



WEST VIRGINIA WATERCOLOR SOCIETY

President's Letter

WVWS members met in Flatwoods on March 17 and made decisions that will make our organization financially more healthy. We've made changes related to making us a paperless organization.

A vast amount of our annual budget is spent on printing. So, to save money, we are going to use our fantastic website to disseminate forms and other timely information.



I realize this change will require a period of adjustment. I am asking our regional representatives to assist members who don't have Internet access so they will receive WVWS forms.

Notifications will be sent out periodically using postcards. And, you may still request hard copies.

But we know that if we do away with mass mailings and printings, we can save a great deal financially and in work hours. And yes, it is a "green" idea.

Another idea discussed at the meeting was allowing non-West Virginia residents to join our organization. Some of the points brought up during the meeting were whether or not that change would take away from showcasing West Virginia artists. We agreed to table this item until the next meeting, allowing time to contemplate this change in our membership requirements. If you have any opinions about this potential change, please contact me or one of the officers.

I also want to say "thank you" to the members coming to the meetings. The discussions we have are representative of our memberships' goals. I especially want to thank

Aqueous 2012

June 11 to July 6

Arts Monongahela Gallery, Morgantown

- Entries postmarked by March 29
- Notifications sent out by April 20
- Hand-delivered works to arrive at gallery June 1 & 2 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Shipped works must arrive by June 2
- Awards reception will be June 22 from 5 to 8 p.m.
- Painting pickup will be July 7 from noon to 5 p.m.

Juror is Beth Nash, professor at Marietta College

Bruce Brenneman for keeping us informed and handling the toughest job – treasurer. Also, my thanks to Jeanine Romano for chairing the scholarship committee.

I hope you have checked out the Charleston Gazette article featuring WVWS that Kristen Colebank has linked to our website (it's on the News page). A reporter at the Gazette contacted us, wrote the story, and as a result, a member has made a prospective sale.

So, please consider putting your work in the online WVWS Members' Gallery. It is a great place to showcase your work. If you already have a website, then Kristen can also link your site to the WVWS site.

We are getting ready to form a slate of officers for WVWS for the next two-year term. If you are interested in an elected position or in chairing a committee, please contact me before June 1. I plan to present the slate at the July meeting and hold the voting at the late fall meeting. New faces in these positions are good for an organization. Newness bring fresh ideas and energy.

I am looking forward to the upcoming juried exhibit in downtown Morgantown. High Street is the center of town and will be a great location for our show. Beth Nash, juror, is a fantastic, creative painter, so I also am anxious to read her critique.


Happy painting!

Linda Elmer, president

Reminder: West Virginia Watercolor Society dues notifications are sent out each November. The forms and \$30 yearly payment are due by Jan. 1. Those who pay after the due date are charged an extra \$10 late fee (\$40 total). If you do not renew your membership by Feb. 15, you will lose your membership status (i.e. juried, signature) and must re-apply. Questions? Contact Jeanne and Bruce Brenneman at bjbrenneman@gmail.com, or call 304-645-3050.


WVWS Member News

Region II – Patricia Roberts

 **Mary Russell** of Charleston has had a watercolor portrait of labor leader Mother Jones included in the West Virginia Division of Culture and History exhibit, “Portraits of Historic West Virginia Figures.” The exhibit, on display in the Commissioner’s Gallery at the Culture Center at the West Virginia Capitol Complex in Charleston, opened in February and will be on display until Aug. 26.

Region III – Joy Cooper

 **Laurie Goldstein-Warren** of Buckhannon was featured in the February 2012 edition of Watercolor Artist magazine. Her painting, “My Brother’s Keeper,” and a description of Laurie’s painting methods are featured on page 73 of the magazine.

 **F. Dennis Clarke** of Martinsburg tells us he had a very busy December, capped by four days in which he completed four watercolor demonstrations at different locations in Maryland.

One demo was for a group of home-schooled children in Hagerstown, Md., another was for a group of high school students in Frederick, Md., and then he had two


demonstrations at Bountiful Design in Easton, Md. Denny had been invited for a one-day exhibit at Bountiful where he showed his representational watercolors and abstract acrylics.

