Milton Artists’ Guild Meeting
April 20, 2017

Led by: Linda Stetch
Notes taken: Ellen Young

Members attended:

Linda Stetch
Ray McClure
Mary Ann Duffy Godin
Lori MacLaughlin
Claudette Eaton
Chrstina Lesperance
Dave Lesperance
Ellen Young
Lorraine Manley
Judy Taylor
Trine Wilson
Sharon Radtke
Cheryl Alwine
Jane Morgan
Janice DeCooman (had to leave early)
Betsy Finstad
Kathy LeClaire
Annette Hansen
Doris Bergeron
Donna Blatchley
Barry Genzlinger
Maureen Genzlinger
Amy Cook

Linda read from the 5 or 6 year old MAG Brochure stating our mission and the goal of opening an art center and gallery in Milton and reminded all the amazing achievement that we’ve done in opening the Art Center & Gallery this year.

Trials and tribulations: With this new step we’ll have struggles and challenges and Linda asked for the members’ support and patience and good communication – please communicate any concerns, questions or kudos.

Resignations: One recent bump was the resignation of Lori and Doris citing the lack of a Directors & Officer’s insurance policy which would cost $800/year. Their concern was they might be held personally liable. Ellen Young has stepped in to help with the last two months of Doris’ directorship; the secretary position hasn’t been filled. In June the members will vote on new officers and directors, the question of insurance, and some changes to the bylaws. The leadership is consulting with attorneys, insurance experts, and other non-profit organizations and will present the information about the issue of insurance to the membership before the vote. Several people strongly urged that the information be presented far in advance of the June meeting – not only so the membership will have time to be informed before voting but so that people who may be nominated will have the information they need to decide whether or not to run. Linda strongly urged members to research this issue themselves using similar means. She stressed the importance of asking direct questions: what a policy covers and doesn’t, who has it, who doesn’t and why. She also asked the members to keep in mind the MAG has no employees or stakeholders. It is a complex issue.

Barry Genzlinger pointed out that state law specifically exempts officers and directors of 501c3 corps from personal liability but that other types of leadership aren’t mentioned/protected and suggested people look up Understanding Your Responsibilities as a 501c3 and Title 11b of the Vermont statutes. Mary Ann Godin points out that there has never been a liability suit on directors of a 501c3 in Vermont, but still urges that the information be presented in advance of nominations.

Bylaws: The attorneys the MAG works with are working on a proposed change to the bylaws that will be voted on by the membership in June. Doris Bergeron passed around an alternative set of bylaws she wants considered.

Membership dues: They are now $30 a year. Linda described the increased benefits as well as expense to the Guild of having the Art Center & Gallery, the increased promotion of the Guild and its members because of it, the new website, the Grand Opening which will bring the governor and many visitors to our Gallery where member art is being exhibited and sold. 2758 member items have gone into inventory representing 48 of our 90 members and sales (net of tax and credit card fees) are already at $1,389.97, which is $347.49 for the guild and $1,042.48 for the artists whose work was sold. That’s in less than 3 weeks!

Proposed raising the dues to $45 or $50 a year. Cheryl Alwine proposed a tiered membership (supporting member, $30 or $35, exhibiting member, $50) which had some interested but ultimately found potentially divisive. There was a lot of discussion among members about how great a benefit membership in the Guild is, even if a member isn’t exhibiting in the gallery, and the much higher dues of other art organizations, as well on the other hand of the other recent price rise, and the increased costs to the Guild for having an art center. Members present agreed to the proposed increase of $50~~;~~ overwhelmingly with one not in favor. The increase will be voted on for final approval at the annual meeting in June.

Scholarships: During the membership dues discussion, members proposed we have a scholarship fund to help those who may not be able to afford the dues. Sharon, our events coordinator, said we could raise the funds with one event. Others indicated willingness to donate to such a fund. An exhibit and art sale specifically to raise funds for Milton High School student membership was also proposed.

Photo Booth to Artist Studio: Originally space was set aside for a photo booth for photography members, but the photographers have concluded that space is unsuitable. It was proposed that the photo booth be converted to a 6th artist studio for rent at the same rate as the others. All present approved this idea.

