

Summer Greetings Everyone,

Hopefully this first president's letter from me finds everyone healthy and happy. I have been busy trying to get up to speed with all things Crooked Creek Art League in addition to painting and catering. I have lots to report and a little bit of soliciting for folks to volunteer as we are looking at a busy year.

Juried Show at Still Hopes: Thanks to the efforts of Randy Spencer and Barbara Teusink, we will be having a show at Still Hopes this coming October and November. Given the limitation of space at Still Hopes, work will be juried in and we are opening it to all artists in the hopes that we can raise more money for the league and bring awareness about our league to the Columbia area. For the first time, the artwork will be submitted and juried digitally. There is an online portal on the league's website for submitting artwork to the show. If a member needs assistance or is not able to complete an online submission, but wants to submit work, we will accommodate you, please let me know should you need assistance. This show is coming up soon, the online portal is open and entries are being accepted now through the end of August. The prospectus is attached. *The show is open for 2D and Photography only as Still Hopes does not have display space for 3D and does not currently allow it.*

Community Art Project: Thanks to the diligent work of Alex DiFrancesco and Barbara Teusink, CCAL was awarded a \$2,500 grant by the South Carolina Arts Commission for the Community Project that is in the works. This is huge news, wonderful news! Way to go both Alex and Barb! The Community Art Project Committee is headed by Barb and she and I met with the Mayor of Chapin last week and are happy to report that the folks at Town Hall are excited about working with the league in conjunction with this project. Lots of exciting details to follow on this at our September meeting.

Farmer's Market: CCAL is participating in the Chapin Farmer's scheduled for September 1, 2018. This is Labor Day and there will be lots of activity and goings on in downtown Chapin that weekend. Nicole Burroughs at Town Hall is in charge of this and it is a great opportunity for the league to build that partnership. We still have room for artists to join us and display their work. We need volunteers to not only help set up and break down the booth, but to speak to the public about the league and the many opportunities we offer as well as to interact with the community about our upcoming community project. It is a great time to get to know

or catch up with fellow league members! Please consider volunteering your time and talent. Email me if you are willing to participate please.

Chapin Annual Fall Festival: In the Fall, CCAL will have a booth at the 3rd Annual Fall Art Festival October 27th. Volunteers are needed to help set up, man the booth and break down and it is another great opportunity for the league to interact with the community. We sold several paintings last year and are hoping to sell a few more this year. Please if you are willing and able to help, sign up at our September meeting.

Volunteers are critical and we need league members to make these events successful. It is important that we continue to increase our visibility and promote our league and our work to the community so that we grow and thrive. We plan on doing more through social media, not only Facebook, but Instagram as well. As workshop coordinator, I contacted numerous artists regarding workshops and presentations and in doing so sent the link to our website to give them some idea of what we are about, the quality of our artists as well as those we invite to inspire us. Late in the season, I realized of the 100 artists in our league, there were only 6 in the online gallery. We were failing to represent ourselves on our own website. Over the summer, I contacted existing Patron Members and encouraged them to join in the online gallery. We now have 14 in our online gallery with a promise from 3 more to join. I hope I can convince more members to participate. If you do not have a website, the league's online gallery has SEO (search engine optimization) which will allow you and your artwork to appear in online searches. But really it is more important to the league that we represent the vast talent we have on our website. So please, when you renew your membership this year, please consider upgrading to a Patron Member for an additional \$25 and join the online artist gallery. Not only will it help with our "image" but will help us fund the Annual Juried Show this year.

Annual Juried Show: Our juried show chairs Ann Peake and Kay Young are busy planning a fantastic show for the 2018/19 season. Our show is one of the largest juried shows in the Midlands, and we hope to get more people from the community in to see the show and garner more financial support from local businesses. Fundraising and publicity have already begun as we start the season and we can look forward to hearing more from Ann and Kay at our September meeting.

The prospectus to the Annual Juried Show has been updated to reflect some changes that were made by the Board at the end of the year in response to the After Action Review Committee findings. The most significant changes are as follows:

1. Categories of *Amateur* and *Professional* have been updated to *Amateur* and *Master*. *Master* more accurately reflects much of the talent in the league and may help make the decision to move to the different category easier for some artists who are very skilled but do not consider themselves technically professionals. Criteria has also been added that if an artist wins one of the top 3 prizes in the 2D Amateur category in 3 out of 5 years, they automatically earn Master status based on their demonstrated skills.
2. Language has been strengthened regarding removing artwork prior to the end of the show as it causes a number of problems, so that artists who do so will not be allowed to enter the following year.
3. The Board will be looking at ways to improve presentation options for 3D work and has updated language surrounding the entry guidelines for 3D work.
4. Finally, a Fundraising Chair has been added to the Board so that the league will have a more coordinated effort in soliciting support for the show and the league from the community. Randy Spencer who did such a good job on the juried show last year, has agreed to serve as our Fundraising Chair this year.

Thank you for your patience as we work through these changes this year. While change is inevitable, it is never easy.

Workshops: Happy to report that the workshops for this coming season have all been scheduled and the workshop page of our website has been updated with this information. The very competent and organized Sandra Oliver will be serving as Workshop Coordinator this year. We start the season most appropriately with a drawing workshop by Roy Paschal. Roy is a well-known forensic artist having worked with SLED for many years and is a much loved teacher in the Columbia Area. Needless to say, he will be doing a refresher or primer as the case may be, helping us hone our drawing skills with faces and other subjects. After that, Madeline Dukes and Sheryl Stalnaker are pairing up and returning to us with an all media workshop designed to help us find our inspiration and translate our muse into both representational and abstract work. The amazing award winning Russell Jewell will be returning in February for a watercolor workshop with a focus on learning to self-critique. In March, the very popular artists and twins Shannon Smith Hughes and

Jennifer Smith Rogers from the Smith Family of Artists out of Charleston will be doing an oils workshop. It is still to be determined if it will be a plein air workshop. Then in April, at Marcia Murray's recommendation, we have the very talented Frederick C. Graff coming and there may be some plein air involved there as well. Finally, Laurie Meyers, well known Charleston artist, gallery owner and business partner to Marissa Vogl, will be doing the last workshop of the season, more details to follow. At this time there are no 3D workshops scheduled, but given our fledgling 3D membership, we look to do so next year.

A final note on workshops, at the end of last year, the Board did approve a new Workshop Policy that will allow a deposit to be refunded to a member who needs to cancel in the event the workshop sells out. Workshops will also open sooner to the public to allow us to properly promote them outside the league so that we can ensure they book up. Once a workshop opens there will be a two week window for league members to enroll before the workshop opens to the public. We hope both these measures will allow our members to more confidently enroll in workshops and allow the league the most success with the workshops as the time and effort involved is significant.

In closing, I'll share that as president I hope to play a part in continuing to nurture, inspire and energize our league which in a short few years has given so much to me. A light got turned on up there at Crooked Creek and I am painting my heart out. And of course I want our social events to have food, lots of good food and I will do my best to make that happen in my term as president! And as a reminder, Board Meetings are open to the Membership it serves. Meetings will start at 5 this season. Look forward to seeing everyone in September!

Sincerely,

Sonya Diimmler