

# Perspectives



grandvalleyartists.com

April 2020

## New Opportunity to Sell Your Work

Submitted by Marty Klar

**Disclaimer: All of this information is for future reference. Hopefully it will be a reality some weeks from now, but for right now everything is ON HOLD.**



Four years ago this month, GVA was invited to feature the work of one artist every six weeks at the Bliss & Vinegar restaurant (B&V) on Forest Hills Avenue in Cascade. This has resulted in great exposure for us as an organization and for each artist that has had their work chosen for display. In 2019, the owners opened a second location in the Downtown Market (GRDTM) on Ionia. Once again, GVA members have graciously been offered the exclusive opportunity to feature their work. This all came about very recently and the owners were eager to get started. Currently four GVA members have their work on display. Items include tea towels, artisan soaps, 8”x8” canvas-wrapped prints of fruits & vegetables, and assorted note cards. Here’s the scoop and scope.



### COORDINATION

GVA member Barbara Doss-Karluk has stepped up as coordinator on this project and can be reached at email: [bjdoss-karluk@hotmail.com](mailto:bjdoss-karluk@hotmail.com) or via voicemail at cell phone number: 616-443-4855. Please do not contact the restaurant directly at this time. If you are interested and feel your work is suitable (as you’ll read below) please send digital images of your work to Barb, or send her the link to your website and/or Instagram account.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- B&V will take a 25% pre-sales tax commission on all work
- B&V is responsible for collecting and filing Michigan sales tax
- B&V will provide each artist with appropriate tax forms or summaries at the request of each artist
- All work must be the original design of the artist and must be safe, non-toxic, and fit for its intended use

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

- B&V has complete autonomy of inventory sold in the store, and artwork will be arranged and displayed at their discretion
- All sales will go through the cash register at B&V
- Each “exhibit” will run for a period of approximately 3 months (quarterly) unless otherwise determined by B&V
- Each artist is responsible for delivering their artwork and picking up unsold items from the GRDTM B&V store on designated days and times by arrangement with the GVA coordinator
- Each artist will provide the GVA coordinator with a short bio for use in each exhibit which she will format for display
- Each artist will need to provide B&V with their name, an email address and home mailing address
- Each artist will be provided a vendor number by B&V
- Each artist will be required to label their individual items with their vendor number and price
- If a discounted price is offered for multiple-item sales this too must be added to the label
- Payments to artists from B&V will be made by agreement with each artist
- Artist releases B&V, the GRDTM, and GVA from any and all liability
- If an artist feels they need a contract, it will be their responsibility to prepare one and negotiate with B&V directly

#### THEMES

- Initially B&V would prefer the following themes:
- Food (the store is in the GRDTM), fruits, vegetables, etc.
- Holidays/Seasonal
- Michigan or Grand Rapids

#### IDEAS WE’VE THOUGHT OF TO SELL

- Small pieces of original 2D artwork, not larger than 12” x 12”
- Matted original art and/or reproductions of original art
- Cards, postcards and magnets

- Towels: cotton tea towel, microfiber, flour sack
- Napkins, table cloths and other fiber arts/weaving
- Wooden or metal utensils, bowls and/or ceramic or glass
- Bowls/containers/plates/cups
- Handmade soaps

#### PRICING

Due to the overall environment of the market, items should be priced at less than \$100. Determining price is the responsibility of the artist in concert with B&V.

#### DISPLAYS AVAILABLE

- The main display is shelves set along one side of the store, and a round dining room-sized table
- There is NO hanging space, so all 2D art will need to go on easels
- We have 12 medium sized easels for use
- We have one metal greeting card rack for use
- We plan to have a flip-through bin for matted artwork at some point

**GVA Welcomes**  
**Michael Koole, Raschelle Smith,**  
**John Kriekaard,**  
**Maggie McGuinness**

**Welcome Back**  
**Lisa Wilkerson,**  
**Phyllis Zimmerman**

# View from the Street

Submitted by Evie Carrier

For nearly a decade, my husband Michael and I have joyfully participated in the Grand Valley Artists' street show—the Reeds Lake Art Festival. We have found it to be one of the best-run shows of its kind in the state ... and we sell at over forty of the better venues.

The Friday before we pack, carefully loading our white pop-up tent, tables, red table cloths, canvases, book-stands, banners, boxes of Jack Handler books (my husband is an author of hard-boiled Michigan-based thrillers), and a couple of director chairs.

