

WIVLA VOICES



women in the visual and literary arts

WIVLA's Mission: To provide an inspiring forum for women to explore and advance their creative development, to promote their work in the marketplace, and to infuse the community with their spirit of cooperation and invention.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jeanne Haner

Happy Holiday Greetings WiVLA members and friends!

The Board of Directors has been working on strategic planning initiatives, and we'd like to report to you at the January members' meeting. We've created an annual operating budget for the organization and revised the bylaws to reflect how we do business. At the end of December, you'll be receiving an electronic copy of the board-approved bylaws, and we'll be voting on them at the January meeting. Also, we'll update you on the 2011 ECO Fund. Please join us on Tuesday, January 18th at 6:00 pm to hear about what's going on behind the scenes at WiVLA to fulfill the organization's mission and serve you better!

Now for a recap of our November activities. Our first annual "New Member Social" was held November 7 at June Russell's home. Thank you, June, for your gracious hospitality! Our WiVLA Reading at Archway Gallery on November 11 was well attended. Thanks to all who took the opportunity to listen to the work of our talented writers. Thanks to J-Coby Wayne, our November meeting announcement was included in the Mayor's Houston Citizenship Week's Activity Calendar. Ramona Brady, founder of the Texas Art Asylum, was our speaker for this meeting. Ramona is a delightful and motivating speaker who got our creative juices flowing! Thank you, Ramona.

The Nominating Committee is in the process of selecting a slate for next year's Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving, please contact committee members Cookie Wells or Connie Buchanan. Thank you for your continued support of WiVLA.

Wishing you and your family a very blessed holiday season, with hopes that we'll all take some time to enjoy the simple things in life!

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Deadline for January 2011 Newsletter: December 20th, 2010; submit to newsletter@wivla.org

New Member Social 2
November 7, 2010



WiVLA Reading at Archway Gallery
November 11, 2010



PROGRAM NOTES

Happy Holidays! There is no program in December. We appreciate your continued membership in WiVLA and wish you and your loved ones peace, joy and contentment during this special season of the year.

WiVLA will be back in swing in 2011 for our Membership Meeting, **January 18th at 6:00 pm**. Please join us for an interesting and informative evening as five of WiVLA's dynamic leaders present, discuss and interact with you about WiVLA's future and your important role as a member.

Our February program will be the "Circle of Five" meeting, a time when we come together to share our creativity in a small, supportive group. Bring something expressing your particular talent or just be an interested observer. Everyone loves a chance to "show and tell!"

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear WiVLA Members,

Today I attended PR Day hosted by the Public Relations Society of America. I did a lot of note taking, asking questions, and networking, but to my surprise I found myself talking a lot about WiVLA. In fact, the first PR professional I met this morning told me she represents a visual artist and is trying to get involved in more exhibits. The words "Women in the Literary Visual Arts" rolled off my tongue with ease, and the woman perked up immediately. She wanted to know all about WiVLA, and I was happy I could wet her appetite to the point of inviting her to a future meeting.

Later that day, I began talking to someone about being the newsletter editor for a wonderful group called WiVLA. The lady, who works in Development for M.D. Anderson, tells me with a big smile, "I used to be a member of WiVLA and my colleague Kellye Sanford here has served as WiVLA's president."

Kellye had been sitting at our table, unbeknownst to me. She's the pleasant type of person who will talk to you like an old friend and hug you at the end of a conversation. She misses WiVLA and wants to return to help in the New Year. What a joy it is to meet people who want to know more about WiVLA or who are already familiar and have nothing but good things to say about what we do!

Today's sessions were about coping in a new digital media age and choosing to hop aboard the social networking bandwagon or be left behind. Change is difficult, and I say this as we approach the end of 2010 and prepare for a new year. I know some exciting changes are on the horizon for WiVLA, and I hope we will be open to them as we face a brave new world.

