

Random Notes

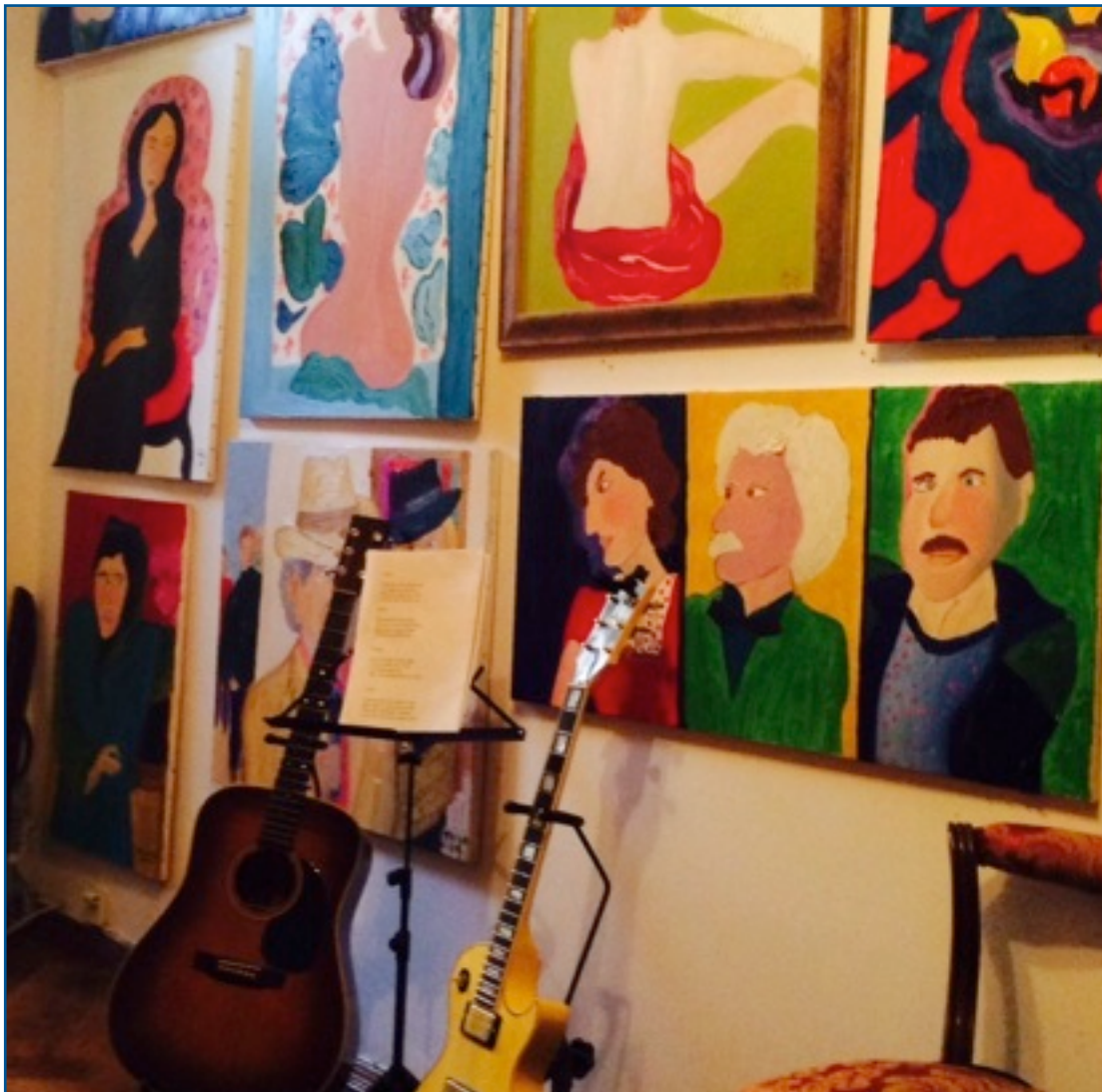


From the desk of Michael Willard, chairman of Willard International. Random Notes are written for a few special friends of Willard (the agency and the guy).