Early on the following morning (always the third Saturday in June), as we pull our vehicle into the line up, in spite of the darkness, we always find the friendly caffeinated Show Director, complete with red visor and clipboard—his performance is reminiscent of a maestro waving his baton, while his orchestra warms up and the music begins.

Year after year there has always been a seamless, well-organized team of GVA volunteers, ready and willing to deploy an endless supply of smiles. They show us where to unload, how to park and what to expect. Without fail we have thusly been welcomed into the East Grand Rapids neighborhood. When the day begins, it is always a joy to greet new and previous buyers. They are also thrilled to find out what is new and to enjoy the adventure of making new friendships.



Evie and Michael's booth

Of course, if needed, a member of the East Grand Rapids security staff is always close by to assist.

Because shoppers, kids and dogs are always welcome, with each year the Reeds Lake Art Festival has come to be viewed not only as a superb



Michael and Evie Carrier

shopping event, but also as a holiday party. There is simply just nothing like it during the summer.

As a vendor, even though I love greeting shoppers at my booth, invariably I still find myself at times strolling down the center of the street, meeting fellow artisans and sharing ideas and techniques. Unlike some events I have visited, the crowds are always good. That is at least in part because GVA energetically promotes the art fair, using street signs, social media, radio, and TV.

At the end of the day, the event provides every participant with the feeling of a job well done. The buyers thin and disappear, the vendors begin to pack up, the tents come down, we say our good-byes, and then the street is re-opened.

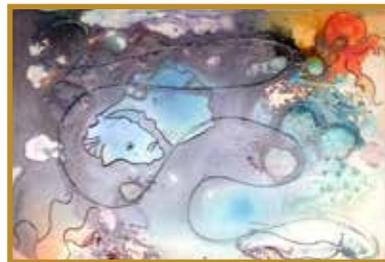
Barely a day passes before the planning for next year begins.

# Workshops: Tons of Fun!

Submitted by **Mary Marin**

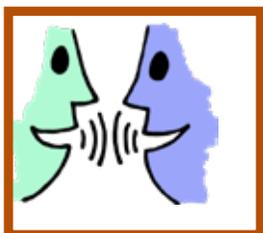
If you haven't yet attended one of the many workshops that are held at our studio, you are missing a good time! Recently, for example, Nora Faber Overvoorde shared some of her techniques for painting on Clay-board with about ten enthusiastic participants over two afternoon sessions.

Keep an eye on the newsletter and Mailchimp announcements, as we will always let you know when another fun opportunity is planned.



# New Opportunity to Show Your Work

All artists over age 18 are invited to apply to show your work at Trinity Lutheran Church. The church has approximately 108 feet of rail and cable system, and can accommodate 12 to 20 pieces of art depending upon size. At this time they can only show wall-hung pieces as they have no display pedestals for sculpture in the round. Any GVA member interested in this opportunity should email HJ Slider at [hjslider51@gmail.com](mailto:hjslider51@gmail.com).



## ART CHAT!

We will be suspending Art Chat until we are back in the studio once again. Hopefully sooner rather than later. In the meantime, please take the time to contact one another. Your voice IS very important.

## Photo Group

Submitted by Randy Nyhof

The Photo Group met for their regular meeting on March 3 with their usual critique and announcements.



Our next meeting was scheduled for April 7 for the usual critique and announcements, but due to the virus it has been canceled.

Randy Nyhof was also the curator for a photo show at the Gallery in the Frames Unlimited Store on 28th Street which was supposed to start at the end of next week. Many GVA photographers are part of the show. All the works are there ready to be hung, but unfortunately the store has closed for the next two weeks. The manager will contact us all when they reopen to give us an updated schedule of our events.

We are waiting to see how the next few weeks unfold concerning the GVA Photo Group Show at the GVA Gallery in May.



art thing. It didn't take long, though before she virtually exploded! Drawing and painting became her passion, and almost every day, she would gift us with a fun little doodle on Facebook, usually with a single accompanying "G'nite folks" comment.

Since those days in 2015, Sri has thrilled us with her whimsical, colorful imagination. Self-taught, her style is unlike anything you'll find anywhere else. Back then, she asked me where I thought she should take classes to improve her skills. I begged her then to continue to do her own thing...there is nothing like it, and I didn't want her to somehow be dissuaded from doing art HER way! Thank goodness her very original works continue to charm us, and it will be great fun to see a lot of them on display in Muskegon. Stay tuned for an update on reception.

