

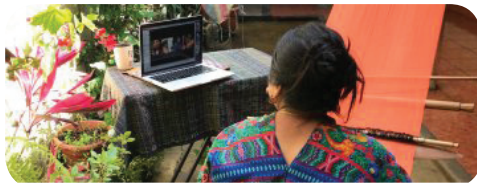


Volume 28, Number 1 - Spring 2021

## Kakaw Designs Shifts to Online Classes, Sales in Guatemala

Mari Gray

Believe it or not, we have been busier than ever in Guatemala since the pandemic hit. We were fortunate to have a solid website and digital presence in place, which proved to be key in our case for the “new normal”



Header for online workshops

we found ourselves in. Pretty soon after the strict national restrictions were brought on in Guatemala, our artisan partners started asking us to help sell their independently-produced creations online. This was the first of many important pivots we took in 2020: opening up a curated marketplace on our website.



Brocade close-up

Now, a year later, we are working on refining our online workshops on backstrap weaving, embroidery, pompom making, and more. It has been a learning experience

for sure, and one that has been surprisingly rewarding for me personally. Specifically, the backstrap weaving classes with master weaver Doña Lidia López have allowed us to explore a variety of different topics together, dedicating a unique class for each technique. It has been a joy to slow down and spend time on exploring textile traditions from home during such a difficult



Doña Lidia Lopez

time. Many of my own personal long-time textile questions have been answered through this journey.

The world seems still uncertain, and there is clear need in many of the communities where we work in Guatemala. Last year was especially challenging with the two strong hurricanes that caused flooding in unexpected areas away from the coast (see Deborah Chandler’s article on page 8).

*continued on page 11*

### 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 of 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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Send address  
corrections to:

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

Weave a Real Peace  
5753 Hwy 85 North #3044  
Crestview, FL 32536

The deadline for  
contributions to the  
Summer issue of the WARP  
newsletter is  
**April 30, 2021**

Send articles and  
correspondence for  
the newsletter to:  
Linda Temple  
1230 NE 70

Oklahoma City, OK 73111  
[lgtempleok@gmail.com](mailto:lgtempleok@gmail.com)  
405/921-1064 (phone)

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## COVID-19 and our #kaamnotdaan Campaign

Arushi Chowdhury Khannar

Nearly a year ago, I wrote an article for WARP about our revival of the heritage technique of Himroo weaving. While we had faced many challenges in re-starting the defunct looms, it felt like we had overcome most of them and I wrote with a burst of optimism of our plans to set up new looms and train more women.

But a month later, the pandemic hit India and we went into complete lockdown. Initially, it seemed like this was a death knell for the project. With everyone stuck at home, the weavers could not



*The Ramzani Jangla is a vintage Himroo design comprising beautiful floral vines. It is woven on a drawloom known locally as a "Paaga Loom"*

come even come to the weaving center to weave. Moreover, our grant partners diverted their funds towards healthcare, leaving this project high and dry. The situation was indeed bleak.

However, necessity as they say, is the mother of invention. I just had a few pictures of the products that were midway through weaving and were still on the loom. I posted these on our Instagram page with an appeal to the social media universe: "Please support the weavers of Aurangabad. Pre-order our products and we will promise to deliver them once lockdown ends." The campaign title was "KaamNotDaan" which translates to "WorkNotAid". The idea was that we do not want dole for our self-respecting and proud weavers but your pre-orders today will help them meet their daily expenses till the looms are running again.

To my utter amazement, we received an overwhelming response from people both in India and abroad. Within two weeks, we were able to secure orders to support the weavers for the next two months. However, the pandemic dragged on. The city of Aurangabad where our weavers live was one of the worst-hit areas and their low-income locality in particular was declared a Red Zone. We sent out a second appeal and received another batch of pre-orders. It was amazing to see how completely unknown people reached out to help. Some of our customers said that they didn't know much about handlooms but they felt that this craft shouldn't be allowed to die. Some even connected us to their friends and relatives who, in turn, placed further orders. And so, this little human chain of interconnect- edness saw us through the lockdown.