Region V – Janet Hart

 **Marilyn Hughey Phillis**, AWS, NWS, of Wheeling was elected by the American Watercolor Society to jury the 145th International Exhibition, held at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. She was chairman of the three-person Jury of Awards consisting of herself, Henry Casselli, AWS, and George James, AWS.

Marilyn, who is a recipient of many national and state awards, has served as an AWS Board of Directors member, as well as on previous AWS selection and awards juries, along with juries of other major national and regional exhibitions.

Marilyn will also be an exhibitor at the 145th Exhibition. For more on the 2012-13 show, which opened April 3, visit www.americanwatercoloristsociety.org

 **April Waltz** of Wheeling won best of show at the Bethany College Fall Art Show for her watercolor, “Organic Orchid.” The multi-media exhibit, held annually at Bethany’s Renner Gallery, features the work of artists who live within an 80-mile radius of the college.

Painters’ Perspectives

Editor’s Note: This question continues the theme I started last summer. I received so many great responses that I wanted to share more!

Q: Do you have a favorite brush?

Debbie Lester

I do have a favorite brush and it’s one I bought at least 20 years ago – it’s amazing to me that it’s still in good shape, as much as I’ve used it. It’s a 2” Winsor & Newton Series 965 synthetic brush.

I have painted entire paintings with this one brush – it’s good for washes but also good for detail. I love it. I bought it from Cheap Joe’s for \$10 and wish I had bought more than one.

I also have a Winsor & Newton series 995, 3/4” flat that I use on every painting – couldn’t live without it.

Brushes are so important. Like a writing instrument, it’s how we tell our story.

Phyllis Crickenberger

I have many . . . but [I love my] Dora Hagge #16 and #10 for watercolor and a new one, very small for detail work, 2/0. Reasonably priced and they hold a great point, etc. Several of us in Greenbrier Artists took classes from her at Cedar Lakes years ago and I have used the brushes since. I get new ones occasionally from her website (www.dorahagge-artist.com)

Kristen Colebank

For me, I prefer rounds in assorted sizes, and of late I’ve fallen in love with Loew-Cornell’s 7020 Ultra Round series. They’re made with synthetic hairs, so they’re tough, inexpensive, and hold amazing points. Mostly I love them for their feel – soft, with a bit of spring, and they hold just enough water. I’ve tried the natural sable brushes before, and I always had trouble with the amount of water they hold.

Gallery Talk – with Kathy Caudill

In the Tradition of Wyeth: Contemporary Watercolor Masters

Vero Beach Museum of Art, Vero Beach, Fla.

Oct. 1, 2011 – Jan. 15, 2012

When I was a young artist and member of the Beckley Art Group in the late 1970s, I entered a painting in one of the Art Group's shows at the Beckley Art Center. I don't really remember the painting, but I do remember the judge comparing it to work by Andrew Wyeth.

At that time, being young and self-taught, I had no idea who Andrew Wyeth was!

Later, I went to a book store, found and purchased a book on Andrew Wyeth, and I've been a fan of his work ever since. I am especially drawn to the underlying emotion depicted in his paintings.

Now, more than 30 years later, I have had the honor of exhibiting my work alongside the work of Andrew Wyeth at the Vero Beach Museum of Art in Vero Beach, Fla.

The show, "In the Tradition of Wyeth: Contemporary Watercolor Masters," Oct. 1, 2011 – Jan. 15, 2012, was built around two Andrew Wyeth paintings from the museum's permanent collection, plus three additional Andrew Wyeth paintings from private collections. The remaining paintings in the exhibition featured two pieces of my work and the work of nine other watercolorists from around the country, including such artists as Stephen Scott Young, Dean Mitchell, Ray Ellis, and Hubert and Alan Shuptrine, whom I also admire.

Like Wyeth, the artists selected for this exhibition express great feeling in their work, painting in styles that range from detailed to spontaneous and gestural.

My husband, Larry, our son and daughter, and I attended the reception for the exhibition in October. The museum was very impressive—much larger than I imagined—located in a park on spacious grounds surrounded by palm trees and outdoor sculpture.