## Program Night

Submitted by Randy Nyhof

Our program for March 12 was presented by Anna Donahue. She spoke about how she built her art business and some of the pros and cons with commissioned artwork. Also she gave some info on the Artist Entrepreneur group which is a spinoff from her art business. It was a very interesting presentation as I did not know the scope of her involvement in the arts and ArtPrize. (Photo of Anna, below.)

The program for April is scheduled for a presentation by Kevin Buist to give an update on ArtPrize for this year. Waiting to see what happens in the next week or so to see whether to cancel or not.



## I Remember

Submitted by Mary Marin

I remember the first time Sri McCarthy attended a sketch session at GVA. We were at our previous location at 1345 Monroe NE. I had worked with Sri, and I encouraged her to join GVA. Her previous artistic expression had been via photography, most especially photographing barns and rural scenes, and quite often her cat.

That first day in the GVA studio, Sri timidly dabbled, feeling shy, so unsure of herself, and new to the whole

# CALL FOR ARTISTS

## Grand Valley Artists Juried Exhibition at the Forest Hills Fine Arts Center

June 1, 2020 through July 17, 2020.

Located in Grand Rapids on the far southeast side, the Forest Hills Fine Arts Center is a state-of-the-art, contemporary arts facility nestled in the beautiful natural surroundings of the Forest Hills Public Schools campus. The scenic yet expansive lobby provides a perfect venue for the display of artwork, which will be viewed by the many people who frequent the building. The exhibitions of the FHFAC are actively promoted within the community throughout the year.

Our juror, Stephen Duren, is a renowned American artist who has called West Michigan home for the past four decades. He was born and reared in the amber light of Northern California. From 1968–1972, Duren served in the U.S. Navy, stationed in Vietnam, Cuba, and Italy. After his separation from the service, he briefly remained in Europe, where he stumbled upon an exhibition of Vincent Van Gogh's work, that he says was akin to a religious experience for him. Duren's formal training in art education was at the San Francisco Art Institute (BFA) and Sacramento State University (MA). In 1978, Duren taught art in area colleges for the next six years, after which he began to work exclusively as a fine artist. From 1984–present, Duren has distinguished himself as both a plein air and studio painter. His works can be found in many private and corporate collections.

The following guidelines have been established for this exhibit:

- This exhibition will be juried to approximately 80 works. All types of art and mediums are welcome.
- All work submitted must be suitable for viewing by children in a school community.
- 3D work including sculptures is permitted; large works (more than 60" or 100lbs) need prior approval before submission. Check with Doug Klemm (616) 481-6121.
- There is no commission charged for sales. Potential purchasers will be referred to the artists by FHFAC staff.
- The FHFAC reserves the right to use the exhibition space for other activities during the exhibit. It is possible that some work may be temporarily moved.
- GVA volunteers and GVA staff will hang the exhibit with oversight of Jane Bunting, FHFAC Coordinator.
- The Opening Reception will be hosted by FHFAC and GVA.
- Awards: 1st Place \$300; 2nd Place \$200; 3rd Place \$150 and 4th Place \$100 will be selected by the juror and awarded at the opening reception.

## APPLYING & SUBMITTING YOUR WORK

Submissions open April 1, 2020 and close April 30, 2020. (No late entries will be accepted.)

- Send up to 4 entries to the following email account: [GVAsubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:GVAsubmissions@gmail.com)
- In the subject line enter: GVA Exhibit-FHFAC
- Enter your name, address, city, state, zip
- Enter your phone number and email address

Next, list your entries, numbering as follows:

- Entry 1: Title of Work
- Medium
- Size
- Price \$\$\$ or NFS
- Repeat for Entries 2, 3, and 4.
- Attach a photo of each entry.
- Your cost of entry is \$25 for one entry. Add \$5 for each additional entry.
- Entries will not be considered complete until payment is received.

## **FEE PAYMENT**

Promptly send payment the SAME DAY you apply for the exhibit.

Address check or money order to: GRAND VALLEY ARTISTS.

SEND TO: Doug Klemm, 7941 Park Lane Avenue, Jenison, MI 49428

Or use this PayPal link: [https://paypal.me/GArtists?locale.x=en\\_US](https://paypal.me/GArtists?locale.x=en_US)

## **PRESENTATION OF WORK**

It is to your advantage to submit clear crisp images of properly photographed work. Do not shoot your images through glass! Remove artwork from the frame before photographing. It is also best to crop the images so that only the art and not the mat or frame is photographed.