Mural: The back wall of the Art Center & Gallery is cement and cannot be used to hang artwork. We don’t have any member muralists, but one of Vermont’s famous muralists, John Young, will paint one on that wall for us for free and become a MAG member. There was discussion about whether it was fair for one individual to receive such a large and prominent spot, and most of the members present seemed to feel it was a gift that would benefit the Guild by bringing more visitors to our Center. There was some concern that such a large artwork would dominate the Gallery and Lorraine suggested that he show several proposals for the members to choose from. Kathy proposed we not have the members micromanage this and to allow the Executive Committee to choose. There was a vote to have the mural yea or nay. 18 yeas, 2 nays.

Gallery rotation: Because it is so much work to hang the entire exhibit, this will not be changed every 2 months as originally conceived. Instead it will be freshened quarterly. There is space left now for new member art to be exhibited - it will specifically be a “New Member” area, until some time has passed where it makes sense to just incorporate that into the normal exhibit. All members who originally brought in artwork to exhibit by the deadline were included. Some members couldn’t make the March deadline and two new members are waiting for their work to be included. Some members brought many more pieces than allowed during the original hanging and the Exhibit Committee has a plan to meet these challenges.

When the exhibit is freshened next, not all work will be taken down, but some will be. Members who don’t have work on the wall yet will be given priority. Members will be asked to bring in new work and the Exhibit Committee will curate from that work to choose pieces that work well together. Not every piece will be used. There was discussion about whether or not those who have studio space should be on the other walls and it was quickly pointed out that people who are paying extra shouldn’t be penalized.

Windows and doors: Bill and Jen Kaigle’s mockup of the proposed door and window artwork was passed around. Cost was discussed; question about why website wasn’t on the second door. Members present unanimously approved of going ahead with the proposal adding the website on one of the doors.

Leadership team, 2017-2018: Elections for new directors and officers are coming up. Nomination starts now. To nominate someone, contact both:

Tina Lesperance castlegarden\_vt@yahoo.com 578-1600

Janet Dooley janettadesigns@gmail.com 598-9219

In the agenda that was emailed, duties were described. Barry objected to the descriptions of the duties of President and Board of Directors, which he feels are inaccurate.

Linda would like to be replaced as chair of the Exhibit Committee. This is a wonderful job that Linda loves but has too many things on her plate to do it all. The key to being successful in this position is organization. You have much assistance because almost all the sites have site coordinators who hang all the artwork in that location. Additional people are also needed on the exhibit committee now that the Art Center Gallery has been added to their slate. Additional help is needed now. Contact Linda if you can help: lstetch@comcast.net.

Sharon needs additional people for the Events Committee. Help is needed now, but it’s not a huge commitment – just planning events. Contact Sharon if you can help, Sharon@sharonteventsllc.com.

Publicity team also needs help! Please contact Mary Ann Duffy Godin at reggodin5@gmail.com.

Upcoming event: At the August 17 membership meeting from 6pm-8pm two lawyers will be joining us to answer questions on legal matters related to art, such as copyright.

Upcoming Exhibit: The deadline for the Cyto Expressions exhibit at BioTek is passed. May 1st, those exhibiting must drop off their work at Biotek between 8:30 and 9:30. If you cannot make that time, you must arrange a friend to help. Annette is bringing two members’ artwork. The Exhibit Committee will be there to take the work and signed releases and will hang the exhibit for you.

Reminder: Everyone in the Cyto Expressions exhibit needs to email their label information to Gisela (see her previous email) so that Mary Ann Godin can create the labels in time. Not every exhibitor has done this yet!

Reception: Those exhibiting in the Cyto Expressions show may bring one friend to the reception which will be held May 18 at 2pm. Governor Scott will be there.

Art Center Café: It was proposed that the Art Center café be named “Artie’s Café. Ray suggested MAGie’s Café. This was unanimously adopted and it was suggested that we have the Kaigles make a sign for the café. Lorraine suggested a Brown Bag Luncheon as a regular member activity at the Café, and Cheryl wanted assurance that this will never happen during a workshop because the distraction would greatly negatively impact a workshop.

Website: Betsy Finstad has created a brand new website for the Milton Artists’ Guild, which includes many new features. A few aren’t completed yet, but will be soon. If you haven’t already, send her a new bio, and pictures of up to ten artworks you’d like included. There is a forum which you can participate in by creating an account on the website. You can renew your membership online – wasn’t able to change the wording from “buy now.” Ultimately, you’ll be able to sign up for workshops on the website. Committee leadership will ultimately have ability to upload things related to their area. If you see anything that needs correcting, or have new artwork to upload, email Betsy at egfinstad@gmail.com.

