

# WARP



WEAVE A REAL PEACE

Volume 15, Number 2

Summer 2008

## *Mayan Hands: Working in Guatemala and in the US to Support Indigenous Women*

*The history of WARP is closely tied to Mayan Hands, an organization working with Guatemalan textile artisans. One of WARP's founders, Deborah Chandler, is the in-country director. And Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland, Mayan Hands' US director of marketing and distribution, is a long-time WARP member, as is Brenda Rosenbaum, founder of MH. Both Deborah and Mary Joan have served as WARP board members. Those who attended WARP's 2007 Annual Meeting in Guatemala visited several cooperatives and met weavers who work with MH.*

*For many years, Mayan Hands generously gave WARP members the opportunity to sell MH products on a consignment basis to benefit WARP. This income (more than \$8,000 in 2007) was a significant budget item for WARP. Although Mayan Hands is no longer able to provide WARP members this opportunity, we want to recognize the good work that they do as a small way of thanking them for their fantastic support over the years. In this two-part article, Deborah and Mary Joan give us an idea of the challenges and pleasures of their work.*

### **Part 1 - The Guatemalan Side**

*by Deborah Chandler*

I am writing from my desk in our warehouse on the edge of Guatemala City. I work here with Julio Cardona, my administrative assistant. Our designer, Joanne de Rybar, works in her home studio in the city. MH also shares the rent of a small house in Panajachel, where the group leaders we work with go monthly to meet with Teresa Gomez, our field worker, to deliver their work and pick up their new yarn and orders. The 200+ weavers/crocheters/embroiderers/basket makers live in ten communities scattered across the western and northern highlands; it takes a very long day to get from one end to the other (two days is better). Teresa also visits nearly every community every month.

Some days I think that describing Mayan Hands realistically would just be a listing of problems to be solved: acquiring quality yarn, way more difficult than you would imagine; transporting people/goods through mega-highway construction that adds hours to any trip, on buses that too often get drivers or passengers robbed or killed; suppliers who say every day they will send what we need but don't do it; coping with shipping fees that suddenly jump by 100%; the government suddenly requiring verification of paperwork done years earlier that takes a day or two of standing in lines; the phones going out for three weeks; the bank changing

*continued on page 12*

### *Mission*

*WARP serves as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of textile artisans in communities-in-need. We provide information and networking opportunities to individuals and organizations who value the social, cultural, historic, and artistic importance of textiles around the world.*

### *Core Values*

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

*Providing support to textile artisans from communities-in-need gives them tools to shape their own destinies.*

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

*Making connections among textile artisans worldwide promotes positive social change.*

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

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## *From the WARP Office...*

*Cheryl Musch, Interim Administrative Coordinator*

I've heard a lot of talk lately about what tremendous changes could be made in the world if everyone who was able donated a portion of their economic stimulus check to organizations they support. If you're thinking along those lines, as I am, join me in investing those funds to the benefit of people and consider making an extra donation to WARP this year.

### *Revised WARP Slide Show Now Available*

The WARP slide show is currently showing in California and North Carolina. It will go to Montana and Canada later this summer. If your group wants an interesting program for the Fall, reserve the WARP slide show now. The revised slide show has received very positive remarks.

Contact Carole Pierce at [cpierce@mis.net](mailto:cpierce@mis.net).

### *Scholarship Recipient Bo Choi: "The WARP Conference Was a Pleasure in My Life"*

*Bo Choi*

As a MFA fiber student in University of Washington, it was a delight to receive a scholarship to attend the conference. At the University of Washington, my specialty is weaving, and the conference was a great chance to meet people in the world of fiber. The meeting was full of positive energy on creation of fiber art. Also, we discussed various ways to go beyond the creation, [to consider] fair trade and teaching outside of US. As a beginner in fiber art, it was a great chance to meet mentors and receive encouragement. During the meeting, I learned from lectures and visiting a weaving studio. After the meeting, I felt a part of the community. Sarah Goodman and Adrienne Sloane visited me at the school after the meeting. Thanks to all the members in WARP and Alice Brown, who created the scholarship fund.



*Bo Choi is currently enrolled in the MFA program in University of Washington. She graduated from University of California at Davis in Fashion Design and Studio Art. Previously, she worked to merge illusion and reality on the edge of fashion design and art in the fashion show "Unraveled." It was presented in San Francisco, CA in 2006 and she was invited to Seoul for the Costume Culture Association & Ars Textrina joint international conference as a guest speaker. She received a Scholarship for Flyway Journeys Wildlife Art Fellowship from California Waterfowl Association. Currently she works with a primary focus in fiber art, approaching habitual behavior and the mind indoctrination established by childhood environment.*

*Consider donating a portion of your  
economic stimulus payment to WARP*

# Solar Trade on Taquile Island

*Tara Miller*

My husband and I have been visiting Taquile Island in Lake Titicaca (on the border between Bolivia and Peru) since 1986. In 1988 we brought the first solar panel, small at nine watts, and wired it directly to a radio. When the music played, big smiles said "Eureka! We can get electricity from the sun!"

Now over 80% of the families have solar electric systems, mostly through a microcredit program that allows them to pay a little each year. A few have come in our suitcases when we visit every two years and were traded for the exceptionally fine textiles for which Taquile is famous. This year one of our solar trades was a ten watt panel, totally complete with small sealed 12 volt battery, charge controller, and three very efficient and pleasantly bright (36 lumens per bulb) LED lights.

