

Perspectives



grandvalleyartists.com

September 2020

Tailgate Gathering: Artists Hanging Out

Submitted by Joanne Swann

One of the many casualties of the pandemic this year was our annual summer picnic. When the board had requests to come up with some kind of event where we could gather with our fellow artists safely, our Secretary, Dana Donnell, came up with the idea of holding a tailgate party somewhere where we could spread out. We came up with holding the first-ever GVA Tailgate Party on Thursday evening, July 24th, in our parking lot. As a special treat, Linda and Steve Scarborough were able to set up their musical equipment and perform for us.

Face masks made by our own members and organized by Kathy Bechtel were for sale at \$5.00 apiece as another fundraising opportunity. We sold \$55.00 worth of masks that night and an additional \$60.00 through Dana Donnell's husband's office.

I appreciate everyone who attended, and I do hope this was a one-time event—that we will be able to meet and share a meal in 2021 without masks or the need to social distance. If you missed the party, here are a few photos.





Meet Emily

Submitted by Emily Green

“Let the beauty we love be what we do” ~ Rumi

I first heard these words of the 13th-century Persian poet and scholar in 2007. In the years since, I’ve encountered more of Rumi’s quotes – in numerous writings, through research, and from friends and family. His beautiful, sensual imagery is an influence in the lives of many people whose paths I have crossed, and his words have inspired artists, musicians, poets, and writers. It turns out that I had been living the philosophy of this saying for much of my life!

As a child I learned to play my first musical instrument, a flute. In high school, I was introduced to the tenor saxophone, and subsequently, I took my first art class – pottery. I was hooked! I signed up for jewelry soon after that, as well as advanced clay techniques and processes. Then came weaving, and oil painting followed. The next leg of my musical journey has roots in Celtic music – I taught myself the pennywhistle, and I’m now working on the violin.

I had been a member of the Grand Valley Artists in the past, but lost touch with my fellow artists, through life’s circumstances. One Thursday, I decided to stop in to see who, from the old crowd, still took part in Critique. I knew some members were no longer with us, but I was fortunate in having had contact with a few throughout the years. Working at Buffalo Traders, I enjoyed the days Bill Bouwsema would come in and amuse me with his good-natured cynicism, and I always looked forward to helping Armand Merizon when he came in for cigars to smoke while staying up all night, painting. That Critique night, I was happy to see one of my old customers! Soon after, I rejoined GVA, rekindling past friendships and finding new camaraderie.

When Carol Lurn announced the opening for Vice President in May of 2016, I thought back to the 1990s and early 2000s at GVA. I decided I wanted to get more involved this time around. Thanks to Carol’s confidence in my abilities, the job was mine! In a newsletter article I wrote early last year, I described my role of vice president as “a simple one – assisting the president and other members of the board in completing their duties. But it is also my job to effectively contribute to the operations of GVA, in whatever way I can. And I find great satisfaction in being this “Jill-of-all-trades.”

Without specific duties, I’ve been able to pitch in wherever the need arises – on the committee to find a new location for GVA, in collaboration with the 501(c)(3) Development Task Force, and as part of the nominating committee for the recent election. I’ve helped with holiday parties/shows, ArtPrize, Reeds Lake, the Box Factory, and the Holland Area Arts Council exhibit. My part in the Clark Retirement Community show was a bit more involved. I helped plan it from the beginning, wrote the Call for Artists, provided a Bio of the Grand Valley Artists, took in art, and helped hang the show. I wrote an article for the newsletter about the exhibit and reception – an event that I had the honor of playing music for, as part of the duo, Morrison’s Green!

As vice president, my horizons have expanded. Besides writing articles for newsletters, and organizing wording for documents (such as the trifold brochure), I’ve become the go-to person for editing and proofreading some of the writings of other board members (including our ArtPrize venue description). Joanne Swann says that I “keep us honest.” For our first ArtPrize, I wrote a history of GVA. With that research, and more, I’ve learned some fun stories about some of our past members. (But those are for another time.) Last November, I became an administrator of our Facebook Group. I’ve taken over the task of allowing posts, and approving or declining requests

to join. I created a set of rules, and changed the group description.

I'm very grateful to be back with my GVA family, and really happy to be able to help keep the organization going. Thank you, everyone, for making me feel so welcome! I leave you with a more complete version of Rumi's words (from *The Essential Rumi*, translations by Coleman Barks & John Moyne). I've put a little addition in parentheses. The poem seems quite appropriate for the strange times we are in. Be well!

