

*National League of
American Pen Women*
Diamond State Branch



July 2020 President's Message

It is July and Summer 2020 is in full swing with some changes due to Corona19. I hope all of you are spending your time sheltering at home, being cautious, wearing masks when out, and safe distancing when with large groups. I have heard from many of our members, and although we were in isolation, many have been productive in one way or another. A virus cannot negate artistic expression from our lives even if it is expressing it in a different medium or way. For myself, I have been working on my front and back deck flowerpots as well as a new 3 x 8 ft vegetable raised garden: tomatoes, peppers, parsley, cilantro, and flowers in between to keep away the bugs. I have also been trying new dinner recipes and baking my signature zucchini bread and sharing it with ill neighbors. I have done two figure drawing Zoom sessions with Ann Hopkins, an artist in Maine. Who would have thought I would be doing that a year ago? I've done some new work this past Spring and have submitted pieces to the Philadelphia Pastel Society Members Show and also the Philadelphia Water Color Society International Show. Both Shows this year will be virtual. This situation has made us stretch and grow in ways unknown before. Finally, the tennis clubs have opened, and I am thrilled to be able to play tennis and socialize with my tennis friends, all with precautions of course. Unfortunately, my family, our children and grandchildren do not live near so we can only connect by phone, on Zoom or Facetime. BUT so good to have that technology to be able to do that! Seeing someone in real time makes a big difference.

50th National NLAPW Biennial

The NLAPW National Biennial scheduled for April and then June has now been moved to **April 30 – May 2, 2021 at the Darcy Hotel. However, the Biennial Art Show will take place this year when D.C. opens again for Art Loop.** I had planned to go down to D.C. the last weekend in June to hang the Show, however, there was a gas leak in the Pen Arts Building. So again, I was not able to go and hang the Show. Hopefully, everything at Pen Arts will be back to normal in two weeks which is when I plan to make the trip. Once the Show is hung, Barbara Wolanin will come in to judge the artwork for awards and I will video the work hanging in the gallery. Fingers crossed nothing happens in the meantime to postpone this yet again!

Diamond State Branch Meetings

Although things are starting to open around Wilmington and the State, realistically, I do not see us having another Branch meeting until maybe **October or November**. Everything will depend on how things progress with the number of virus cases in our area at the end of the summer. **The Village of Brandywine Clubhouse is set to reopen in September**. I want to wait to see the circumstances at that time before I book the Clubhouse for a meeting. However, I want to point out that the Clubhouse is private and closed except for small group meetings. It is used primarily by our community residents for social gathering and mostly all of us are at “that age” where we all know we need to be careful. (No hanging out at bars etc.) So, I feel more comfortable having our meeting there rather than at DuPont CC, at least for the first few times. So much depends on what everyone around us is doing to control the spread. Time will tell.

Scholastic National Winners’ Celebration

Our usual New York City trip in June to attend the Scholastic Affiliates’ Workshop and to attend the National Scholastic Awards Celebration and Ceremony at Carnegie Hall was canceled because of Covid-19. **Taralee Morgan** was set to go again this year but it was not to be. I was so sorry for those student National winners. Several days of festivities and the meeting of other National winners is something to remember for a lifetime. However, there was a video program on June 3rd that showcased videos sent in by the students. There were also appearances by Chris Colfer, who played Kurt in Glee, Dav Pilky, author of Captain Underpants, and Suzanne Collins, author of Hunger Games. I did not get to see it, but Betsy Greer did and said it was done very well.

Diamond State Branch Board Art Show at the Station Gallery

I am pleased to tell you that Michele Foster, our Art Chair, has negotiated a **Diamond State Branch Board Art Show** date for **Oct 2- 31, 2020 at the Station Gallery, Greenville, DE**. The Diamond State Board Art Show is a new event that the Board approved last Spring. It is a benefit for members willing to spend time attending Board Meetings and working to make our Diamond State Branch interesting and better. Many other art organizations that I belong to have had Board member art shows as a benefit to those who serve. Especially after this long hiatus from our normal routine, I think this Show is a wonderful impetus to have more public exposure and get us back in the groove of exhibiting our work in a professional space.

Diamond State Branch Members Go to Rehoboth Beach Again

Betsy and I were concerned when the State of Delaware closed rentals at the Delaware Beaches earlier this Spring. We did not know at the time how long those restrictions would be in place and how it would impact our rental plans. We didn’t know how the Covid-19 Pandemic would play out. However, conditions in the State have improved and rentals are now allowed. I am hopeful that conditions will continue to improve by the end of September. The Realty company has contacted Betsy to let her know that the cleaning service will need extra time to thoroughly clean the house before and after our stay. They ask that this year we bring our own pillows and blankets as well as the bed sheets and towels, just to be safe. Our annual trip to Rehoboth Beach is set for **Friday**

September 25th through Friday October 2nd in that lovely large house on the corner of 2nd Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. It's a quiet location away from crowds, and when we are there, we stay pretty much by ourselves anyway. Of course, we will do that this time. I know all of us have been extremely careful during these last several months of quarantine. We are not traveling very far outside our immediate area, we are washing hands frequently, wearing masks when we are out, and staying away from large crowds. **We will continue to be cautious when we are in Rehoboth for that week.** We do not need to go out to dinner. We can order take out and eat in! It will be good to finally be together. We can take our walks in the neighborhood and on the beach, and paint outside in the yard. We can manage these conditions, be safe and together at the same time. I'm so looking forward to it.