Señora Mercedes lives with Señor Sebastian out toward the end of the island in an adobe and rock house with a wooden door lock and thatched roof, flowers, and a courtyard nearly completely shaded with a fruiting vine called granadilla. She has never had electricity in her life. Her eyesight is failing so she doesn't weave much any more. She had been keeping a traditional women's poncho made in two parts, each 26 inches wide with two red threads running the 62 inch length. She had made it when she was much younger, and people have tried to buy it from her, but she was saving it for when she could get her electricity. We got the poncho plus an *uncuña*, a small cloth for carrying food. The next week, she told everyone she feels much younger now that she has lights at night. A good trade.

[Note: The solar electric system costs \$225, plus shipping, and is made by Ledtronics (<http://www.ledtronics.com/ds/SLR001/default.asp>)]

*Tara Miller can be reached at [intisolar@paonia.com](mailto:intisolar@paonia.com)*

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## WARP at Convergence

If you will be at Convergence this year, from June 22-28 at Tampa Bay, FL, join board member Deb Brandon at the WARP meeting to be held 12:30-2:00 pm on Saturday, June 28. Look for notices at Convergence about the location. Deb will facilitate the get together and will show the new slide show. Please help her welcome those interested in knowing more about WARP. Convergence is the biennial, international conference for those who love fiber and is sponsored and organized by the Handweavers Guild of America, Inc. (HGA).

### ***Is your last issue of the WARP Newsletter?***

***If you haven't renewed for 2008, do it now!***

***Memberships are based on the calendar year and expire on December 31. Renew online at [www.weavearealpeace.org](http://www.weavearealpeace.org) or by mailing a check to WARP, 3102 Classen Boulevard, PMB 249, Oklahoma City, OK 73118.***

### ***You can help WARP by***

#### ***...providing financial support for the:***

- Operating fund (includes staff salary, listserv and website costs, and WARP publications—the newsletter, brochure, and directory)
- Scholarship fund
- Sister Memberships
- Endowment fund

#### ***...volunteering to:***

- Show the WARP slideshow in your community
- Write an article for the newsletter
- Help with annual meetings
- Solicit paid ads for the newsletter and/or membership directory.
- Encourage other textile organizations and guilds to link to the WARP website

If you are interested in any of these financial or volunteer opportunities, contact Cheryl Musch at [info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org)



**WARP Newsletter**

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Editor: Linda Temple

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or to  
[info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org)

The deadline for  
contributions to the Fall  
2008 WARP newsletter is  
**August 15, 2008.**

Send articles and  
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Information about an  
organization or service in  
this newsletter does not  
constitute an endorsement  
by WARP.

Submissions may be  
edited or shortened at the  
discretion of the editor.

***Member Profile***

***Louise Todd Cope:***

***Practicing the Art of Being***

*Pegi Bevins*

At 77, Louise Todd Cope says she intends to live “this last part of my life with grace.” She describes this as practicing the art of “Being.” Louise may be taking it easy now, but her earlier accomplishments attest to a life of service to people and dedication to the fiber arts.

Louise currently lives in Berkeley, California, but as a younger woman living in Philadelphia, PA, she studied art and fiber, and also clothing construction. She augmented her textile studies by apprenticing herself to a tailor. Later, she began investigating weaving at the local arts center. Intrigued with the craft, she apprenticed herself for a second time—this time, to a weaver. She went on to attend Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science and also lived in Scandinavia for a year, where she researched Scandinavian, Guatemalan, Nepalese, and Thai textiles extensively. With that background, she went on to teach and become chairman of the textile program at Moore College of Art in Philadelphia.

Over the years, Louise, along with Don Willcox, led textile tours to Indonesia and Thailand. The Indonesia tours focused on traditional clothing, while the Thai tours focused on Thai weaving, primarily ikat and silk. Louise and Willcox also started “Hands in Outreach” in Nepal to help educate Nepalese and Tibetan children.

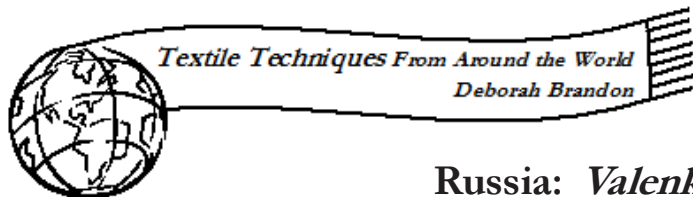
In the 1960s, when Louise first started working in the fiber world, she and other craftspersons felt their work would help “save the world.” Louise often sent proceeds from sales of her creations to the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker group committed to the principles of nonviolence and justice. She also worked on the Ribbon Project, organized to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and to draw attention to the buildup of nuclear weapons during the Cold War. On August 4, 1985, people from every state traveled to Washington, D.C., tied their ribbons together, and encircled many of the capital’s landmarks, including the Pentagon, the Capitol Building, and the Lincoln Memorial. The connected ribbons expressed our heartfelt desire for a world without a nuclear threat of war.

In 1994, Louise started an interfaith project called “Cloak the Earth” with the aim of helping people make prayer shawls as a way of tangibly expressing their belief in the universe and their care for the earth. The project culminated in 1999 when it was presented as one of the “Gifts of Service to the World” at the Parliament of the World’s Religions Conference in South Africa.