Today, like every other day, we wake up empty and frightened.
Don't open the door to the study and begin reading.
Take down a musical instrument (or pick up a paintbrush).
Let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

GVA Gallery

Artwork Created During the Quarantine Submitted by Jim Johnson

Some of our artists are already sharing current artwork on social media, of course, and that's great. But 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.

Photo Group

Submitted by Randy Nyhof

I am planning again on having a Zoom GVA critique for Thursday, September 3.



Also I'll be having a GVA Photo Group Zoom meeting on Tuesday, September 1. The GVA Photo Group is also working on submissions for a set of note cards.

NOTE CARDS

10 Art Cards with Envelopes
\$12.00



Order Yours Today!

Submitted by Joanne Swann

In our on-going effort to raise money, Grand Valley Artists is offering a package of note cards for sale. The package holds 10 note cards and envelopes and sells for \$12.00. This series is the first set of note cards we hope to offer. Our next series will be images selected from our photo group. Plus, we're planning a holiday set.

The images on these cards were selected by a jury of our members from the images posted on our Facebook Hunkering Down site. The artists featured in the set are Pat Buist, Dana Donnell, Diane Haworth, DeLaine Klar, Joanne Swann, Marilyn Troutman, Sandi Brogger, Jim Johnson, Gene Sampson, and Sue Snell.

The set will be for sale at our Art Materials Swap being held in the GVA parking lot (weather permitting) Saturday, September 19th from 1 to 4 p.m. We also hope to sell them at the Downtown Market and at Terri Hanna's Neighborhood Art Hop in October.

I have a list of members who have pre-ordered. When the packages are available, I will contact you to make arrangements for where to pick them up. At this time we are only accepting cash or checks. If you would like your name on that list, please contact me at joswann@sbcglobal.net.

Program Night

Submitted by Randy Nyhof

No program scheduled for September.

Gratitude

Submitted by **Doug Schwentor**

There is such a need for positivity during this time. As part of my art practice, I create handmade cards:



painted acrylic cards, photo art cards, and collage cards. I send

one gratitude card out every week or so to someone that I think is deserving (e.g., CEOs of corporations



that are doing the right thing when it comes to protecting their cus-

tomers, my mail carrier, various

“essential” workers, friends, and family).



Given today’s milieu of social distancing and limited social contact, this is one way we can still have a meaningful relationship with others.



Thank you, Sara Youngman, for brightening up this page with a beautiful Rose of Sharon.



Pat Buist in Salon Re

Watercolor paintings by Pat Buist are being displayed in Salon Re, 940 Fulton St E, Grand Rapids, MI. The show will run through October. Please stop in!

WANTED

Someone to head up the most important event Grand Valley Artists hosts, our Reeds Lake Art Festival. This is our major fundraiser which allows us to keep our membership dues low and our doors open.

It's a time consuming job but we have written guidelines as well as a team of people who are willing and able to take on many of the tasks involved to help get through the process.

If you're energetic, brave and willing to take on this position, please contact Joanne Swann at joswann@sbcglobal.net.

In Flanders Fields

A poem written by Maj. John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



Another Field of Beautiful Flowers!

Mary Helmick discovered this field of sunflowers on A-37 just north of Allegan. Special thanks to Mary for her willingness to proofread this newsletter every month! It takes a village.

Poppies in the Field

Submitted by Anneke

A field of poppies was planted in Fennville as a memorial to the son of a farmer who, following the Iraq war, suffered from PTSD. Sadly, the son committed suicide. The farmer's son loved life—the life of small creatures—the bees and butterflies. These photos were taken on June 16,



2020. I entitled these photos "Flanders Poppies," after the poem "In Flanders Fields," a poem written for the fallen men of WWI by Maj. John McCrae. (Poem at left.)

The background of the photos is intentionally blurred, representing the "blur" in the dying and passing of our men and women soldiers—the great sadness! The color represents the life and blood of our men and women.



Congratulations, Marilyn!

Marilyn Troutman received a purchase award from Ottawa County Art Trust for her painting "Rosy Mound." Rosy Mound is the oldest sand dune in West Michigan.

Artists that live or work in Ottawa County were eligible to compete. The Ottawa County Art Trust exhibit runs until September 11th at 12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, MI., and is open to the public.



GVA GARAGE SALE!

Submitted by Mary Marin

When? September 19, 1 – 4 p.m.

