

Ouachita Artists Presidents 2013 Report

Allie Graves, President 2013

Carrying the baton as president in 2013 for the Ouachita Artists has been my privilege and honor. Still in the infancy of the group's organization, it is easy to step back and take a look at how far we've come as an organization. The most visible evidence is the wonderful Ouachita Artists Gallery and Studio located just off Mt. Ida's Town Square. In addition to providing the Montgomery County Community a place to enjoy the beautiful art, many consider the Gallery a place to shop for gifts as well as stopping-off place for visiting friends and relatives to experience the artistic flavor of our local artisans.

In 2013, Ouachita Artists became incorporated. Steps to a non-profit organization have been taken and continue to be on-going. We look forward to a non-profit status for the benefit of the community, patrons and membership. Non-profit status should bolster fundraising activities like the silent auctions that have been so popular.

Ouachita Artists Board of Directors considered acquiring good signage a priority. Throughout this past year, a total of six signs have been strategically placed within the Mt. Ida City limits. David Welchman crafted a very large sign, and one displaying OA's beautiful logo. There are two signs on Hwy 270 at the entrance to our Mt. Ida Town Square; a sign on the brick wall beside Splendid Splinters, and a sign on the Front Porch Stage. Increased traffic to and through The Gallery is anticipated as a result of this wonderful signage. A huge thank-you goes to Hodge Black, Robert Cavanaugh and Jerry Babbitt for their help in placing the signs.

One of Ouachita Artists' founders, Barbara Holt, purchased the building in 2013. As exclusive lessor, the Gallery can offer many activities and fundraisers for the enjoyment of the community. Santa was available for pictures during last year's Christmas celebration and the Halloween costume contest was a treat for kids and adults alike. Face painting was a big hit too. Art supplies were given to the costume winners.

"Mini paintings" covered the entire back wall of the Gallery during the holiday season providing very affordable, original art for gift giving.

Ouachita Artists participated in the 2013 "Good Old Days"; Quartz, Quilts and Crafts Festival; a Halloween party inviting kids and adults to wear their costumes and come in for a treat. Kids were thrilled to have their faces painted, and several left with art supplies given as best costume prizes. Santa hosted 2013's Annual Christmas Celebration and many children left with pictures of themselves taken with the jolly ole' guy.

Our members judged kids' art at the County Fair Exhibit, and we were pleased to be presented with a plaque for the 2013 "Friend of 4-H" at their annual banquet.

Maintenance equipment was purchased to keep The Gallery "show-ready". And a permanent mail box was leased to accommodate increasing correspondence. The building now sports a lovely new awning in front of the Gallery thanks to Barbara Holt.

In keeping up-to-date and in the forefront of technology for the purpose of maintaining high visibility, Jane Babbitt and Linda Card saw that The Gallery was well represented on Facebook. Barbara Bowen hosts an on-going blog, and David Kimball designed and built an interactive website for Ouachita Artists. As the President of O.A., I wrote a weekly article for the Montgomery County News. Dewayne Holloway, the paper's new editor, saw that most publications contained information about upcoming events.

O.A.'s Board of Directors voted to keep The Gallery open on Friday evenings for anyone, members or not, to come in and paint, draw or sketch with other local artists. Fridays are referred to as the "Friday Open Studio". The interaction among artists creates a learning atmosphere, allowing for the exchange of ideas and techniques.

Artists Barbara Holt, Dortha Scott, Phyllis Anderson, Marge Graham and Carol Carpenter were featured guest artists. The Gallery proudly exhibited their work, individually, throughout the year.

Ouachita Artists Gallery & Studio

135 S. West Street
PO Box 1204
Mount Ida, AR 71957

Hours:

Tuesday-Saturday 10:00-3:00
Friday 10:00-6:00

E-mail

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Allie Graves, Vice-President
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Jane Babbitt, Secretary
(870)867-2761

Patti Presley, Secretary
(405)808-1325

Meetings at the gallery:

January 6, Business, 3:30
January 20, Program: **Carole Katchen, 3:30**
January 29, Board, 1:00

February 3, Business, 3:30
February 17, Program TBA, 3:30
February 26, Board, 1:00

Jury Committee Notice

The Gallery takes pride in exhibiting new art each month. Ouachita Artists Jury Committee meets the first week of each month to identify members' artwork that is appropriate for showing in the Gallery. It is important that members who wish to exhibit their art bring it in the last week of the month. This month, January 31, 2014 will be the cut-off date for new artwork to be considered.

Every ninety days, unsold artwork is transitioned out of the gallery and held so it may be returned to the artist. Unless other arrangements have been made, items that have been in the Gallery for more than ninety days are available to be picked up during the Gallery's regular hours.

