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**THE CREATIVE CONNECTION COMES TO ST. PAUL SEPT. 15-17;
SECOND ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AND MARKET TO
PROMOTE THE BUSINESS, THE BLOGGING, AND THE CREATIVE
SIDE OF BOTH HANDMADE AND FOOD.**

OGDEN, UT (May 17, 2011) -- THE CREATIVE CONNECTION, a national conference and market celebrating creative women and entrepreneurs, will land in St. Paul at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on September 15-17.

Bringing together the creative process of handmade goods and food with the marketing savvy of business and social media, the second annual event will draw on the rich experience of over 100 industry experts, entrepreneurs, and authors.

Hands-on workshops in cooking, knitting, sewing, jewelry making, crochet, creative writing, paper crafts, photography, food styling, book publishing, painting, baking, cheese making, canning, journaling, and more will be joined with social networking and business panels that

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focus on the practical details of setting up, running, and marketing a business and leveraging its impact through blogging and other social media.

Co-founders Jo Packham of WHERE WOMEN CREATE and WHERE WOMEN COOK magazines and Nancy Soriano launched THE CREATIVE CONNECTION in 2010, an event that united and galvanized creative women and women entrepreneurs who are passionate about living a creative life. Now in its second year, the event has joined forces with BlogHer as its official media partner. BlogHer, the largest women's social media network, receives over 25 million unique views per month. "BlogHer recognizes the handmade community THE CREATIVE CONNECTION brings together. We are honored to have the largest women's social media community as our media partner," says Jo Packham, creator of WHERE WOMEN CREATE and WHERE WOMEN COOK.

"We're in the midst of a creative revolution," says Soriano, publisher of craft at F+W Media. "One that speaks to women at all levels of creativity, whether they are following their personal passion or aspiring to launch a business. This connects them to the larger community and gives them the tools to help accomplish their goals."

Many sponsors have lent their expertise and support to the event, including presenting sponsor Sterling Publishing, one of the world's leading publishers of illustrated, nonfiction, fiction, and children's books. Other sponsors include VOGUEKnitting and MaryJanesFarm, both of whom have gathered top needle art and food instructors for THE CREATIVE CONNECTION's lineup of classes. Founding sponsor Stampington & Company has been a leading source of information and inspiration for arts and crafts lovers around the world. The magazines *Where Women Cook* and *Where Women Create* are founding sponsors of the event as well.

Headlining the event's Keynote Welcome Dinner at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on Thursday evening are two accomplished women: television personality, author and entrepreneur, Cristina Ferrare, and author and founder of the internationally-known design site, [decor8](http://decor8.com), Holly Becker. These remarkable women will share their stories of turning their passions into successful media-driven businesses, and talk about their creative processes. Bestselling author of five books, Ferrare hosts a show for OWN, the Oprah Winfrey Network, called *Cristina Ferrare's*

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Big Bowl of Love. Through decor8, Becker delivers fresh design ideas meant to inspire the site's 45,000+ daily readers to live a more fulfilling, authentic, and creative life. Becker is also the author of *Decorate: 1,000 Professional Ideas for Every Room in Your Home*, and a weekly columnist for *RealSimple.com*.

Among the event's many highlights, events, and networking opportunities:

* **BlogHer Handmade Day**, Thursday Sept. 15, will help attendees turn a creative passion into a lucrative business through social media. BlogHer Handmade panels merge the tech world with the art world, offering valuable information for starting or building a business. Sessions are available for all skill levels.

* **VOGUEKnitting Day**, Friday Sept. 16, offers classes from the top experts in the field that range from beginning instruction to building a business around needlecraft. Classes include pattern making, project photography, getting published and hands-on projects.

* **MaryJanesFarm Day**, Saturday Sept. 17, boasts top food experts, chefs, bloggers, and authors to teach unique classes, share secrets, offer food demonstrations, and conduct panels. Classes include bread baking, party planning, food styling, vegan and gluten-free eating, among many others.

* **TCC Handmade**, Friday and Saturday Sept. 16-17, offers classes and panels led by top artists and designers in sewing, jewelry, mixed media, painting, styling, photography, and more. Beginners, intermediate, and advanced crafters will find what they're looking for in these hands-on workshops.