Where? The GVA parking lot

During this COVID time, I've used the abundance of "downtime" to simplify my life a little. The simplification process has included a few trips to Goodwill, but somehow the purging hasn't extended to the drawers and bins of art supplies in my studio that, well, you just never KNOW when you will need that stuff! Do you have the same situation? Frames? Pads of paper? Canvases? Brushes? Easels? Even finished art that needs a wall?

Bring whatever you want to sell, swap or give away to the GVA parking lot on Saturday, September 19, from 1 until 4. Maybe you'll get lucky and leave with less than you schlepped if you are into purging, or maybe you'll end up with a trunk full of things you didn't even know you really needed. It's a crapshoot, really. But won't it be fun to see your GVA friends and poke around?

Bliss & Vinegar

We have enjoyed a wonderful relationship with B&V for a few years already, which has been a great opportunity for our artists to share their work. For the next month or so, Sri McCarthy's unique work will be gracing the wall. Be sure to swing by, grab a fantastic salad, and check them out!

If you want to show your work at Bliss & Vinegar, you will need to post it on our website, www.grandvalleyartists.com, so the owners of B&V can see what you do. They decide whose work they want to feature. Please don't contact them directly. Marty Klar coordinates this opportunity for us. Please do not contact the restaurant directly. Questions? Call Marty at 616-813-7921.



Welcome

Jacklyn McIntee, Steve Savasky, Sarah Ellis, Beth Charles and Jean Kubiszewski! Our newest members of GVA!

Fields of Flowers

Near and Far

Submitted by Steve Scarborough

Linda and I have discovered—though I'm certain that they were not lost to begin with—flower fields that people have planted on their farms for profit or fun, many of them close to Grand Rapids.

This new pastime started with a picture of a poppy field in Fennville one of our members posted on our GVA Hunkering Down site. After Googling the location, we packed our cameras and headed out, not sure what we would find. We found four acres of flowers, mostly poppies, planted in memory of the owner's son. We followed the cars parking alongside of the road and then walked with the crowd to the field next to the cemetery in Fennville on 124th Ave (M-89) where the flowers were planted.

It was amazing and fun to see how many people were there taking special occasion photos or shots just to remember the experience. This place goes on our calendar for next year for sure.

Fast forward to August. Linda mentioned she saw several posts on our GVA Facebook page about sunflowers being in bloom, so we set out to find a few locations.

The first field we visited was not yet in bloom, so on we went to the next farm on our list, Gull Meadow Farms in Richland. It was a huge farm with a store, bakery, flowers for sale, animals to pet, a parking lot—and the most important part—the sunflowers were in bloom!

Acres of flowers, with winding trails cut through the field, letting you explore and see the flowers from all vantage points. However, sunflowers need to be watered often, and our luck meant the fields and trails were very muddy. We felt sorry for the young mothers pushing around baby strollers with two inches of mud clinging to the wheels. For the \$11 admission price, we also got to cut a flower to take home, which was great. Everyone kept social distancing and wore their masks in close quarters, so it was a stress free and fun trip!

Feeling confident that we now knew what we were doing, we decided to take a couple of our grandchildren to a sunflower field closer to home. Ed Dunneback and Girls farm on 6 mile road north of Grand Rapids sounded like a good pick. Still giddy from our successful outing at Gull Meadow Farms, we headed out, telling the kids what a great time they were going to have. We arrived at a rustic barn and asked a woman where the sunflower field was. She replied, "There's no sunflowers here until September. We plant late to tie the sunflowers in with the fall push." So off we went to Rockford with the kids to walk by the river, which is almost as good as a field of fresh blooms anyway!

Something we found online but haven't checked out yet is the Three Acre Farm in Byron Center, which is a U-Pick flower business. Planning ahead to next year (which can't come soon enough), we will visit Windmill Park in Holland as well as Veldheer's, and both can satisfy our springtime tulip cravings.

It's tricky, as you can tell, trying to figure out what's in bloom when and where and the whole parking question, but it's still fun to take a drive in the country—and finding a small treasure is pretty fun!

(Editor's note: Websites often have photos that represent their location during its peak growing/blooming time. This does not mean that those flowers are in bloom at this very moment. When possible, call ahead to inquire. Check the Facebook page, too, if there is one. You'll save yourself frustration by arriving too early or too late.)



One of Linda's photos.

