

Berkshire Women for Women Worldwide *Newsletter* December 2009

From our President, Anne Harrison:

We are deep into our first (of many, I'm sure) Berkshire snow storms, with icy wind blasts and drifted snow keeping us inside and cozy. I am on the mend from my double knee replacement, and want to give a great thank-you to Judy Nardacci and Jane Canova, who chaired several meetings in my absence. I also greatly appreciated the notes of encouragement from many of you and the lovely flowers from the Board.

We had a successful autumn season: FEMINART was wonderful, as always, thanks to Jane Falcone and her committee. Several more paintings sold with our new smaller painting format, and attendees were all pleased with the art and with the opening reception. We are taking a break next year to do some thinking on how we can make this project more profitable. We also had our first movie nights, with good attendance at the Lee showing and moderate attendance in Williamstown, but a good start to a new project. Kudos to Judy Nardacci and Charlotte Zloczower for all their work on this project. A second film is in the works. Finally, Jane Falcone hosted a lovely reception for new members, with one returning and three new members attending: Zoe Dalheim, Cheryl Madden, Eve Cholmar and Doris Fleischer.

We are starting planning for International Women's Day and for the annual meeting. The committee for IWD is hard at work; this year's theme is Women in Science. We are also looking at speakers for the annual meeting, hoping to find someone who will draw new attendees and get our message out to more people. Liza Sarinsky is looking at putting together, with help from lots of us, I hope, some new fund-raisers that might increase our coffers. It has been a difficult year financially, and our contribution to UNIFEM was less than in previous years. We are still earmarking our contribution to their Anti-Violence Program. Our selection for the President's Fund this year is the Family Literacy Program.

I hope you are all enjoying the holidays, and I look forward to working with you this winter and spring, as we gear up for a busy summer.

FILM NIGHT!

Charlotte Zloczower wrote, after the Lee Library screening of "Taking Root": "I woke up this morning remembering this song from "Threepenny Opera" and the simple tune keeps playing in my mind. It's likely the stimulus for this

memory was the documentary film I saw last night at the Lee Library, 'Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai'. The film had a happy ending in many ways. The ' beautiful dreamer ' was a woman from Kenya, who came to the US as an exchange student in the 1960s and used the experience as a powerful tool to do good. There are universal lessons to be learned from her experience.

“The film was inspiring, like a pebble thrown into a pond where the ripple effect is clearly visible. The audience's response to the film was expressed after the viewing in a lively exchange between them and the film makers, Lisa Merton & Alan Dater.

“The event was sponsored by BWWW. It brought together many people from Berkshire County and beyond and I felt the film would indeed ripple outward to a larger audience.

“Wangari Maathai has already received recognition for her work by having received the Nobel Peace Prize. Her work itself, to me, is even more substantial . I see it as - through one woman's empathy and effort, a tree planting movement began . At first it required no money - only collecting seeds and growing them in fertile soil for there to be a regeneration of the rain forest in Kenya.”

Judy Nardacci adds: "We had more than 30 people at the Lee Library and about a dozen in Williamstown. Lisa spoke with both groups; the audiences were very enthusiastic and responsive, and we have some new BWWW members as a result!"

We're planning our next evening for January, with a film titled "Tillie Olsen: A Heart In Action", followed by discussion of the film and her book of stories, "Tell Me a Riddle" (available new or used from local libraries and online or local bookstores .) Watch for dates in your email and local newspapers in 2010.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2010

The Ninth Annual International Women's Day Conference will celebrate the important contributions of women in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and encourage full participation of women in these fields, which are so crucially important to our local and global society and the health of our planet. "Women in Science: Making a Difference" will be held March 6, 2010 at the Daniel Arts Center at Bard College at Simon's Rock, co-sponsored by BWWW. We will explore why and how girls and women have historically been discouraged from achieving in the STEM fields, and how pioneering women have challenged this trend in classrooms and laboratories here and abroad. How can young women be inspired to enter these fields? What kinds of support are needed to facilitate the success of female students and young

professionals in the STEM fields today? How do women scientists, engineers and mathematicians make a difference in their professions and in the world?