What our Diamond State Branch Members Have Been Doing

Anna Bellenger

A big congratulations to Anna!

The Chester County Chapter of NSDAR (National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution) is pleased to announce that Anna Bellenger is the recipient of the very first Women in the Arts Award from this Organization. Her accomplishments in creating new techniques and unique works of art are so strong and the recommendations so glowing that the approval process was very rapid.

This award does not require NSDAR membership, but it does require that the nominee be recognized for her accomplishments in her field as well as innovative in her techniques. She has without question demonstrated both. Sometime this autumn, Anna will be presented with the award certificate and pin by the American Heritage Committee.

Betsy Greer and Shirley Rigby



Betsy and Shirley were among several artists at Hardcastle Gallery Saturday June 27th for an outdoor paint out. Luckily, the weather was good, and everyone seemed to enjoy being out and painting together again.



Maria Keane

The Delaware Art Museum celebrates the *Fourth Annual Writers' Conference* on Saturday, July 18th. The topic is *UNTOLD STORIES* featuring keynote speaker Erin Entrada Kelley and other presenters. Maria's proposal was accepted for the conference. Her presentation will be ***Mary Magdalene. Saint/Sinner, Let's Get It Right, Searching the History of her Spirituality***

The workshop suggests methods to research the valuable lives of women whose worth may have been overlooked or misconstrued in the annals of history. The conference will be a virtual experience using Zoom.

Iris Gray Dowling

Iris has been remarkably busy this summer. She has been working in the garden to raise fresh veggies she can eat. She also is enjoying planting flowers making her property look beautiful. Iris has been putting together her new picture book: *Toads: Friends You Never Knew You Had*. It is at the Publisher and may be ready by midsummer for release. It is a book for children and adults alike showing pictures that most people have never seen in a lifetime. She is also working on another book of stories from her childhood, similar to *Echoing Memories*. She had a lot of stories written and just need to revise and organize them. She says time goes so fast when she's working that she doesn't seem to have enough hours in the day!.

Trish Chambers

Trish has been busy in Magnolia, Delaware working with the DE food bank to stock her Church kitchen so they can give away prepackaged food. They had been able to feed 200 families so far. It is a lot of hard work arranging deliveries, but she finds the work very satisfying. She feels she and the other Church members are making a difference in the lives of people in need.

Geri Huxsoll



Geri printed two lithographs before the winter session ended at the Fleisher Art Memorial in Philadelphia. The lithograph is a snowy woods scene. She was also working on two others. "I grained two of my own stones together, giving me both to work on and I have drawn on them. I will now just wait until the summer session, (as the spring session was canceled) to go in, etch and print these two." Her plans for retirement

are to focus more on her artwork, walking her dog and no more juggling work schedules!



Tracey Landmann

Tracey has her own Show this summer at the Gibby Center for the Arts, Middletown, Delaware titled ***Hues of the World works by Tracey Landmann***. It is a joyful, playful approach to color. Colorful canvases, repurposed painted tables and a transformed medieval tapestry privacy screen are some of the pieces that will be on display from July 9th thru the 25th. The Gibby asks that visitors wear masks and maintains social distancing when visiting. A reception may be held later in the month depending on

Covid-19 updates. The Center is located at 51 W. Main Street, Middletown, DE, and is open on Thursdays and Fridays, 12:00AM to 5:00PM and Saturdays, 10:00AM to 5:00PM.

Sandy Mallett and Mary Lou Griffin

Sandy and Mary Lou joined a Zoom Model Drawing



session on June 27th with artist Ann Hopkins, from Eastport, Maine. They learned of her Zoom sessions from Kerin Hearn who became acquainted with the group during this Covid-19 shutdown. **Catherine**



Bosk, who is currently with her daughter in Massachusetts, had also joined a previous figure

drawing session with Mary Lou and Kerin in June. There were warm up short poses, several longer 15-minute poses, and then two 20-minute poses. Music and poetry readings in between. We are looking forward to next month's session. No shlepping drawing pads, watercolor, or pastel. You do not even have to leave your house to participate!

Please send your latest projects, interests and news to Mary Lou Griffin

Enjoy the warm weather and everyone please be safe and stay healthy.