August, 2014

Lost Love Found

Two years ago, on a sunny Sunday afternoon and after painting as many as 50 canvasses a year for 18 years, I gave my oils and paint brushes away to concentrate on writing four novels.



For the moment, the big idea for a fifth novel has eluded me.

However, as I write these notes from my in-laws in Zhovti Vody, Ukraine, the smell of linseed oil from my mother-in-law's recent paintings is intoxicating. I miss the challenge of a blank canvas.

Having never painted previously, Svetlana took up the craft about the time I abandoned my brushes, many of which she inherited. Her works are excellent and getting better.

As I inspired her to take up art, glancing over her landscape paintings now is like a siren call back to that lost love.

But in tough times for all, one needs a good reason to spend at least a day of the week on something that gives so much enjoyment. Yep, a profit motive for sure, but something *more important*.

Over the years, I have not concentrated on selling paintings, except for a couple dozen or so during three, one-man exhibitions. A collector once bought one for \$2,000 (Lady with Lemons), but many I gave away to friends and Willard clients.

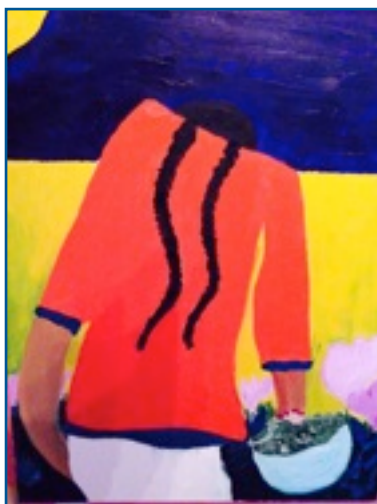
All of the fees generated in my first exhibition went to purchase equipment for homes for the elderly. With the war in the east, there is another worthwhile and immediate cause.

Generally my *paintings* fall into the category of selling for \$750 to \$1,500. So, for a \$750 work, \$150 would go to the war effort. On a \$1,500 painting, \$500 would go for our troops. This includes shipping.

The purchaser would receive official documentation as to the direction of that portion of the money for the Ukrainian war effort.

Below are three of my favorite works, and their particulars. However, most of my paintings can be found at [The Willard Reader](http://www.michaelwillard.org) website under paintings (www.michaelwillard.org).

Please feel free to inquire about the details.



China Woman

31/39

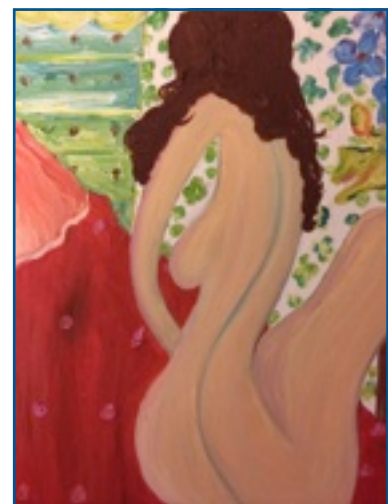
\$1,200



Call of the Sea

28,5/36

\$750



Girl on a Bed

28,5/36

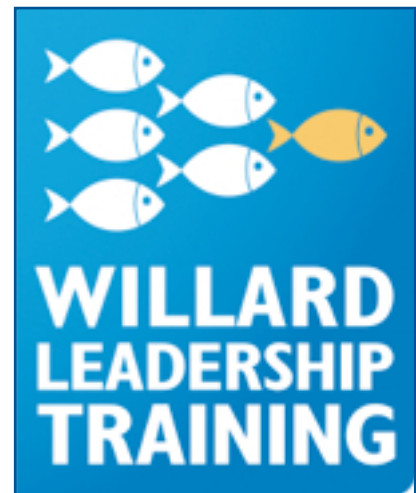
\$1,500

[The Willard Reader](http://www.michaelwillard.org)

Some of us blossom rather late.

I was *29-years-old* before I had my first major speaking opportunity, and even then I was only the person introducing the speaker. The main attraction was Helen Thomas, the famous White House reporter for UPI.

