

Milton Artists Guild

March 19, 2018

Art Center

6 – 8 pm

Members attending: Gisela Alpert, Carolyn Beaulieu, Don Bennett, Claudette Eaton, Nicole Gaulette, Cathy LaClair, Christina Lesperance, Lorraine Manley, Ray McClure, Linda Moran, Lori Niederer, Christian Poupart, Michael Purcell, Ethan Rogati, Linda Stech, Claudia Stoeffler, Judy Taylor, Mark Weymouth, Trine Wilson

Gallery - Gisela reported the first quarter art center sales, not including workshops. In January, total sales were over \$2377, in February, \$3568, and in March, sales totaled over \$5242. Given those numbers, we can probably predict art sales next winter will be equally good with a likely minimum of \$2400 a month.

Future Growth - The Vermont Community Foundation has awarded a Capacity Building grant of \$2500 (the maximum) to the guild for Strategic Planning. A special recognition goes to Sharon Radtke who wrote the grant application.

The first Strategic Planning meeting was held in January. A facilitator led the meeting, attended by the officers and directors, Mike Wasco, an attorney from Paul Frank and Collins, and Sharon Radtke, as the membership advisor and representative. Both short and long term goals (five year) were defined. The plan can be tweaked as we move forward.

The guild has changed a great deal between last year to the present due to the increase in membership and moving into our own space. To better describe the current function of the guild; Mike Wasco is reviewing and rewriting the bylaws to better reflect our nonprofit status. They will be presented prior to the annual meeting for review and discussion.

Short term goals 2018-2020:

- Hiring staff to man the gallery: It's been difficult to keep the gallery staffed. It's common in large organizations; people are too busy to help. We will hire three employees. This is an opportunity for members and non members to submit their resumes. We will choose the best candidates for the positions without favoritism. There will be two people working two days each, and one person who works one day, and as a floater. The employees would be able to switch days among themselves. The shifts are eight hour days, from 10:30-6:30, which allows for a half hour before and after the regularly open gallery times. This would allow for prep and take down, light cleaning which includes dusting and/or vacuuming, cleaning bathroom and kitchen. As a sales representative, the candidate must be friendly, presentable, and agile. Some artwork must be reached with a step stool. The pay is \$13 per hour. When the applications come in, Cathy LaClair, Linda Stech and Gisela Alpert will interview the candidates. The President will manage the new employees on a day to day basis.
The commission rate would move to a flat 40%, but 25% for members who volunteer to join a committee and serve at least four hours a month. Descriptions of the many volunteer opportunities available will be sent via email once the employee status is set up. One good example is that we need help on the workshop committee as hosts for the upcoming workshops.

- Within the next months, an Executive Director will be hired. We are looking for an experienced candidate to grow the guild and to be responsible for major fundraising at a much higher level, where the donations/grants to the guild may be in the five to six figure range.
- We will develop a stellar marketing plan to boost sales and workshop attendance.

Long term goals: 2019-2022

- The workshops become fully populated.
- Become financially self-sustaining. After March 2019, the guild will pay 'rent' for the gallery which includes taxes, insurance, and CAM (common area maintenance). It's currently \$1600 each month but may increase next year.

The board feels that these are reasonable and achievable goals and will be revisited yearly or as needed. It is the duty of the board to make sure that the guild is financially sound.

There was discussion regarding the new positions at the guild, and of volunteering to earn the lower commission rate. Any members who wish to be considered for the positions described in Gisela's April 18th email, can send in their resumes. A separate email will be sent to the members detailing the volunteering opportunities.

MAGnificent Milestones – We will celebrate the anniversary of our first year in the gallery and the 30th year as a guild on Saturday May 5th, from 1 – 3 pm, with refreshments, live music, and samples of local Vermont made products. Sharon sent an email with volunteer and donation requests.

Milton High School scholarship – Linda Stech reported that there were no applicants yet. In the case that the scholarship isn't awarded this year, the \$300 will roll over into next year's fund. This scholarship is awarded to a graduating student pursuing art in their collegiate education.

Milton Teen Outreach – Linda Moran and Barbara Pafume haven't had any success yet in meeting with students. Linda expressed frustration in dealing with school representatives. She said that she and Barbara would like to talk with the kids directly, even for a 5 minute time in the classroom.

Cathy mentioned that there is a Rotary Club in the school and they are always looking for community service work; maybe this connection will give us some traction in working with high school students.

Mark Weymouth suggested that we provide an opportunity for the high school art students to do an art show at the gallery to bring more people and to highlight the opportunities the guild offers.

Gisela mentioned that she had the opportunity to meet three people who have great connections, the head of the VT Department of Commerce, the head of Peoples Bank (in three states), and a VT tourism representative. They would work with us to facilitate a working relationship between the MAG and possibly the school system.

