

Introduction

Welcome to the 2022 VAC Annual Meeting

I am Marj Shymske, President of the Dataw Visual Arts Club

Today is about a review of 2021, 2022 things to come, election of our board officers and then the highlight of today, Fireside Chat with an amazing lady and artist Kit Porter.

I would like to start with our Mission:

The Visual Arts Club is dedicated to encouraging artistic expression and furthering knowledge and appreciation of the arts for its members.

So, let's start with our Members.



Membership

We ended 2021 with 384 memberships, 64 of which were new members. We implemented an auto renewal program through billing member's accounts and repeated that again for this year. For the first time in over 10 years, for 2022, we raised our annual dues by \$5 to \$20 individual and \$30 for family. The best deal on Dataw!

In the last 4 years, our membership has grown 45%. While our island population has changed with new faces, our population has not grown 45%. Our growth is a testament to what VAC offers. Even during the tough times of Covid, we found ways to give members opportunity to create and appreciate art. It is the work of people such as Marie Doyon, Jennifer Flanagan, Dena Dardzinski who built our curriculum for the year, as well as those that head up our Clubs within our Club inviting people to join, that attracts

people to us and makes us one of the largest clubs on DI want to take this opportunity to recognize for her work and commitment to Membership. Kathy Kelenski has been our Membership Chair for last 4 years and today is her last day in that role. Each year Kathy set goals for growth and then found ways to reach out and get people to join. From hosting a membership table at all events, to sending personal notes to those who moved onto the island, Kathy found ways to spread the word. And when someone did not renew, she reached out and found out. Her energy and passion to membership as well as her role as a Board Member has had an enormous impact on our club and our growth. Kathy, I thank you for all your hard work. You have been an invaluable asset to VAC, a joy to work with and you will be missed.

Objectives

As a club we have 4 objectives:

First - Offer opportunities to create art and to display artwork.

We held 4 quarterly exhibits, Structures in January, The Blues in April, Happiness Is in July and Isn't it Iconic in October. And at July's exhibit, our opening night reception returned for the first time in almost a year.

Over the year 225 pieces of art were showcased, with almost 20 pieces sold. We had 4 impressive Juror's and over 500 Datawites who cast their votes for the People's Choice Award. These exhibits, a long time offering of VAC is so enjoyed by all of Dataw. AND...

It is a LOT of work. Anne Clements and Bill Tremitiere along with their "it takes an Island" team, do it all. They set the theme, find a juror, in-take, hang, label, photograph for the website, hold the reception, count the ballots, post the results, wait 3 weeks, take it down and do it again. Thank you all for bringing this event to life, 4

Second objective: Expand workshop offerings to include basic through advanced instruction

How do we know what members want from VAC? Last year Marie Doyon developed a survey and sent out to VAC Membership. Together with a team she assembled, they took the results of that survey and designed a

curriculum. Designed to introduce at beginner level but also more advanced classes, this year we offered

Oil Painting with Mary Segars

- 3 part Demo including videos lead by Mindy Smyth – Oil, watercolor and Pan Pastel
- Beginner Acrylic Painting – Camilla Pag-lee-o-rolly
- Pet Portrait Painting
- Nantucket Basket Weaving – Jennifer Flanagan
- Indigo dyeing, 2 sessions– Lori Thompson
- Art of Rug Hooking – Judy Brown
- and
- Introduction to Card Club – Pam Farris and Dena Dardzinski

In addition, the following Clubs and groups went back to meeting on a regular basis.

- Card Club
- Photography Club
- Open Studio
- Clay Open Studio
- Mudslingers
- Mixed Media

I wanted to recognize the work of one of these groups, Mixed Media. Creative for sure. Like turning plastic shopping bags into art or how about using Tyvek to make jewelry. But as creative as they are, they are also extremely generous. In March they created over 500 bookmarks for St. Helena Elementary School. For the MM, they made zippered canvas painted pouches, which sold out quickly. The proceeds went to Community Center Staff holiday gift and the Employee Holiday Gift Fund. Thank you to Lynn Baker and the MM Group for your artistic talents and thoughtful

Third Objective - broaden offerings to increase knowledge of art, art history and art appreciation.

VAC held 2 art appreciation events hosted by Susan Emons
Savoring Cezanne and movie night, Eternity's Gate about Vincent Van Gogh

Our Studio Tours also returned in 2021. Under the leadership of Becky Loughee, members visited local LyBensons Gallery/Gullah Geechee Visitors Center. We had a very special event in February, the brainchild of Jennifer Ethier. Searching for My Valentine gave Dataw residents 2 days to tour the Island and find 14 pieces of original pieces of art created by 7 artists with clues from love song titles and lyrics. To say it was a success is an understatement. It was a beautiful day, clever art and clues and a lot of fun.

And art appreciation? Who could forget our young, budding artists as they demonstrated their love of chalk art under the pool pavilion at Easter.