Invited speakers include Yvonne Spicer, head of the National Center for Technological Literacy at the Museum of Science Boston, who is working to develop a curriculum to strengthen STEM education in Massachusetts and replicate it throughout the U.S.; Demet Gral, a physician and a public health specialist who currently serves as Vice President of Programs at Pathfinder International, working to improve sexual and reproductive health programs and primary health care management in developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America; Emily Maher, assistant professor of physics at MCLA, whose research field is experimental particle physics; Donna Riley, associate professor of Engineering at Smith College, who has recently been studying the risks of mercury use as part of religious and folk traditions in Latino and Caribbean communities, and who in 2005 received a CAREER award from the National Science Foundation for implementing pedagogies of liberation, based on the work of Paulo Freire and others into engineering education; and many more!

The role and impact of women in science will be further explored in an afternoon program on Friday, March 5 aimed at local high school and college students, and in a special series of lectures and workshops on the topic Women in Science, in which prominent women from around the region will share their expertise and the lessons they have learned working in one of the STEM fields.

Tax-deductible contributions from local businesses, organizations, and individuals are invaluable to the success of our annual conferences, and are prominently acknowledged in the event program. If you would like to make such a contribution, please make your check payable to the special account managed by our fiscal sponsor, Bard College at Simon's Rock/IWD 2010, and send it c/o:Dr. Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez, Bard College at Simon's Rock, 84 Alford Road, Great Barrington MA 01230).

Local IWD conferences are co-sponsored by Berkshire Women for Women Worldwide and Bard College at Simon's Rock, with the collaboration of other local organizations such as the Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts, The Women's Times, and the Women's Interfaith Institute of the Berkshires. This year we intend to seek the collaboration of other organizations and institutions involved in enhancing STEM education.

BWWW AWARDS SECOND PRESIDENT'S FUND DONATION

This will be our second year to bestow a monetary award on a local program that serves to better the lives of women in the Berkshires. The BWWW Board has named the Family Literacy Program as its recipient of the President's Fund Award, 2009. The Family Literacy Program, located within the Adult Learning Center in Pittsfield, offers education for parents - GED, ESOL, Adult Diploma, and computer skills, while providing the necessary (and qualified) daycare for their children.

Additionally, trained staff work with the very young mothers to improve their situation through Life Skill Classes that focus on effective child/parent interactions, health and diet issues, community resources and open discussion. A caseworker will make visits to social and service agencies as needed, counsel on financial needs, and suggest ways for the young mothers to become more involved in their community. A guidance service is also available to assist the young women in planning for their short and long-term work or educational goals.

The Family Literacy Program initially received its funding from state and city grants that are no longer available; it is now funded largely by the Center for Families and Children. With this donation, we hope to contribute to the enrichment of young women's lives by linking parent with family literacy. We are proud to support this important program in the Berkshires.

You, too, can contribute by making a gift to the President's Fund, if you wish.

PRESIDENT'S FUND GIFTS

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

Send acknowledgment to:

Name _____

Address _____

Donor Name _____

Donor Address _____

Mail President's Fund form & check payable to "BWWW" to: Anne Harrison, 42B Cliffwood St., Lenox, MA 01240

Thank you!

*MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

Welcome to our new members: Anne L. Hershman, Janet Wohlberg and Timi Bates; and thanks to renewing members Ellen A. Anchin, Lenore Berck, Jane Canova, Nancy Freedman, Ruth Glazerman, Janel Halpern, Cynthia Kaplin, Joan Larned, Kitty Lawrence, Dorothy Lerner, Sharon Meyer, Jane Phelan-Falcone, Judy Nardacci, Liza Sarinsky, Adrea Seligsohn, Bonnie Sexton, Arlene Shapiro, Elaine Silberstein, and Louise Wasserberg.

And More About One of Our New Members....

Cheryl Madden is a native of Rhode Island and mother of two sons. She has a dual-major magna-cum-laude B.A. degree in English and History from the University of Rhode Island and high honors Master of Arts in Modern European History from Providence College. She and her elder son, Ben, came to Berkshires to live last December.

Last year she was given Ukraine's highest civilian honor for a woman for her work raising public awareness of the genocidal Stalinist famine in Ukraine, the Holodomor, of 1932-1933. She is a member of several academic societies. She has traveled to Ukraine, Russia, and Australia on independent research trips related to the Holodomor, and to the study of the forced repatriations conducted by Western forces around the conclusion of World War II.

*Jane Falcone, our membership chair, reminds us to renew our memberships!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

This is a renewal I am a new member

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

General \$50 Seniors \$35 Student \$10

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

I would like to attend a Welcome Coffee

I would like to serve on a committee

Please mail form and check payable to "BWWW" to: Jane Falcone, 55 Marble Street, #10, Lee, MA 01238