

The Artisan

News & Events of MACG

January 2010

President's Message

Happy New Year!

Don't you all just love the new numbers for this year: 01-01-10 or our next meeting date: 01-12-10. It all looks like some new binary code for a winning ticket on something. Which really means not much, but it will be a great year for the Guild.

Last year saw us have our first Guild show at the Museum and in addition another successful show at the College. Our members took many prizes at competitions and Fairs and shows, and we were able to give our usual financial support to the Art Masters Program in spite of the slow economy. Our meet and greet openings helped welcome many new members and great demonstrations added to our knowledge base . We now have a professional web-site with Ray Short, a publicist with Judy Pence and a lot of good ideas for the New year.

One of our nicest additions to the Guild is a library. Most of the books were donated from one of our Charter Members, Shirley Scott. Shirley is a watercolorist and many books are for this medium, although oils and acrylics are well represented. The books include many on Art History, especially Impressionism, woods, photography, anatomy and design to name a few. Ed Morris has volunteered as librarian and we have a dedicated bookcase in our garage. All are welcome to come browse through the books, coffee is free!

Our January meeting will feature the first Artist of the month. I will give an example of this by bringing some of my work and chatting about it during the meet and greet time. We are looking for volunteers that would like to demonstrate their media, maybe have a show and tell either before or during meetings. A camping trip for members. How about a Saturday workshop? Send me you ideas as they come beaming in through your creativity genes.

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KUDOS to members. Please send me information about your successes, shows and prizes you may have won. It encourages others to try for competitions and

Karen Mathis is a new member and our featured "Bio of the month."

My name is Karen Mathis. I have been an oils artist since 1980. Let me start by saying, "I think "art" was in my blood, from my very first box of crayons." Besides being an art student since junior high school, as a first grader in Bakersfield, California, I began dreaming of someday being an accomplished artist; an oil painter, in fact, but it wasn't until 1980, at the age of 28, that my dream would appear to become a reality. It was at a local recreation center that a class teaching oil painting seemed to be the opportunity knocking at my door.

It was there, (my heart leading the whole way), I found the medium that was perfect for me. Though, I'm sure that the intentions of the recreation department was to serve as a form of recreation only, but for me, it was clearly my future.

I painted in class and at home, seeking an opportunity to compete with other artists in all mediums. In 1981, I entered my first competition in the Kern County Fair, with my first truly original, which I entitled "Old Friends". Much to my surprise, I was awarded 1st Prize-Novice Class. (That painting is still most cherished and was shown at the Mohave County College Art Show, November 5, 2009.)

I competed in a Juried Show in 1986 at Bakersfield's prestigious Cunningham Museum of Art with a painting entitled "Springtime at Montana de Oro". That show would determine who, out of several 100's participants, were among "The 100 Best Artists in Kern County". Mine was chosen. I was honored. (Though, that painting was entered in the MCAG show at MCC, due to space constraints, I was unable to display it.)

In 1987, I was struck a devastating blow when I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). My focus then turned to fighting the neurological condition that was taking over my ability to perform activities, which had once been routine to me. I stopped painting for 15 years, believing I'd never be able to paint again. In 2005, another opportunity appeared: An oil painting teacher who attended the church I was attending was offering free art classes as his ministry. With much encouragement from my best friend, I fearfully started that class. I realized my fear was only an obstacle I had to overcome. With my newly resurrected courage, I found that, with God as my strength, I painted an original painting, which I entitled "Beside Still Waters". (I hope to show it in the next MCAG art show.)

The church's art department had 2 Art Shows while I was a student there and prior to my move to Kingman. The second art show honored me with the title of "Featured Artist". I painted slowly, but I was thankful that I had not lost my love for and ability to oil paint.

Lastly, to give credit where credit is due, I cannot omit giving Thanks to God, for giving me the innate sense and desire to express His Love with brushes and paint and for bringing me back to continue the work he began in me. And A Big Thank You to my supportive husband, who believes in me and makes showing my work possible.