Grand Opening: This will take place Saturday May 6, from 2pm to 6pm. The ribbon cutting will be at 3pm. Unfortunately, Mr. Pomerleau won’t be present after all. There was a call for volunteers and a sign up sheet passed around. Many but not all slots were filled! We still need more volunteers. To sign up to help, please contact Events Coordinator Sharon Radtke at Sharon@sharonteventsllc.com.

There will be a raffle and a silent auction at the Grand Opening. You can contribute artwork or another great thing to contribute is a donated gift certificate from a local business. To donate to the raffle, please contact Trine Wilson at: trineshome@yahoo.com

The event is being promoted widely – Sharon has gotten much free promotion. Kathy suggested we get the event on Milton’s electronic sign. Annette suggested VPR Art Hounds. Sharon will contact. It was also suggested that the press release be on the website.

Several people strongly objected to having a cash bar at the event, because it is a daytime event.

Food is being donated by two restaurants, but Lorraine proposed members bring additional food. Contact Sharon at Sharon@sharonteventsllc.dom.

Leunig’s Fundraiser: Leunig’s is donating 10% of all proceeds for the night of April 28 from 4 – 11. There will be a raffle. All items for the raffle have already been collected, but you can help by signing up to sell raffle tickets that evening. If you can take one of the hour-long shifts, contact Trine at trineshome@yahoo.com.

Exhibit Committee has great news: The Town of Milton has purchased a new hanging system for the Community Gallery and the Library which will make hanging your exhibits so much easier! We have acting town manager Don Turner to thank for this development.

Upcoming Exhibit Deadline: July 14 is the deadline to submit the photograph of your artwork for the “Off the Wall” exhibit at Frog Hollow to Frank Alwine at frankalwine@hotmail.com , which will be hung sometime in early October. Work will be juried by Rob Hunter, with assistance from MAG leadership. If your work is chosen, you will be given a time to bring the artwork to Rob Hunter at Frog Hollow, the first week of October, date to be announced. You are welcome to take the title “Off the Wall” literally or figuratively. If you have any questions, contact Linda at lstetch@comcast.net.

Upcoming Event: “Rumble 2017” is an event being organized by Ethan Rogati to bring Milton’s car enthusiasts and their work into the Art Center at a big car themed event. Ethan needs assistance in planning and organizing the event. To help in any way, please contact Ethan at: edrogati@gmail.com.

Arts Day at Milton Elementary School: One of the teachers at Milton Elementary School is looking for 18 artists to assist in a big art event at the school on May 26, from 8:55 to 3pm to teach several 50 minute long art classes to several classes throughout the day. This is a great opportunity to connect MAG with the local schools. The teacher has grants that will cover any supplies needed. Linda will be sending an email about this opportunity to the membership. She is leaving the information and sign up at the Art Center for your convenience.

Opportunities to Exhibit: There are still a few opportunities to get on MAG’s exhibit schedule at area locations. We will soon have a new location at Laura B’s – the restaurant replacing the Dam Diner. There will also be a second Biotek building exhibit. Contact Linda at lstetch@comcast.net to inquire.

Upcoming workshops: Joy Choquette is giving a writing workshop at the Art Center next Thursday from 6 to 8pm. There will be workshop to make Fairy Houses from gourds in June, a basket weaving workshop still in the works, and others. The Workshop committee has a need for member volunteer’s to act as Hosts when non MAG members are giving workshops – to welcome the participants, and to participate in the workshop free of charge! Contact Cheryl at cherylkalwine@gmail.com to offer your assistance, or inquire about teaching or taking a workshop.

Workshop delay: If you’ve signed up for the weaving workshop, be aware this might be delayed due to a family emergency. The workshop committee will contact you with more information.

Take over the E-Card: Gisela would like to pass this duty on. If you’re interested, please contact her at vtsnowgise@gmail.com.

Call for grant writers: the guild can use your help in this important activity. If you can help, please contact Gisela at vtsnowgise@gmail.com.

Member questions (Barry Genzlinger): Will the next year’s budget be voted on by the membership at the annual meeting? When will members get a detailed accounting of the Art Center expenses? Linda recorded his questions and will get back to him.

Meeting ended with sign up sheets and member gathering.