Community family project - Gisela reported that the Selectboard approved the plan to paint the dugouts at Bombardier Park. Jon Young has designed the work to be completed in a paint-by-numbers fashion. The children who are 8 y/o and older can help with the dugout painting. The younger children, ages 3 to 8, will paint on Masonite panels, which will be displayed throughout town. Vicki Patterson, from the Community Center, mentioned to Gisela that even babies have created abstract art. We will need at least 8 volunteers to help out. The event is scheduled for Saturday, June 23, with June 30 as a rain date. **(Please note this is a CHANGE IN DATES, at the time of the meeting the dates were June 16 and 23 respectively. It has since been changed due to MHS graduation.)** We may also put up a sheet

to poll attendees as to what they would like for workshops. Ethan mentioned how much his daughter enjoyed the Sunday Social family workshops and would like to see additional opportunities offered.

On a side note, the MAG will do 'Come as You Art in the Park' again this year; the date to be announced, but likely in September to coordinate with the town Touch a Truck event. We are hoping that more artists sign up to demonstrate their craft this year – you can't beat free advertising. More than 800 people attended last September.

The **new postcards** featuring Ellen Young's painting of the gallery were shown. It was suggested that we make use of them to announce upcoming events and promotions. By using inexpensive stickers, they can be updated as needed. We could even use them to measure their effectiveness, perhaps as bringing it back is a free ticket to an ice cream social or some other return event.

Open Studio Weekend - The MAG is a member of the Vermont Crafts Council and will be participating in the spring Open Studio Weekend on May 26 & 27th. Members are welcome to demonstrate their art in the gallery, and several members expressed interest in participating. Most art is sold when a buyer develops a rapport with the artist. Please email Gisela to sign up.

MAG Meetups – Cathy LaClair had offered to host a monthly session for members to socialize, share, and work on their art on the fourth Wednesdays, with a morning and evening session. To date, the participation has been low. This next meeting is on Wednesday April 25th. The morning session is from 10 to noon, and the evening session is from 6 to 8. Please feel free to join in. For more information or questions, please email Cathy at cathy@cathylaclairjewelry.com.

Photographers Group – also on the fourth Wednesdays, all who are interested in the photographic arts are welcome to come this Wednesday, April 25th, from 6 - 8. David Lesperance will do a presentation on using the Paint.net software. For more information, please email Dave at davidlesperance5@gmail.com.

Senior Tea – This month we will be hosting visitors from the Converse Home, in Burlington. We offer real linen, fine china, and pastries to the participants, as well as an art demonstration. Donations of baked goods, greeting cards for the seniors, and supplies such as linens and tea cups are most welcome. Please email Trine, oscarmom2458@gmail.com, if you can help out. Linda Moran said that in December we can look forward to a 'high tea' for the members.

Linda suggested that we keep a list of members who also like to bake, for this and other events. She mentioned that BFA in St. Albans has a culinary program, perhaps students may wish to donate items.

Workshop committee – The committee members are Jesse Swétel, Nicole Gadouas, Barbara Pafume, Stephen Webb, Julie Griffis, and Rochelle Wallace. For suggestions and questions about workshops, you may email the group at magvtworkshops@gmail.com. In the works: We plan on offering home schooling classes, educational, and summer camps. Barbara Pafume will teach the first of MAG's summer camps with a nature focus. This is family oriented, and parents accompany the children.

Sap Bucket fundraiser - Lorraine Manley will bring galvanized sap buckets for any who would like to create a piece for a fall fundraiser starting September 1st. Twenty five buckets are available. Ethan mentioned that he wanted to participate, but didn't know how his photography could be transferred to the metal; Michael Purcell said that he has researched a method to do so. Cathy wanted to participate also, but her media is jewelry. We may come up with a theme for the fundraiser to be inclusive of all

media. Lorraine will bring buckets to the gallery, please send her an email at jmaf36@comcast.net to make arrangements for pickup.

Video Library – Ray McClure has donated a collection of art related videos to the gallery. There is a sign out sheet to borrow them. Inquire at the desk.

July 4th Parade – Gisela asked if anyone was interested in taking over for her organizing the annual umbrella walk. She has done it for many years. We have a stock of white umbrellas for the participating artists to decorate. Please email Gisela for more information. Suggestions were that we should conduct an ice cream social immediately after the parade ends at 12PM. We are looking into this.

BioTek – Caleb Foster immediately sold a piece that was on display; someone unrelated to BioTek or the MAG saw the image posted on MAG's Facebook and inquired about its availability and is purchasing an original piece. Social media works.

Champlain Valley Fair – Gisela asked if there was any interest in sharing a booth at the fair. If so, the cost is \$800 and would be shared and manned by those participating. There would be no commission on art sold from the booth. The consensus was to move ahead. Gisela will find out more information.

VCC Spring Open Studio – On May 26 & 27, 10AM-5PM, the MAG is participating. Many of the attending members signed up. If you would like to participate in demonstrating your medium and benefitting from this experience, please contact Gisela to sign up. If you would like to donate a food item, please contact Sharon Radtke. Members may sign up for one day or both to demonstrate their craft. The outdoor space behind the center may accommodate wood working, stone carving and other “messier” mediums. We are looking into this.

Show & Tell

Christian Poupart brought scroll saw plaques in various stages of completion to demonstrate his process.

Ethan Rogati showed his photos of northern lights that he took from the Sandbar Park area and the cellophane sleeves he bought to display and sell unframed pieces.

Respectfully submitted by Christina Lesperance

Next meeting is Thursday, May 17, 10AM-12PM