

WGB Board 11 December 2019

Board meeting commenced at 10:38 AM at Beth Guertin's house, 49 Pleasant St., Waltham, MA.

Attending: Cindy Gimbert, Joan Paul, Pat Vinter, Frann Bennett, Julia Flanders, Beth Guertin, Carol McClennen, Susan Pippin, Martha Rossman, Marnie Smith, Helen Sandoz, Sue Knowles, Diane Chaisson, Caroline Ronten, Ginny Hamilton

Carol McClennen called the meeting to order at 10:47 AM.

Cindy Gimbert summarized the minutes from the prior board meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Beth Guertin reported all looks very good at mid-year. When planning workshops, she asked that all be mindful of costs of the workshop, including mileage, and the number of students who register. Budgets are needed by the end of February for next year in order to build the budget. Beth submitted the Treasurer's Report:

As of November 10, 2019 the TD Bank savings account has \$40,487.42 . WGB earned \$16.13 in interest in October

Checking account has \$7,633.11. I moved \$5,500.00 from the checking account to savings account in October to earn interest on the money.

- The Yarn and Equipment Yard Sale that was held on Saturday, September 28, 2019 was disappointing as there were very few shoppers (due to lack of advertising and promotion). THANK YOU to Linda Snook, Carole Chapin, Lynne McKay, Diane Sinski, Mary Mandarino for all their help to set-up in a record time of 2 hours! Thank you to Ruth Archer and Sara White who came to help on Saturday morning. Thank you to Nancy Flood, Mara Taylor, Lois Brown and Mary Mandarino who packed all the yarn back up in boxes to come to October meeting.
- The gross sales for the day were \$790.45; \$500.97 to WGB and \$289.48 returned to guild members.
- The Yarn Table Sale at the October 2, 2019 Guild meeting. Thank you to Lois Brown, and Lynne McKay who loaded their cars with yarn and arrived at the church by 8:30 to help set up the sale at the guild meeting. Thank you to Ginny Hamilton and Pat Vinter who also arrived by 8:30 am to help set-up. Thank you to Julia Flanders for helping me sell during the meeting. THANK YOU to ALL of you who helped pack up the left-overs (sorry I lost track of all the members who helped me); and to Julia Flanders and Lois Brown for taking boxes of yarn in their cars. I could have not done it without all your help.! THANK YOU to all. All members attending the meeting were encouraged to take home a cone of yarn (drawing prize for all)!
- The gross sales for the day were \$613.13; \$409.13 to the guild; 204.00 to members who put things in the sale.

GRAND TOTAL for BOTH DAYS: \$1403.58; \$910.10 to WGB; \$493.48 to members.

- Both these sales would not have happened with the volunteer help of members. THANK YOU!!!!
- All the left-overs were donated to Gateway Crafts in Brookline and WCI in Waltham. Both, 501(3)(c) organizations that work with fiber/textiles and adults who have challenges. The Yarn table sales help to keep the guild in the “black”.

Annual Sale

Nancy Flood, Marnie Smith, Sara White and Caroline Ronten submitted a Fiber Arts Sale Report. The sale reported record sales. The gross sales were \$44,000, with about \$6,000 net profit for the guild expected. The numbers may come down a bit when final numbers are totaled. (A chart of the preliminary stats and statistics from 2013 to 2018 sales can be found in the report, which is included in the meeting handouts in the guild folder.)

The sale included close to 2000 items (a 21% increase from 2018). Forty-five weavers submitted items (a 28% increase). More than 500 people attended the sale.

Issues discussed included:

- a few found parking tricky (construction first day & church parking second day)
- a need for better seats for husbands, though chairs were available
- perhaps consider a seating area by the front door.

Sara White conducted a survey of 100 people during the sale asking people what they thought about the sale and whether they wanted to be added to the guild mailing list. She also asked how the respondents found out about the sale. The most frequent ways people found out were: guild contact; Weston promotion, mailing list, and through friends. Weston promotion included Weston library mailings, signs, Weston Facebook page and calendar and the Weston Town Crier. (More detailed info is available in the report).

The Weston Library/AIC has reached out to us to have us return next year, with possible dates of Nov. 12- 14.

The Sale Committee Report suggested two necessary improvements:

- More automatic checkout system with computer driven receipts and bar coding. “ This would involve the guild printing tags for members, which will increase expenses because they will likely need to be mailed out. But, currently, there is no guarantee that printed spreadsheets match those submitted electronically. “
- Better location for checkout desk. “Members standing there felt crowded as people pushed past them to get into the conference room.”

There was only one missing item this year, a potholder. The guild paid out the weaver as if it had been sold. There was less than a \$10 discrepancy between inventory and receipt lines.

Improving shift hours was discussed. Some felt the volunteer shifts need to be longer. Also more people are needed to jury during specific shifts.

