



December 2023

newsletter

President's Letter

Dear Members,

December is a good month for many things.

It's a great month for homemade hot chocolate and a very good month for viewing the neighborhood Christmas lights after dark. It's good for Christmas songs and festive events with your favorite people. Look further into this newsletter to see the DPAL version of "festive events with favorite people." Admittedly, we jumped the gun and got together the first Sunday in November, but it was timely as we kicked off our Yuletide Treasures collection.

But we can probably all agree that gifting is a very big part of December. The little drummer boy had no gift and so he played his drum. The Magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the infant Jesus. In the 18th century, the English carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas," saw all kinds of birds being gifted and lots of dancing ladies and lords.

Well, we have none of that here for you! Bah humbug!

What we do have for you is a view of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan that we've been developing and working on for the past 18 months—first studying and learning how to create one, and then beginning the implementation last January. It's a three-year plan so there is more work to be done, but we thought you would appreciate reading the details. Look for the one-page description of the plan further along in this newsletter.

This is our gift to you, and the DPAL purpose, mission and vision were the guiding stars that we followed in creating it. Let's thank our lucky stars and enjoy this special season.

Merry Christmas and **Happy Holidays** to all!

Till next month,

Mary Lynn Sullivan
dpalpresident.mls@gmail.com

IT'S RENEWAL TIME!!! 2024 MEMBERSHIPS

You are now able to purchase your 2024 membership online and at the front desk. Registration for Winter begins December 3rd, so renewing now is recommended.



Plein Air Wrap up & Reception

All good things must come to an end and so did our Plein Air outings for the season. We had a lovely reception at the art league that was well attended by artists, family and friends. We were blessed with great weather most Fridays and even on the few days that it was drizzling in the early morning, it always cleared up by the time we got started.

Congrats to Natalie McFaul for her watercolor painting that came in 1st place in our challenge of "SKYLINES AND ROOFTOPS" Ellen and Sue hope to have some interesting changes to our Plein Air locations next year. Any input is appreciated and welcomed. See you next spring...

Visit the YULETIDE TREASURES for all your Holiday Shopping Needs!

The DuPage Art League does not discriminate nor tolerates harassment on the basis of race color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetic information or any other characteristic.

Board Meeting Notes - November

Treasurer's Report: Jennifer Bayer reported that expenses for the period were less than budget and income was more than budget. We have 15 months of reserves.

Publicity: Mary Kate Venturini reports that the DuPage Art League will exhibit art at Mayslake in January. The exhibit will run from January 9, 2024 – February 17, 2024.

Membership: Amy Ip Tran reports we have 504 active members. Membership for 2024 will be available December 1st. (Class enrollment for the Winter session will be open December 3rd at 1:00 pm. Members may want to establish your 2024 membership before December 3rd).

Activities: Sandy Winter reports the Monday Night Program on October 16, featuring Michael Latala had 22 people attending live and 79 people attending virtually from 16 states and Canada. November's Monday Night Program featured Joel Fremion demonstrating painting with fabric. The recording is available from Wheaton Public Library.

Office Management: Barb Finn reported the Holiday shenanigans event was a great event. Beginning Saturday, November 25th and through Saturday December 23rd, hours will extend to 5:00 pm.

Business Manager: Yvonne Thompson said Yuletide Treasures is doing very well. The schedule for Winter Session A class sign up for members will be December 3rd at 1:00 pm.

First Annual DPAL Holiday Mug Contest

Congratulations to Barbara Grabowski for winning our 1st annual holiday mug contest! Mugs are available at DPAL and can be purchased for \$15. We have a limited supply.



Mayslake Exhibit

Our January Mayslake exhibit sign up is now full. If you have signed up and have not received the DocuSign from Mayslake, please contact Misty Alvis misty.alvis@gmail.com.

DuPage Art League Apparel Update

If you ordered Apparel, watch your email for the December pickup dates.