Once the restrictions began to be lifted, we started to dispatch the orders we had received. However, it was one step forward and two steps back all the time. A couple of weavers went down with mild



*The drawloom technique enables designs to have a much larger scale than typical jacquard looms and hence the Ramzani Jangla has a stunning tapestry like effect*

cases of the virus. Weaving continued to be slow and we are still completing orders that we received last year. But, I think the pandemic has taught us all to be more patient and understanding that there are larger forces beyond our control. Con-

*continued on page 6*



# Virtual Annual Meeting - June 18-20

Kate Colwell

Plan now to stock up on your favorite snacks, dress in your best handwovens, and greet friends new and old at the June 18-20 Virtual Annual Meeting: **Unraveling Borders, Weaving Networks**

On Friday night we have expanded the welcome circle to a 90 minute Zoom Meeting to see everyone's face while accommodating our burgeoning membership. There's an option to meet with friends in small breakout rooms after the Circle.

Saturday will be a packed day with scheduling 11:30 am to 8:30 pm EST to accommodate time zones across the Americas. We are tentatively planning a Keynote and panels including teaching during a pandemic, art and activism, and scholarship presentations. This section of the meeting is Zoom Webinar and will be open to non-members. The auction will run concurrently and there will be

breaks during the day where you can run over to the auction and place your bids. In the evening we're back to Zoom Meeting for members only and we will have a Show and Tell. Members who make art and members who work with artisans can make two minute videos of their work to show off on Saturday evening. The options of opening your favorite beverage and joining small groups of friends or interest groups in breakout rooms will also be available Saturday night.

Sunday morning we'll have our business meeting and there will be at least one speaker.

We are open to finding times to show short videos, author presentations, etc., during breaks on Saturday or extending into Sunday afternoon. If you have something you want to present please e-mail me [kcolwell53@gmail.com](mailto:kcolwell53@gmail.com). I look forward to seeing you all there.

## Weave A Real Peace Membership Information

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

### 2021 Annual Dues (USD)

- \$50 - Individual in US/Canada
- \$90 - 2 year special - Individual US/Canada
- \$40 - International Individual/International Sister Guilds
- Simple living - Choose an amount you can live with
- \$40 - Sister/Gift Subscriptions
- \$75 - Friend of WARP
- \$50 - Professional: Guild/ Business/ Non-profit Organization
- \$150+ - Patron of WARP

All memberships are for 12 months, and expire 12 months from date of joining.

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 Google 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:

Weave a Real Peace  
5753 Hwy 85 North #3044  
Crestview, FL 32536

or join online at  
<http://www.weavearealpeace.org>

There are several Assistantships available for people to help with the Annual Meeting and currently these skills are needed:

- Social media before the meeting
- Video editing skills prior to the meeting
- Zoom technical support during the meeting

Please contact Kate Colwell, [kcolwell53@gmail.com](mailto:kcolwell53@gmail.com), if you would like to apply for an Assistantship.



### WARP Newsletter:

#### Copy Deadlines

- Summer 2021 - April 30
- Fall 2021 - August 27
- Winter 2021 - November 5

Contact me at [lgtempleok@gmail.com](mailto:lgtempleok@gmail.com) if you have questions. Thanks! LT

## What's in this Newsletter...

Kakaw Designs .....	1
Covid-19 and #kaamnotdaan .....	2
2021 Annual Meeting to be Virtual....	3
Assistantships Available.....	3
WARP Membership Information .....	3
From the Office .....	4
2021 Online Auction .....	4
Member Profile: Betsy Blosser.....	5
WARP on Social Media.....	5
From WARP's President.....	6
New Members .....	6, 7, 8
How Are You Faring? .....	7, 8, 9, 11
WARP Donors.....	9, 11
WARP Panel Donors.....	10, 11
Nominating Committee.....	10
WARP Zoom Panels.....	10
WARP Business Members	
Network .....	10
Publisher of Books.....	12



# From the WARP Office

Kelsey Wiskirchen

Dear WARP Friends,

What a year it has been! Amidst the challenges of the pandemic, WARP has adapted and evolved. We have been looking closely at our mission, and considering all of the ways that we can grow to help meet the needs of our members. We have formed a new Business Networking Group, with a committee working on monthly programs to help our members who work with businesses - both international and domestic - connect and learn from one another. (If you would still like to join this group, it is not too late - just send an email to Maren Beck, [maren@hilltribeart.com](mailto:maren@hilltribeart.com).) We have been hosting monthly programs on Zoom that are free and open to all, and we have been able to use our surplus gains from last year to offer COVID-19 Relief Grants. Because of our active presence in the textile com-



munity, we have gained 50 new members and over 500 new contacts (general public who have attended our online zoom programs) in the past six months.

We are currently in the process of planning our 2021 Annual Meeting, which will be fully online this year (see article on page 3). We will also be offering both Assistantships and Scholarships. In a year when students and young professionals have very few options for in-person professional development, I am thrilled that we can offer this opportunity.

