

Ladies of the Lake series by Kathy Meaney

# 2014 Writing Competition Winners



## 1<sup>st</sup> place WINNER

**Bonnie Makowsky (nee Cormack)**

Lake Cowichan, BC

*Wins a 11x14 print from the "Ladies of the Lake" series of her choice and has selected "We Left Our Mark" print*

When I first saw your artwork I knew I had to have one. I sent a note to a friend and she purchased two for me at a store in Alberta, and mailed them to me in BC. We spent many years at different lakes around northern Alberta so could relate too many of them, but it was the picture "Whoo Hoo" that caught my attention.

Being from a large extended family we frequently had family reunions on the Shuswap Lake at my cousin's cabin. At first it was my Dad, his brothers and sisters, children and grandchildren. Slowly and sadly all the elder family members were no longer with us but we continued the reunions with the remaining relatives. The last one we held there was 1999 and at that time only my Mom, one Uncle and two Aunts were with us. As we stayed up late one night, the teenagers and young adults dared us to go in the lake swimming at night. I will never forget my Mom, almost 80, trudging down to the lake joining myself, my sisters and girl cousins. There was no way she was going to miss this dare and show her grandkids she could do this. Once in the lake, yep, we did it.....we all took off our bathing suits and flung around in the air. Imagine everyone's surprise on shore trying their hardest with flashlights and binoculars to see the show!! Thank goodness it was dark out!

So when I saw that picture last spring, and we were going to host the reunion here, I knew I had to purchase that art piece. Most of us who participated in that fun night were here this summer and amazed by the art and how it truly resembled our family. What fond memories we have.

Having turned 60 this fall I was lucky enough to have my friend, who sent me the pictures, and my sisters here to celebrate. I received a trivet and beautiful card from your collection. It was then my youngest sister recognized your name and said "That is Kathy Pasemco from Redwater!" What!! Are you kidding me? Yes it sure was. Four children in our family and four children in Kathy's family all went to the same small school and all know each other. Right then and there I went on line and quickly became friends on Facebook. What are the chances we actually know you?

Sadly my mom passed away before she could see your beautiful prints. Every time I walk by them I think of her wearing her red hat, (as that was her favourite color), swimming in the lake that night with us and drinking a wine on the dock. Thank you Kathy you truly have a special gift.

We are fortunate now to live on a lake and plan to spend many days with my family and our grandkids, enjoying many Ladies of the Lake moments.

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> place WINNER

Susan Martin of Moncton NB

*Wins an 11oz Coffee mug from the "Ladies of the Lake" series. "Sharing 'N Caring" as image shown here.*

When does our story begin....well this one starts June 2006.

A dear friend was diagnosed with Cancer.

Over the next year she fought....for life. We were blessed to have her teach us about true courage...hope....and love.

She was a warrior...she stood tall in the face of the disease and we stood with her. As her condition worsened she never bent down....ever. She refused all pain medication until the last breaths of life were leaving her....she did that so she could truly be present in every moment.... a message we hear repeatedly but we don't really understand.

Prior to illness she drove herself to be successful....to be the best of the best at whatever she did.....she never really felt that she was enough just the way she was. She questioned her marriage...her husband was not a businessman but a simple man.

Watching her over the last year of her life there is one thing I know....she was enough. That simple man....well he was with her everyday and every night.

We decided as a group of friends and go away and celebrate our lives while she still shared them with us. It was one of the most special nights of my life....we danced...laughed....and cried.

She passed away on February 14 2007.... a day of love.

