

Wisdom Passage on display

The Pella Community Center Board and the Pella Community Art Center invite you to view the installation of “Wisdom Passage” at the Community Center’s Joan Kuyper Farver Art Gallery.

“Wisdom Passage” is an inter-media sculpture created by nationally known artists Jane Gilmor and Sandra Menefee-Taylor in collaboration with oncology patients, their families and caregivers. An inter-media Arts/McKnight Fellowship provided funding for the project to Gilmor and a LIN Grant to Menefee-Taylor.

The large media sculpture takes the form of a bridge-shaped construction covered inside and out with words and images on metal, plaster, and wood.

In a series of workshops at St. Joseph’s Hospital in St. Paul, oncology patients were invited to keep journals concerning their experiences, feelings and fantasies while struggling with serious illness. Writings and drawings selected from the journals by the participants were then transferred onto metal and plaster panels by Gilmor and Menefee-Taylor. Video taped images of patients and families appear on video monitors in several window-like openings in the structure.

Viewers are invited to contribute their own comments, stories or images in books mounted outside the sculpture.

Gilmor says that one of the goals of the project was to encourage the use of imagination as a survival tool. She believes that art can help make meaning of one’s experiences, particularly when those experiences (like catastrophic illness) interrupt everyday life. Menefee-Taylor adds that she hopes the project assists participants in learning to live with illness and using their creative resources.

Both Gilmor and Menefee-Taylor have exhibited widely throughout the U.S. and have been written about in numerous media sources including *The New York Times*, *The New Art Examiner*, *The Copenhagen Daily News* and *the Chicago Tribune*. Other work by Gilmor is also on view at the Des Moines Art Center as part of their permanent collection.

The exhibit at the Joan Kuyper Farver Gallery continues through December 19. The gallery is located on the second floor of the Pella Community Center, 712 Union. Hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. or if these hours are not convenient, you may schedule a private showing by calling 628-9433.