The WARP Board is committed to serving our community, and these new programs are evidence of their dedication and creativity. If you are interested in getting more involved with WARP this year (and working closely with me!) please consider joining the WARP Board, or send me an email at [info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org) if you would like to volunteer for one of the program committees.

Warmest of wishes to you all,

Kelsey Wiskirchen

WARP Administrative Coordinator

## WARP Governing Board

Philis Alvic  
Lexington, KY  
[philis@philisalvic.info](mailto:philis@philisalvic.info)  
Term expires 2021

Maren Beck  
Eugene, OR  
[maren@hilltribeart.com](mailto:maren@hilltribeart.com)  
Term expires 2023

Sara Borchert  
Hudson, NY  
[sara@camphillhudson.org](mailto:sara@camphillhudson.org)  
Term expires 2021

Kate Colwell  
Kensington, CA  
[kcolwell53@gmail.com](mailto:kcolwell53@gmail.com)  
Term expires 2023

Beth Davis  
Acton, MA  
[bethbox@hotmail.com](mailto:bethbox@hotmail.com)  
Term expires 2022

Mary Joan Ferrara Marsland  
Great Cacapon, WV  
[maryjferrara@gmail.com](mailto:maryjferrara@gmail.com)  
Term expires 2021

Sara Lamb  
Grass Valley, CA  
[lambspin@gmail.com](mailto:lambspin@gmail.com)  
Term expires 2022

Susan Weltman  
Brooklyn, NY  
[sweltwoman@gmail.com](mailto:sweltwoman@gmail.com)  
Term expires 2022

Kelsey Wiskirchen  
Administrative Coordinator  
[info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org)



## Get Ready for WARP's 2021's Online Auction!

If you missed out on the WARP Online Auction last year, never fear! It is coming up again soon. The 2021 Online Auction will run consecutively with WARP's Virtual

help us make that happen. This is WARP's biggest fundraising event of the year and we need members to make it a success by providing auction items and bidding on these fabulous handmade creations.

Start cleaning out your closets, drawers, and shelves! We would love donations of new or gently used handmade textile or fiber related items such as clothing, accessories, baskets and home décor, textile and craft related books and equipment, handmade jewelry, and more.

We know our wonderful members will help us make this a huge success. Keep your eyes open in April for further details and instructions for submitting your treasures. To allow us plenty of time to set up the auction, we will start of accepting donation forms and photos of your gifts in April. Don't miss out!



*Celebration Table Runner - Donated to 2020 Auction by Mayaman Weavers*

Annual Conference this year, ending on the last day of the conference, June 20.

Last year we had almost 90 amazing items, with massive support and participation. We hope to have even more incredible treasures to offer this year, and you can



# Member Profile: Betsy Blosser

Gloria Miller

*"I've had the good fortune of being able to travel a lot, primarily to the Global South. I have always been attracted to the arts of Latin America and Africa. I love the colors, patterns, and textures. I am really interested in making sure that such arts survive and that fair trade is a way of enabling artisans to be paid for their work and to facilitate the preservation of these arts. I also hope that artisans are able to find the same sense of satisfaction and accomplishment in their arts that I achieve when I hide away in my sewing room."* Betsy Blosser

Betsy Blosser of San Mateo, CA recently retired as professor from the Broadcast & Electronic Communication Arts Department at San Francisco State University where she developed a two-semester course in which the spring semester was spent designing and producing a video for a local non-profit organization while also learning about another country. In June they flew to that country and produced a video to meet the needs of an NGO "client". Students received invaluable learning in cultural differences and social justice as well as "in the field" video production. Over the years the class produced films in Brazil, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Tanzania, and Thailand.



Growing up in Detroit Betsy started sewing doll clothes with her mother's remnants, wove with a pin loom, and taught herself to knit and crochet. Another childhood interest that serves her well is fluency in Spanish. As a college sophomore she studied at the University of Madrid and later taught graduate classes in mass communications in Uruguay and Chile on Fulbrights.

She bought a loom 20 years ago and has learned from Deborah Chandler's book (*Learning to Weave*) and her guild friends. When her two boys got older she took sewing classes and now makes most of her own clothes. In retirement she is expanding her skills and is now knitting and sewing for her brand new first grandchild, Blair.

