

**By KRISTEN WALSH**  
For The Patriot Ledger

**W**hen Alice Means and Joan Paley ran into each other at a reunion for the Chelmsford High School Class of 1957, they were so happy to see each another that they ignored everyone else in the room.

"We fell into the same friendship that we had more than 40 years before," Means said.

Five years later, the two women have joined forces to put on an art show at the Art Complex Museum in Duxbury. The show displays their artwork, which is similar aesthetically but different in form.

The show is part of the museum's "Complex Conversations" series, where the work of two artists is showcased side by side. Past exhibits have included mother and son and husband and wife, but never best friends whose friendship survived the separation of more than 40 years.

Paley, who lives with her husband, Norman, in

Schaus, worked as an art director for a publishing company for many years. She began illustrating children's books in the mid-1990s when she was given a chance to display her own artwork by a fellow art director.

"I've always wanted to do that, but I never thought it would be a reality," Paley said of her book, "What's That Sound Woolly Bear?" which became the first of the nine books she has illustrated.

Around the same time, Means, who divides her time between Bolton, Conn., and Ilanes City, Fla., took a quilt class, and was soon addicted to the craft. She has made more than 200 quilts, and began showing them and

teaching classes in New England and Florida.

"I'm absolutely hooked. I'll be doing this hobby forever," Means said.

Shortly after they reconnected, Paley gave Means copies of her books. In return, Paley created a quilt based on one of the images in the books. It was the first quilt Paley has given anyone outside her family.

"I asked her what her favorite book was, and she said 'Little White Duck.'" Means said. "I looked at a page from that

PHOTO: JEFF LUDWIG FOR THE PATRIOT LEDGER

vegetables. Specifically bananas and cashews and broccoli. I'm not sure why those three items, maybe it's because I know they were in the home, just waiting for me to sink my teeth into.

Amazingly, my energy level stayed high enough to take a rigorous yoga class and chase all day after two toddlers. It got me thinking about how little a body really needs to survive.

After seven days without eating, I felt good and I felt strong. What I didn't feel was the urge to reach into a box of something concocted in a far-away factory.

And today, more than a year later, I still don't. Fasting cured my food abuse.

—KERRI MCCONNELL

PHOTO: JEFF LUDWIG FOR THE PATRIOT LEDGER



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## If you go...

■ "Complex Conversations: Featuring the Work of Joan Paley and Alice Means" is at the Art Complex Museum in Duxbury, 189 Alden St., through Aug. 17.

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## WINDOW DRESSING ■ By VALERIE A. RUSSO/For The Patriot Ledger



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Come across any products for women that we should know about? Contact Valerie A. Russo by e-mail: [varusso@earthlink.net](mailto:varusso@earthlink.net). Please put "Window Dressing" in the subject line.