* **Event Meals**, including the Keynote Welcome Dinner and Luncheons, feature delicious menu offerings, inspiring keynote speakers presenting the founders of BlogHer: Lisa Stone, Eisa Camahort-Page, and Jory Des Jardin; personalities and entrepreneurs such as Stacy Julian, Becky Higgins, and Nora Boustead of Budra Style; as well as expert panels, and beautiful table settings.

* **The VIP Breakfast Panel of Women Entrepreneurs** consists of a dynamic panel of women who have turned their creative talents into viable businesses. Attendees will enjoy a continental breakfast

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sponsored by McDonald's and soak in the energy and ideas of this amazing panel of creative women which includes Susan Branch; Amanda Fortini, freelance writer for *The New Yorker*, Kelly Rae Roberts, sought after designer and author; and others.

* **The Pitch Slam** is a fast-paced event that lets attendees pitch literary or product ideas to a panel of professionals—Chronicle Books, Demdaco, Michael Miller Fabrics, Hallmark, Sterling Publishing, Stampington & Company, Simplicity, and others—to receive immediate feedback and expert suggestions for improving and refining ideas. This is a unique opportunity to not only pitch ideas, but to get “face time” with experts, tips on marketing, and a chance to find professional representation.

* **The 2011 Market Place**, which is **open to the public and all conference attendees**, will feature over 70 craft and handmade vendors, including: knitting, sewing, jewelry, fabric arts, paper goods, upcycled art and mixed media artists, as well as raw materials to inspire creative projects. Other fun and exciting mini-events happening in the Market Place include: pie tasting, blogger parties, book launches, craft demos, and workshops. New this year is the Market Place Kitchen, which will feature demonstrations from many food experts and cookbook authors. The unique shopping experience and all Market Place happenings are open to the public for a \$10 admission fee for one day, or \$15 for two days. The market is open from 1:30 – 9:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 16, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 17.

* **The Autograph Cocktail Party** will take place on Friday evening, in conjunction with our Friday night Market hours. Over 50 authors will be ready, pens in hand, to personalize and sign books. Barnes and Noble will be selling those selections in their Market booth. The book launch for *Where Women Cook: Celebrate* will also be underway in the Market, and many of the featured women will be available to sign copies and chat about their contributions. Also present will be creative women included in the August issue of *Where Women Create* and the September issue of *Where Women Cook*. Access to this event is included in Friday's Market entrance fee.

* **Pietopia**™ - Based on her love of community, food and design, “Eating is Art” blogger, Tricia Martin, developed her Pietopia contest.

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Entrants are asked to submit a recipe and an essay about what their life tastes like, in a pie. Three winners will be flown to THE CREATIVE CONNECTION event, and the final tasting will happen in the Market Place. Pietopia will then celebrate the winners by unveiling original artwork based on their submissions. To enter the contest, visit www.pietopiacontest.com. Entries will be accepted until June 2011.

Flexible packages are available for those who wish to attend the event, including a Weekender Pass for all three days, a BlogHer Day Pass for Thursday only, a Day Tripper Pass for either Friday or Saturday, and various à la carte selections. Registration and fee information, a complete schedule, and course and panel descriptions can be found at www.thecreativeconnectionevent.com.

Get updates on Twitter at www.twitter.com/TCCEvent or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/thecreativeconnectionevent.

The Market Place is still accepting vendor applications. Inquiries can be emailed to creativeconnectionevent@gmail.com.

Local St. Paul fiber artist Steven Be will be a VOGUEKnitting Day teacher for THE CREATIVE CONNECTION. Be studied in New York City at Parsons, and graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology. Since then, his international career has taken him to Hong Kong, Milan, Paris and Miami. He now finds himself in Rosemount, Minnesota, where he and his sister, Monika Oeltjen, opened The Yarn Garage—a full service yarn, knitting and needlework station.