Two years ago, she travelled to the Philippines as the Textile Coordinator for New Pathways to Enterprise, an organization that works with women in villages to develop businesses that enable them to send their children to school. The trip challenged her to develop ideas for sellable products they could produce with available materials. She became interested in abaca, fiber from the banana plant. She was pleased when a weaver in her guild had some abaca and Betsy was able to acquire enough to start weaving with it. She was scheduled to return to the Philippines in February 2020 but the trip was cancelled by the onset COVID.

Betsy hopes to continue to work with women in developing countries creating products that can be marketed through fair trade and to increase her weaving skills to get the same satisfaction from it as she does with sewing and knitting. She is happy to connect with WARP members at [bblosser@sfsu.edu](mailto:bblosser@sfsu.edu)

*Gloria Miller, the Member Profile columnist, is a Sister of Mercy and has been working with a knitting group in Peru for many years. She became connected with WARP when she started weaving in 2006 and continues to enjoy weaving and her weaving connections all over the world.*

## Connect to the WARP Community!

-  @weaveareal-peace\_
-  Weave A Real Peace
-  @WeaveARealPeace
-  Weave A Real Peace (Google Groups)
-  [weavearealpeace.com/blog](http://weavearealpeace.com/blog)
-  Weave A Real Peace

## Post Your WARP Experiences

- Social and textile work of members/yourself
- Events from WARP meetings
- WARP's history and long-time members
- New members you've met
- Events relative to WARP's members and mission
- Local and global textile initiatives

(Tag posts with [@weavearealpeace\\_](https://www.instagram.com/weavearealpeace_) and [#weavearealpeace](https://twitter.com/weavearealpeace) for reposting!)

## Be a Social Media Volunteer

Interested in writing a guest post for our blog? Contact Deborah Chandler [weavingfutures2012@gmail.com](mailto:weavingfutures2012@gmail.com)

Would you like to be featured on our Instagram? Contact Lola Faruroti [lolalovescargo@gmail.com](mailto:lolalovescargo@gmail.com)

Interested in helping with the blog or Facebook? Contact Kelsey Wiskirchen [info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org)



# From WARP's President

Susan Weltman

Doesn't this feel like more than a year of the Pandemic? In our Spring Newsletter, 2020 we were planning our Annual Meeting in Bozeman. It didn't take long to realize



that wouldn't be possible. Remember when we had never heard of Zoom?

W A R P has done an extraordinary job of moving on, adjusting, offering new programs in the safety of our homes. Thanks to Philis Alvic and Judi Jetson we have gotten to know members from all over the world, increased our membership

and donations. We've also had a very successful - and fun - auction with the hard work of Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland, Kelsey Wiskirchen, and Maren Beck with the participation of members and non-members who would not have been able to attend the Annual Meeting.

I will not list the additional accomplishments in this challenging year; you'll read about them in the Newsletter.

I'm excited to welcome many new members to the WARP family, including several who live within walking distance of our home in Brooklyn! We're looking forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting in June - from the comfort and safety of your home.

Susan can be reached at [sweltwoman@gmail.com](mailto:sweltwoman@gmail.com)



## Covid-19 and our #kaamnotdaan Campaign

*continued from page 2*

stant communication with our customers and close monitoring of the looms is helping us set in place a more robust production system.

On the bright side, we have been able to set up the five new looms we had planned for this year. A couple of senior weavers who had given up weaving decades ago have also been motivated to re-start work and we are providing them with the loom parts and raw materials they need to begin weaving. The complex and beautiful designs that have emerged under their skilled hands constantly remind me of the importance of the work we do. The Ramzani Jangla, for example, is a beautiful floral design that is woven with four shuttles of different

colours. It is woven on a drawloom (left) which is operated by two people—the weaver and the “draw-boy” who manually lifts the warp yarns as per the design harnessed through a web of knotted threads. The last time this was woven was over 20 years ago. With each new design we bring out, our tribe of like-minded and discerning customers grows too. And, once again the future looks bright.