Louise says she supports WARP because she loved the energy and bright eyes of all the people she met when the organization was just forming. As a person continually involved with creating peace, Louise feels WARP’s philosophy fits her own vision. She welcomes contact with other WARP members and can be reached at [louisetoddLouise@earthlink.net](mailto:louisetoddLouise@earthlink.net)

*Pegi Bevins is a freelance writer and editor of products for language arts classrooms and an author of two children’s novels. She can be reached at [prbevins@netins.net](mailto:prbevins@netins.net).*





## Russia: *Valenki*

Valenki are seamless felted boots, which are the traditional Russian footwear. These boots are designed to withstand the harsh Russian winters, preventing frostbite. According to folk wisdom, wearing valenki increases circulation, prevents impotence, and cures hangovers.

Valenki have been worn by peasants, the military, and Tzarist families since the early 1700's. In the 1980's there was a decline in the use of valenki, however they are now back in style. Valenki are not water-resistant, so they are often worn with *galoshi* (galoshes) which also protect the soles from wear and tear.

The process of making valenki involves wet-felting wool. Since each strand of wool grows with overlapping scales, felting starts when the strands become entangled and are then held in place by the scales. As the felting process continues, the fibers are further compressed until the desired level of firmness is achieved. First, a layer of clean and carded wool is wrapped around a boot shaped cutout, which is in turn moistened and then wrapped in cloth and rolled back and forth until the fibers are interlocked enough to adhere somewhat to the cloth. The result at this point looks like a very large sock. Throughout the process more moisture is added as needed, in the form of either hot water or steam.

To compress the wool further to form a firm felt boot, this sock is then pulled over a boot mold, and the felting is continued by beating the wool with a rod and/or rubbing it over a rough surface (e.g., a washboard). Once the felt has taken the shape of the boot mold, its surface may be smoothed using a pumice stone. The final step involves drying the felt while it's still on the mold.

### Resources

**Felt: New Direction for an Ancient Craft**, by Gunilla Paetau Sjoberg. Interweave Press, Inc., 1996.

<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P1-71593383.html>  
(accessed 5/13/08)

<http://www.englishrussia.com/?p=639> (accessed 5/13/08)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valenki> (accessed 5/13/08)

<http://www.valenki.inc.ru/eng/> (accessed 5/13/08)

<http://www.akaculture.com/hiofva.html> (accessed 5/13/08)

[http://www.stpetersburger.com/html/home\\_decor\\_valenki06.html](http://www.stpetersburger.com/html/home_decor_valenki06.html) (accessed 5/13/08)

Deborah Brandon can be reached at 412/967-1578; or at [brandon@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:brandon@andrew.cmu.edu).

### **WARP on the Web**

<http://www.weavearealpeace.org>

You can join WARP's Listserv from the 'Contact Us' link on the website

### **Weave A Real Peace**

Membership Information

#### **2008 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 all publications for the year joined.

Members receive an annual Membership Directory, a quarterly newsletter, and can participate in the WARP listserv.

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, and telephone number with appropriate check or money order in US funds payable to **WARP** to:

Weave A Real Peace  
3102 Classen Boulevard  
PMB 249  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

or visit the website at [weavearealpeace.org](http://www.weavearealpeace.org)

### **Sister Membership Sponsors Needed**

WARP would like to continue to provide Sister Memberships for the groups listed below. If you would like to sponsor a Sister Member at the \$40 level, please contact Cheryl Musch at [info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org)

- Elelloang Basali Weavers - Lesotho
- Habitat Integrated - Pakistan
- IFFAD - India
- Nanyuki Spinners & Weavers - Kenya
- Queen Amina Embroidery - Nigeria
- Ribob Village Silk Weaving Project - Japan
- Spirit of the Andes/Alma de los Andes - Bolivia
- Thai Tribal Crafts - Thailand
- WEAVE - Thailand
- Weavers Wheel - India

## ***Asia-Pacific Regional Microcredit Summit to be in Bali, Indonesia***

The Asia-Pacific Regional Microcredit Summit will be held in Bali, Indonesia from July 28-30<sup>th</sup>. Register before May 31 to take advantage of early registration rates.

Close to 100 top experts will discuss challenges and successes of microcredit's contribution towards ending global poverty. Featured speakers include Muhammad Yunus, Managing Director, Grameen Bank; Fazle Hasan Abed, Chairman, BRAC (formerly, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee); Shafiqul Haque Choudhury, President, ASA (Association of Social Advancement, Bangladesh); and R.M. Malla, Chairman, SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India)

For more information on the conference, to read the full list of confirmed speakers, or to register online, please visit [www.inamicreditsummit.org](http://www.inamicreditsummit.org).

## ***Black Mesa Weavers Seeks Funds for 7th Annual Churro Wool Buy***

*Carol Halberstadt*

Since 2002, Black Mesa Weavers has sold enough wool, handspun yarn, weavings, and Black Mesa Blankets to recycle the money to the woolgrowers and hold its annual wool buys. Because of the current economic climate, we desperately need another \$3,000 by the beginning of June to hold the wool buy this year. The annual wool buy costs \$5,000, but we have only \$2,000 in our bank account.

The Dine' Churro sheepraisers have depended on Black Mesa Weavers for seven years to sell their Churro fleece. And, to our knowledge, we are the only organization buying any significant quantity (averaging 2,500-3,000 lbs.) of Churro wool at fair trade prices. The past two years we paid \$1.90/lb. to the woolgrowers (as opposed to the four-five cents/pound the Navajo growers were earning previously). Without the June wool buy, the future of the Churro—of which only about 1,000 are to be found in all the Navajo Nation—is even more endangered than it is now.

