

LEISURE

# Arts & LIFESTYLES

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## *Women's Expo*

to be held at Middle Country Public Library  
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COVER STORY

# Eighth annual Women's Expo to be held at MCPL

## Long Island women entrepreneurs offer shopping, stories and support

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Where can you sample Long Island's diversity, meet interesting women with remarkable stories, expand your circle of contacts and resources, and jump start your holiday shopping? You can do all this and more at the eighth annual Women's Expo, to be held at the Middle Country Public Library on Oct. 2 from 11 am to 6 pm. You need not be female to attend; folks of both genders are welcome.

Presented by the Middle Country Library Foundation, and founded in partnership with the Long Island Fund for Women and Girls, the Women's Expo promotes economic independence for women by bringing together products that are created by, designed by or imported by Long Island women entrepreneurs.

This year's marketplace will include jewelry, clothing and accessories, fine art and photography, home decor, pottery and ceramics, wood and metal craft, glassware, children's items, fiber art, specialty foods, gift baskets, household accessories, paper products, cosmetics, skin care and, of course, books.

"Each year Women's Expo organizers sift through applications with the goal of producing a trade show with the greatest possible variety — both in the women exhibiting and in the items for sale," said Elizabeth Malafi, Miller Business Center librarian and one of the event's coordinators. The resulting diversity is ethnic and cultural, experienced and beginner, young and old.

There will be much to see, buy and do throughout the day, but, as in years past, the expo's best feature is the women you'll meet. Here's a small sampling.

Stella Krasinski established her Malaika Boutique to make life easier for the women of her native Bunju in Tanzania, East Africa. The traditional clothing, baskets, jewelry, sandals and home décor she imports are made by 20 women. Stella supplies the raw materials and im-

ports the finished products to sell in the United States.

"The whole purpose of doing this is to help women in Tanzania. I buy fabric and materials ... they do the work and I pay them," she said. "They feel proud of what they are doing and their ability to earn." In addition to paying for labor, Stella gives 10 percent of her profits from the sale of goods back to this African community. "I'm so proud, so glad to be in America, because I had a lot of opportunity to reach out to other people ... if I was back in Tanzania, I don't think I'd be able to help."

Krasinski came to the states for an education, met her husband and decided to stay. Seeing things lacking in her homeland, she sets goals for specific projects. In November she hopes to return to Tanzania with enough funds to provide a bus to transport children to and from school. Women's Expo gives her a chance to tell her story, "and to show people that one person can make a difference."

A sociologist working toward a doctorate, Carol Lindquist started Liquid Lace Designs five years ago after a life-altering awakening. She had undergone treatment for stage three breast cancer and became a survivor. "Following breast cancer, one of the strategies I embraced was to find what gives me joy," Joy, for Lindquist, includes creation — and textiles. She began designing knitwear and also jewelry. "Design is in me. Color is in me. Texture, fabric — I'm a fabric junkie," she said. So she returned to making wearable art, with her hands. (In a previous professional life, she designed and created historical costumes for the theater.)

A new item at this year's expo is a line of kimono scarves made from mostly recycled kimono fabric she buys directly from Japan. "It's a wonderful 'green' kind



Photo by Barbara Jordan  
 Belinda Windbush, Carol Lindquist, Pat D'Aversa, Stella Krasinski and Flo Kemp.

of thing," said Lindquist. "Lots of one-of-a-kind pieces that are being given another life." She exhibited at the Women's Expo last year and said she was so impressed with the quality and variety of the objects there. "It's a class event." In typical sociologist fashion, she also commented on "the array of customers who came through — the breadth of people." She enjoys meeting and chatting with them all. Who knows ... maybe there's a scholarly paper percolating through her experiences.

In the fine art category, you'll find Flo Kemp's distinctive etchings. Kemp is an award-winning fine artist who works in oils, but specializes in creating soft ground etchings with a painterly quality. Her talent was evident early in life. Her dad wanted to send her to art school, but she had other plans. She went to college, majored

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in Spanish and English and taught languages. When she took time off to have children, she painted around their schedules. After learning the etching process, she encountered what she describes as “a eureka moment,” and decided to make art her full-time career. Her designs are actually a form of intaglio printing in which a drawing, done on a zinc plate, is specially treated (etched) and then, using oil-based inks, is pulled through a press to create the final artwork. “It’s a labor-intensive process,” she said, “done entirely by hand. Each proof carries its own subtle differences, thereby making it a

titled, signed and numbered ‘original.’” A Women’s Expo veteran, Kemp remarked about her past experiences: “Everybody is so kind, the public is awesome — so interested and supportive — it just makes you feel welcome.”

Belinda Windbush, problem-solver, is a first-time exhibitor. Her product lines, Saturday’s Soaps and Saturday’s Natural Blends, grew out of a need to alleviate her own chronic dry skin. When existing brands did not offer the relief she sought, she took matters into her own hands — and her own kitchen. A great deal of research later, she shares her solutions with others. “My products support wellness,” she said, “[they are] handmade, all-natural and support different elements;

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whether your skin needs to be restored, moisturized, soothed. They are healthy, safe for people, safe for the planet — I like to keep it simple.”

The soaps came first. She developed them and sold them to friends and coworkers right out of her over-sized purse. Lotions followed as her customers requested more products. Until now she has marketed at home parties and small shows, as well as through her website, but she is ready to grow the business. “The people in the Miller Business Center have encouraged and inspired me,” Belinda said. They suggested she might apply to be an exhibitor in the Women’s Expo and she jumped at the chance. “I’m expecting good things,” she said, “[My products are] making a difference, and that’s the biggest thing.”

Every family has a historian/photographer who maintains their unique story. Pat D’Aversa fulfilled that role. About 20 years ago she decided to take photography to a new level, enrolling in courses to hone her craft. “I wanted to be a painter,” she said, smiling, “but I had no talent.” Photography provided a similar creative outlet, as well as stress relief from her nursing career. “More recently, I joined a camera club and found I had something. There was a great deal of satisfaction in finding my niche. I also found out how competitive I was.” That, she says, was the source of her growth as an artist. She has developed a love of microphotography. “My forte is the flowers.” She

enjoys snapping a photo and making it into something more artistic and compelling. Six years ago she changed from film to digital photography and is thrilled with the instant gratification it provides. D’Aversa is pleased to be returning to the expo this year. “It’s a unique opportunity for women to focus on their work. You meet a very ambitious bunch of women with power and energy and you feel empowered — to do what you want to do. Create a second life ... a second career.”

Lunch will be available for sale in the Expo Café between 11 am and 3 pm. A “Tea at Half-Past-Three” author chat and book signing will feature Long Island-born communication strategist Michelle Yozzo Drake, talking about her book “From the Kitchen to the Corner Office.”

The Women’s Expo will be held at the Middle Country Public Library, 101 Eastwood Boulevard, Centereach. Admission is free, but it is hoped that Expo-goers will purchase raffle tickets that they can put in contention for chances to win the prizes of their choice. All proceeds go to the library’s Miller Business Center, which offers support services to the business community as well as a spring skill-building educational workshop especially for women entrepreneurs.

For information, call the library at 585-9393 extension 296 or visit [www.womensExpoli.org](http://www.womensExpoli.org).

### On the cover:

*Photos by Barbara Jordan*  
Top row, Belinda Windbush, Pat D’Aversa; bottom row, Carol Lindquist and Stella Krasinski.