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# A NEW DEFINITION OF BEAUTY

# Expanding the definition of • B E A U T Y •

BY GRACE HOUSHOLDER  
AND LINDA LIPP

Beverley Danusis is among the fortunate few who have discovered their "goddess" within.

To help others with this search Danusis has created a new line of dolls and co-authored "Sophia and the Seven Goddesses" which came out this summer.

SophiaDolls, 10 years in the making, help young girls and women build self-esteem and tap into their innate gifts of wisdom.

The dolls, in varying shapes, sizes and costumes, are named after seven Greek goddesses and the personality archetypes they represent. Unlike Barbie or the Bratz dolls, the SophiaDolls are realistically proportioned to represent real women's body shapes, ranging from a size 6 to a size 16.

"The message of the dolls and the book is that whatever hand nature has dealt you, you are perfect as you are," Danusis says.

SophiaDolls is a division of Nea Matia — Greek for "new eyes" or "new sight." Danusis understands the power of the idealized images of beauty that women see around them and feel they also must achieve because she spent 20 years in the cosmetics business in Los Angeles, rising "from sales girl to

running the company."

After a friend committed suicide because "she couldn't be the perfect woman," and her own daughter had body issues and could not get thin enough to please the fashion industry, Danusis began to re-evaluate her life and her priorities.

Danusis, then a single parent, took two years off. Eventually, she ended up in Monterey, Calif., where she led expensive

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**THE SOPHIA DOLLS** are modeled after real body types and are made to give teen girls inspiration and courage to be comfortable with who they are.

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**ILENE SATAL, LEFT, AND BEVERLEY DANUSIS** hold the original painting and recently published book at the Sophia Dolls office in Fort Wayne.

PHOTOS BY KARLY TEARNEY

## FAST FACTS:

**WEB SITE:**  
sophiadolls.com  
(featuring an online test to help you find your "goddess style")

**BOOK:** "Sophia and the Seven Goddesses," 179 pages, color illustrations, \$18.95

**GODDESSES:** Athena, leadership; Demeter, generosity; Persephone, intuition; Artemis, independence; Aphrodite, creativity; Hestia, centeredness; Hera, friendship.

## MISSION STATEMENT:

To educate, inspire and empower all women, especially girls and their mothers, by providing fun yet educational products and experiences that combine playing and learning, thus facilitating the development of skills that support an easier transition into teen years, ultimately fostering a healthier and happier adult.

**ADDRESS:** Nea Matia Inc., 825 Barr St., Ste. 300, Fort Wayne, 46802

**PHONE:** (260) 423-DOLL or (800) 678-3698

**MORE:** For book signing and workshop information please call (260) 423-3655 (DOLL).

## SOPHIA DOLLS

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empowerment workshops for corporate women. But even those very successful women suffered from deep self-doubts based on their inability to live up to unrealistic body and beauty images.

As she pondered how to address these self-defeating attitudes, which women begin forming at a very young age, Danusis had an epiphany. She saw seven dolls, in seven different shapes and seven different sizes.

She decided to name the dolls after Greek goddesses — in part, a tribute to the Greek heritage of her husband. Each goddess would represent a different personality archetype, as theorized by her inspiration, author and psychiatrist Jean Bolan.

The dolls, which sell for \$99 apiece, are designed for “tweens,” girls aged 8 through 12 and women. Each comes with a booklet telling the story of how that goddess discovered her talents and developed her powers. Parent guides and workbooks encourage discussions about self-esteem and other issues between parent and child.

Currently the dolls are manufactured in China, but the goal is to find a way to manufacture them in Fort Wayne.

Danusis says she and her co-author and friend Ilene Satala have made empowerment and spirituality a lifetime study.

“I did nine years of research before bringing the dolls to the market (or meeting Ilene) and many of my ideas and concepts came out of those nine long years of waiting and wanting to bring out the dolls and book,” Danusis says. “I met Ilene 2 1/2 years ago at a meeting and purchased one of her amazing goddess paintings. This meeting



KARLY TEARNEY

**FAITH RUNGE, LEFT, AND KAITLIN BAILER** pose with a Sophia Doll and “Sophia and the Seven Goddesses” book in the Fort Wayne office. The girls were used as models for the paintings in the book. “Sophia and the Seven Goddesses: A Journey of Self-Acceptance” by Ilene Satala and Beverley Danusis was conceptualized following the production of Sophia Dolls.

started a wonderful and exciting relationship and friendship. Ilene took my concepts and ideas along with hers and spun this amazing story.”

Satala also did the vibrant, powerful illustrations.

“I was chronically ill as a child and because of being alone and indoors. I spent my time creating art and then developing stories that went with my original paintings,” says Satala, a Fort Wayne resident. “I started doing this when I was 6 and have never really stopped.”

Satala says when Danusis approached her with the book idea it was a dream come true.

“Working with Beverley and being part of the message of self-acceptance for young girls and

women everywhere is a true gift that fills me with joy and delight — I love this book!” she says.

Danusis, working with a professional editor, edited “Sophia and the Seven Goddesses.” It was printed in the U.S.

The goal of the book and dolls is to instill in girls and women the idea that they come in all sizes, shapes and colors and they are enough just the way they are — despite what the media, fashion, cosmetic and toy industries are trying to promote.

“The concept is powerfully simple,” Danusis says. “Everything you need is within. Look inside to connect to your inner beauty and wisdom, to discover the real you, not whom you feel you SHOULD be.”