

2008 Philadelphia Chapter Report

Co-Presidents **Marie Elcin & Bonnie MacAllister**

Secretary **Sonia Sherrod** Treasurer **Virginia Maksymowicz**

The Philadelphia Chapter launched the exhibition "**Women Helping Women: Stitch by Stitch**" exhibit with **Rubia** (<http://www.rubiahandwork.org>), a project of Social & Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE), a registered 501(c) [3], which provides non-profit status. Rubia serves women in Afghanistan, offering education, skills training and income opportunities through the promotion of their traditional handwork. Rubia is committed to building sustainable business in a fragile environment, empowering women while respecting traditional ways, reviving and preserving traditional crafts. Members of the **Charleston, District of Columbia, Florida, Central Massachusetts, St. Louis (Missouri), Louisiana, and Oregon** are participating in this exhibition. The work will be collaboration with Afghan women as WCA members interpret the motifs and images of Afghan embroidery and together create a global tapestry.

This tapestry, "**Women Helping Women: Stitch by Stitch**" will be showcased in the Philadelphia Chapter's show "Environmental Distress" which opens May 2, 2008 and will be visible until May 31, 2008 City County Building, Wilmington, DE and there is current talk that "**Women Helping Women: Stitch by Stitch**" will travel to the Florida chapter for a show later in the year. "**Environmental Distress**" will feature work by WCA-Phila members including **Alison Altergott (Recent Past Present), Cindy Back, Molly Crowley, Kathy Dobash, Nicole Dul, Marie Elcin (Co-President), Pamela Flynn, Katrina Kiefer, Bonnie MacAllister (Co-President), Virginia Maksymowicz (Treasurer), D. McCarthy, Karin Morris, Diana Riukas, Sonia Sherrod (Secretary), Heather Sundquist, Carol Taylor-Kearney, and Michelle Wilson (Past President)**. It is our goal for this piece, "**Women Helping Women: Stitch by Stitch**" to travel to other chapters, to other venues, and to the original artists in Afghanistan. Our next show will be at the **Plastic Club** in downtown Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Chapter hosted our first workshop of 2008, "**Vegetable Papyrus and Image Transfer**" which was taught by **Michelle Wilson** in her studio. **Virginia Maksymowicz** will host "How To Survive an IRS Audit" in the coming months. We will present an open slide share and video presentation at Project Basho, an independent photography collaborative, featuring the **New Media Caucus'** videos, courtesy of **Liz Dodson**.

Our chapter was represented in the media by the *Philadelphia City Paper*, through pieces on and by **Michelle Wilson** and **Marie Elcin**. WCA-Phila (represented by Bonnie MacAllister) partnered with the **Rotunda** at the University of Pennsylvania on the Collective Imprints Mural Project which was featured in the *Philadelphia Daily News* and the *Philadelphia Weekly*. The permanent public art installation in the historic West Philadelphia building will have a dedicated plaque to commemorate our involvement.

Member **Kathy Dobash** will present a recruiting workshop at the **2008 Columbia - Montour Women's Conference** on March 29 at the **Danville Middle School** in our membership outreach to the greater **Pennsylvania and Delaware Valley** for the PAP chapter and for National membership.

Through our membership outreach, we targeted social networking websites. This strategy allowed us free access to art students in the greater area. We set up profiles on **Myspace** and **Facebook**, and we expanded our contact list by 500 within one month. On both sites, we notify our “friends” of upcoming meetings and events. We have had several new faces at every meeting since beginning this initiative and we have recorded three new memberships as a direct result. We have six new Facebook “friends” who have registered to attend our February meeting, and we are able to “message” each of our 200+ “friends” at once without using an email list serve. Each “friend” may comment on our events page and **Facebook** sends a message to each of the other friends immediately. Communication is immediate, smooth, and easy. Our chapter highly recommends this technology for reaching youth and college students.

We welcome new members **Sharon Burton, Molly Crowley, Kathy Dobash, Karin Morris, and Alison Nastasi**. We are also extremely honored to have President-Elect Marilyn Hayes as continued member of our chapter. We are thirty strong right now, and we anticipate more memberships before the year’s end.