A Few of My Favorite Things

Submitted by Mary Helmic

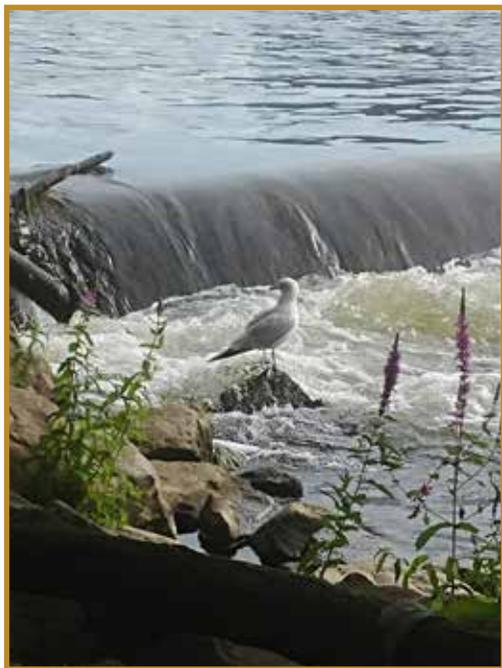
These two groups on Facebook consistently draw my attention:

- 1) I Love Michigan Nature Photos!
- 2) Barns and Farms in Michigan



Posts in both groups are from amateur as well as professional photographers. I've also seen paintings of barns shared. These groups will not disappoint with their vast array of images!

Do you have favorite websites and Facebook Group pages that you'd recommend?



While on her morning jog, Pamela Newbury captured this gull getting his feet wet. Thanks for sharing it with us, Pam.

Sketch...the Rules

The GVA board wants to ensure that the studio remains a safe and clean environment for our members upon reopening. Our current plans for sketch groups include but are not limited to the following:

- We will have regular deep cleaning of the space, but we request your help in sanitizing the areas you come in contact with; door handles, light switches, easels, tables, counter tops, equipment, restrooms, etc. Disinfectant wipes are provided around the studio.
- Before and after using the space, wipe down all frequently touched surfaces. See above.
- A disinfectant spray is in the bathroom. Please use it on all surfaces before and after using the room.
- Wash your hands frequently and/or use hand sanitizer. There are several bottles provided around the studio.
- If you have some sort of gloves, e.g., latex, wear them.
- We will limit the number of artists in sketch sessions to provide proper distancing. 6' between easels.
- We will have an online sign-up site set up for you to sign up for a sketch session. Information will be sent on how to access it. Sessions will be limited to 10 plus the model. When that limit is reached, no one else will be allowed into the session. If we find that a specific session is very popular, we will consider adding sessions. Please be considerate of your fellow members. If you sign up for a session and later find you can't make it, please take your name off the list.
- A mask is weird and hard to wear, but it is required.
- Don't share tools or supplies.
- Don't use the coffeemakers or tea kettles. Bring your own beverage in its own container.
- Don't bring food to be shared.
- Books and magazines in our library should not be used or shared at this time.
- If you're sick, stay home.
- Be respectful of your fellow members. We are all in this together.

Thank you for understanding.

Bliss & Vinegar & GVA at the Downtown Market

Submitted by Marty Klar

Bliss & Vinegar reopened their Downtown Market space a few months ago. Before the Covid-19 closure and since reopening, a number of your fellow GVA members have been displaying and selling their artwork at this premium location. As the holiday season



approaches, the restaurant's owner is looking to bring in seasonal work, like stocking stuffers, cards, etc. Some suggestions include ceramics, wood carving boards, magnets with scenes of Grand Rapids or animals, even smallish not-too-pricey jewelry.

As you can see from the pictures, no wall space exists for displaying framed art, nor are there copious display areas at all. That said, and I repeat, sales are happening.

The GVA member that coordinates this venue for us is Barb Doss-Karluk (bjdoss-karluk@hotmail.com). The restaurant owner decides what is appropriate for sale, and items must not compete with any of the other merchants' wares. If you have work you think might be appropriate for this holiday season, please forward images of it to Barb. Based on what's been selling, reasonably priced items work best.

Some things to know:

- Once approved, you will be assigned a vendor number. You must affix your vendor number to each item along with your price.
- Barb will arrange to meet you at the Downtown Market to assist you in displaying your work.
- All work must be the original design of the artist; the essential work required to make each finished piece must be done by the artist.
- All work must be safe, non-toxic, and fit for its intended use. If any work requires special or limited use, this will be fully disclosed and explained to the public.
- Buy/Sell vendors are strictly prohibited.