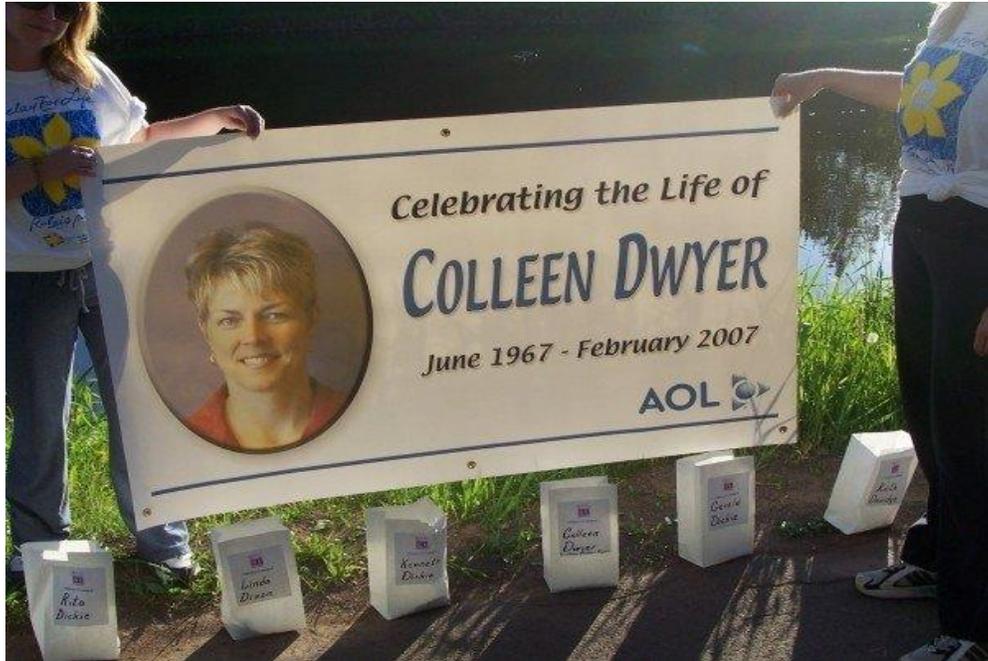
We remember her always and every year we have a "weekend" together. That weekend we remind ourselves that every second counts. That weekend a group of sisters celebrate another year and start planning for the next.

It was in Mahone Bay while away with the girls that I found "Ladies on the Lake"..... a group of 5 women by the water....celebrating exactly who they are...the first one I bought was 'Hickory Daiquiri Dock'

Your pictures to me celebrate what some may view as imperfections....but to a trained eye are the best pieces of all of us.

There is the gift she left for me.....a message. I AM ENOUGH JUST THE WAY I AM!

My promise is that I will share this message at all opportunities and make others come together to feel good about what today will bring....and not hoping for more tomorrow....just more of the same.



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## 3rd place WINNER

Carol Schutten of Smithville, ON

*Wins an 11oz Coffee mug from the "Ladies of the Lake" series. "TanLines" as image shown here.*

I came across your painting (in magnet form) while camping at McGregor Provincial Park in Port Elgin Ontario. I first saw the one with the four ladies drinking wine on the dock and it reminded me of my dear group of girlfriends.... Rarely an occasion where we don't share a bottle or two or three of wine when we are together.

We are four woman who have known each other for a very long time but became bosom buddies in the last twenty + years. We don't all live in the same town, so in order to see each other we must plan lunches, dinners. Sometimes a golf game is thrown in, and at least once a year we try to get away with just the four of us for a night or two getaway, leaving our husbands and families to fend for themselves. We look so forward to our little getaways... So refreshing for our minds and souls.



Then I saw the magnet with the "tan lines". My eyes about popped out of my head! My friends and I have a photo of the exact same pose while on a trip south about 10 years ago. When I showed my husband the magnet he said "Is this a painting of you girls?" I wanted to purchase one for each of the girls, but was disappointed to find they out had one left. Often us girls will get a small gift for each other when we go on our outings and this would have been the perfect one... Always random, always wrapped and always a "one, two, three - unwrap" because each gift for each person is the same. So, this is why I need to order 3 more of the "tan lines" magnet. It's always so heartwarming when you find something that reminds you of the time you spend with friends...

A laugh, a smile and sometimes tears...each one making us closer bosom buddies.

Thanks so much for making my day.