*The Paaga Loom or drawloom is operated by two people--the weaver and the “draw-boy” who lifts the warp threads*

*Arushi has been working in the field of Indian handlooms and handicrafts for nearly a decade. She set up LoomKatha three years ago with the mission to revive*

*those crafts that are on the verge of extinction and bring them back to life through product and skill development programs. She can be contacted at [arushi@loomkatha.in](mailto:arushi@loomkatha.in).*

### New Members

Michelle Akcar  
Grand Jct, CO

Jessica Elena Aquino  
Brooklyn, NY

Kelly Bahash  
Kelocabay  
Brooklyn, NY

Beth Benjamin  
Claremont, CA

Terry Blecher  
Santa Monica, CA

Sara Braden  
PAMBE Ghana's Global Market  
Oklahoma City, OK

Judy Cobillas  
St. Louis, MO

Mary-Anne Dalkowski  
Fergus, ON  
CANADA

Amy Davis  
Seattle, WA

Sandy De Master  
Egg Harbor, WI

Janet Dittrich  
St. Louis Weavers Guild  
Labadie, MO

Sharon Donnan  
Acadian Brown Cotton  
Los Angeles, CA

David Nungow Gabe  
NDOP HANDICRAFT  
ASSOCIATION (NDOP CRAFT)  
Bamenda, North West Region  
CAMEROON



# How Are You Faring? Updates from Around the World

*I asked to hear from groups who have been associated with WARP in the past. The feedback was overwhelming--from good news to the tough times of this past year. LT*

## Indonesia - Earthquake on Sulawesi Island

*William Ingram, Threads of Life*

On January 17, a 6.2-magnitude earthquake hit Indonesia's Sulawesi island with its epicentre near the coastal city of Mamaju where over 650 people



*One of six weaving groups in Batu Isa and Saleluke*

were injured and 15,000 were displaced. Mamuju is the transit point when visiting the 98 women Threads of Life works with in West Sulawesi, most of whom live 65 kilometres into the interior on barely passable roads. At the best of times, reaching the weaving communities from the coast takes three days by pickup truck along dirt roads, motorbike taxi along footpaths, and on foot via mountain trails. Earthquake and rain induced landslides have now made access impossible. Contact has been made via text message with the son of one weaver, and he says his family is unharmed. As soon as direct contact is made with the weavers, and as soon as a collapsed bridge on the only road south from Mamuju has been repaired, Threads of Life will be purchasing more textiles.

Though less dramatic, the impact from Covid on weavers across Indonesia is similar: inter-island travel restrictions have severely limited Threads of Life's ability to visit and buy from its partner

weavers throughout 2020, and 2021 looks little better. Cellphone contact is maintained with most communities and weavers are proving very resilient to the economic hardships. All are subsistence farmers and a good monsoon has at least meant food enough to survive. The imperative is to keep the Threads of Life organization alive until such time as fieldwork can begin again.

Support Threads of Life's work with Sulawesi weavers through their online shop, (<https://www.threadsoflife.com/online-shop/>) using coupon code SULAWESI\_APEAL to get a 20% discount on Sulawesi textiles and products. Donations are welcomed through Threads of Life's non-profit arm, the Bebali Foundation (<http://give2asia.org/ypbb>).



## Morocco: A Few Orders Cheer Moroccan Artisans

*Susan Schaefer Davis*

Reaction to Covid was quick and strict: a widespread lockdown. They still have limited outings and intercity travel, but friends can meet outside. And the vaccine has arrived.

N'kob, the main site where I work with weavers, is isolated in the Anti-Atlas



M o u n t a i n s and has no reported cases of Covid. But Lalla Aicha, who's on the cover of my book (*Women Artists of Morocco*), just got her first vaccine. In Ben Smim, the other village where I work, there have been two cases, both recovered. However it is much more widespread in the cities.

Without tourists, weaving sales are nearly dead. (Buttons too, for those who know Amina Yabis.) However, there are

*continued on page 8*

## More New Members

Barbara Goldberg  
Wilmette, IL

Uddipana Goswami  
Lahe Lahe: A House of Slow  
Crafts

Guwahati Assam  
INDIA

Constance Hall  
Marysville, OH

Erika Hollingdale  
Edinburgh Guild of Weavers,  
Spinners and Dyers  
Edinburgh SCOTLAND

Paula Holman  
Milwaukee, WI

Valarie James  
Artisans Beyond Borders  
Tucson, AZ

Denise Jenkins  
Akiko Kotani  
Gulfport, FL

Erika Lewis  
Athens Fibercraft Guild, HGA  
Athens, GA

Sue Malvern  
Reading, Berks  
UK

Rebecca Mezoff  
Rebecca Mezoff Tapestry  
Studio, LLC  
Fort Collins, CO

Laxmi Naik  
Surya's Garden  
Kaddirampura, Karnataka  
INDIA



## More New Members

Laurie Naranch  
Siena College  
Round Lake, NY

Paula Nesoff  
Hull, MA

Ann Nurre  
San Antonio, TX

Youngmi Pak  
Berkeley, CA

Christina Palafox  
San Antonio, TX

Paula Rudnick  
Scottsdale, AZ

Joan Shinnick  
Brunswick, GA

Eliza Strode  
A Thread of Hope  
Guatemalan Fair Trade  
Brookline, MA

Margaret Tayti  
Loomacy and Lace  
Prince George, BC  
CANADA

Laverne Waddington  
Santa Cruz, CA

Mary Woodley  
Long Beach, CA

Alisa Woofter  
Upavim Crafts  
Fort Collins, CO

## Morocco - Orders Cheer Artisans

*continued from page 7*

are a few bright spots. Because of my book, people have found my website and asked



