



## Membership Introduction Letter

The Northwest Basket Weavers - Vi Phillips Basketry Guild is a non-profit organization that started with 16 people who were traditional basketmakers. They met in their homes on a regular basis and formalized their group into our Guild in 1982. From this group we have grown to be almost 200 members from 9 states and 3 Canadian Provinces. We took the name of Vi Phillips because she was the first Teacher and had a great fascination, curiosity, and passion for all kinds of traditional baskets. This fascination, curiosity, and passion has continued in our membership today and evolved to include contemporary baskets as well as the traditional ones.

The Guild has promoted the following goals since its beginnings:

- To promote and preserve the art of basketry
- To study, practice, share and teach basketry weaving techniques
- To identify, collect and appreciate basketry
- To gather and use natural materials

We meet at the Phinney Neighborhood Center in Seattle on the second Wednesday of the month except for July, August and December. The November meeting is a potluck and holiday gift exchange. The meeting is in Room 6 on the top floor. There is an elevator accessible from the lower level parking area. Directions to the Center are on the website:

<http://www.phinneycenter.org>

We have a social hour at 6:30 PM and program at 7:30 PM. The program portion of the meeting generally begins with introductions, announcements, and show and tell. The program topics range from the history of basketry, how to gather and prepare materials, hands on demonstrations and instructions, a talk about a specific kind of basketry, or an artist speaking about their work. Members are encouraged to suggest or present program topics. The Guild's extensive library is open during meetings for members to check out books and other educational materials.

Our members are informed and connected by our e-news list notifications; with a newsletter, published ten times a year; and with our website, [www.nwbasketweavers.org](http://www.nwbasketweavers.org).

Through our e-news list you will receive timely announcements, a link to the digital version of the newsletter, and the digital version of the annual Guild Handbook & Directory. When joining the Guild, you will receive an email asking you to click on a Web-page link to verify that you want to be on our e-news list. This process will assure that our mass mailings are not mistakenly identified as spam. The newsletter provides business and program notes, announcements of upcoming local and national basketry retreats, exhibits, workshops and classes, as well as other articles of interest. The editors welcome input from Guild members. Announcements are also found on our website. The "Members Only" link there is to view present and past newsletters and the Guild Handbook and Directory.

Mary Irvine Basket Day, regional Basket Days and the Guild Retreat are yearly events open to all members. Additionally members may organize field trips, workshops, exhibits and study groups. Field trips may be planned to gather natural materials, visit to museums, gallery shows, collections or to an artist's studio. Workshops and lectures have often featured well-known basketry artists from outside of our area. Study groups meet to pursue a common interest. We have helped with juried exhibits throughout the region.

The Guild Retreat is a multi-day opportunity for members to enroll in classes or to spend time weaving with others. Often a nationally recognized basketry artist from out of our area is the designated feature teacher. Other classes and instructors are chosen from a call put out for teachers. A highlight of the Retreat is the Gallery Show where many of our members have exhibited their work for the first time ever, along with the baskets of internationally known artists. The diversity and quality of this exhibit is indicative of the balance of traditional and contemporary basket weavers in our community as well as the artistic excellence and beauty of their work.

Not only does the Guild encourage members to exhibit, we also provide opportunities for them to teach at monthly meetings and for Basket Days. In this way the Guild has been a steppingstone for members to go on to teach and exhibit locally, nationally and internationally. The Guild supports a variety of educational opportunities for both members and the general public. Members may apply for Study Grants to attend workshops, conferences or classes. Basket Days give members and the public the opportunity to take a class for the cost of the materials.

We enjoy a special relationship with the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture and are pleased to support them by helping to purchase major pieces for their collections and to contribute to the John Putnam Endowment fund. The Burke includes our Guild members for their Members Behind the Scenes night where we can view their extensive basketry collection.

Our members have demonstrated at various events at Museums, Galleries, State Fairs and the Northwest Folklife Festival. We are able to provide basketmakers for other events.

The Northwest Basketry Weavers Guild is a member of the National Basketry Organization. Several of our members have taught at NBO conferences and serve active roles within that organization. We also enjoy reciprocal privileges with the Columbia Basin Basketry Guild in Portland.

Membership is open to anyone interested in baskets, whether or not they are weavers. If you would like more information, or would like to join, please contact the Corresponding Secretary, Northwest Basket Weavers, PO Box 75131, Seattle, WA 98175-0131. A Membership Registration Form is available under Resources on our website. [www.nwbasketweavers.org](http://www.nwbasketweavers.org)

General membership dues are \$25, or \$35 for business members. Our membership year is from January 1st to December 31<sup>st</sup>. Dues paid January 1st through September 30th pays membership for that entire calendar year. Dues paid October 1st through December 31st pays membership for those months and for the following full year.

***For current information about our programs and activities, please visit our website at [www.nwbasketweavers.org](http://www.nwbasketweavers.org)***