

Attending: Gisela Alpert, Donna Blatchly, Heidi Chamberlain, Rose D'Elia, Greg Drew, Claudette Eaton, Cathy LaClair, Christina Lesperance, Richard Lyons, Ray McClure, Nicole Gadouas, Lorraine Manley, Anita Michele, Linda Moran, Mike Ozenich, Bruce Pendleton, Sharon Radtke, Doreen Slusser, Linda Stech, Claudia Stoeffler, Felix Swétel, Jessie Swétel, Jim Yolda

- Gisela welcomed the members to the first meeting of the New Year. She asked that any members who had not yet renewed membership could do so at the gallery. Dues are payable by January 31st for members who joined prior to June 2017 Annual meeting; those who joined after that date are renewed annually on their month of joining.
- Gisela announced the hiring of an Executive Director after a lengthy search, and many interviews. Our newest employee, Jessie Swétel, was introduced. Jessie had been our Workshop Committee chair for the past year. She will be working full time in the new position, and will have a presence in the gallery. More information about Jessie will be announced. She will be creating a Marketing Plan which will be presented at the February meeting. We are looking to increase the customer base and recognition in the community. Word of mouth is a key to growth – make sure to 'like' us on Facebook, and encourage friends to pass on the request.
- MAGgie's Café – We've been meeting with a local independent coffee roaster in a bid to launch a coffee service. There are complex practical issues to work through; plumbing and electrical changes, permits, seating, atmosphere, etc. We will do a trial run in the spring with Kestrel Coffee. They will be providing the machinery. It won't be a big investment yet until the test run is evaluated. We will be asking for community support. It will also require that the gallery have earlier opening hours.

We envision making the gallery a gathering space for creative people. We may put up a 'vision board' with ideas for the project; café scene art, architectural sketch, etc. To get people used to using the gallery as a meeting space, we may forego the \$50 event fee to encourage informal gathering.

- Lorraine suggested that members could put their volunteer hours in by demonstrating or working in their media at the gallery (painting, photo editing, etc.). The idea was welcomed and accepted. Guests are very interested in learning more about the creative process. Mark Ozenich said that he sometimes sets up a table in the front of the gallery to work on his fishing lures. He talks with customers and they share stories.

Members are reminded to fill out the cards at the front desk to record their volunteer hours; monthly meeting attendance counts as volunteer time.

- Beginning April 1st, we will be paying rent for the gallery space. We are grateful for Mr. Pomerleau's generosity, and are now in a position to shoulder some costs. The 2019 Budget will be finalized tomorrow, January 18th, and the numbers will be presented. First analysis shows a net gain of over \$6000 for the year. It had been a struggle for Trine Wilson to staff the gallery with volunteers, so staff were hired. We are very happy that we ended the year with a positive balance, given these changes. And again, thank you to all who gave their time to get us this far. On a side note, we would like to remind artists to freshen up their work on display in the gallery; and a big thank you to Lorraine and Claudette!
- Summer event for members – Christian Poupart suggested that we participate in the Jay Summer Festival. It's on Saturday, August 10th from 8:30 – 4 pm. MAG would be given a 12' x 36' spot to put up tents to show and sell work. It would be especially great for the 3D artists. Each artist would be responsible for their own sales, but we may ask artists for a donation to the MAG for the opportunity to participate and as a sign of commitment. Additional information will be sent via email.
- Community Project – Linda Moran is spearheading the labyrinth project. Since this would be a rather complex undertaking, there are still logistics and space issues to be decided with the town. As this is ongoing, more information will be sent when available.

- There was a bit of brainstorming on other potential community projects: Colorful crosswalks, painted utility boxes, painted public benches, painted merchants' windows, doghouse painting, etc. It was suggested that we revive Ethan Rogati's idea for a 'Rumble' show with art on car parts, or wheels.

Gisela said that these were all great ideas, but for any to move forward, we need individuals to raise a hand to be the lead person; after which we will match volunteers to help out. For further information regarding this type of role, please contact Gisela.

- MAG website – we would like to tweak the homepage so viewers can see click-able images of art, instead of just an artist's name. It would be easier for viewers to shop based on the style of work. The images could link to the artist's MAG page, Etsy page, or website. Please send 3 – 4 images to Gisela. If you have difficulty getting a good photo of your work, please let us know; we can help. Also, please send images to Linda Moran for her email blast.
- Social Sundays – We need teachers for the children's art. The guild provides the supplies, and the teacher is paid \$40 for the two hours (1 – 3 pm). These are simple projects; the teacher is there to demonstrate and give guidance as necessary. The parents are also there to help the kids. We provide live music and hot chocolate. Sharon arranged for advertising Social Sundays on WCAX.
- Senior Teas will resume in April on the 4th Thursdays. We will be asking for volunteers to assist serving and to demonstrate their art.
- Exhibits - We are looking for a volunteer to coordinate venues outside the gallery. This would involve keeping a calendar to remind artists when to switch out displays (usually every two months), emailing the volunteer who oversees that site, and contacting potential hosts about displaying our artists. This can be a stay-at-home position using just phone and email. Please reach out to Gisela for more information.
- Studio rental – a half-booth space will become available. This is the back corner on the left side and would be shared with Trine. The rent is \$51 per month. Please contact Gisela for information.
- Chamber Calcutta – Jessie Swétel announced a fundraiser sponsored by the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce to benefit the Lake Champlain Lifelong Learning Fund. This is a swanky party with a silent auction that will be held at the Double Tree location in March. The donating artist is listed on their website and in print. Jessie would like to offer a variety of the different media from the MAG membership. Please send an image to Jessie at [jessieswett@gmail.com](mailto:jessieswett@gmail.com) by February 22 if you would like to participate. The MAG is a member of the Chamber.
- Linda Stech announce a new feature of the monthly meetings called Motivation. This will be a single word or phrase to inspire new art at times when we are having a blocked creative moment. We can show what we've created at the following monthly meeting. The challenge word for February is Unity. It was suggested that these themed pieces created could be displayed in the gallery, and perhaps allow visitors to vote for a People's Choice award from the participants.
- Sculpting workshop – this is an ongoing workshop opportunity for beginners or accomplished sculptors. Kathy Stockman provides the training and all the tools necessary to complete a stone sculpture, start to finish. The studio is open year round, and work can be completed at your own pace. Registration is on the guild website.

#### Show & Tell:

Heidi Chamberlain brought a colorful, very detailed cross stitched image with a tree, and a small piece depicting elephants.

Richard Lyons brought a photograph of a lily with an unusual optical effect.

Tina showed examples of concrete garden sculpture.

Rose D'Elia brought an example of minimalist pen & ink with watercolor.

- Announcement: the Photographers Group has a meeting change. They will now meet on the 4th Sunday of the month, from 3:30 to 5:00. The first meeting of 2019 will be on January 27th. This is open to any and all who are interested in photographic arts. Bernhard is planning a workshop-style event for this first meeting and will send more information via email.

The next regular meeting is on February 21st, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Christina Lesperance