- Work must be wired for hanging. Sawtooth hangers are not permitted.
- Submit original art. No giclees or other reproductions of your art will be allowed. Exception, printing original digitally created artwork.
- Framing must show good craftsmanship.
- No exposed glass edges.
- Entries will be handled with care. However, neither GVA nor the FHFAC, or staff or members of either, is responsible for loss or damage to an artist's work.
- Selected images must remain for the duration of the show.
- Please do not submit work that was previously shown in an exhibit at the FHFAC.
- If you have no computer access, or have difficulty submitting your entries, please contact Doug Klemm at (616) 481-6121 or [dougeklemm@hotmail.com](mailto:dougeklemm@hotmail.com)

## **NOTIFICATION/DROP-OFF ACCEPTED ARTWORK/PICK-UP ARTWORK**

- Notification of Acceptance/Decline will be by email prior to May 10, 2020
- Drop-off Accepted Artwork to the Forest Hills Fine Arts Center on Thursday, May 28, 8:00-5:00 PM or Friday, May 29, 8:00-10:00 AM
- FHFAC and GVA Volunteers will hang the exhibit, Friday, May 29, 10:00 TO 5:00 PM
- Pick-up artwork July 20, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**OPENING RECEPTION**-Tuesday June 2, 2020, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at FHFAC

- Reception is hosted by FHFAC and GVA (Catered by Evie Carrier and daughter)
- Juror Remarks and Awards Presentation at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Forest Hills Fine Arts Center 600 Forest Hill Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546

We look forward to receiving your entries! Best wishes and good luck to all of you! Please address any questions/concerns you may have to:

Doug Klemm at [dougeklemm@hotmail.com](mailto:dougeklemm@hotmail.com) (616) 481-6121

or Carol Lurn at: [carollaurn@yahoo.com](mailto:carollaurn@yahoo.com) (616) 437-9365

# 34th Annual LowellArts West Michigan Art Competition

Extended Until April 29

Submitted by Doug Klemm

The 34th Annual West Michigan Art Competition highlights outstanding artwork by artists from 25 Lower West Michigan counties. This year's distinguished juror is Jim Nawara, a Professor Emeritus of Painting & Drawing in the James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History at Wayne State University in Detroit.

Five cash awards totaling \$2500 were awarded at an Artists Reception on Thursday, March 5, from 6:00–8:00 p.m.

## Gallery Hours:

Tuesday-Friday 10am-6pm

Saturday 10am-5pm

The LowellArts Gallery is currently closed. The anticipated re-open date for LowellArts is April 14, and regular gallery hours will resume at that time.

## Award Winners

David Besteman, *Triptych #10*

JA Dine, *Visions*

Taylor Hendrix, *Psilocybin Self Portrait*

Doug Klemm, *Cusop Hill, Hay, Wales UK* (GVA)

Taylor Mazer, *Mail?*

## Honorable Mention

Richard Aardsma, *Palm Springs Revisited*

Amy Johnson, *Pathway*

Frank Leasure, *Morning Mist*

Maria Lemon, *White Peony*

Michael Nashef, *Anbara Bracelet*

## Juror - Jim Nawara

Jim Nawara earned a BFA degree from the Art Institute of Chicago and his MFA degree in painting at the University of Illinois, Champaign. Nawara is a Professor Emeritus of Painting & Drawing in the James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History at Wayne State University in Detroit, where he taught for forty-six years. His paintings, drawings and prints have been exhibited in more than 250 international, national, and regional group exhibitions as well as nine solo exhibitions. Nawara has received substantial research grant support for his work from Wayne State University and three Creative Artist Grants from the Michigan Council for the Arts. His work is represented in numerous museums, corporate, university and private collections.



Doug Klemm's painting, *Cusop Hill, Hay, Wales UK*

Jim Nawara's work emanates from a continuum of ideas and observations about landscape that have intrigued him since he was a very young artist. While his compositions involve the creation of illusions and allusions concerning particular places and things in the world, Nawara has said, "I am interested in natural and unnatural visual events in landscape. These events may be grand, unimportant, profound or quirky. While an image usu-

ally evolves from an actual place, the paintings are essentially abstract configurations of shape, space, color and light that I perceive or imagine within a subject from the beginning. Ultimately the work is about interpretation, invention, and memory, as well as the physical process of painting. I consider subject matter a vehicle to express something that is ineffable, yet guided by acute observation, history, and by the inspirational works of a wide variety of fine artists, past and present.”

