

We are proud to present profiles of individuals who have been influential in promoting WDCC, Fine Craft, and the artists who produce it.

Here is one....

Barb Chappell

Barb has been a long time, dedicated member of WDCC. We asked her to tell us about her background and her evolution as an artist, educator and business person. However, given the unassuming way she described her WDCC involvement is a single sentence in the narrative, we felt it necessary to expand upon that a bit.

Barb has held just about every leadership position in the organization, and carried them out with great dedication and personal involvement. Whether balancing the books, planning the annual meeting, organizing, (and doing much of the heavy lifting) for the Morning Glory Fine Craft Fair, she is always there with a smile. While she has now left the board, she is still a central figure on the Morning Glory committee, contributing her efforts and talents for its continued success. Now her story:



I remember making things from a very early age but I don't think I identified as a creative person. My parents were both creative and it just seemed natural for me to enjoy art as well. Fiber was always my main interest. I made things for friends in grade school and was an avid seamstress throughout high school. It was a natural progression to pursue a degree in Textile Design from UW Madison. Although I was "seduced" by metal work and also photography during my academic studies, I always came back to fiber or tried to incorporate those disciplines into fiber techniques. My graduate design show was "An Interpretation of the Photographic Image in Fiber!"

Wisconsin Designer Crafts Council

1916 - 2016



There have been a few different iterations of 'fiber as a business' for me. I had a yarn store and weaving studio directly out of college. It allowed me to create, sell yarns, teach and begin to sell my woven work in galleries and art shows. Although I enjoyed the retail environment, I preferred design and teaching and went back to school for a Masters in Textiles and Clothing. I was fortunate to have a number of professional Textile Positions in design, while raising my family. However, I think I always knew I would have my own business again and 20 years later I found myself in Milwaukee and began the current phase of my artists life. I started teaching part time at Mount

Mary University, opened my 2nd business, Fiberwood Studio and continued to market my woven textiles in galleries and shows. Diversity has been the key for maintaining the viability of my business. A balance of making and selling art, teaching and general retail operations keep things at a pretty even keel.

When I started teaching at Mount Mary in 1999, the Art Dept. Chairperson, Sr. Rosemarita Huebner, a former WDCC president and longstanding board member, submitted my name for a board position. I began as a Member at Large and through my tenure have been volunteer Co-Ordinator, Program Chair, Treasurer and President.

The relationships I have formed, challenges met and sense of community from WDCC has been a tremendous positive in my life.

Future aspirations are to expand my gallery work and focus on specific techniques.

"I'll let you know when I figure that one out!"