Last Objective: Support the acquisition of art from the VAC artists.

- Spring Fling and Fall Fest – Dena Dardzinski and her committee continue to amaze and delight us. Fabulous as always. So many returning as well as new vendors to sell their creations and wares. And recognition and thanks Susan Hertz who had an idea and then organized an art raffle at the Fall Fest where over \$2,000 was raised for the St. Helena Elementary Art Program.
- Mistletoe Market, our holiday event, was another success. Kathy McShane and her Committee organized 22 vendors and we went back into the Community Center giving exhibitors options where to exhibit, with about ½ at home and ½ at the Community Center.
- In all three of these events, we strive to make sure that they are successes for our member vendors. Dena and Kathy surveyed all those that sold their fine arts and fine crafts so we know what worked and where we might want to tweak in the future.

So, what about, what I call “operations”?

Operations

Capital Improvements

- VAC purchased a new wooden cabinet on wheels for card club supplies.

- Our VAC Library – completely updated and reorganized by Barb Carakostas. A little bit of something for everyone. Visit it!
- And Display Curio in the A&C room, refurbished, restored and refreshed thanks to Jennifer Either and Ann Clements. Go see current display of fabulous clay pieces.

Finances

Financially we are solid. Please note, we are not a for profit organization so we don't charge to make money. Your dues, costs for vendors to participate in exhibits or events, for instances, these monies help offset costs of things like our new Wooden Cabinet, our promotional pieces, and food and wine!

I want to Recognize our Treasurer, Michael Allen, who has created the most detailed and effective financial reporting structure and report out. He keeps us on track, aware of where we are vs. our planned spend and what we have coming in and have going out. Thank you, Michael

Technology

Our website is a critical part of how we communicate. Over the last 4 years we have totally revamped our website. Our 3 most visited pages in 2021 were *Calendar* where we show all past and upcoming VAC events, *Gallery* that showcases all pieces entered in Quarterly Exhibit, and *About* which talks about who we are, what we do. We had over 6000 page views and most come from mobile devices. So how do we know all this? And how do we keep it current.

Two words – Bill Riski. He is a technology wizard. Not often can you find someone who can handle both the look and the guts of a website, but Bill knows it all and does it all. A genius for sure and thanks for putting up with me for all these years with “could you please....”.

Which leaves me to last area of how we work, and probably the backbone of all we do.

Communications

How do we speak to our members? Email, website, cards in your mailbox, posters at an event, the monitor in the pub, the program in your hand, and more. And who does it all? Mary Marshall! Mary creates every flyer, every listing on the calendar, and each email for everything VAC offers.

So everything that I have said so far today, that we did this year, Mary had a hand in. She has more deadlines, works with more people, all with different needs than you imagine, and she does it with style and grace. She has wonderful ideas, a way to put art into speaking to our members. She is the VAC Communications chair and we could not operate without her!

2022 Things to Come

Already Scheduled

Barbara Krakehl – Calligraphy

In our member survey conducted early last year, clay was identified as the #1 medium people had interest in. As a result

Jerry DeVisser – will be hosting *From Clay to Art* – a demo and introduction to clay.

Look for classes and workshops in:

- Watercolor painting
- Drawing lessons for those who say I Can't Draw
- Alcohol ink
- Oil painting for “Fraidy Cats”
- Painting with Paper
- Hopes to have Martha Quigley back for pet portraits
- Alcohol Ink Silk Scarves – Jennifer Ethier, instructor
- Photography
- Sea Grass Baskets

Field Trip – Kathy McShane, new heard of Art appreciation and History, and I as past president will looking at an art trip in fall – Savannah, Greenville, Columbia as options. Plus more special events to be determined!

Watch for Becky Loughee setting up studio tours.

Our Clubs – Card Club, Photography Club being led now by Harold Burnley, Mixed Media, Clay Open Studio, and Mudslingers Open Studio 3 days a week

Each month there are 22 standing spots for these art opportunities; find your spot!

We will continue with 4 Quarterly Exhibits – the first opening tonight at 4:00 at the Community Center –Still Life exhibit, followed soon by our Spring Fling and Mistletoe Market.

Summary

Now We need you. We cannot offer all we do without YOU! Whether its teaching a class, or pouring a wine as a bartender at our opening night receptions. Sign-up sheets are going around the room and please sign up today!

What a great year 2021 was for the Visual Arts Club and their members. We wanted to recognize those for being part of this year and you will find those listed on back of your program. If we missed anyone, my apologies and know, we appreciate each and every one of you.

So, before I turn the Election of 2022 Officers to Kathy I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to lead. And to the Board, I thank you for the last year, to many on the Board for the last several years. We are an amazing Club, inclusive, innovative, creative and full of talent and fun.

Marj Shymske

Fireside Chat with an amazing lady and artist Kit Porter.