Marketing for the Sale

Suggestions included:

- reach out to prior members with a mailing about the sale
- send an email blast that includes promotional information that can be forwarded to members' friends and contacts (it was noted that a guild blast used to include a pdf with the promotional postcard and a reminder to forward the postcard to all friends who might be interested in the sale)
- separate the blast for the meeting and the blast promoting the sale; shorter targeted blasts are more effective than long blasts
- we need more photos for Instagram and Facebook

It was suggested that AIC and Sales Committee should meet for a follow up discussion of the sale. There was concern about AIC taking space to sign up people for classes and AIC promotional material going into WGB sale bags. Members noted competing concerns: WGB desire to support emerging non-profit art groups' efforts and WGB's satisfaction with the building and location vs. WGB's need for space for our sale; WGB's commitment to our mailing list and members that their information will not be used for any other purposes than weaving guild business; and the expectation from the rental agreement, which stated we have use of all the space. Use of the parking lot in back and trash removal could also be discussed. It was left to the sales committee to get together with AIC in January or February to have a follow-up meeting to discuss successes, concerns, and the way forward. The consensus was a hope to continue holding the sale at AIC pending successful discussions.

The board agreed that the sale was fabulous and thank the committee and guild members for all their hard work.

Membership Report

Frann Bennett reported and submitted Susan Targove's membership report.

We have 242 active members: 13 Bulletin Only; 11 Honorary Life; 218 Regular. There were 3 new members and 1 late renewal since the November report.

The issue was raised that the membership list on the website needs to be updated in a timely manner. Multiple people responsible for updating the spreadsheet and uploading the membership list make it difficult to assure a single accurate membership list is available online to members at all times. At this time, online membership application involves two separate parts: an informational form and a billing site. Separate records are kept by separate people for membership dues payment and membership information. With the goal of achieving an accurate and updated single pdf

membership list online, Helen will construct a new form and pass it on to the membership committee to improve and review for possible implementation. Frann will talk to Susan and investigate the best way to arrive at one source for the list. Frann will report back to Carol and Carol will solicit board advice or approval as needed.

Currently, people joining the guild April 1 or after are included as members the following year. Frann suggested that the date for receiving membership the following year should be moved to March.

Frann made the following motion, which was seconded and passed.

MOTION

New members joining from March 15 onward automatically will be included in membership for the next year.

Website- Placement of Fuller “Call for Artists” on website

Helen reported on the website.

It was suggested any information about March workshops and classes should go out first to members, keeping in mind to send it 2 weeks in advance so members have time to register before the 10 day prior price increase. It was suggested the guild send a later blast to non-members advertising the classes that still have space after the member only registration window has passed.

The **Placement of the Fuller “Call for Artists” on the website** was discussed in detail. It was suggested that there be a Tab (not a banner) very visible on the home page announcing the call for artists. Also a dedicated space (a box) where important events will be announced should be a prominent permanent feature on the home page. This space could be used to promote our 100th anniversary events in a prominent way. It was suggested that there be a blast asking for member feedback on the website and/or a committee plus 3 non-board members to act as a focus group. Also there is a need to highlight sponsors with a tab and standardize information about sponsor ads with sponsor link. Carol and Helen will work on redesigning the home page.

Long Range Planning Committee

Beth Guertin reported that the long range planning committee summarized their findings into 5 points.

1. Move to a permanent location. (See below)

2. Create an online public resources list, which includes:
 - a. list of resources and equipment owned by WGB
 - b. list of privately owned shared equipment
3. Streamline Guild Structure and evaluate volunteer responsibilities
4. Authorized purchase of 1 laptop computer to be stored at associate dean's home, used for class library, and ordered on sale day. Computer is on the way.
5. Submit budgets by end of February.

The committee has come up with requirements for a new permanent location:

- Kitchen
- 4 classrooms (2 for 20 people)
- Near public transport (to encourage participation of younger weavers)
- Parking
- Lecture space for 75 to 80 people
- Library space that is lockable, climate controlled, and able to be open multiple days per month year round. (There will be a moratorium for library purchase until the move is made.)

Bulletin

Diane reported that the next bulletin will come out in March. Please send photos and information on timely events. The Chart of Items for the Annual Sale with prices and information of whether the item sold will be in the bulletin. This year the price categories will be further broken down into towels and scarves. This chart helps weavers price their items. Items were priced better this year.

Yearbook and Ad Chair

70 yearbooks were printed this year.

50 members paid for a printed copy.

Cost of printing is \$4.72; Members pay \$10 to receive a printed copy.

By spring, the board must decide whether or not to print a yearbook this year. The committee suggests the guild print at least one more year and see how many sign up for the printed version. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Ads in color appear on the sponsor page. Some sponsors pay \$55; other \$85, depending on size.

