



July - August 2024
Newsletter

Shenandoah Valley Watercolor Society
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ShenandoahValleyWatercolorSociety.org

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What's Important to You?

I had surgery in March and have been house-bound for three months, only able to get around independently since June. I am usually very busy, but those three months gave me time to think about two questions, "How do I use my time when I can't go anywhere or get around easily? How can I paint when I don't feel like it?" These answers worked for me.

#1. Go through old sketchbooks, marking interesting pages, then sift through photographs on the computer, piling up the possibilities. Next, I worked on drawings and paintings from those ideas and other work that had been started and abandoned, trying to find that missing spark of creativity. It really helps if one of the paintings you're working on is successful!

#2. Bargain with yourself. "You can read today, but then tomorrow begin a series on flowers and gardens?" "If you get all your emails written this morning, you can read for an hour this afternoon, then paint!"

#3. Be kind to yourself. If you don't want to draw or paint, it's OK. Plan to do it the next day but be honest with yourself about what is important.

Now that I can get around more easily, these three things still work: find what sparks your fire, spend time on what's important to you, and be kind to yourself. Don't give up!

Barbara Gautcher

*In this short Life
That only lasts an hour,
How much – how little – is
Within our power*

Emily Dickinson

Our Featured Artist: Donna Detrich

Donna Detrich embodies the spirit of a woman of “The West.” To scratch beneath her surface is to understand where she comes from and who she is. Her often-outcast people migrated slowly westward through Indiana, Texas, settling finally in tiny Indian Cove, Idaho, sheltered in the Snake River Canyon among a small community of other immigrants, Shoshone, and Paiute. Her generational family farm nestled near the Snake, which watered their crops and livestock. Mountains, desert, and sagebrush surrounded the isolated settlement.



Women especially had to be strong, resilient, and resourceful, and the confines of eastern society didn't much apply to their daily lives. Donna points to her grandmother with pride. Widowed early with many children, they squeezed every tidbit of prosperity from their land, fished the river, and hunted wildlife. Summer was fleeting and daylight hours were used to their fullest, while the frigid winters could be isolating or a time for creativity. Like many women of the west, Grandma had to be a go-getter for her family to survive and thrive. She heard President Teddy Roosevelt was traveling through by train with a stop nearby, and she needed a word with him. She arranged a meeting, persuading TR to create a federal irrigation grant program for the people in Idaho. As a result, today Idaho farmers enjoy irrigation land rights along the Snake for vast agricultural opportunities. Donna's dad stayed on the farm, raising his family there, as her brother does now. Donna sees her grandmother as a woman to emulate – strong, independent, and more than willing to buck the tide.

Her western values are buried deep within her, such as a love of land, farming, and the outdoors, resourcefulness, a focus on family first and friends, neighbors, and community, plus a pursuit for peace. As a young girl, Donna loved art. However, in school, her art teacher made his students draw nudes. Her unhappy Mennonite parents pulled her from his classes and became her art teachers. In college, she pursued a degree in counseling and took as many art courses as she could. Marriage and four small children always came first, with her husband practicing dentistry and her own career as a school counselor for troubled children and their parents. For many years, art was nonexistent. As her family grew, she took her first watercolor class in Bridgewater and was hooked. The Detrich's daughter brought home her Pakistani roommate who was enfolded into the family and is considered their fifth child, and her children are also Detrich grandchildren. After eighteen years as a school counselor, she turned her sights on community counseling, and then her own private practice.



Painting by Donna Detrich

“Retired” now, the girl is busy. Her full life includes her family, rich with grandkids. Year after year infinitum, she serves as SVWS leader, Treasurer, and an Oasis volunteer. Donna serves at a non-profit agency as a supervisor, helping new counselors. For 48 years, she has enjoyed a supper club with dear friends. Avid readers, she and her husband formed a book club. The weekly SVWS Friday Paint Party is on her calendar. Mrs. Detrich, an artist who likes to have **five (!)** paintings going at the same time, has earned deserved recognition, awards, and sales.

Today, the one thing she does not do well is sit still. She focuses on what matters most to her. She loves to work outside their newly built, efficient home where over 2000 trees have been planted. She makes time for people, especially her grandchildren. Her new home features an enclosed porch/studio off the kitchen where she dabbles “for 15 minutes which may turn into an hour.” Her volunteer activities feed her spirit, although she would **very much** like to hand off the SVWS treasury!!!!!! (Her requested exclamation marks) Her values shine through in her paintings, with lush landscapes featuring the serene beauty of the outdoors.

As she spoke about art, not so obvious truths emerged as well as some great tips. Shh, when a wise woman speaks, it's best to listen:

“Composition is a struggle. It's hard to narrow down and think through ... Because I began in oils, I tend to paint with many layers and usually must remove paint ... I'm trying to sketch and draw more, and be looser, freer. It's more fun ... I used to think every painting had to be framed but no more. I'm pulling old paintings out of their frames to mess with again and if they don't go back in their frames, that's okay ... If I mess up a piece of paper, oh well, I use the other side ... These days, I'm giving myself permission to waste paper ... Ann McFarland said, “If you don't like it, tear it up and use the scraps for something else.” ... I love the Friday Paint Party because I get so many ideas, tips, and new perspectives.”

And finally, “I used to paint for other people and what would sell but I got tired of that. Paint what you love, that stirs your soul and spirit. When others see it, they may feel that same emotion and want to buy it. The spirit of you will come through your painting. It will touch others.”

Life is short. Be true to you and you'll have energy for what matters most.

Member News

Shenandoah Valley Art Center in Waynesboro is hosting multiple summer art camps for kids. If you're interested, check out their website.

