication of *Learning to Weave* by Deborah Chandler. What started as a workbook, complete with worksheets and woven samples, eventually evolved into a 232-page spiral-bound book published by Interweave Press.

*Learning to Weave* has gone through a minor title change, hard- and soft-cover versions, a major revision, and countless printings, with life sales in excess of 150,000. You could call it a classic.

It's important to think about the influence this book has had on weaving in North America. It has been adopted as a text in university programs, been the basis of classes in weaving shops and community education programs, and has mentored thousands of people learning in the isola-

tion of their own homes. How many people would never have come to practice and appreciate the craft without it? Impossible to say. I'm proud to have been the publisher of this important work, but the real creative effort came from editor Jane Patrick, photographers Eric Redding and Joe Coca, and of course Deborah herself. She's become a legend in her own time.

And to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the launch of *Learning to Weave*, Deborah, along with her life partner Teresa Cordon, has just turned in the manuscript for a second book, yet to be titled. It's a celebration of traditional textile crafts in Guatemala told through the eyes of a score of craftspeople. It will be published by Thrums Books, an independent remnant of Interweave Press. It's scheduled to launch in late spring, 2015.

## Postcards for WARP Members

WARP has a new series of vibrant postcards for members to share with local guilds, at conferences, and in your communities. There are four postcards, each with a photo relating to a different topic: Knitting, Spinning, Basketmaking, and Weaving (see photos, page 11). The postcard series is a cost-effective tool for us to represent the breadth of WARP member interest in textiles, and promote the organization in our individual textile communities.

The images were shared by WARP members who are involved in a variety of textile communities. The Knitting postcard features an image of knitters on the Capachica Peninsula in Peru, the Spinning postcard in-

cludes an image of a PAZA member in Independencia, Boliva, the Basketmaking image shows a basket weaver in Ghana, and the Weaving postcard features an image of children learning to weave at Weaving Hand, an organization in New York City.

The postcards can be distributed at meetings or businesses as a promotional advertising tool for WARP, and there is also space on the back to write an address.

If you are interested in having WARP postcards from any of the four options, please contact Judy Allen at [info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org).

### Meet the Designer

Tonia Dee Martin is a freelance designer with a fondness for textiles, living near Manhattan, KS. Tonia volunteered her time to design the postcard series for WARP and is currently designing our new Artisan Textile Resource Guide (see page 12) To see more of Tonia's design work or to contact her for a freelance inquiry, please visit her website, <http://www.toniadee.com>, or email her at [toniadee@gmail.com](mailto:toniadee@gmail.com).

## With a Little Help from Their Friends, Borucan Weavers Become Proficient on Floor Loom

About two years ago, Susie Atkinson (Pacific Edge Cabins in Dominicalito, Costa Rica) built a floor loom for Doña Marina and her group of weavers, Artesanos Naturales, (see WARP Newsletter, Fall issue 2012). The floor loom was inspired by a trip to Guatemala. Traditionally, the Borucans weave on a backstrap loom. The floor loom makes it possible for the weavers to weave wider widths. Learning to weave on the floor loom has been a challenge. So, Susie arranged for Sherri Smith, a master weaver from the US to spend 11 days in July with Marina to teach them how to use the loom. Sherri has taught many accomplished weavers throughout her 40+ year career, including Deborah Chandler.

When Sherri arrived at Boruca, she reviewed the loom and had her doubts about the strength of it. After some modi-

nearly three yards in one day! However, this was only possible with Sherri's knowledge of keeping the loom alive by the art



Consultant Sherri Smith

of jerry-rigging. The major fault of the loom was when the loom was set to weave full width. It was difficult to release the tension, and be able to advance the warp, tighten the tension again

and reset the locking mechanism. Sherri invented what she called her tool of torture, and said she has made many tools in her career, but this was the most primitive one. This basically fits over the square end of the warp beam and the long handles allow the tension to be torqued by leverage; look out fingers, ouch!!



Idania Gonzalez Lazaro

fications, her two students, who speak Spanish, began lessons in English and sign language. They quickly learned how to measure out the warp, and were excited by the way Sherri showed them how to put the warp onto the loom, from front to back; Sherri knows all the shortcuts. They also learned how to add on new warp for another project without having to rethread the reed and the heddles. The loom is set to weave a 32" wide piece of fabric, which with three panels sewn together make a double size bedspread. They were amazed at how fast they could weave,

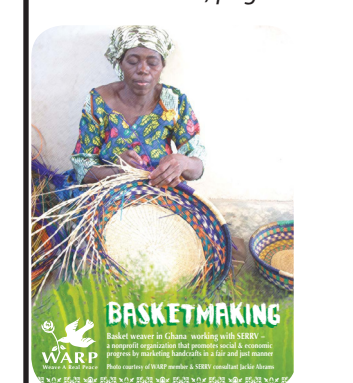


L-R, Idania Gonzalez Lazaro, Sherri Smith, Katalina Lazaro Morales

Artesanos Naturales and Susie are very grateful for Sherri's visit and insight she has provided to the Borucans. The backstrap loom is hard on their backs, and not very many of the young girls want to continue to carry on the tradition of their mothers and grandmothers in weaving. Hopefully the floor loom will be the inspiration to keeping their weaving heritage alive.

## Postcards for WARP Members

See article, page 10



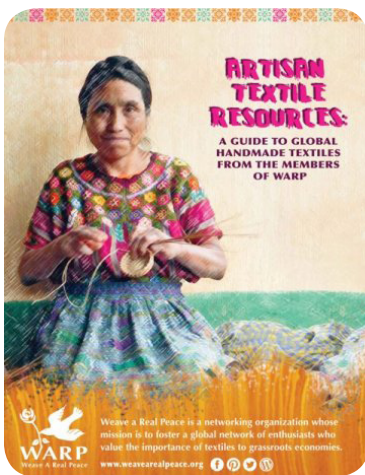


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## In This Issue: WARP Connections!

### WARP's *Artisan Resource Guide* Available Soon

WARP will soon publish its first *Artisan Textile Resource Guide*. The Guide presents the rich resources of WARP members who support grassroots economies that rely heavily on textiles to better their world. First conceived as a membership service to highlight artisan textiles, the *Guide* expanded to include services such as tours, consulting, design assistance, and repair and restoration of textiles. Nearly forty members responded to the committee's call for listings. Jackie Abrams,



WARP board member and Chair of the committee, commented on the wider goals of the *Guide*. "WARP members are incredibly interesting people, involved in amazing projects throughout the world. This is our chance to share our products and skills, and to introduce our WARP members to people with similar interests."

The *Guide* is scheduled to be published in mid-September to coincide with the Fall shopping season. WARP will issue a press release once it is available and plans to use social media to market it. All WARP members are encouraged to pass along the *Resource Guide* to their friends and encourage these friends to also share. By expanding the WARP network, unique handmade products and professional services will become available to a much wider audience.

Initially it will be available as a PDF with lots of embedded navigation. The *Guide* will be updated yearly. In tandem with this guide, WARP is revamping the information collected from its members during the annual renewal campaign and plans publicly sharing more of this information—with permission—to facilitate networking. This is part of an overall effort to use more electronic resources to promote WARP and its members with the goal of growing the organization and supporting artisans worldwide.

*Resource Guide* Committee – Jackie Abrams, Philis Alvic, Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland, and Marilyn Murphy with help from Liz Gipson