Jay Williams, curator of exhibitions and collections, opened the exhibition with a lecture on the history of watercolor dating back from the mid-eighteenth century.

As he spoke, he projected images on a large screen at the front of a room packed with museum members. It was very humbling and a bit surreal to see my own image and that of my work projected on that screen as he compared my drybrush watercolor technique to that of Andrew Wyeth.

This was certainly a wonderful experience for me. The museum handled everything, including the packing and transport of my work by an art truck sent to my house. Also one of my paintings was loaned to the museum for this exhibition by a collector who has since purchased my other painting as well.



BELOW: Some of the exhibition literature featuring one of Kathy's paintings.

ABOVE: "Time Passage II" by Kathy Caudill was part of the Vero Beach Museum of Art exhibit, "In the Tradition of Wyeth."



At a time when oil and other works on canvas seem to be stealing the art spotlight in many galleries, I think a show of this caliber not only validated my own work, but also brought watercolor to the forefront once again. For those of us who paint in this magical and sometimes difficult medium, we owe much to Andrew Wyeth's influence in elevating watercolor to a medium of serious artistic expression.

News & Notes



Society to go 'paperless'

The time has come – WVWS is going to move to a paperless workflow. As a result, **this will be the last newsletter mass-mailed in hardcopy form.** Future editions of the newsletter will be posted to the WVWS website. If you feel unsure on how you might access the newsletter in the future, go to the website now and visit the News page. Current and past newsletters are already posted there for you to review.

Also, all WVWS forms (i.e. exhibit prospectus, by-laws, workshop registration, jury packet) will be disseminated digitally, rather than mass-mailed.

If you want a newsletter or form to arrive in the mail, you must make a request for it to be mailed. Note the committee chairpeople for certain subjects, and make the request of them. For example, for the newsletter, contact newsletter editor **Kristen Colebank**; for exhibits, contact President **Linda Elmer**; for the workshop, contact **Judy Mattson Reed**.

Notifications will be made periodically by postcard or email when important WVWS items are available online and will include directions on who to contact.

Also, for those who have limited Internet access, make connections with WVWS members around you, particularly the Regional Representatives (Trustees). If you don't know who your Regional Representative is, refer to pages 1-3 in the recently completed (and mailed) WVWS Directory. We are asking Regional Representatives to assist anyone in obtaining forms from the Internet, especially if a member does not have access to computers.

On a final note, the WVWS Directory will go to print every other year now, rather than annually. Updates will be sent out in a one-page format as needed on the off years.

New juried, signature members

The WVWS jury committee members offer congratulations to **Betty Neely, Janet Hart, Diane Mitchell, and Kristen Colebank** on achieving Juried Status in WVWS.

Congratulations also to **Jeannine M. Romano** and

April Waltz for achieving Signature Status in WVWS. The West Virginia Watercolor Society has three classifications of membership in addition to Charter, Honorary, and Patron Membership.

Associate Members: *All individuals wishing to be associated with the West Virginia Watercolor Society who have applied for Associate Membership and been accepted into the Society through payment of dues.*

Juried Members: *Members who have been granted the privilege of Juried Status by the Society's Membership.* To earn Juried Membership status, an Associate Member must submit six painting images for review by the Membership Jury. Candidates selected for Juried Membership consideration may be requested to submit three or more original works for final admission judging. Juried Membership status becomes official upon notification of acceptance by the Jury from the committee chairman.

Signature Members: *Juried Members who have been granted the privilege of using the West Virginia Watercolor Society initials (WVWS) in conjunction with their signatures by the Membership Jury.* To earn Signature status, a candidate must have work accepted in two juried WVWS shows in a six-year period, and submit four additional paintings images (other than slides of paintings that have been juried into past WVWS exhibits), for review by the Membership Jury. Signature Status may also be granted to any watercolor artist who is a signature member of the American Watercolor Society, the National Watercolor Society, or whose work has been accepted in any AWS, NWS, or Watercolor USA exhibit.

Change your membership status

Now that you have read about the membership classifications in WVWS, we hope Associate Members will be interested in moving toward Juried or Signature Status.