Art League on the Airwaves

Tanya Bohannon of K-Love radio station featured the DuPage Art League on her program called "Closer Look." It aired in October and will re-air multiple times over the next few months. You can listen here:

<https://www.klove.com/news/closer-look/hot-topx/local-closer-look-dupage-art-league-wheaton-il-6470>

Are you "of an age?"

You are if you are 72 or older and must take **RMDs** from your IRA.

We're talking, of course, about IRS **Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)**. The positive side of that coin is that you can use part of your **RMDs** to make **QCDs**!

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) are a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian to a qualified charity. This transfer allows you to exclude the amount donated to a qualified charity from your taxable income – saving you a little money, and making a qualified charity a little happier.

A tax advisor can help you determine if both your IRA and charity qualify for QCDs. But, it's a great feeling to donate to a charity and feel like you're getting a little "kick-back." You should also be happy to know that the **DuPage Art League**, as a 501(c)(3) organization, is a qualified charity.

During this upcoming season of giving, remember this formula:

(RMD-QCD=\$\$DPAL)

(RMD minus QCD equals money for DPAL.)

Thank you for your generosity!

DPAL Board 2023-2024

President: Mary Lynn Sullivan

Secretary: Maeva Cook

Treasurer: Jennifer Bayer

VP Activities: Sandra Winter

VP Building & Grounds: Kay Wahlgren

VP Education: Kathy Szeszol

VP Exhibits: Gallery I: Margaret Bucholz

Gallery II: Mary Ann Staroscik

VP Finance: Sally Hines

VP Membership: Amy Tran

VP Office Management: Barbara Finn

VP Publicity & Promotions: Mary Kate Venturini

Presidents Emeritae: Diana Mitchell and

Carol Kincaid

Yuletide Treasures: Yvonne Thompson and

Wilda Kemp

Newsletter: Lori Tucker

dpalmembershipt@gmail.com

Newsletter/E-Blast Submittals

To submit email blast information and newsletter articles, send your information to: dpalmembershipt@gmail.com by the 15th of the month.

Acceptable formats include Word documents or PDF files for text and 300dpi .JPG form images. Please proof and verify your copy before submitting. Send photos, flyers and other images as attachments to

Monday Night Programming Returns January 15, 2024 Fur, Feathers, and Flippers

Learn to SEE and PAINT Nature's Wonderful Models in
WATERCOLOR

Dan Danielson will present a live demonstration on how to discover and paint animals, birds, insects and other world wonders. We share life on earth with amazing creations, and need to take the time to appreciate and paint what we see. Dan's loose watercolor technique and spontaneous



6:30 to 8:30pm; In Person on via Zoom

Register here:

<https://wheatonlibrary.org/event/art-demo-watercolor-fur-feathers-and-flippers-54230>



Yuletide Treasures

Yvonne Thompson Co-Chair

There is a second receiving for items for Yuletide Treasures on Friday December 1, starting at 1.30pm in the small classroom....but you need an appointment. Please call or email Yvonne.

If you exhibit in Yuletide you are required to volunteer for 4 hours. Many of you already have and I thank you for that, but those of you who haven't now is the time to do so. You can do any of the following:

- * Help staffers on Saturday's after Thanksgiving with wrapping sales, as we are open all day.
- * Help with Breakdown of the show on December 28th
- * If you have no fear of a glue gun, join us December 1st at 2pm to make candy cane reindeer for customers.

Please contact me so I can set up these for you.

Also everyone was asked to donate a small piece of their work for the "Sales over \$75, choose a gift" showcase. If you haven't done this, as it does not fit the work you do, please bring in 4 boxes of full sized Candy Canes ASAP and leave them at the Front desk, labelled with your name. It will save me doing follow up phone calls!

- Yvonne

Proposed 2024 Gallery I, Exhibit Schedule

Have fun with the themes, but remember that your artwork does not need to reflect the theme.

January 2024 – HAPPY NEW YEAR! *Drop off: Jan 3-4*

Description: Resolutions, celebrations, renewal, etc.