## ARTISTS

Richard Aardsma		Henry Droski	(GVA)	Maria Lemon	
Hannah Apps	(GVA)	Iris Fischer		Cathy Marashi	
Cindy Awrey	(GVA)	Lee Ann Frame		Taylor Mazer	
Ted Bergin		John Gregg		Wendy Mersman	
Deborah Bergren	(GVA)	Tatsuki Hakoyama		Michael Nashef	
Margo Carlson Berke		Thomas Hegewald		Kathleen Nolan-Hutchins	
David Besteman		Taylor Hendrix		Nora Faber Overvoorde	
Annemarie Biernacki	(GVA)	Laura Hollenbeck		Angela Pastor	
Larry Blovits	(GVA)	Amy Johnson		Stone Peng	(GVA)
Mary Bommarito		Mary Clare Johnson		Kendra Postma	
Laura Burke		Doug Klemm	(GVA)	Thomas Reverman	
Ted Carlson Jr.	(GVA)	Michael Koole		Emerson Schreiner	
Gary Cialdella		David Kuecherer		Patti Sevensma	
Bethany Clark		Frank Leasure		Shelley Stevens	
Jay Constantine		Robert Lee			
Caroline Cook					
JA Dine					

## Officers, Board, and Committee Chairs of GVA

### President

Joanne Swann  
616-406-8648  
joswann@sbcglobal.net

### Vice President

Emily Green  
ww.emilyg@gmail.com

### Secretary

Dana Donnell  
danaBdonnell@gmail.com

### Treasurer

Lloyd Wheeler  
lbwheeler518@gmail.com

### Membership

Mary Baine  
marymbaine@gmail.com

### Photography

Randy Nyhof  
r.nyhof@comcast.net

### Program

Randy Nyhof  
r.nyhof@comcast.net

### 501(c)(3) Coordinator

Carol Lurn  
616-437-9365  
carollurn@yahoo.com

### Reeds Lake Art Festival

Linda Scarborough  
lindaascarborough@yahoo.com  
616-570-8796

### Newsletter and Website

Mary Marin  
marymarin1285@gmail.com

### Publicity

Steve Scarborough  
stevescarb1@yahoo.com

### GVA Gallery Shows

Jim Johnson  
johnsontheartist@hotmail.com

### Sketch/Model Coordinators

Kathy Bechtel  
kathleen.bechteler@yahoo.com  
Mary Marin  
marymarin1285@gmail.com

### Hospitality

Peg McKeown  
mcperritt@me.com

### Facilities Coordinator

Dave Bazen  
dbazen@bazenelectric.com

### Legacy Liaison

Robert Kraai  
rkraai@ameritech.net

### Outreach

Doug Klemm  
dougklemm@hotmail.com

### Facebook

Emily Green  
ww.emilyg@gmail.com

### Instagram

Jessi Son  
sonjiwooart@gmail.com

### Newsletter Distribution

Sallie Zigterman  
sallie.zigterman@yahoo.com

### GVA Library

Wenxi Gu

# Area Art News

**Venues may be closed. Check before visiting!**

**Donna Chase Gallery at Clark Retirement Community**  
Evie Carrier's Encaustic Photography will be on display until April 26, daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The encaustic process, when used in photography, refers to the act of applying hot beeswax over a photographic image. This wax can be pigmented with color or remain white or creamy beige. In both cases, it gives the image an intriguing surface quality and a distinct density not attainable using any other process. In the world of alternative photography, anything old can and often does become new again. They are hoping to have the artist's reception on April 23 from 2–3:30 p.m.

## **Dominican Center at Marywood**

Ruth VanderMeulen's work will be shown during March and April. The artist for May and June will be Henry Droski. That reception will be June 14 from 1 to 4 p.m. The gallery is located at 2025 E. Fulton Street, Grand Rapids, MI, and is open Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m., Friday: 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday: 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

## **Forest Hills Fine Arts Center**

Forest Hills Public Schools Student Art Exhibit April 13 to May 3. Reception Thursday, April 23, 6–7 p.m. Exhibit Hours: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Mon.–Fri. All exhibits are free to the public. Learn more here: <https://www.fhfineartscenter.com>

# Reserve Your Panel/s Now!

**Submitted by Dani Ehlenfeldt**

Now is the time to reserve your panel in the GVA Tent for the Reeds Lake Art Festival. To reserve a panel, the cost is \$25 per panel. We have eighteen 3' wide x 4' high panels available. They are one-sided and will have black fabric backing. GVA will be handling all sales: cash, credit, and Apple Pay. We will have an area for extra artwork and for artists to take breaks behind the GVA tent. If you rent a panel you are required to be at the GVA tent at 7 a.m. to help set-up and hang your artwork and back at 5 p.m. to take it down. If you choose to stay at the tent, please bring your own chair. To reserve a panel or two, please contact Dani Ehlenfeldt at [drgnfairy@att.net](mailto:drgnfairy@att.net) or 616-334-8904. Payment for the panels can be mailed to me or dropped off at my address: 1405 Spencer Street NE, Grand Rapids, MI, less than 5 minutes from GVA.