Have a creative idea for the newsletter? Submit to newsletter@wivla.org.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Watson

MEET OUR NEW MEMBER

Name: Justina Page

E-mail address: justina_page@theamoshouseoffaith.org

Creative media: books and writing

She heard about WiVLA through the internet. She joined WiVLA because: I wanted to find a forum to become familiar with other women who have authored books or whom are pursuing publication in the Greater Houston Metropolitan Area.

Her work: In February of 2011, I will be publishing my first book entitled, "The Circle of Fire". This inspirational book conveys a powerful message designed

to empower and change the lives of those who are hurting and are in need of understanding on how to travel the challenging terrain of tragedy. "The Circle of Fire" is an inside view of my journey in overcoming the devastation and loss caused by a four-alarm house fire. Survivors of tragedy will be able to realize how tragedy is not a death sentence to despair, anger, and continual pain. They will discover how you they too can learn something positive from every bad experience, even when their faith has been taken through the fire

MEMBER NEWS

*This column is for members to report their news: getting published, **having a show, receiving an award** – recognizing any of their work. Please submit your news to share with other WiVLA members.*

VISUAL ART CELEBRATIONS

Kay Cox has work accepted into The Arts Alliance of Clear Lake's Winter Juried Show opening December 2, 6:30 – 8:30 pm.

LITERARY CELEBRATIONS

Donna Siegel's book On the Doorposts of All Our Houses is now available for order at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble. A recipient of the Editor's Choice Award, the book is about Siegel's immigrant family and other families who came to the States in search of the American Dream.

Joanne Cooke had her first non-fiction short story, *Heavenly Tea Party*, in the online Pulse Literary Journal. Link to the story at http://www.heartsoundspressliterary.com/Pulse_Literary_Journal/Fiction_Place/Fiction_Place.html.

HUMOR

GOOD PLACES TO WRITE AND DRAW

By Cary Reeder

The Path of Tea

2340 West Alabama, Phone: 713-252-4473

The question today is: does the mere act of drinking tea make one a calmer person?

I'm curious because as I yell at cars on the freeway or get incensed when inanimate objects don't do what I want them to, I'm reminded that I'm not a very calm nor patient person. I learned at the last WiVLA Member Tea from Path of Tea proprietress and Tea Master, Thia McKann, that my lack of serenity is probably due to the copious amounts of coffee I drink. Tea, she said, is the magic elixir for tranquility and calm. So today I am venturing off my normal route to experience how the other half lives at The Path of Tea, a peaceful place of Zen in an in town strip mall.

I'm here with another WiVLA member for a "productive meet up"; she is working on beautiful hand-made cards while I write this column. This is one of two WiVLA-inspired work groups I'm now part of. In my other group, we meet once a week at a coffee house to write together. We don't read or critique each other's work. Instead we show up, say hi, and get to work. It's the perfect combination of camaraderie and accountability, and is great for productivity. The Path of Tea is the perfect setting for such a meet up.

General Atmosphere: The Path of Tea has everything you would hope for in a tea house—massage therapy-style music in the background, paper lanterns hanging from the ceiling, colorful teapots, Chinese watercolors, a Kimono and other tea house appropriate art on the walls, and soothing trickle of a water fountain. There are about 10 or so tables and during my Thursday afternoon visit, the place was jumping. Even with a full house, being inside the Path feels far removed from the bustling street life outside. The proprietors have created a wonderful oasis in this formerly nondescript space.

Features: If you visit the Path of Tea, the odds are very high that you will run into another WiVLA member as I have every time I have visited. Today it was former WiVLA President Marian Szczepanski, who has stopped by for a pot of tea and a good read. The Path is a very WiVLA-friendly outpost where you can be right at home writing, doodling, collaging, creating, or reading. On Thursday afternoons, they offer Origami classes and today's group is having a great time. For those of you who don't know oolong from a hole in the ground, the staff is incredibly welcoming and helpful with choosing a tea to suit your taste.