The next bulletin will highlight the 3 sponsors with give-back programs. The bulletin will print a “please support our sponsors” announcement on an ongoing basis.

Nominating Committee

Positions open are:

- Education Assistant Chair
- Library Chair
- Nominating Committee (3 positions)
- Outreach (to complete term)
- Social Media

Caroline Ronten now chairs both Public Relations and Outreach. She would like to continue on public relations and step down from outreach. Public Relations and Social Media will work with the sales committee on the marketing the sale, so we can eliminate the annual sale marketing position.

Morning Workshops, Special Workshop

Joan Paul reported on planning for next year’s workshops and provided a handout of proposed workshops. The education committee will decide whether there will be three or four workshops each month. Factors influencing this decision include:

- Is there a Part 2 of a class that only allows those who have completed Part 1 to participate, thus providing fewer options to choose from for those who haven’t taken the first part?
- Will the afternoon speaker be presenting a morning workshop?

The guild wants to have enough workshops so our members are not shut out from registering for a workshop. Sometimes four workshop presentations are difficult to find. Repeating past successful workshops is a good idea; members who were not able to take a workshop one year, either because it was full or they weren’t ready for it, may want to take it in another year. The final decision on number of workshops will rest with the committee.

Carol presented the Core Curriculum that she and Linda Snook had revised in October 2019. They thought it would be helpful to re-activate this both as an aid to weavers working on ratings, but also for others who wish to document their weaving learning.

She proposed that each guild workshop description include which parts of the core curriculum will be addressed in the workshop. This will be a help to those pursuing ratings by allowing them to pick workshops that will help them on the skills they need for the ratings. Carol will send out the core curriculum to board members with a request for feedback.

There was also a discussion of creating a study group that would meet on meeting days.

Due to religious holidays, the first meeting of 2021 will be moved to September 15.

Proposed special multi-day workshops include a fall warp ikat workshop and a spring workshop on weaving many structures on one warp. Topics for morning workshops at meetings may include: Andean Braids (two part workshop); Turned Drafts; Krokbragd; Blending Colors in Tapestry; Crackle; Textile Analysis; Shadow Weave; Deflected Double Weave; and the Guild Challenge. Morning workshops are not yet finalized.

Social Media

The guild will keep the social media position. There is a vacancy for that position in the coming year. Maris Van Vieck has stepped down due to a change in employment. Caroline is covering the social media position in the interim.

We have come a long way in creating a social media presence, but there continues to be a need for a more active social media presence with more frequent postings on the variety of sites where we maintain a presence. There was a call for more photographs and information on guild activities. There was a discussion of how curated and how supervised those sites should be and whether more active postings by more guild members (and perhaps non-members interested in guild activities) might generate more interest and visitors to the sites. The question of who should be allowed to post came up.

Outreach, Public Relations

Plimoth Plantation no longer has an active weaving program. The guild may contact Kayla regarding questions on what that means for the WGB relationship with Plimoth.

Caroline reported that there has been a big problem getting volunteers for outreach programs recently. Jayne has 5 requests for demos in the summer and fall and does not have enough volunteers to fill all requests. The question of how to get more people to volunteer for outreach was discussed.

Caroline Ronten will go forward on preparing an article for *Shuttle, Spindle and Dyepot* about the history of our guild and the 100th anniversary. She is also working on an article for *Handwoven* on how we are celebrating the 100th, focusing on the guild scarf

challenge. The goal is for this article to come out with the start of our celebrations, perhaps Spring 2022.

Education Grants

The future of the Education Grants was discussed. This issue will be revisited at the March board meeting and we will figure out whether or not the program benefits the guild and if so, what guidelines should be in place. This supersedes the information on Education Grants guidelines in the August Board Meeting Minutes.

Ideas brought up and shelved for the March meeting included: instead of education grants, the guild could do philanthropy; if grants continue, a goal could be to have the program self-funding through donations.

New Business

Carol reported that Silk City Fibers had reached out to the guild about establishing a guild account that would give a 5% discount. Beth will follow up with her contact at Silk City about this. She will find out the particulars. Will the discount be given to the guild or individual members? Could individual guild members buy directly through this account or just the guild? Would such an account undercut retail stores and local providers who depend on revenues from yarn sale? Does this represent a change in the Silk City business model? Board members voiced strong concern that if guild members could now buy their yarn directly from Silk City, it would significantly affect the bottom line of guild members who have retail accounts with Silk City and depend on said yarn sales to keep their weaving schools and stores afloat. Beth will report back.

The idea of the guild creating and selling a calendar that would highlight the work of its master weavers was discussed. No decisions were made.

Board Meeting adjourned at 2:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Gimbert, Recording Secretary