about buying rugs. Since I haven't updated the site, rugs there have been sold. But since they are such excellent weavers, women can re-make the rugs, also in different sizes and even colors. That is the case for the two rugs shown. My assistant took a phone video of one of them being woven, and my client was delighted - I think I have to do that in the future!

So if you're suffering from 'pandemic passivity', take a look at the weavers and rugs on my website: [www.marrakeshexpress.org](http://www.marrakeshexpress.org) and click on Women Weavers OnLine at the bottom of the home page and go to N'kob. Maybe you'll be inspired to refresh your rug environment, and at least you'll enjoy 'visiting' with artisans and their creations.

## Guatemala - Hurricanes on Top of Covid-19

*Deborah Chandler*

After a year of shutdown, especially of the tourist industry, many artisans worldwide have had to find other ways to survive. In Central America, last November brought two whopping hurricanes back to back that further altered the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, many of whom are artisans. The storms were devastating, and now those artisans have lost not only their



*Quineles Miguel's home*

markets but in many cases their tools and materials as well. It's a rough start to what everyone hoped would be a better year. Hurricanes Eta and Iota swept across Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala, leaving agricultural ruin in their wakes. There are many organizations and just regular folks doing what they can to help. For the weavers of



*Pombaaq: miles of devastation*

Samac, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala, Heidi McKinnon set up a GoFundMe campaign - google GoFundMe Heidi McKinnon. Do a search for GoFundMe Hurricane Eta Relief and you will see many funds for all three countries. I am involved with a group of people helping in the area around Lake Izabal, lowland jungle territory that suffered major flooding. We are working there because we have contacts there and because it is an area less likely to get help from anyone else. If you are interested in making a donation, write to me: Deborah Chandler - [weavingfutures2012@gmail.com](mailto:weavingfutures2012@gmail.com).

## Oaxaca Mexico - Life in Communities Disrupted

*Porfirio Gutierrez*

Keeping my weaving and natural dye traditions alive in this time of Covid restrictions and social distancing has been a serious challenge for me and my family. Like others in our pueblo, and like so many people around the world right now, we are focused on how to survive, and how to maintain our studio and our way of life. After traveling extensively to host workshops, exhibitions, lectures, and sale events, I now have to pivot to reach

*continued on page 9*





## Oaxaca, Mexico - Life Disrupted

*continued from page 8*

people through online events and website sales. Until it becomes safer for me to travel and resume gathering in person, this is my new reality.

Over the last year I've seen studio visitors, tourism in Oaxaca, and sales in the US all disappear. I've seen firsthand how the



*Porfirio at the loom*

virus brings families to a standstill when a loved one is ill. I've tried to remain optimistic and focused on the future but it all has been a devastating blow to our family business with real long-term impact. Our culture is one of sharing, and in the pueblo that means we greet people by touching



*Porfirio's rugs for sale*

hands, embrace our elders, shop in crowded markets, and gather for large celebrations. Social distancing isn't normal for us at all. Covid restrictions threaten our traditional lifestyle and also my studio life.

I'm very concerned, but I will continue to keep my work and our cultural legacy alive with your help. As you might know, for many years I have been working between the US and Oaxaca. I have been blessed with temporary studio space to work in Ventura, at home with my wife and sons. This blessing has allowed me to continue weaving and dyeing on a smaller scale,

hoping to preserve my practice while I create an income for my family and our network of dye plant growers, wool suppliers, and my team of weavers. Having my hands busy at the loom, watching colors develop in the dye pots, I remain connected to my tradition, my artistic legacy and my Zapotec heritage. My parents have known real hardship and taught me how to survive many of life's difficulties through faith and hard work. I work for them as much as I do for my sons, to maintain the thread of life that connects us all. If you are interested in supporting my work please visit my website <https://porfiriogutierrez.square.site> to view available pieces for sale.