- The GVA committee and Bliss & Vinegar reserve the right to reject any work that is considered unsuitable.
- The GVA committee and Bliss & Vinegar also reserve the right to interpret these rules.
- Bliss & Vinegar is responsible for collecting and filing Michigan sales tax.
- Bliss & Vinegar will take a 25% pre-sales tax commission on all work.
- Bliss & Vinegar reserves the right to prohibit any item from being sold on the premises.
- Management of Bliss & Vinegar has complete autonomy of inventory sold in the store.
- All sales will go through the cash register at Bliss & Vinegar.
- Artwork will be arranged and displayed at the discretion of Bliss & Vinegar and GVA committee.
- Each exhibit will run for a period of 3 months (quarterly) unless otherwise determined by Bliss & Vinegar or GVA committee.
- Payments to artists from Bliss and Vinegar will be made quarterly.



B&V continues to be an ardent supporter of GVA, so please reciprocate when you can. Their Cascade location is open as well, and their fresh offerings are healthy and delicious.



Membership Update

Submitted by Mary Baine, Membership Chairperson

As we approach the end of the 2019-20 membership year, over a hundred members have already renewed for 2020-21; some members renewed well in advance. If you cannot recall whether you have already paid your dues for 2020-21, please email marymbaine@gmail.com.

Membership cards are being delivered into name badge cases at the studio, as they traditionally are, and missing name badges are being replaced for this purpose. Our name badges have effectively been quarantined for an extended period of time, so there should be no danger. By the time all members have access to their name badges, sufficient time will typically have passed since even the Membership chair has handled them. In the meantime, temporary membership cards can be emailed at a member's request. To obtain an emailed membership card, please contact marymbaine@gmail.com.

Finally, well over a hundred members still need to renew. We encourage you to send your dues via check (made out to GVA or Grand Valley Artists) to Mary Baine, GVA Membership Chair, 2280 Leonard Street, Marne, Michigan 49435. If you choose to include a donation as well, your contribution will be gratefully acknowledged, and a receipt will be provided for any amount designated for GVA itself as a 501(c)(3). If you have any questions, you know what to do: Email marymbaine@gmail.com!

Officers, Board, and Committee Chairs of GVA

President

Joanne Swann
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Photography

Randy Nyhof
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501(c)(3) Coordinator

Open Position

Hospitality

Open Position

Instagram

Open Position

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Reeds Lake Art Festival

Open Position

Facilities Coordinator

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GVA Library

Wenxi Gu

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Newsletter and Website

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Legacy Liaison

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Publicity

Steve Scarborough
stevescarb1@yahoo.com

Note from the editor: Until we are back in full swing, we will only be distributing the newsletter online. If you have any news to share, please always feel free to send it to marymarin1285@gmail.com for inclusion. Below are some weeds in the park by my house.



A weed is but an unloved flower.

~Ella Wheeler Wilcox



GRAND VALLEY ARTISTS

Membership Application: Membership Year is September 1st through August 31st.

Note: All memberships expire on August 31st and require renewal on September 1st; the annual membership fee is due every September 1st and remains the same regardless of collection date.

The information on this form is used for contact purposes and member services; please provide as many details as you feel comfortable sharing.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Apt: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Your e-mail address is used to distribute the monthly newsletter as well as important announcements and updates; regarding this service, every member is able to "unsubscribe". If you do not have a valid e-mail address, please check the GVA website for news—and newsletters. Printed copies of the newsletter are available at the studio as well.

Annual dues are \$45 for all new, renewing, or rejoining members except as otherwise noted; payment may be made as follows:

By PayPal—Log onto grandvalleyartists.com and choose the link "Artists: Join here!", then follow the prompts until payment is complete.

By check—Make the check payable to GVA or Grand Valley Artists, then mail it to Grand Valley Artists
% Mary M. Baine, Membership Chair
2280 Leonard Street
Marne, Michigan 49435

Charitable contributions may be added to your dues.

>The William (Bill) Kubiak fund was established to offer assistance to artists coping with financial hardship.

>Grand Valley Artists is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations made to support GVA are tax-deductible; you will receive a receipt for your records.

Date: _____

Please check one:

New member _____

Returning member _____

Renewal of current membership _____

Please select one:

>Lifetime membership (20 consecutive years in good standing): \$0

>Individual adult membership: \$45

>Student membership (age 18+): \$25

>Family membership: \$45 for the first adult; \$22.50 per spouse/partner/child (18+) Please list:

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Please confirm amounts:

Dues: \$ _____

Donation(s):

Kubiak Fund—\$ _____

GVA 501(c) (3)—\$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Please choose method of payment:

PayPal: _____

Check: # _____

Cash: _____