

Barbara Wolanin  
VP for Chapter Relations

### **Summary of Discussion at Chapters' Council Meetings February 23 and 24, 2008, Dallas, Texas**

A majority of our chapters—17 or more—out of 28-- were represented at the meeting. The effort everyone made to get to Dallas was most appreciated. All members are welcome to attend the **summer board meeting July 25 to 27**, which will be held in Washington, D.C. Mark your calendars for the next national conference to be held in **Los Angeles in February, 2009**.

With more time than has been allotted in recent years, we were able to accomplish our goals of electing women to represent the chapters from 2008 through 2011—Joann Adams from Florida, Laurie Carlock from San Diego, Marsha Heck from St. Louis, and Dale Osterle from Chicago. The fifth slot will be filled by President Marilyn Hayes, who has also appointed other Chapters' Council Representatives to other board slots. It is good to see that we have the 15 Chapters' Council directors representing chapters widely spread across the country.

Jennifer Colby helped define our priorities through strategic planning. Marilyn Hayes is concentrating on enhancing communication in all directions and clarifying responsibilities and her priorities.

Each chapter representative gave a brief highlights of the most successful chapter initiatives and issues that need to be solved. Copies of detailed reports were shared. **Please send the reports in PDF to Karin Luner to be posted on the national Web site**—this will give people in other chapters and people looking to join a good summary of what your chapter is about. (I don't know why we haven't thought of doing this before.)

Some of the chapter news that caught my attention: Brenda Oelbaum's new chapter in Michigan already has 21 members and is working on by-laws. They have started a feminist art book group and are planning a 2009 exhibition on the theme of "reversing the gaze." Northern California has a new member welcome event and contributes \$200 to a member to travel to the national conference. Boston organized a CyberArts Festival. The Chicago chapter—continuous since 1974—is very active with studio visits and exhibitions. Washington, D.C. organized a feminist art forum to accompany two major feminist art exhibitions. New Hampshire has 90 members and rotates meetings at Borders bookstores in different parts of the state. New Orleans sent the Katrina Diaries show to three chapters and announced a D Day in New Orleans in November.

The major issue facing many chapters is how to find and convince people to move into leadership positions in chapters. This problem is a perennial one for almost every chapter.

Several people highlighted the real underlying issue— that we need to better define what WCA stands for on a national and even international level. We need to move beyond the chapter focus which is often on local exhibits. We need to encourage "salons" where members can grapple with issues of what feminism means today, how it relates to biodiversity and sustainability. What is WCA doing for the community? Where do we want to be 5 years from now? How can

we bring in people from outside the art community. How can we collaborate with sister organizations? People voiced the need for a clear vision of who we are and what kind of future we want to create. We need to revive WCA as an advocacy organization that can make a difference politically. The suggestion was made of drawing on Americans for the Arts to let members know about relevant legislation to support.

Don't forget to join and participate in the **Chapter Network**. Sandra Mueller volunteered to take it over from Marilyn Hayes– but as she gets busy with the next conference, she might be glad to pass it on. The main duty is receiving e-mails and adding or deleting people to the site, monitoring and encouraging discussion. We agreed that the network can be open to anyone interested.

Please fill out and send back to me the **Chapter Questionnaire** if you did not already do so in Dallas. (Barbara Wolanin, 7807 Hamilton Spring Road, Bethesda, MD 20817). Marilyn Hayes is interested in getting an accurate count of how many chapters have non-profit status.

Please make sure that the National Administrator has your **current chapter officers** on the Web site and that the national office has a copy of your chapter bylaws.

Send Marilyn Hayes your **chapter news and ideas for articles** for upcoming **Artlines**.

Send your **chapter newsletters** in PDF to the National Administrator to be posted on the National Web site.

Remember to add chapter events to the **Feminist Art Project** list at [www.feministartproject.org](http://www.feministartproject.org).

Let your chapter members know:

They can have their **Web sites** linked to the National Web site.

To check out all of the new **member benefits**, including a new discounted subscription to the Woman's Art Journal.

There is a new **WCA blog** now at [www.nationalwca.org](http://www.nationalwca.org). Joann Adams volunteered to create a tutorial on how to blog.

How to log in to the National Web site and Members Only sections (last name, member number, and password, currently Happy35 but soon to change.). Encourage them to use the on-line directory and to participate in **MATRIX**.

About **Blaze**– the important new book edited by Karen Foster and Kathy Halamka that grew out of the Boston conference with a history of WCA by Eleanor Dickinson. Use the book as a basis for discussions in chapters and for wider discussions of critical questions. See [www.blazediscourse.com](http://www.blazediscourse.com). There is also a DVD of the Boston conference sessions available.

**“We ARE National”** – make sure members know there is no big administrative organization out

there— just Karin Luner working part time and board members who are all swamped with full time jobs and families and only meet twice a year, with the President and Treasurer carrying much of the ongoing work. National is the thread that ties the chapters together and carries the torch for the Lifetime Achievement Awards.

We are working to engage board members and members more actively. All WCA members are invited and encouraged to serve on **national committees** led by board members. If each person takes on and carries through on even one small task, the cumulative impact will be great. President Marilyn Hayes will be announcing more about committees shortly.