



July - August 2025 Newsletter

Shenandoah Valley Watercolor Society
P. O. Box 2744
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
ShenandoahValleyWatercolorSociety.org

Officers:

Chair: Elaine Dunaway
Co-Chair: Laura Pooler
Treasurer: Kevin Updike
Membership: Julia Stauffer
Social Media: Lynda Chandler

“Victory Belongs to the Most Tenacious”

I have been thinking about tenacity ever since I watched the French Open last month. The quote “Victory Belongs to the Most Tenacious” is displayed at the stadium that hosts the Open. In other words, success is achieved by those who persevere and show the greatest determination. Rafa Nadal did it fourteen times there!

In Mindy’s interview with Lynda Chandler in this newsletter, Lynda emphasizes the idea that art often “thrives in the details.” I, along with other members, took the wonderful portrait class with Jane Angelhart. I came home afterwards, inspired to paint a photo of my father when he was a teenager. In my first attempt, I just could not capture his pleasant expression. Then I remembered Jane paying close attention to the details around the eyes, nose, and mouth. So, I did it again, focusing on the lines and shadows, and I did it! I was able to get the look I wanted! I am reminded of all the long- time artists in our watercolor society and am inspired by their tenacity over the years.

The discipline of sticking with something and getting the details right surely must be a large part of successful art creation!

Elaine



Our Featured Artist

Lynda Chandler: From Scientific Roots to Artistic Heights

By Mindy Morrison

Every artist has a story, but Lynda Chandler's is painted with a palette as rich and detailed as her botanical illustrations. From her childhood days spent surrounded by geology and flora to her rise as a celebrated botanical illustrator, Lynda's life has been an extraordinary fusion of science and art.

Lynda's earliest memories are intertwined with her father's geology lab, where she spent countless hours as a child while her mother typed his research papers. It was not just a workspace for her—it became a playground of discovery. She played with microscopes, doodled on chalkboards, and soaked up the intellectual hum of scientific discussions. The lab was her second home. Meanwhile, her mother's passion for plants introduced Lynda to the intricate world of flowers and foliage, which she often captured through sketches and paintings.

Fast forward to middle school, where Lynda's natural talent for art began to flourish. Her art teacher once criticized her for painting "too tight," but instead of changing her style, Lynda leaned into her love of minute details. It was not just about art for her—it was about capturing the essence of nature with precision and care, an early hint of the path she would one day follow.

At 16, Lynda's family moved from Urbana, Illinois to Gainesville, Florida, where her father became the chair of the Geology Department at the University of Florida. It was a monumental change, but one that would shape her future in unimaginable ways. Initially, Lynda considered pursuing a degree in Interior Design, but it did not take long for her to realize it was not her true calling.

One fateful day, while pondering her future, she flipped through a book on Florida's Landscape Plants, mesmerized by the illustrations. "This is it," she thought. "This is what I want to do." She wasted no time tracking down the book's illustrator, Marion Ruff Sheehan, who was a professor at the university. This chance encounter would set the stage for the next chapter of her life.

Under Mrs. Sheehan's mentorship, Lynda dived headfirst into the world of botanical art. She switched her major to Botany and Horticulture and began taking scientific illustration classes, meticulously rendering live plants with watercolor and ink. It was during this time that she met her future husband, a fellow plant science major, and began building a life rich in both art and science.



At just 22 years old, Lynda achieved a milestone that many artists only dream of: she became a published illustrator, contributing to the book “Foliage Plant Productions.” This was only the beginning of what would become a remarkable career.

As her skills and reputation grew, Lynda’s work attracted prestigious opportunities. She joined the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators and lent her talents to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, among other organizations. Her illustrations were not just art. They were tools for education and conservation, helping to document invasive species and uncover hidden microscopic worlds.

Despite her impressive résumé, Lynda never lost sight of what truly mattered to her: her family, the love of her craft, and the joy of merging science and art. Her tight painting style, once criticized, became her signature, a testament to her philosophy of staying true to oneself. Today, Lynda Chandler is not only an accomplished, award-winning artist but also a source of inspiration for watercolor enthusiasts. Her journey is a reminder that art and science can coexist beautifully, and that our personal passions often hold the key to our greatest achievements. Thinking of painting flowers or plants? Why not reach out to Lynda for tips and guidance? Her insights might just help you bring your own creations to life.

The next time you pick up your watercolor brush, think of Lynda Chandler. Whether you are capturing the delicate veins of a leaf or the vibrant bloom of a flower, remember, art, like nature, thrives in the details.

Member News

From Julia Alderfer Stauffer, our Membership Czar:

Welcome the following artists who have joined SVWS since April 2025. We now have 52 members. We are truly delighted to have you join our group. Any questions? Reach out to Julia at jastauff@comcast.net

Carol Congdon
David Draime
Sandi Hult
Cindy Watkins

Donna Delisle
Chris Hall
Arnita Taliaferro

Applause to Laura Pooler, our New Master Signature Member. She offered proof of acceptance in at least three juried art exhibitions, among her many accomplishments. Congratulations!

Bonnie Stutzman’s husband Ervin passed away June 3. He was a deeply committed leader in the Mennonite community in many ways. Our heartfelt condolences to Bonnie, their family, and friends.