The applications to apply for a change in WVWS membership status will be available at the WVWS website **starting June 1.**

Get your gallery online

Do you have a website that features your art? Or do you need a website for your art? Either way, WVWS can help! The WVWS online gallery features the



News & Notes


work of our artists, either through a link to an existing website, or through an online slideshow built on the WVWS site.

The gallery and gallery links are FREE to WVWS members. Contact webmaster Kristen Colebank at wvwatercolor@gmail.com if you'd like to have a gallery created, or if you'd like a link to your existing site.

Necessary materials for a gallery built by WVWS will include digital images of your paintings, painting titles, and an artist's statement or bio. The gallery size is flexible, but the maximum limit will be nine paintings per artist.

For artists who already have websites, adding a link to WVWS will increase your web traffic. The gallery pages are the most popular pages on the WVWS site, with more than 300 unique visitors to the main gallery page in just the last 30 days.

Watermedia workshops in W.Va.

 **The Berkeley Arts Council** is hosting a four-day watercolor workshop with **Tom Lynch**, July 10-13, in Martinsburg.

Cost for the workshop is \$400 (fee does not include food or lodging). Lodging is available at the same facility as the workshop location. Group lodging rates are available for workshop participants.

To reserve a space, or for more information and workshop registration forms, visit the Berkeley Arts Council website, www.berkeleyartswv.org, or call Jane Horst at 304-279-9880.

 **The Beckley Art Group** is sponsoring a workshop with **Pat Weaver** from June 11-15 at the Cynthia Bickey Art Gallery in Beckley.

Workshop fee is \$300 with a \$150 deposit due by May 11, 2012. Fee does not include food or lodging. Mail deposit to Pat Ewing, 30 Sandlewood Drive, Beckley, WV 25801. To pay deposit by credit card, call the Bickey Gallery at 304-253-9226 Wednesday-Friday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

More information, including the reservation forms, are available on the WVWS website on the "Opportunities" page.



These are some examples of Laurie Goldstein-Warren's recent portrait and figurative works.

WVWS workshop in August

Make plans to attend the WVWS Workshop, which is scheduled for Aug. 2-5, 2012, at Canaan Valley Resort and Conference Center. The 2012 workshop will be led by WVWS member Laurie Goldstein-Warren and she will focus on portraiture techniques using a limited palette.

Here's what Laurie has planned for the sessions:

"In this fun and informative workshop, I will demonstrate a simplified approach to watercolor portraits. All portraits can be completed using the same five tube colors. This method works for any portrait, regardless of skin color or age of your subject.

No portrait drawing skill required. Basic knowledge of watercolors is helpful. This method also works for still lifes, landscapes, and abstracts. You will expand your painting skills by limiting your palette.

There will be short demonstrations throughout the day with plenty of painting time for students. Each student will receive individual assistance during studio time. Each day will end with a group exhibition of the day's work and a discussion."

Registration forms have been mailed to the membership and copies are also available to download from the WVWS website.

Building a sense of mystery

Betty Neely, who lives near Fairmont, has spent years experimenting and developing her own approach to the watercolor medium. The result is a unique combination of techniques, all aimed at creating “realistic abstractions” – works that build a sense of mystery and often provide a glimpse of a story that lurks beneath the surface.



Given her first exposure to watercolor, it's a wonder that Betty Neely persisted with the medium.

As an art and design student at Fairmont State, she recalls seeing lots of “pastel pictures” and wasn't satisfied with them.

So she began experimenting and working toward creating watercolors that had a sense of body and depth – just as an oil painting might.

With a first look at one of her paintings, it's easy to mistake them for oils because their convincing textures. But, if you touched the surface, you'd be surprised, Betty says. The illusion of impasto would fade when touching the smooth, cool surface of watercolor paper.

So, one wonders, how does she create these effects? How does she build these textures?

As it turns out, Betty doesn't like talking about technique or materials for their own sake. For her, they are simply a means to an end and are always evolving as she still searches for ways to push her paintings beyond surface realism.

Simply put, the best way to learn about her methods, she says, is to understand how she starts the painting process.

She often will begin with a particular color palette – nothing that indicates a specific subject, but just a group of colors that she thinks will work harmoniously. “I very seldom have a subject in mind,” at the start of each painting she explains.