## **TerryBerry Gallery at St. Cecilia's**

Brad and Carole Neilsen's work is a collection of watercolor batik, watercolor, photography, and digital images. This show will be up through April. Parking is free next to St. Cecilia. Learn more at <http://scmc-online.org/visit-terryberry-gallery>

## **Guardian Gallery Grand Rapids**

Valentina Gregorieva's greatest aspiration is to introduce people of all ages to the beauty of art and its possibilities for life enrichment. This show ends on June 29. Hours: Monday–Thursday 12 noon–6 p.m. at 654 Davis St., Grand Rapids, MI 49504.

## **Guardian Gallery Lowell**

Kristin Thornton's work is done in an Expressionist-Fauve style, with bright color and dark outlines, similar to artists' works such as Cezanne and Matisse. The show ends on June 29. The Guardian Gallery is located at the Franciscan Life Process Center, 11650 Downes St., Lowell, MI 49331, (616) 897-7842. Open during regular business hours.

## **Frauenthal Center**

Dennis O'Mara's exhibit, *Everyday Inspirations*, will be on display until the end of May. The center is located at 425 West Western Ave., Suite 200, Muskegon, MI.

## GVA Gallery for August 2020

### Artwork Created During the Quarantine

Some of our artists are already sharing current artwork on the media of course and that's great. But in August, or whenever we get the ALL CLEAR, let's put this work up on the wall. One of the wonderful things about creating original art is that the artist always remembers what he/she was thinking and feeling during the creation of the art. I think for this period of time it will be that, to the tenth power. Be well, fellow artists.

I look forward to seeing you all this summer.

Jim Johnson

## APRIL CALENDAR

Until we are given the "all clear" for socializing once again, GVA will not be having any events. We encourage you to stay connected with fellow artists, and to share your art in our Facebook group, called GVA Artists Hunkering DOWN and MAKING ART! Only members are permitted to share their art on this page. It's just us!

## Inspiration – where to find it, how to make it and is it really necessary?

By Steve Scarborough

Sometimes I get stuck for a new idea. When that happens, I generally try and switch perspectives, meaning I go to a different place, listen to a new album, or look at art I'm not familiar with, hoping any or all of these things will trigger a rush of creativity.

The time it worked the best was when Linda and I flew into Las Vegas and stayed in Boulder City, taking day trips to the Valley of Fire, Red Rock Canyon, and the Grand Canyon. Each of us took some amazing photographs. I even did one oil painting of a scene Linda shot, and I hope to do more in the future.

We chose the western part of the states after talking to Larry Blovits at a GVA function. It was clear that he's been able to draw upon that experience for years to give him inspiration in his art. Listening to stories of adventure and creativity does help your own creativity grow, especially if the stories are coming from a master of their craft.

Here's a list of other possible ways to light that creative fire!

Go for a walk, and take a camera with you. Looking through the lens makes everything more important, more clear. If you can't travel, look up places on YouTube. Think about stories your folks used to tell you, places they went, people they met. Don't be afraid to fail. The willingness to take chances often can lead to failure and, well, who cares? Maybe the next time, you'll succeed! Stop being a perfectionist and let yourself go. Clear away distractions and just focus, on anything really, just immerse yourself in the process and dig in. Reading also helps, autobiographies in particular are good for this. But really just read anything.

Speaking of reading, author Stephen King wrote the book he entitled *Thinner* because his doctor told him he needed to lose weight. King says it's important just to get up and work, keeping the same schedule every day, make a time just for your art and once you start doing it, inspiration will come. Of course, that's kind of easy for him to say!

It's not easy keeping yourself open to creativity and finding inspiration in everyday life, especially when everyday things take us far away from our art, but when we look at each other and see what we can come up with as a group, well, that's inspirational!

# Grand Valley Artists

1695 Service Road NE, Suite 106

Grand Rapids, MI 49503