We must keep this from happening. Help us hold the wool buy, and help the unique historic creation of the Black Mesa Blanket continue. Please make contributions to Black Mesa Weavers, and mail to P.O. Box 543, Newton, MA 02456. If you have any questions, leads, or ideas, please call me toll-free at 866-4-CHURRO (866-424-8776) 10 am-8 pm eastern DST, or email [carol@blackmesaweavers.org](mailto:carol@blackmesaweavers.org)

*Ahe'hee'*—thank you for caring, for your kindness, and for your help in sustaining this little corner of life and a unique culture on this Earth.

## Special Section: 2007 Annual Report/ 2008 Annual Meeting



### 2007: The Year in Review...

**Membership:** In 2007, WARP membership numbered 302, including **60 new members!**

**Sister Memberships:** Fourteen overseas organizations received sister memberships in 2007. Some of these organizations did not have sponsors, but continued to receive WARP member benefits, including the newsletters.

**WARP Board:** In June, the WARP board gathered for a rare face-to-face meeting to assess how well we are doing and to discuss future directions. Input was received prior to the meeting from much of the full membership via a survey posted on the website and published in the newsletter. Several decisions included clarifying the organization's Mission and adopting new Core Values (see page 1); implementing a more active effort to partner with other organizations (a regular column from the FTF Director in the newsletter is one move in this direction); and initiating Special Interest Groups (which met for the first time at the 2008 Annual Meeting.)

Melinda Lowrey, whose term was scheduled to expire in 2007, resigned in 2006. Due to timing issues, this position was filled in 2007 by Cheryl Musch. Cheryl's term expires in 2010. The board committed to realign board terms during the next cycle.

**Annual Meeting 2007:** Fifty-nine members attended the meeting in Panajachel, Guatemala, from March 2-4. The meeting started in Guatemala City, with a visit to Museo Ixchel, the museum of indigenous textiles, and a visit to UPAVIM, a women's cooperative that includes medical clinics and a Montessori school, partly funded by workers sewing traditional fabrics. In Panajachel, various cooperatives and field workers presented their stories and work. On Saturday, beautiful textiles were available for purchase, and, on Sunday, we enjoyed market day in Chichicastenango. Many members stayed on for a wonderful textile extension trip in Guatemala and El Salvador, coordinated by Deborah Chandler.

**Newsletter:** Thanks to the great contributions of many WARP members, four issues of the WARP newsletter were published in 2007. Articles covered projects and techniques from all over the world. Special appreciation goes to the newsletter's regular columnists: Pegi Bevins, for the Member Profile, and Deb Brandon, for Textiles Around the World. In 2007, Cindy Lair began overseeing the printing and mailing of the newsletter, which greatly reduced the editor's workload and improved the timely and orderly distribution of the newsletter.

**UPAVIM/Mayan Hands Sales:** Through sales of UPAVIM/Mayan Hands products, WARP received \$8,430.37 in 2007 (\$5,905.17 deposited in 2007, and \$2,525.20 deposited in 2008 for 2007 sales). This sum far exceeded projections and 2006 sales of \$2,371. Because of logistical burdens, the sales benefiting WARP ended this past December. Thank you to the many members who hosted UPAVIM/Mayan Hands sales for WARP, and heartfelt gratitude for the years of support from Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland and the other Mayan Hands and UPAVIM staff members who graciously made these sales possible.

*continued on page 15*

## Special Section: 2007 Annual Report/ 2008 Annual Meeting



### *Meeting summary by Linda Temple*

People from fifteen states and three countries (US, Taiwan, Korea!) gathered from March 9-11 for this year's meeting of Weave A Real Peace (WARP) on Whidbey Island, about an hour and a half, partly by ferry, from Seattle.



*Happy campers!*  
(photo by Barbara Aman)

When WARP started in 1992, the idea was to have a face-to-face meeting each year to gather together those who share our passion and work in supporting textile artisans in communities-in-need. WARP's activities extend beyond this now, but the annual meeting remains the most significant WARP-sponsored program—an unparalleled opportunity to learn, network, share resources and contacts, and provide encouragement and support to each another.

We first gathered at Earthhues, Michelle Wipplinger's studio/shop, in Seattle on Friday afternoon. From there we drove to Camp Casey, on Whidbey Island, where we had our favorite activity—introductions—on Friday night. As always, any one of the thirty+ people there could have taken the entire evening to relate their experiences, interests, accomplishments. But brief (three minutes or less) introductions are a great way to get a quick glimpse of everyone.

Saturday began with a presentation by Teresa Parker, a member of the NW Native American Basketweavers Association, telling us about her community's basketmaking traditions and beliefs, which all by itself would have been worth the price of admission (she made each of us a cedar rose pin). But there was more to come.... four Special Interest Groups met (fair trade, marketing, ecological issues, providing technical assistance); Layne Goldsmith, Professor of Fiber Arts at UW told us about the Tibetan refugee rug weavers in Nepal she is working with to weave the rugs designed by her students; Liz Gipson, managing editor of Handwoven Magazine, talked about new media and how we can use it to further our work. We visited Madelyn van der Hoogt's studio in Coupeville. And Syne Mitchell, WeaveCast Host, interviewed people and recorded much of it all (check out this great "new media" resource at [www.weavecast.com](http://www.weavecast.com)).