## Asylum Seekers Soon Able to Apply for Asylum

*Valarie Lee James*

Even without politics and a pandemic, 2020 was quite a year for Artisans Beyond Borders (ABB), our bi-national initiative in Tucson, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora that addresses trauma, restores grace and



*Mantas for sale*

agency, and provides income for asylum-seekers and their families stranded at the US-MX port of entry.

As reported in the Spring 2020 WARP newsletter, from 2019 – 2020, the Tucson Friends of Artisans Beyond Borders volunteers sold the maker's original mantas through presentations at local churches and educational conferences. But like so many other businesses confronted by Covid, we had to pivot. We had to figure out how to transition to internet-based sales only.

*continued on page 11*

## Thanks to WARP

### Donors!

Kate Banner  
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## Thanks to Panel Donors!

*These donations made with panel discussion registrations.*

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Yonat Michaelov  
Barbara Morse

## Nominating Committee Seeks Member Input

Three board positions expire this June: Philis Alvic, who has served two terms (six years) and has been our able historian, former treasurer, and the originator and organizer of this year's very successful online panel discussions will be retiring. Terms for Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland, our current and very able treasurer, and Sara Borchert, member-at-large also expire.

The board will be seeking interested members to fill these positions. Maren Beck, and Beth Davis, current and continuing board members, will co-chair the nominating committee. They

are looking for two members for the committee from the general membership.

Anyone with interest in helping on the committee or in volunteering for a board position, please contact either Maren [maren@hilltribeart.com](mailto:maren@hilltribeart.com) or Beth [bethbox@hotmail.com](mailto:bethbox@hotmail.com) We are particularly looking for people who might be able to take over the online panel organization, for which Philis has created a procedural handbook, and someone with the skill to handle the treasurer's position.



## WARP Zoom Panels

*Philis Alvic*

When the WARP Board sought other ways to serve members, a committee was constituted of Sara Borchert, Judi Jetson, and me to come up with something. The format was decided by what we liked and didn't like about Zoom presentations. We choose to have a panel with three speakers, where each would be given 10 minutes to tell of their activities. The rest of the hour would be for questions. Since we wanted this to be a member service, we chose not to charge to attend.

By November, we were ready for our first trial run with Peruvian presentations. Our first

panel so far exceeded our expectations, that we knew we had a winning format and began organizing monthly panels through May.

We were not prepared for the immediate benefits to WARP in donations and new members. It is harder to judge success for the presenters, but several have indicated sales and speaking engagements.

Rounding out this season will be more free panels on the third Saturday of each month at 1:00 EST, with registration on the WARP website. A link to all past panels can also be found on the website.



## Interested in Networking with WARP Business Members?

WARP has formed a new Business Networking group available to all members. Participants include studio fiber artists, as well as members with businesses working with artisans and/or less formal sales support relationships with artisan groups. The members had their first meeting in January, and after brief and interesting introductions, spent the rest of the meeting discussing many ideas they want to delve deeper into. These included how to market effectively using social media, online sales platforms, search engine optimization (SEO) of websites, content creation, Google ads and more.

In order to facilitate better conversation, members are forming subgroups composed of areas of interest or specialization such as wholesalers, tour operators, retailers, filmmakers, etc. They can discuss what interests

them and hopefully help each other stimulate new ideas and solutions to challenges for moving forward in their businesses. Members have indicated which subgroups are of interest, and they will start meeting in early March.

The overall group will decide and narrow down topics they want to explore and learn more about. Presentations of these topics will be scheduled on a quarterly basis. Either group members with expertise in these areas who will form a panel to discuss and share their knowledge and experience, or specialists will be invited to do presentations.

There is still room for more people! If you are interested in networking with your fellow WARP business members, contact Maren Beck at [maren@hilltribeart.com](mailto:maren@hilltribeart.com) for more information.



## Artists Beyond Borders

*continued from page 9*

Thanks to the generosity of people across the US, many of whom watch our ABB presentations on Zoom, the artisans' new Etsy shop has proven a success, earning enough in sales to support the embroiderers through the worst of 2020 and into the winter of 2021.

The other key ingredient to our success in the middle of a pandemic has been team-



*Bordadoras (Embroiderers)*

work with our Mexican non-profit partners in community health. Together, we help care for migrants, body and soul.