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BIOS

THE CREATIVE CONNECTION KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

*** BECKY HIGGINS**

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Becky has a passion for living well and documenting life. Since 1997 she has been authoring books, creating artwork, writing articles, teaching classes, and designing products—all in the name of scrapbooking. In her personal evolution she came to find herself relating to everyone who has said, “Scrapbooking is too time-consuming, too complicated, too expensive, too much.” In 2009, [Becky Higgins.com](http://BeckyHiggins.com) was born so that she could share solution-based ideas and simple products with everyone who felt the same way, but still wanted to do something special with their pictures and memories. Becky nurtures her creative side by dabbling in various creative projects from floral design to home decor to photography. She also appreciates organization and has a knack for order. And because she can’t keep any of it to herself, Becky’s Blog has gained the reputation of being an uplifting and inspiring place on the web. She’s the girlfriend who will share her favorite finds, most-loved tips, design ideas, tried and true recipes, practical how-to’s and even videos. There’s always a common goal in everything Becky shares, which is to CULTIVATE A GOOD LIFE. Becky’s faith and family are the center of her world and more important than any creative project or exciting opportunity. Arizona is where she and her husband David are raising their three small children.

* **CRISTINA FERRARE**

As an accomplished author, television personality, entrepreneur, actress, motivational speaker, blogger, wife, mother, and grandmother, Cristina Ferrare dishes out yet one more curtain call: hosting her own show for OWN: the Oprah Winfrey Network. *Cristina Ferrare’s Big Bowl of Love* features celebrity guests along with members of Cristina’s family and friends who serve up great ideas for all kinds of real-life situations. Cristina recently joined the “Oprah family” as a regular contributor, featuring Oprah’s favorite meals, and hosting a series of web cooking classes for Oprah.com—preparing delicious meals for families on tight budgets and little time.

Cristina is a *New York Times* bestselling author of *Okay, So I Don’t Have a Headache*, *Cristina Ferrare’s Family Entertainment* and *Cristina Ferrare Style*. Her most recent book, *Realistically Ever After*, is a humorous view of finding happiness when he’s not Prince Charming, you’re not Snow White, and life is not a fairytale. The success of Cristina’s books attest to her expertise in the areas of women’s health and well being, culinary arts and stylistic design. Her books also reflect

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her great zest for life and sense of humor. Cristina has just completed her fifth book, a cookbook due out in April, 2011 entitled *A Big Bowl of Love*.

In the early 80's, Cristina co-hosted *AM Los Angeles*, which was the #1 rated morning television show during her five-year tenure. Among her many TV appearances, she has hosted her own shows: *Cristina and Friends* and a two-hour live show from Universal Studios called *Home and Family*. She has substituted as a co-host on *Good Morning America* and co-hosted numerous times with Regis Philbin on *Live with Regis and Kathie Lee*. Her primetime series for CBS, *Shame on You*, was one of the first magazine format shows that featured consumer fraud and awareness. It set the stage for other prime time magazine formats that followed. For NBC, she co-hosted *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* with Dr. Drew Pinsky. At one time, Cristina had three ABC shows on the air at the same time: *AM Los Angeles*, *The Home Show* and the primetime series *Incredible Sunday*. In feature films, she starred opposite David Niven in *The Impossible Years* and the critically acclaimed *J.W. Coop* with Oscar winner, Cliff Robertson.

In 2006, Cristina, along with partners Brian Thorson and Tim Hosier, designed a line of home accessories that sells domestically and abroad. "Ferrare With Company" products are sought after by top interior designers around the country and sold to over 60 stores, including Bergdorf Goodman and Barneys. The company has expanded its business to meet the needs of clients in France, Turkey, Istanbul, Dubai and Saudi Arabia.

Cristina is a sought-after speaker and has spoken at various conventions around the country including the 2004 "The Women's Conference" where she monitored a session about women's health and sexual well being. In 2007 she hosted, along with Chef Art Smith, a session on cooking for 300 women! She sits on the board of directors for "The Women's Conference," headed by California's First Lady Maria Shriver. Once a year, over 14,000 women attend the conference for a day of transformation and empowerment. The Women's Conference encourages women to be their own "Architect of Change" for a better life—for themselves, their families and their community.