*Teresa Parker*  
(photo by Barbara Aman)

Saturday evening gave us a chance to hear from those who had more than five minutes of interesting stuff to tell us. And we got to see the great new WARP slide show.

A distraction throughout was Marketplace (selling fantastic products from Camphill Village, Guatemala, Peru, Morocco, Marilyn Anderson's work, and videos from the Vitales) and the Silent Auction, with textile treasures that members donated to WARP (sales netted over \$750)! I spent a lot of money in both places.

It was a fantastic meeting, doing just what WARP does best—getting people together with similar interests to share stories, ideas, frustrations, dreams. And to rejuvenate ourselves. If you've never been to one of these gatherings, start saving now for the next one—to be held east of the Mississippi (exact location not yet determined).

*"I dearly love the annual WARP meeting. It offers me inspiration, fellowship, learning, and yearning for more. I liked the idea of special interest groups and hope we can make progress with all the great ideas that evolved from the discussions. We all lead hectic lives and the WARP meeting is like an annual regrouping for nourishment, education and networking before returning to those busy lives, hoping to make a small difference in the fiber arts community. See you next year." Linda Bowden*



## Special Section: 2007 Annual Report/ 2008 Annual Meeting



### WARP Annual Business Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2008 - Camp Casey, Whidbey Island, Washington

Adrienne Sloane called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

The Minutes from the 2007 Annual Meeting were reviewed and approved.

2007 programs and activities were reviewed (from 2007 Year in Review, page 7).

#### Board Meeting Report:

The board only met for one day, this past Thursday. A major item of discussion was how to meet the challenge of the loss of funding from Mayan Hands/UPAVIM sales (about \$8000 last year). The 2008 budget is again a deficit one—it is anticipated there will be approximately \$3500 in expenses over income (primary budget expenses are the administrative coordinator salary and printing costs for the newsletter and the directory). Fortunately, in years' past, WARP donors have been generous and the organization has been frugal, so we are able to cover that deficit. However, the real financial needs of WARP were recognized, and the board will be working toward meeting these needs. WARP members with suggestions are encouraged to get in touch with any board member.

The other major agenda item was about the WARP administrative staff needs. After discussion between Ann Rubin and the Board, we agreed that Ann's role as Administrative Coordinator would not continue. Cheryl Musch will assume the Coordinator's role on a temporary basis.

Newsletter: Members continue to support the newsletter and see it as a key activity of WARP. We recognized the benefit of indexing past issues and Marianna Mace has volunteered to do this.

Financial report: Because of staff transitions, this is not yet available. It will be published in the newsletter as soon as possible.

Scholarship Fund: Sarah Saulson noted that a generous donation from Alice Brown makes it possible to introduce students to WARP's values by providing scholarships to the Annual Meeting. This year is the first when a student attended the full meeting (two students were selected, but one was ill at the last minute). See related article about scholarship recipient Bo Choi on page 2.

Election of board members: Sarah Saulson and Carole Pierce presented the report of the Nominating Committee. Sarah's second term expired this year, and Candy Meacham was nominated to fill that position. The terms of Deb Brandon, Adrienne Sloane, and Linda Temple also expired this year, and each was nominated for a additional term. Because of the need to realign board terms, Deb was nominated for a three year term, Adrienne for a two year term, and Linda for a one year term. Nominations were requested from the floor. It was moved and seconded to accepted the slate recommended by the Committee. All approved.

Thanks were expressed to Ann Rubin for serving as WARP's interim coordinator; Linda Temple for putting out the newsletter; Cindy Lair for printing and mailing the newsletter; Cheryl Musch, who will serve as temporary coordinator; Mary-Joan Ferrara Marsland for her generosity in facilitating Mayan Hands/UPAVIM consignment sales for WARP members (although not present, Mary Joan received a standing ovation and an appreciation gift); Teena Jennings for being the Marketplace coordinator; Candy Meacham for organizing much of the programming for this meeting; Carole Pierce for her work updating the WARP slide show; and Sarah Saulson for her service on the board for the last six years.

2009 annual meeting: Important factors in choosing a location are regional variations and having an on-the-ground person. Suggestions for 2009 included Toronto, the Washington, DC area, or southeastern PA. Sarah Saulson and Deb Brandon will follow up.

Meeting adjourned by Adrienne Sloane at 11:00 a.m.

## Understanding the Actors in Fair Trade

Carmen K. Iezzi, Executive Director, Fair Trade Federation

### Funding Connections

If you know of a textile group in need, maybe one with whom you've worked, let Cheryl Musch know specifically what they need and what it will cost, and we'll get the information into the next newsletter. Contact information for Cheryl is on page 2.

As awareness of fair trade grows in North America, confusion about the different types of actors, systems, and organizations also grows.

Within the overall fair trade movement, two types of organizations play complementary, and distinct, roles. WARP members can rely on this simple primer to better understand the different organizations and better explain fair trade to others:

1) *Business Screening Organizations* – The International Fair Trade Association (IFAT) and the Fair Trade Federation (FTF) evaluate businesses and NGOs for their full commitment to fair trade. No matter what type of product they sell (coffee, clothing, chocolate, décor, gifts, tea, t-shirts, wine, etc.), member organizations have dedicated themselves to using trade as a tool to empower producers and create positive change. As a global body, IFAT has members on all continents, while FTF is an IFAT partner network focused on North America. Members of these organizations display the IFAT or FTF logo on materials connected to their business (such as website, brochures, banners, etc.)