Then she will apply thick layers of paint to her support, which usually is a watercolor board.

Betty says she began using board rather than paper



Texture plays an important role in the design of “Secluded.” With a nearly monochromatic palette, texture, shape and value define movement within the painting and create a sense of three-dimensional space.

because board could handle her painting techniques with a minimum of buckling. Essentially, the board is 100 percent cotton rag watercolor paper mounted to conservation-quality backing. The boards come in a variety of sizes and paper surfaces – hot press, cold press and rough.

The paint-to-water ratio is also important to Betty's approach. She uses mostly Winsor & Newton watercolors, but she uses very little water in the mix. With her flat brush, she will wet the brush, then dip it into some fresh paint, sometimes picking up two or three colors from different wells on her palette. Then she'll apply these colors with a goal of making interesting marks and layers.

Sometimes she also applies paint with other tools, such as scraps of mat board.

Once she has painted a layer or two, she stops and really begins to look at the piece. “I'll look and look through it,” she says. She's searching for elusive hints of a story that she can bring to the surface.



With these initial paint layers and a tentative sense of where the painting will go, Betty's subtractive painting process begins. Using lots of different re-purposed tools, she'll wipe and blot paint from the board. She will use wax paper, crumpled paper, mat board scraps – anything that might be useful to accomplish a particular look.

Each painting develops with these alternating additive and subtractive phases, with additional time invested in between as she carefully looks over the painting and finds elements that merit further exploration.

Betty also notes that the time she uses to examine the piece provides opportunity for the different paint layers to thoroughly dry, and then the transparency of watercolor comes into its own as complex colors and textures develop. "You can do a lot with watercolor," she says.

Since she's not interested in realism alone, she doesn't use photographic references as she paints. For inspiration, she often relies on her memories. As she explains, she might work on a painting for a while before she sees

something that reminds her of a place or an occasion. Then the process might turn toward developing that scene and playing up the emotional elements that she associates with the memory. Essentially, she works to imbue each painting with atmosphere and a "mysterious and spiritual quality."

But, she stresses, even though it's a flexible, almost organic, painting method, it's certainly not arbitrary or accidental. She always keeps basic design principles in mind as she works. She's looking for pathways, as well as color dominance, shape dominance, repetition, value, unity, and more. These elements hold her paintings together.

Betty wants to encourage other artists to push themselves, experiment, and work toward self-discovery. In her own case, she says, "This is my own technique. I've worked for years to loosen up and searched for a way to paint that would represent me."

"It's fun," she concludes. "It's really fun to paint this way."



"Dancing in the Street," represents one of Betty's flights of fancy. At some point, deep within the layers of this painting, she began to see faint hints of dancing figures, so she developed this boisterous scene from her imagination.



"Glacial Enchantment" utilizes a complementary color scheme punctuated by textural effects. In this painting, Betty also experimented with opaque white watercolor.



West Virginia Watercolor Society
P.O. Box 66
Wardensville, WV 26851



West Virginia Watercolor Society

WVWS Officers

- **Linda Elmer**, president
- **Jeannine Romano**, past president
- **Jeannine Romano**, vice president
- **Bruce Brenneman**, treasurer
- **Katherine Crim**, recording secretary
- **Amy C. Post**, corresponding secretary

WVWS Directors (Trustees)

- **Lou Gates**, Region I
- **Patricia Roberts**, Region II
- **Joy Cooper**, Region III
- **Katherine Crim**, Region IV
- **Janet Hart**, Region V
- **Robert W. Smith**, Region-at-Large

WVWS Committees

- **Jeanne Brenneman**, membership
- **Doncia Franklin**, archives and video library
- **Judy Mattson Reed**, workshops
- **Joseph Sweeney**, videographer
- **Linda J.C. Turner**, publicity

The West Virginia Watercolor Society actively seeks new associate members. Applicants must be a West Virginia resident at the time of application. Dues are \$30 per year (January to December). Membership applications can be downloaded from the WVWS website, www.wvwatercolorsociety.org, or contact Membership Chair Jeanne Brenneman at bjbrenneman@gmail.com.

Please send newsletter items to:
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www.wvwatercolorsociety.org