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Cristina lives in Los Angeles with her husband, entertainment executive Tony Thomopoulos. They have a blended family of seven children and four grandchildren.

*** ELISA CAMAHORT PAGE**

As BlogHer's COO, Elisa Camahort Page leads events, marketing, public relations, and research for BlogHer, while ensuring all company operations execute according to plan. She is a frequent keynote speaker, bringing to life research data about women and online communities to organizations such as MediaBistro Circus, Fem 2.0, New Comm Forum and WOMMA Marketing Summit.

Prior to co-founding BlogHer, Elisa ran a marketing consultancy, Worker Bees, which was among the first to integrate corporate marketing strategies into the social media environment. Elisa also served as Senior Director of Product Marketing at Terayon Communication Systems.

Elisa is a founding fellow of the Society for New Communications Research and serves on the board of directors for the 42nd Street Moon Theatre in San Francisco, the programming advisory committee for SXSW Interactive and the board of advisors for the Anita Borg Institute.

*** HOLLY BECKER**

Holly Becker is the founder and editor of decor8, the internationally-known design site dedicated to delivering fresh design ideas meant to inspire its over 45,000 daily readers to live a more fulfilling, authentic and creative life. Since its launch in January 2006, decor8 has been mentioned in over 70 national and international publications, in addition to radio and television programs and Blogger ranked it #10 in 2008. Holly is an American freelance journalist, author and design consultant living in Germany while also maintaining a US office in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

In addition to decor8, she is the founder of the first online e-course about creative blogging, Blogging Your Way, which was launched in March 2009 and includes written lessons, videocasts and podcasts along with a dedicated forum for students to interact with Holly and

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her co-teachers, Leslie Shewring and Thorsten Becker along with other students. In the past two years, she has taught over 2,000 students worldwide through *Blogging Your Way* and teaches workshops and classes in-person on decorating and blogging, with her most recent being in Morocco for ACE Camps. In addition to decor8, Holly maintains her more personal blog, Haus Maus, which documents her life as an expat living abroad navigating a new culture.

Holly has worked with a number of top magazines; she was an online columnist for *Domino* and *Cookie* and a style editor for both *HGTV* magazine and their online site. Holly also reported on trends for *The Boston Globe's* Style and Arts section as a bi-weekly columnist before relocating to Germany. Holly is currently in her fourth year as a weekly columnist for *RealSimple.com*. She has been quoted in and has contributed to a variety of books, which include: Lotta Jansdotter's *Handmade Living* by Lotta Jansdotter (2010) and *The Handmade Marketplace* by Kari Chapin (2010).

Her debut book, *Decorate: 1,000 Professional Ideas for Every Room in Your Home* published by Chronicle Books, was just released in the United States and was simultaneously published by Jacqui Small Publishing in London and Murdoch Books in Australia. *Decorate* will be translated and published in Germany by Callwey Verlag in September 2011 under the title, *Lust auf Wohnen*.

*** JORY DES JARDINS**

As BlogHer's President of Strategic Alliances, Jory Des Jardins develops strategic relationships with Fortune 500 brands and leads innovative campaigns to integrate contextual marketing and advertising into communities of women interested in every topic—from food, health and family, to business, finance, and technology.

Prior to co-founding BlogHer, Jory helped high-technology start-ups Pluck and Rojo launch successful blog syndication initiatives and produced Third Age's network of bloggers. Having keynoted such events as ad:tech Chicago and the Marketing to Moms Conference, Jory has also represented BlogHer at events for the IAB, ANA, and WOMMA. She brings community insights and compelling real-world case studies directly to companies and agencies that are navigating the social media space.

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Jory serves on the advisory board of RSS company FeedBlitz, the Internet Advertising Bureau and Juno Baby.

*** LISA STONE**

As BlogHer's CEO, Lisa Stone works across the entire organization to advocate for bloggers, partners, products and events that fulfill BlogHer's vision.

Lisa is a leading expert on developing successful online communities and interactive programming for women, as well as media strategies designed to recognize and compensate individual contributors, such as the BlogHer Publishing Network and BlogHer.com. Lisa is the original author of the "BlogHer Community Guidelines," which have been upheld as an Internet gold standard in user-oriented transparency, disclosure, and authenticity.