2) *Product Certification Organizations* – The Fairtrade Labelling Organization (FLO) sets standards for agricultural products. FLO's certification body audits 16 agricultural products from their point of origin to the point of sale, no matter who ends up to be the end seller. FLO has 21 national affiliates, including Transfair USA and Transfair Canada, who license their logo in each country. In the US, coffee, tea, cocoa/chocolate, vanilla, bananas, mangoes, honey, rice, sugar, and flowers are available with the Transfair USA logo. In Canada, bananas, cocoa products (chocolate, syrups, baked goods, and drinks), coffee, cotton, flowers, quinoa, rice, sugar, tea, spices, sports balls, and wine are available.



In the United States, the

- Fair Trade Resource Network ([www.ftrn.org](http://www.ftrn.org)) raises consumer awareness about fair trade alternatives by providing information to the public, the media, and other advocates. They offer curricula for schools, provide resources and publications, and coordinate World Fair Trade Day and other activities in the US.
- Fair Trade Towns Campaign ([www.fairtradetownsusa.org](http://www.fairtradetownsusa.org)) supports local grassroots groups to organize around fair trade. As of 2008, eight towns in North America had been named official Fair Trade Towns (Amherst, MA; Brattleboro, VT; La Pêche, QC; Media, PA; Milwaukee, WI; Northampton, MA; Taos, NM; and Wolfville, NS).

Whether buying from a Fair Trade Organization or choosing Fair Trade Certified products, you can support fair wages, safe, healthy, and participatory workplaces, environmental sustainability, and direct trading relationships with communities across the globe. Educational organizations such as the Fair Trade Resource Network and Fair Trade Towns also offer WARP members tools to bring fair trade to your community.

## ***Aid to Artisans' Market Readiness Program Addresses All Marketing Areas***

*by Deborah Brandon*

In February 2008, I participated in the Market Readiness Program (MRP), run by Aid To Artisans (ATA). This workshop was originally designed for artisans in the developing world who are interested in marketing their products in the US, as well as non-artisans who work with fair trade groups, co-ops, etc. Lately, they have opened it to people like me who have no direct affiliation with such groups, but have an interest in the program for other reasons. In my case, I felt that attending this workshop would be a good first step towards being effective when I become directly involved in such endeavors (something I hope to do in the foreseeable future).

As I'd hoped, we learned about almost every aspect of the process artisans need to go through in order to market their products successfully in the US. I felt that by gaining a better understanding of the various steps in that process, I would be better equipped to help ensure successful entry into the US market.

My favorite sessions involved learning about design and product development. Those were run by Michelle Wipplinger of Earhues. She is a wonderful source of information, from color trends to learning about the customer base. In order to enhance the experience, the MRP takes place in conjunction with the New York International Gift Fair. I was assigned to Michelle when we toured several sections of the fair to see applications of what we'd learned, e.g., various ways to display the products effectively. In addition, we used those tours (as well as a tour of various shops in Manhattan) to get some ideas for product design, current trends, etc.

There were also sessions on packing, shipping, and documentation, as well as costing and pricing, channels of distribution, and product promotion. I found those sessions less interesting, however they did provide essential information to help gain a full understanding of the entire process, going from product design to successfully creating a niche for those products within the US market. The goal is not only to enter the US market, but also to go beyond that by maintaining and further expanding the sellers markets.

Overall it was a fantastic experience. I came away with a wealth of information. Knowledge that I have already had the opportunity to share with a friend who wanted some advice on the subject. I was also very lucky to have forged close friendships during the program. I now have new friends from across the globe, that if I do see again we will be able to pick up where we left off—the sort of friendships that are forged during a WARP meeting. I feel that my decision to attend the MRP was one of the best I have ever made.

*For more information about Aid to Artisans, go to [www.aidtoartisans.org](http://www.aidtoartisans.org). Deborah Brandon can be reached at 412/967-1578; or at [brandon@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:brandon@andrew.cmu.edu).*

### **WARP Newsletter**

#### **Ad Rates**

For WARP members:  
Business card - \$6/issue;  
\$22 for 4 issues;  
1/4 page - \$11/issue; \$40  
for 4 issues;  
1/2 page - \$18/issue; \$65  
for 4 issues;  
Full page - \$30/issue;  
\$108 for 4 issues;  
Classified - \$1.50 per line  
for members (50 spaces)  
Rates for non-WARP  
members are double the  
above figures.  
All rates are for camera-  
ready copy.  
A paid ad ensures that  
your information will  
appear in the newsletter  
exactly as you wish, exactly  
when you wish. Contact  
Linda Temple  
([LGTemple@juno.com](mailto:LGTemple@juno.com))

## ***Mayan Hands: Working in Guatemala and in the US to Support Indigenous Weavers***

### *Part 1 - the Guatemalan Side, continued*

their policy of freeing funds on US checks from same day to 10 days to 15 days to 21 days and calling that a privilege; discovering that instructions were given to the women incompletely and most of a month's work is unacceptable. Etc. We regularly must decide how to respond to challenges in the women's lives such as: an attack of African bees during a group meeting that wounded humans and killed livestock; husbands and sons who disappeared en route to the US to find work; family members murdered while in Guatemala City; women or their children living with debilitating health problems; robbery of the entire month's income for a whole group held up by ten (yes 10!) masked gunmen. And don't forget flooding, earthquakes, mudslides, and other natural disasters, all part of the Guatemalan landscape. In every case, what do we do to help, if anything?