February 2024 – BEST OF THE BEST *Drop off: Jan 31-Feb 1*

Description: Show representing winning artworks from a dozen art leagues/guilds from around the suburbs.

March 2024 – MARCH MADNESS *Drop Off: Feb 28-29*

Description: Sports, races, St. Patrick's Day

April 2024 – CREATURES AND PETS *Drop Off: Mar 27-28*

Description: Animals are such fascinating creatures.

May 2024 – CREATE A FRAGRANT BOUQUET

Drop Off: Apr 24-25

Description: Bouquets, gardens, landscapes

June 2024 – Music in Motion– VOLUNTEER SHOW

Drop Off: May 29-30

Description: Depicting the dynamic energy and movement of music..

July 2024 – ABSTRACT ART *Drop Off: June 26-27*

Description: Let your inner Picasso stretch you to try a looser, more abstract way to create art.

August 2024 – MASTERS AND FABULOUS FAKES

Drop Off: July 31-Aug 1

Description: Learn from the masters by imitating their style and techniques.

September 2024 – GLORIOUS FALL COLORS

Drop Off: Aug 28-29

Description: Be captivated by the red and golden colors of the fall leaves.

October 2024 – BEAUTIFUL STILL LIFES

Drop Off: Sept 25-26

Description: Beautiful centerpieces, window displays, fruit bowl, you get the idea.

November, December 2024 – YULETIDE TREASURES



OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE THE VISUAL ARTS THROUGH EDUCATION, EXHIBITS, AND OUTREACH.

EVERY DONATION HELPS ACHIEVE OUR MISSION. YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR 501C3 ORGANIZATION IS APPRECIATED!

DONATE NOW Scan this QR code with a smart phone camera to go to a website where you can donate.

Kay Wahlgren, Renaissance Woman - PART II

By Barb McCartney

DPAL Over the Years

In Part II of this feature about long-time member Kay Wahlgren, we learn that she has a treasure trove of knowledge about the different locations the DuPage Art League has rented, bought and refurbished over the years. The league was incorporated as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization in 1959. As such, it is recognized by the IRS as being tax-exempt and is run entirely by volunteers (except for a part-time business manager). When Kay first joined in the late 1960s, the dozen or so members met in the rented basement of a Wheaton Park District building—before that classes were held in the reception room of an animal hospital.

The league began to search for a permanent home as its needs grew. In 1975, they bought the building at 219 Front Street, just across the street from the current location. “It was not the classiest place,” said Kay, “but it was artist messy and we made room for what we needed.”

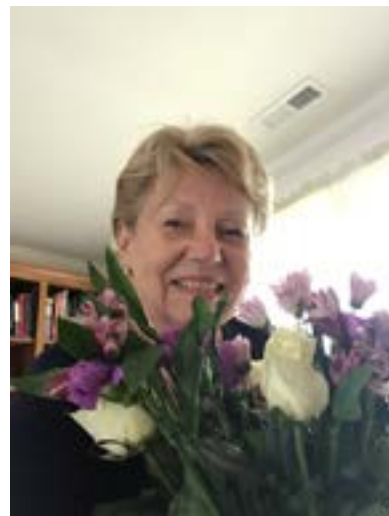
When the City of Wheaton decided to build a multi-level parking garage and apartment building on the land owned by the league, they made a low-ball offer. DPAL refused. The city threatened to take the land by eminent domain, but was eventually convinced to give a respectable offer, which was accepted.

In 1996, a larger building was acquired at the current location at 218 Front Street. A generous offer was made by Phil Tuscetta, the owner of an empty religious supply store. Phil also carried the mortgage for five years until it could be paid off. The upstairs closets were once a place to hang vestments for religious to try on. Before that, in the 1920s, it was a car dealership (hence the garage door just west of the front entrance).

Kay’s background in architectural engineering, as well as her husband Bob’s knowledge of finance, came in handy during building improvements. “I know what’s behind these walls,” she said. “I know how they were constructed because I was in on all of it.” Many dedicated volunteers also contributed to each renovation, which required moving walls, refurbishing floors, creating classrooms and making an attractive gallery space.