Interested in a class with **Peg Sheridan** or seeing her paintings? Go to www.pegsheridan.com and Facebook: Peg Sheridan Art

Member David Draime offers a variety of art classes at Draime Fine Art Studio School at 1153 South High Street in Harrisonburg. For more information, go to www.draimefineart.com/classes

Upcoming Events

The Friday Paint Party at the Price Rotary Senior Center gathers every Friday except on federal and state holidays. There are usually several members who paint together and share ideas.

Bring your painting project, supplies, and \$2-\$4 to offset the two-hour cost for the space rental. The building is directly across the street from the UC building where we hold our monthly meetings. When you enter Westover Park from Route 33, turn at the first right and go up the hill, then park in the first parking lot on your right.

Our Monthly SVWS meetings occur on the first Saturday of every month, ten 'til noon at The UC Youth Center located at 700 West Market Street.

July 12 – 20: The Bath County Art Show will happen at Bath County High School in Hot Springs, Virginia. It is open to all SVWS members. Note the 30% commission on sales. Drop off your artwork on July 6 – 7 and pick it up on July 21. If you are unable to transport your art, contact Donna Detrich for assistance. For more details, visit www.bathcountyarts.org.

August 15: Your Member Show digital artwork is due to Lynda Chandler. Visit our website for tips on how to photograph and submit your work. Your artwork information, regarding title, media type, and price is also due by this date. **Also, Kevin Updike** needs your check and Title Tag artwork information included in your Member Show application by this date.

September 6: Member Show artwork will be accepted and hung at VMRC. No regular meeting on this date.

September 7, 2–4 PM Member Show Opening reception and Awards announced.

September 8, Gallery Day: SVWS Signature Members may display and sell artwork at locations in Harrisonburg. Paintings are rotated every three months on the first Monday following our regular monthly meetings.

- Taste of Thai restaurant, 917 S. High St. Contact Lois Whitecotton.

- The Rocktown Gift Shoppe is inside the Hardesty-Higgins House Visitor Center, 212 South Main Street. Contact Barbara Gautcher.
 - OASIS Fine Art and Craft, 103 S. Main St. Contact Donna Detrich.
- Sharp Litigation Offices, 1224 Newman Avenue, Suite 201, Harrisonburg. Contact Barbara Gautcher.

Harrisonburg Plein Air Paint group meets on second Wednesday of each month from May to November at various locations, 10-12. No cost. If you are interested in the schedule and locations, contact Elaine Dunaway or Julia Alderfer-Stauffer.

Treasurer Kevin Updike reported an ALL TIME HIGH in sales at OASIS last month, a total of \$3,007.00. OASIS has doubled the display space for SVWS Signature members and increased our presence to three days each month. Currently, fourteen members show and sell. OASIS wants to break a Guinness World Record with a community mosaic project. You and your family, friends, and neighbors can help by going to OASIS, and the staff will show you how easy it is to take part. Contact Barbara Camph at tbcamph@aol.com for more information.

Brushstrokes GALORE!

Standing ovations to two of our accomplished artists!

Barbara Gaucher's linocut *Hard Working Kyle* was accepted into the National Juried Art Exhibition at VMRC's Park Gables Gallery. The show ends on June 27. Her artwork has also been accepted for the 2025 Virginia Watercolor Society Show in September. Additionally, Barbara sold a painting at the 5 x 5 x 25 show.

Stay standing and applaud Lois Whitecotton! Her exceptional painting was accepted for the Virginia Watercolor Society Show.

We have greatness in our midst!

Lois Kauffman's first solo exhibition will be at the Frame Factory in Harrisonburg from July through August. The opening night is July 3, 5-7 pm. **Bravo, Lois!**

The SVWS at Hotel Madison exhibit was a success with several paintings sold. **Lois Whitecotton** sold two and **Laura Pooler** and **Jennifer Wharton** each sold one.

Jennifer Wharton will have a solo show at Hotel Madison in October.

Arnita Taliaferro and **Laura Pooler** have been selling artwork at a local craft show.

Donna Detrich and **Karen Moyers** will exhibit their art together at Hotel Madison, November through December.

Donna Detrich recently sold a painting at Taste of Thai.

Kudos to **JanetLee Wright** for the outstanding job she did coordinating Jane Angelhart's superb Portrait workshop. She also sold a painting at Oasis.

Bahir Al Badry, the resident artist and top seller at OASIS, continues his search for marketing assistance. Contact him if you can help. Lately, his focus is art for children. See the image on the right.



Musings & Miscellany

From Julia Alderfer Stauffer: Check out YouTube and Podcasts for inspiration at any time day or night, including.

*Paul Clark on YouTube @ArtbyPaulClark - weekly tutorials

*Eric Rhoads - <https://www.youtube.com/@artschoollive> daily podcasts and YouTube videos.

On Fridays at noon, Eric reviews and critiques submitted paintings. It is very educational to watch him provide feedback. He always asks these three questions: What is the focal point of the painting? What are the elements of the design and composition? How do the values suggest foreground, mid-ground, and background of the painting?

***Podcast:** Savy Painter Podcast by Antrese Wood

News for the Next Newsletter?

Inquiring minds want to hear your news! If you sell a painting, receive an honor or award, are exhibiting or teaching a class, or have any area art news to share, send your information to me, Mindy Morrison, at MindyMo36@gmail.com by August 10. Please specify in the Subject line, "For the next newsletter." Expect your next bimonthly newsletter at the end of August.



Trillium by Lynda Chandler, Winner of the Judge's Choice Award, 2024 SVWS Member Show

Inspiration does exist, but it must find you working.
Pablo Picasso