But other days I remember: last year we paid the women over one million quetzales (almost \$150,000). We spent approximately Q. 250,000 on yarn. After those two biggest expenses, in the five years I have been with MH we have reduced our operating expenses from unknown to 12% to 8%, and as a result last year actually broke even, i.e., covered our expenses for the first time. (That does not include the salaries of the four of us working here in Guatemala, which are donated.) Through constant encouragement and provision of school supplies, we can now say that all the women's children are going to school, including their daughters. In addition, we have developed our sister education project, Oxlajuj B'atz', which provides the women with workshops in four areas: artisan techniques, small business skills, democracy and organization, and women's health.

The women all say that being able to count on having an income every month is even more important than the amount they earn, because it allows them to plan ahead. By providing steady work we are making a significant difference in the lives of the women, but the real changes will be for the next generation, for their daughters and sons who will have options the women never had. And for that, the struggle is worth it.

### **WARP T-Shirts and Scarves**

WARP t-shirts, with the logo on the sleeve, \$20

Hand-dyed 100% silk scarves (8" by 54") discharged with the WARP logo, available in navy, burgundy, orange, and brown, \$20

***All proceeds go to WARP.***

To order, contact Deborah Brandon at 412/268-2552 or by email at [brandon@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:brandon@andrew.cmu.edu)

### ***A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!***

#### **FOR SALE:**

#### **Santa Fe School of Weaving/Miriam's Well**

*The school is about to enter its ninth year and continues to grow. 2007 was the best year ever. All classes are full, loom sales are up, and the fiber store for weavers, spinners AND knitters continues to expand. The business lends itself to expansion as well as growth into partnership. The dealerships of Leclerc looms and Ashford products provides a great asset.*

*A SCORE appraisal of fair market will be available 6/1/2008.*

*Contact: Miriam Leth-Espensen  
614 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, NM 87501  
505.982.6312*

*[www.sfschoolofweaving.com](http://www.sfschoolofweaving.com) \* [miriamsf@mac.com](mailto:miriamsf@mac.com)*



## ***Mayan Hands: Working in Guatemala and in the US to Support Indigenous Weavers***

### **Part 2 - the US Side**

*by Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland*

The US distribution seems pretty mundane in comparison to the Guatemala side of things, but this part is absolutely necessary, too. Without a market, all the work in Guatemala would be for nothing. We certainly do not have many issues to deal with, compared to the obstacles that confront the Guatemala side daily.

After nine years of working out of my house, last year I moved the operation into a warehouse space of about 1800 sq ft. in the rolling countryside of Ijamsville, Maryland. The space can be very cold in winter and very hot in summer—the downside—but is still much better than lack of space and having products all over my house and in sheds out back. We also worked out of my one-car garage, which was even more uncomfortable than the warehouse. Our work team now consists of me, the US director of marketing and distribution, and two part-time employees, my assistants and the main packers, Dana Dallas and Laura Mayer. As was my house, the new space is shared with another Guatemalan crafts organization that helps women, one with which many of you are familiar, UPAVIM Crafts.

A separate, smaller division of Mayan Hands is located in Albany, NY. The founder of Mayan Hands, Brenda Rosenbaum, works out of her home, doing retail sales and organizing consignments for people who want to help MH. Brenda also gives talks when asked, and is very much our “ambassador.” Much as she loves the contact with customers through sales and presentations, her favorite activity is developing new products, always looking for something new and exciting for our customers.

We receive orders from our print catalog via e-mail, fax, or phone. We hope to go to a wholesale website in the near future. Our regular customers are in the US, Canada, the UK, and occasionally other parts of the world. They are mainly shops, many of which are fair trade, and also church groups, website based companies, non-profit organizations, and individuals who do shows and fairs. Presently very little is sold retail from the warehouse but there may be more sales here when we get a retail website going. We usually process and ship orders within a day or two. Customers have 30 days to pay once they have established an account. The early part of the year is slow—it picks up as the year goes on until we are non-stop super busy in October and November, our two busiest months and when half of our sales for the year take place.

Although I am also in charge of marketing, we really are unable to do much. There is no advertising budget so I try to come up with ingenious low budget ways of letting people know about things—special mailings and e-mails mostly. Most people find our site on the web or hear of us by word of mouth. Even without advertising, we have managed to increase sales every year, perhaps a result of consistently high quality products and

*continued on page 14*

### ***Jobs...***

#### **Executive Director**

##### **MayaWorks**

MayaWorks, a proud member of the Fair Trade Federation, is a micro-enterprise nonprofit organization focused on marketing the handiwork of Maya artists in Guatemala. Founded in 1990, the organization is seeking a passionate, committed, and entrepreneurial new executive director to lead the organization through its next stage of growth. The Executive Director will be responsible for setting the strategic vision of the organization, and for overseeing all aspects of financial management and fund development for the organization's \$600,000 budget. This position is located in Chicago, IL, with periodic travel to Guatemala.

##### **To Apply:**

MayaWorks has engaged Koya Consulting to manage this search. Please send cover letter and resume to Dana Levy at [executivesearch@koyaconsulting.com](mailto:executivesearch@koyaconsulting.com), and put MayaWorks in the title line. Candidates will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. MayaWorks is an equal opportunity employer.