Another challenge came when the City of Wheaton wanted to assess taxes on the building. As a not-for-profit, the league contested the assessment. It went to court and the outcome was that the building is only taxed as a business on the small hallway gift shop.

Kay is impressed with the commitment of the volunteers. “People amaze me by how well they do their jobs,” she said. “And that just happens year after year. I see people doing sterling things. There’s a commitment here that is very refreshing and that’s what makes us work.”



Even during the recession a few years ago, the art league flourished. Kay said that people who were out of work decided that they were going to do something they’d always wanted to do. During COVID, difficult decisions had to be made. The executive board developed protocols surrounding class cancellations, mask wearing and class size limitations. “We managed it together and we went through all the safety rules. We’re thriving again,” she said. There are now over 500 members, all with a common love of art.

As advice to new members, Kay encourages taking advantage of the many classes offered. “I’ve noticed that the quality of the artwork here has really come up over the years.” She attributes that to the excellent teachers and to the fact that people take classes over and over again. “Students really just enjoy the atmosphere here,” she said. In addition to creating artwork to be proud of, they end up making lifelong friends.





**Photos from
Festive Fun and Holiday Shenanigan's
Prize winners and Santa's visit**







Do you think we had a fun time?

Thanks to all of you who shared these photos of this super fun get together. Thanks to all those who staffed the front desk, the Board who brought the wonderful refreshments and Mary Lynn Sullivan and Yvonne Thompson for supplying the prizes and centerpieces.

Thanks to everyone who attended and if you didn't make it this time be sure you have it on your calendars for next year!

Strategic Plan

2023-2026

More than the letterhead on a page, more than an address at the post office, the **DuPage Art League** is a living, breathing organization stretching back to 1957, when a small group of women began to share their common interest in art and founded this vibrant organization.

Over the years they most certainly implemented fresh ideas and needed changes to accommodate their growing membership. At some point they articulated their intentions for the organization and preserved them as a guiding light for future members. It's these principles that our current Board of Directors turned to as they worked to develop a Strategic Plan for the next few years of the League's operation.

We invite you to read about the DuPage Art League's purpose, mission and vision, and how we will endeavor to support those intentions with our 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan.

Our Purpose

The League is a not-for-profit art school and gallery dedicated to promoting the visual arts through classes, workshops, gallery exhibits, student scholarship, free art programs open to the public and other similar activities which further the purpose of encouraging, promoting, advancing and assisting art education and instruction, and the advancement of and development of the arts.

Our Mission

Dedicated to promoting the visual arts through education, exhibits and outreach.

Our Vision

To provide a lively, vibrant gathering place where people of all ages come to develop their artistic skills and share the joy of creating.

1. GROW MEMBERSHIP

Objective 1: Establish an **Annual Membership Drive** to grow membership.

Objective 2: Focus on member retention to stabilize membership.

2. INCREASE REVENUE

Objective 1: Expand and communicate the DuPage Art League's many art classes to both League members and the local community with the goal to increase enrollment.

Objective 2: Increase the DuPage Art League's visibility in the community through a timely and vibrant Instagram account.

Objective 3: Create events to attract the downtown Wheaton crowd to our galleries and gift shop.

3. IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

Objective 1: Develop monthly measurement and reporting protocols.

Objective 2: Identify potential business problems and issues with current POS/website and plan for future development.

Objective 3: Invest in and maintain functioning and up-to-date software and hardware supporting DuPage Art League operations.

Objective 4: Review and address building safety and maintenance to mitigate any risk to students, staffers and guests, and to preserve DPAL assets.

Objective 5: Review and streamline class registration process to best serve our students.

Objective 6: Encourage succession planning and job share arrangements to ensure business continuity.

4. INCREASE MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

Objective 1: Inform members of the many social and volunteer opportunities available at the DuPage Art League.

5. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Objective 1: Identify, maintain, grow and publicize DuPage Art League outreach to the local community.