Teas and Tantalizing Treats: I must admit I was a bit intimidated by the vast breadth of choices. The Path of Tea has a dizzying variety of organic teas for every taste, as well as frozen tea drinks. Sorry, no sweet tea here. At this place you will not want sweeteners coming between you and the true essence of your tea. Be forewarned however, that the kindly tea server is quite sly. During my visit, she casually stopped by our table while we were waiting for our tea to brew and mentioned that she was getting ready to pop some delicious, melt-in-your-mouth scones into the oven and should she add some for us? That's downright devious, but yes, the scones were delicious and so was my frozen Chai. The Path also has a variety of other sweet treats including tea cakes, cookies, and other yummys.

When to Go: Thankfully, no alcohol or meals are served at Path of Tea, so happy hours and noisy lunch crowds are not an issue - anytime they are open is a good time to go. While the Path is quite popular and does get busy at times, it's always tranquil enough to focus on your work.

The Verdict: The Path of Tea is a fine place to write and draw for tea drinkers. I loved the atmosphere, the soothing water fountain and massage-therapy music, the gracious staff, and all the sane people around me. It was interesting; I felt like an anthropologist studying a different culture, one similar to mine but without all of the drama. For a moment I thought, what if? Could the simple act of drinking tea change my lifetime of impatience and unease? Sadly, I will never find out. They say a person has to want to change and I don't, for coffee, not tea, is the brew for me. Still, I highly recommend The Path of Tea.

Have you found a Good Place to Write or Draw in your neighborhood? Tell us about it as a guest columnist!

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CONTESTS

J-Coby Wayne and her organizations, Energy Arts Alliance and e2 poetry initiative, have expanded operations with a new Austin regional office based in Dripping Springs. The Austin office, which joins an ongoing Houston office, is located on 5 acres with a pond, an organic vegetable garden, a 20,000 rainwater tank and 360-degree Hill Country views as far as the eye can see. An ideal artists' retreat, she invites any WiVLA member wanting some inspiring R and R time or a creative space that includes a lovely deck with drafting tables and easels and a designated guest room to come and stay anytime!

Ann Bell invites WiVLA members, friends & guests to Holiday Open House: Sat. **Dec. 11, 12 pm to 5 pm** Please come visit and perhaps indulge in some holiday shopping and handmade gifts. Small paintings, collages & cards under \$50 will be for sale. 2711 Main at Dennis.

For appointments: 281-330-3827

Joan Son's Studio Sale: Fri. Dec. 10 from 12 to 8; Sat. Dec. 11 from 10 to 6, and Sun. Dec. 12 from 12 to 12 to 6 - Please join us for a unique gathering of artists and handmade holiday possibilities including paper art, photography, origami, ceramics, hand knits, and much more. 1905 Vermont.

Join us on **Saturday, February 19, 2011**, for Literary Day. We will have two workshops: **Sarah Cortez** will give us ideas for capturing and enlivening our memories into memoir. **Sandi Stromberg** will show us how to gather poetic seeds, with writing exercises and some mechanisms to consider when writing a poem. For details, contact Corry Austin at corry@sbcglobal.net

Call for Artists: Houston Arts Month – Deadline: Dec. 6 (Online). For more information, go to

visithoustontexas.com/houston_arts_month_contest_proposals

Lucia's Garden has moved to a location 3 shops down from The Path of Tea. New address: 2360 West Alabama 713-523-6494.

Publishing opportunity for poets: With our noisy marketplace of belief, how or where can the sacred be found? Mutabilis Press is seeking thoughtful and well-crafted poetry that explores this question for an anthology to be published in **Fall 2011**. Guest editor: poet Martha Serpas, Submissions will be accepted from poets currently working in Texas and Louisiana. See www.mutabilispress.org for submission guidelines.

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WiVLA – CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

December 13: WiVLA Board Meeting, Live
Oak Friends Meeting House

January 10: WiVLA Board Meeting

January 18: WiVLA Membership Meeting

February 15: WiVLA Membership Meeting:
“Circle of Five”

WiVLA meets the **third Tuesday of every month** excluding December at The Museum of Printing History, 1324 W Clay Houston 77019



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*Happy
Holidays*