## ***Mayan Hands: Working in Guatemala and in the US to Support Indigenous Weavers***

### *Part 2 - the US Side, continued*

the attentive service given to our customers. Even now, while a lot of businesses are suffering, Mayan Hands sales are up for the year.

Shipments leave Guatemala once every six weeks or so, and arrive at Dulles Airport in Virginia. A customs broker does the necessary import paperwork and clears the shipments for us. Then a trucker brings the shipments to our warehouse. There is usually about a one week turnaround time from pickup in the Guatemalan warehouse to delivery to our warehouse. It takes a couple of days to unpack and process the shipments. It is hard work, but it is always fun to see what comes, both products we are expecting and any new products recently developed.

At my end, the first of the two main frustrations is having to backorder products because we do not have what people want. When I first started it was impossible to get much at all. Once Deborah started overseeing production (five years ago), backorders decreased significantly. After reading the Guatemala side of the story you can fully understand why we do not have certain products at times. Unfortunately a lot of customers do not understand the challenges at that end, and they get very frustrated, too. It can take up to a year to get some items when there are problems with material procurement or groups. The second biggest frustration is people that do not pay on time (or at all!) and need constant reminders. For the most part, though, I say we have the best customers in the world. They are very supportive of what we do and really want to help people better their lives through fair trade. Because they are committed to fair trade they seem to be more conscientious.

For the most part it is great work and we are all really happy to be able to do something meaningful and fun that benefits so many women every year. Who could ask for more than being surrounded by beautiful textiles day in and day out? I think the answer to that is really easy....

### **Workshops and Tours in an Undiscovered Mexico**

Traditions Mexico Hands-On Tours offers learning and uncommon, small-group travel into the weaver's world of deep Mexico with weaving and dyeing workshops and travel into the ethnic backcountry.

#### Winter/Spring 2009 Schedule

February: The Zapotec Tapestry Weaving Workshop, The Oaxaca Natural Dye Workshop, The Fiber Arts of the Oaxacan Highlands.

March: Fiber Arts of the Oaxacan Coast, The Mayan Fibers and Culture Tour and the Mayan Backstrap Weaving and Natural Dye Workshop.

For more information contact Eric Mindling at [www.traditionsmexico.com](http://www.traditionsmexico.com), [traditionsmexico@yahoo.com](mailto:traditionsmexico@yahoo.com).

### ***Lucie Hempstead, Founder of Museo Ixchel and WARP Member, Dies***

Deborah Chandler writes of the recent death of her friend Lucie Hempstead, in Guatemala. Lucie, a WARP member since the early 1990's, was better known as Baysis, the name given her by a tiny sibling saying, "This is my baysis" (baby sis).

Deborah became friends with Lucie in recent years and often spent Saturday mornings with her, listening to her stories.

For her work with the museum, Baysis was awarded the Order of the Quetzal, Guatemala's highest recognition. In the near future, her family will be giving the museum a map that shows

Guatemala's amazing variety of huipiles located in their communities, a treat for all who treasure textiles and their social history. Baysis died just after midnight on Saturday, April 26, at the age of 88, and is buried in Guatemala City. She is survived by two sons and four grandchildren—and, of course, The Museo Ixchel of Indigenous Textiles.

## 2007: The Year in Review...

*continued from page 7*

**Website:** Ann Rubin coordinated a number of major improvements in the website in 2007, including text updates on several web pages; adding a WARP Yahoo Group sign-up button directly on the website; and providing the option to pay memberships online via PayPal, which allows WARP to accept credit card payments. Ann also incorporated an online form to collect membership directory information. Thanks to Doug Davis for coding the directory form, handling the back-end functions, and advising on survey collection. We also appreciate the efforts of Joan Fernbach and Rose Gerstner who continue to update the website as needed.

**WARP's Email List/Yahoo Group:** Cheryl Musch will be a co-moderator with Beth Davis, who had limited online access last year. At the end of 2007, there were 204 email addresses subscribed to the list.

**Slide Show:** Thanks to Carole Pierce for updating the slide show last year and for continuing to manage the circulation of the show, which traveled back and forth across the US 15 times in 2007. The slide show was viewed at a county high school in Kentucky, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, a Columbia College ethnic textiles class, and several weaving and spinning guilds. The possibility of offering the slide show in CD/DVD formats is being discussed.

**Annual Directory/Survey:** The Membership Directory was distributed in the summer of 2007. In preparation for the 2008 Directory, some modifications were made to the annual survey of members, and these changes were reflected in the survey sent with membership renewal letters in December.

**Scholarship Fund:** WARP was not able to provide sufficient assistance to enable any students to attend the 2007 annual meeting in Guatemala. Guidelines are in place and scholarships have been awarded for students to attend the 2008 meeting. The scholarship fund was established in 2006 through the generosity of Alice Brown.

**Other Fundraising:** Ann Rubin registered WARP as a participant in EBay's charity auction program, called Mission Fish.

**Other Administrative Matters:** Ann Rubin started working as the WARP administrative coordinator in July, when Ann met with administrator coordinator Cheryl Musch in Madison, WI, for the transition. As part of the transition, the Access membership database was transferred to Excel as either an interim or permanent solution. WARP opened a new checking account with Bank of America, with online checking and bill pay.

### *New Members*

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