OASIS Volunteers Needed: Please consider volunteering at OASIS a couple of times each month.

SVWS Treasurer Yep, still need a Treasurer. Please consider!

Social Media Report from Lynda Chandler

Check out Shenandoah Valley Watercolor Society on Instagram, Facebook, and our web site. ShenandoahValleyWatercolorSociety.org continues to add to the Gallery page. Send Lynda Chandler a painting image of yours.

Upcoming Events & Exhibits

July 5, 5 – 7 pm: First Fridays of the Valley downtown Harrisonburg with OASIS and several other galleries open. Enjoy art, music, dinner, neighbors & more! ValleyArts.org

July 6, 10 – noon: SVWS monthly meeting

July 10, 10 – noon: Harrisonburg Plein Air will be at Preston Lake There is a lake with a pathway, weeping willows, hydrangeas, and homes. Count on shade and restrooms. Meet at the clubhouse near the pool.

Second Wednesday of the month, 10 am – 12 pm. If you are interested in being notified when and where we are meeting, Elaine Dunaway is collecting phone numbers. She will text you a week ahead and then the Monday before to remind you. You are not bound to come if you agree to have your phone number included. Just RSVP if you will join us so we know how many to expect. There will be

bathrooms, and shade when necessary. Feel free to paint in the medium of your choice. Text Elaine Dunaway with questions 540-246-1833

Save the following dates, although they may be subject to change due to unforeseen situations:

August 14 – Downtown Library

September 11 – A family farm north of town

October 9 – Bluestone Winery

July 13 – July 21: Bath County Art Show will be at the Bath County High School. Information regarding artists and attendees is available at ArtShow@BathCountyArts.org

August: Muse Winery Exhibition in Woodstock. The theme this year is “The Best of the Valley.” Signature members are invited to enter up to three paintings. Paintings will be hung July 30 or 31, waiting for confirmation. When pricing your painting, please keep in mind that a 27% commission will be taken (20% by Muse, 7% by SVWS) A print bin will be available on site. Prints sold well last year. For those who do not wish to drive to Woodstock, bring your work to the SVWS July 6 meeting, and Lorraine and JanetLee will take it. Please wrap or box your art so they can be handled safely. Take down date to be announced. Contact Lorraine Davis at davis99LAD@gmail.com for information.

August 4, 2 – 5pm Muse Exhibition Reception. Everyone plus friends are invited. Enjoy the art, wine and snacks, and explore the trails around the vineyard and river in Seven Bends State Park.

August 6, 10 – noon: SVWS monthly meeting

August 14, 10 – noon: Harrisonburg Plein Air will be at the Downtown Library

August 15: SVWS Member Show Yellow Entry Forms, plus \$10 per painting entry fee is due. Mail to Donna Detrich, P.O. Box 2274, Harrisonburg VA 22801

September 2 Next Gallery Day: SVWS Signature Members are invited to show and sell their work at three locations in Harrisonburg. Paintings are changed every three months on the first Monday following our regular monthly meetings.

- Taste of Thai restaurant, 917 S. High St. - Contact Lois Whitecotton, Lwhitecotton@yahoo.com
- The Rocktown Gift Shoppe inside the Hardesty-Higgins House Visitor Center, 212 South Main St.
- OASIS Fine Art and Craft, 103 S. Main St. Contact Donna Detrich, DonnaDetrich@gmail.com

September 7, 10 – noon: monthly SVWS meeting

September 7, 9 – 11am: Deliver your Member Show paintings to VMRC Park Gables 1491 Virginia Avenue, Harrisonburg. If you can, we will need help with the installation. Bring your hammer. The show will run through November 8.

September 8, 2 – 4pm: SVWS Member Show Reception. **3:00 Judge’s presentation of awards**

October 4, 5 - 7pm: First Friday Reception at VMRC

October 5, 10 – noon: monthly SVWS meeting

November 2, 10 – noon: monthly SVWS meeting

November 9, 9 – 11am: Pick up your paintings from the Member Show. Be sure to sign them out before you leave.

December 7, 10 – noon: Our final meeting of the year

Brushstrokes

Congratulations to Karen Moyers! Her painting “At the Auction II” was accepted at the recent Juried Art Exhibition at VMRC’s Park Gables gallery. It ends June 28.

Karen’s painting “At the Auction III” was accepted in the 2024 Virginia Watercolor Society’s Exhibition in Lynchburg at the Academy Center of the Arts. The show also closes on June 28.

Karen, we are so proud of you!

And our very own Julia Alderfer–Stauffer recently collaborated with Harrisonburg’s Public Works Department to design, build and install artist’s easels at Liberty Street Park. The project was introduced at the recent Best. Weekend. Ever. Then, on June 21 at the Liberty Park Pollinator event, Julia and city employee Brittany Clem – Hott promoted “Art in the Park” with a watercolor painting activity. Atta Girl, Julia!

If you sell a painting, receive an honor or award, are exhibiting, or teaching a class, email Mindy Morrison at MJDM@comcast.net It will go into our next bimonthly newsletter.

News for the Next Newsletter?

Send it to me, Mindy Morrison, at MJDM@comcast.net. Please specify in the Subject line “For the next newsletter.”

This bimonthly newsletter’s summer color scheme is red, white, and blue with a pop of yellow. Ahh, summertime!

Bouquet to editor Janet Lee Wright, for her polish!

*Flowers blossom with the beauty of a
fleeting moment, reminding
us that life, like petals,
is delicate and short-lived.*

Actually generated by Chat GPT



Painting by Donna Detrich