At the time, I was State Manager of UPI's Kentucky operation, one of the youngest people in the wire service to lead a state effort on behalf of what was, at the time, a venerable news gathering organization.



Helen had been chosen as the keynote speaker at the University of Kentucky's chapter meeting of the national journalistic group Sigma Delta Chi (SDX). Since I was manager of UPI, it fell on me to introduce her.

I was not ready for the assignment. They say that the only fear worse than *public speaking* is the fear of death. It isn't. Death is rather final, and the fear of speaking a momentary issue to be overcome.

Throughout the afternoon I practice my 10 or so lines of introduction. I became more nervous by the hour. Once at the university, I found that the event was expanded to a larger auditorium to accommodate demand.

At the reception prior to Helen's speech, I was offered Kentucky bourbon. I felt one drink would calm me down. It didn't. Surely a second or third would do the trick. They didn't.

When the time came, my heart felt like an anvil with a hammer pounding away. I approached the microphone and grabbed it as securely as one would a rattlesnake. My tie seemed to tighten around my neck.

I thought the microphone was off. It wasn't. "How in the hell do you turn this damn thing on," I mutter. My words echoed throughout the auditorium. There was laughter.

When all became quiet, I opened with a squeaky "on behalf of Sigma.. .." In my nervousness, I had forgotten the name of the group.

Finally, I blurted, "Oh hell, on behalf of SDX." Somehow, somehow, I muddled through the remaining lines, and Helen went on to give a *great speech*, full of interesting and colorful stories from her life.

Even in my embarrassment, I was amazed at the way she held the crowd. I swore after that one incident that I would not only be able to speak before an audience, but that I would be a good story teller.

It took a while.

Today, CEO Olga Willard and I lead [training courses](#) on public speaking. We are currently writing a book on the topic, “Be the Best Speaker in the Room”, out early next year.

Being a good communicator, is one of the best guarantees of *career advancement*. It is a must for senior executives. We can help make you the best speaker in the room. Just give me a shout at my email below.

Moon Pie, Killing Friends, Thief and Urainia

I mentioned earlier I went on a writing spree and finished four books in less than two years. If the books were lousy, then I wasted my time. They would be worth just so many pieces of confetti tossed in the air.

But I am trying to challenge an era when people simply don't read as much as they once did. These are good yarns, starting with “Killing Friends” which gets four and a half stars on Amazon out of five.

I followed “Killing Friends” with “Urainia: A Fable” and currently out is “A Thief Wears a Burning Hat”, about Kyiv in the early to mid-90s.

My latest is “*The Legacy of Moon Pie Jefferson*”, a political novel set in Washington, D.C. and my home state of West Virginia. I think you will like it. It is currently being edited by my colleague, Scott Lewis.

I have a book tour for it coming up in January in the United States.

All my books, including the autobiographical “Optimistic Alien”, can be found on *Amazon* and in an electronic form on Kindle books.



Willard Round Table July

The *Willard Round Table* for July was again held at the Sofiyskiy Fitness Center, but this time on its outdoor terrace. The main topic of conversation. You guessed it: The war in the East.



Brian Mefford, business and political consultant; Marek Wojtyna, General Director, Danone Ukraine; Irina Marushko, Partner at Lavrynovych & Partners Law firm; Jock Mendoza-Wilson, Director of International and Investor Relations, SCM; George Logush, President, Kyiv School of Economics; Roman Khrushch, Corporate Affairs Director, Philip Morris; Ambassador Cliff Bond, assistant coordinator of the U.S.Embassy; Dennis Bazilevych, Government Affairs, Corum Group (SCM); Iryna Ryabchenko, family owner of Sofiyskiy Fitness Center; Armen Khachatryan, Senior Partner, Asters Law firm; Viktor Liakh, President, East Europe Foundation.

Michael Willard
Chairman, Willard

Handwritten signature of Michael Willard in blue ink.

Facebook: Michael Willard, Kyiv, Ukraine
Twitter: @michaelwillard
www.twg.com.ua