On-going challenges for ABB remain. In addition to the logistics of border work in general, senior volunteers in the US may soon retire. We are actively seeking funding

for young bi-lingual Cultural Arts workers to maintain vital cross-border connections while our neighbors wait on asylum into the foreseeable future. Immigration policy is evolving quickly with the new administration. What we know at this point is that asylum seekers at the Arizona-Mexico border will not be first in line (that is reserved for asylum-seekers from Texas and California), but they will still be able to apply for asylum in the not too distant future. The good news is that they will be able to lawfully continue to work with Artisans Beyond Borders in Refugee Resettlement after they are settled in the US. In championing cultural arts and artisanal craft at the US-MX border, we will continue to uphold the dignity of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in Mexico and in refugee resettlement in the US.

To contact Artisans Beyond Borders with information or resources, email Valarie Lee James at <https://artisansbeyondborders.org/contact-us>

## Kakaw Designs

*continued from page 1*

Two of our partner weaving groups suffered damages in their communities, in Chamelco and Cotzal. It has been a struggle, but we are encouraged by the ability to support our partner artisan groups in our own way with the online community that surrounds us. We are also looking forward to our in-person textile adventures this November with Covid safety in mind. No matter what the future holds for inter-

national travel and in-person activities, we are enjoying being able to connect weavers from around the world on Zoom, and we hope that the world will continue to engage and learn this way even post-pandemic.

*Mari Gray is the founder of Kakaw Designs, a small artisan made business working with 16 different artisan groups in Guatemala. [www.kakawdesigns.com](http://www.kakawdesigns.com) / [mari@kakawdesigns.com](mailto:mari@kakawdesigns.com)*

## Publisher of Books...

*continued from page 12*

foundly different in many cases. But the core values that inform their textile traditions are fundamentally the same everywhere.

I was struck by his metaphor when David Brooks (author and columnist for the **New York Times**) started "Weave: The Social Fabric Project" more than a year ago. His TED talk has been viewed by more than four and a half million people. You can read more about it at [aspeninstitute.org](http://aspeninstitute.org). The thinking behind it is powerful: that people coming together with care and open communication and authenticity can repair our world. That he

used weaving as his symbolic flag surely resonates with all of us here at Weave a Real Peace. We've seen it, we've practiced it, we've lived it in tangible ways. That's what this organization has been about from the beginning.

So while I spend much more of my time reading and writing and editing and publishing than I do weaving or spinning, I guess I see them as a whole. I'm an average weaver with better than average communication skills. So that's what I do.

## Thanks to More Panel Donors!

Mary Alice Orito  
Marti Owensby  
Alison Rainford  
Jo Randolph  
Geri Retzlaff  
Karen Riggins  
Barb Ross  
Gail Shutiak  
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## Annual Meeting Info + How Artisans Are Faring

# “Publisher of books documenting endangered textile traditions and the artisans who carry them on.”

Linda Ligon

Somebody [I’m looking at you, Linda Temple] asked me why I chose publishing as a way to focus on and share my interest in textiles. Because I’m a Virgo? A preponderance of publishers are, if you believe in such things. Because I’m an introvert? Most editors are, often to the extreme. Because, to paraphrase an old saw, “Those that can, do; those that can’t, write about it”? That sounds about right.



My interest in textiles goes back to early childhood, as I’m sure it does for many of us. As a three-year-old, picking the tufts out of the chenille bedspread, and wondering how on earth they got in there. As a 16-year-old, marveling at how a sock heel turns while knitting one for a boyfriend (I never knitted the second one). As a young housewife, hemstitching and monogramming linen napkins because my mother had. There seemed no end to the processes and ingenuity to be found and pondered upon.

And then when I saw my first floor loom—wow! That was the mother of all handmade cloth! I dove right in.

So why publishing? I could have just woven warp after warp, spun skein after skein of yarn, and it would have been pretty satisfying. But there was this other thing, this love of books, of print communication, of how shared language can take us out of ourselves and into other worlds. Reading—books, magazines, cereal box labels—had been my constant companion and magic carpet ever since I was three. I was better with words than with threads. But instead of choosing, I put the two together. First with *Interweave*, starting in 1975 (which has morphed into Long Thread Media, in which I’m a partner), then with *Thrums Books*, from 2011 to just recently. And now with [Thrumming.net](http://Thrumming.net), an occasional blog about textile books, the people they feature, the people who made them.

Thrums Books has had the strongest intersection with WARP, as both focus on indigenous weavers around the world. The travel it has entailed, and the human connections it has fostered, have been an education in how people everywhere are the same, but also how they are different. Pro-

*continued on page 11*