A traditional journalist who left CNN for the Internet in 1997, Lisa became the executive producer and Editor in Chief/VP, Programming for Women.com. While there, she oversaw all original programming, integrated Hearst and Rodale magazines, grew Women.com to a Top-30 site, worked with E! Television/Online, HBO's "Sex and the City," and Bloomberg and Gallup among others. Lisa was the first Internet journalist awarded a Nieman Fellowship by Harvard University (2002), and began blogging as an extension of her 2004 political reporting for the *Los Angeles Times*.

Lisa regularly brings her analysis of new media business models to industry events. For more on Lisa, see *Fast Company's* [The 100 Most Creative People in Business 2010](#), and *Working Mother's* [Most Powerful Moms in Media](#).

*** NORA ABOUSTEIT**

Nora Abousteit is the co-founder of BurdaStyle.com, a DIY fashion community of 500,000+ members who share techniques, projects and PDF sewing patterns to print at home. Previously, Nora worked at a German publishing house, writing speeches, organizing workshops and planning events for the World Economic Forum. She is also a founding member of the DLD Conference.

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Nora has been invited to share her experience at Picnic, FOO Camp, Parsons School of Design, Stream, and the Menorca TechTalk. Her work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Wired*, *BusinessWeek*, *WWD* and *Fast Company*. Nora holds degrees in Middle East studies, political science and philosophy from the American University in Cairo.

* **STACY JULIAN**

Stacy Julian is a recognized leader in the scrapbooking industry and the visionary founder of Big Picture Classes (BPC). Launched in November 2005, BPC is the first online community offering creative e-learning with members around the world. Stacy is a passionate sought-after speaker and the author of four books including her most recent, *Photo Freedom*. Her television appearances include the Discovery Channel's *Home Matters* and the PBS series *Scrapbook Memories*. *Simple Scrapbooks Magazine* (2002-2008), where Julian was the founding editor, has been mentioned in *The Chicago Tribune* and *Woman's Day* as a leading consumer publication for the scrapbooking industry. Stacy has been a certified professional teacher with the Craft and Hobby Association since 1997 and lives with her husband Geoff, five energetic children, and a tank of somewhat neglected goldfish in Washington State.

THE CREATIVE CONNECTION EVENT CO-FOUNDERS

* **JO PACKHAM**

Jo Packham has been a leading innovator in the creative industry for more than 30 years. A successful entrepreneur with her own publishing company, Chapelle, Ltd., she currently partners with Stampington & Company to produce two magazines *WHERE WOMEN CREATE — Inspiring Work Spaces of Extraordinary Women*, and *WHERE WOMEN COOK — The Heart and Soul of Cooking*. Jo has authored more than 40 arts and crafts titles, including her newest book *Where Women Cook: Celebrate*. She also now has her own imprint with Sterling Publishing: CREATIVE CONNECTION PRESS which will work with such brands as MaryJanesFarm, Stampington, Tracy Porter, UpperCase, and others.

* **NANCY SORIANO**

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Comfort and American style define the heart and soul of Nancy Soriano, whether she's consulting with companies on their brand extensions, cooking Sunday dinner for her family, or pursuing her own creative projects. Nancy is currently the Publisher of Craft at F+W Media, fwmedia.com. During her 10 years as editor-in-chief of *Country Living* magazine, Soriano redefined "country" to embrace casual, comfortable living as the core value of American style. She brought readers a fresh, updated look as she grew the magazine into a multiplatform brand that included book publishing, live consumer events (such as the Country Living Fair), an online presence through countryliving.com, licensed products, broadcast media, and SIPs. She has always been passionate about creative women and women entrepreneurs and was the driving force behind the Country Living program of women entrepreneurs.

Soriano's understanding of comfort continues to be her filter for how America lives today. She is a lifestyle expert on *Good Morning America*, a design and home keeping expert on Martha Stewart Sirius Radio, and sought-after expert to discuss decorating, lifestyles, and the growth of women entrepreneurs.

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