Bill Black, Veteran, POW and local hero, was the O.A.'s honored guest at the 4th of July celebration. Residents at the Montgomery County Assisted Living Center created and displayed patriotic cards, this with the on-going help and instruction of Velma Lippert who contributes her time with the residents throughout the year.

Drawing and painting classes for local Montgomery County residents were taught by Barbara Holt and Martha Koelemay. Martha also taught a class for 4-H students at Oden School. Drawing and painting classes for children during the summer months were welcomed both by children and their parents.

O.A. continues providing monthly Program Meetings for members and residents. In 2013, Barbara Bowen presented on traditional rug hooking; Marge Graham presented "From the Easel to the Wall"; Pat Riggs, an Oklahoma artist, presented Animal Scratch Art; Daisy McDonald made a presentation on painting with instant coffee; Phyllis Anderson hosted a program on values and composition; Marlene Gremillion presented on pouring watercolor; Gene Sparling, of Hot Springs, instructed on woodworking and displayed a selection of his art; Phyllis Davis – "Sewing with Southwest Fabric Art"; Mary Alice Black instructed on floral arrangements; Jim Oberst – "One Hour Watercolor Demonstration"; Glenna Lybrand taught on using the camera and gave tips on framing compositions with the right perspective; Jan Briggs – "Painting on Aluminum"; and Wayne Bearns – "Art thru the Ages".

Mt. Ida art teacher Doris Cook's students exhibited their artwork in the Gallery. Marlene Gremillion taught a watercolor workshop; Wendi Summerville from Benton, Arkansas, instructed on scrapbooking and Jim Oberst taught a one-day watercolor workshop. Residents at the Montgomery County Assisted Living Center, with the help and instruction of Patti Presley, display their art monthly in the Gallery.

Message from Martha

Martha Koelemay, President

Greetings to all our members! We are initiating this bimonthly newsletter to keep you informed of the "doings" of Ouachita Artists: meetings, programs, classes, activities and special events.

Many thanks to our secretaries for undertaking this job in addition to their other duties. I am honored that the Nominating Committee entrusted the leadership of the organization to me this year, and I will do my very best to keep us moving forward smoothly and steadily. We have an excellent slate of officers, Board members, and committees and look forward to another busy year. As you can see from past president Allie Graves's recap of last year, we accomplished a LOT!

I hope that you will keep this newsletter handy, write the dates of meetings and events on your calendar, and join us when you can. Most of all, I hope you will let us know where your interests lie—what classes you would like to teach or take, what programs you would like to see, what activities you would like to participate in. Our contact information is included for your convenience, let us hear from you. The dates when new work will be accepted and hung (and old work picked up) will be published for the convenience of exhibitors as well as the Jury Committee; generally, the gallery is changed out every 90 days to keep it new and fresh. We will start new classes as soon as the weather stabilizes a bit, and notification of these will appear here, on Facebook, on our website, and in the Montgomery County News. Drop by the gallery and visit with us!

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Montgomery County Assisted Living artists sporting their new aprons. Pictured left to right: (back row) Irene Copeland, Ollie Hays, Ruby Wright, Irene Haggard, Aletha Stovall, Antoinette Ray, Martha Hughes; (front row) Faye Wallstrom, Emily Fryar.

Artists Share Gift of Time and Talent

by Patti Presley

Folks visiting the Ouachita Artists Gallery and Studio in Mt. Ida are amazed at the enormous amount of artistic talent there is right here in Montgomery County. Also amazing is the gracious gift of time and resources that are shared among the artisans, and the overwhelming gratification that comes from giving.

Resident artists of the Montgomery County Assisted Living contribute their time and talent to exhibit their art work at the Gallery. Every month they provide a new exhibit of their individual canvas art. The Gallery considers them among the many featured local artists. The giving of their time to provide the Gallery with beautiful art every four weeks is an example of the many contributions made by local artists.

Antoinette Ray, another contributor to the Ouachita Artists Gallery exhibits handmade, men's and women's aprons – one of Antoinette's many talents. These aprons are made from unique fabrics and materials that are beautiful, whimsical and fun to wear. When Antoinette discovered there were twelve resident artists at the Assisted Living Center in Mt Ida, she became excited at the thought of giving them aprons to wear while they paint in order to protect their clothes. So, as so many of the artisan contributors at the Gallery, she shared her talent by presented them with the aprons. It was a wonderful surprise to the residents during the recent gift-giving season.

This past holiday season, many Montgomery County residents visited the Ouachita Artists Gallery for the first time. What they found was a surprising array of art expressed in a multitude of disciplines. One can lose track of time walking through the Gallery and marveling at the unique way people apply their creativity. What they also found were wonderful gift-giving opportunities. Items on display are for sale at surprisingly low prices. For many of these first time visitors, they felt they were walking into a gift shop of incredibly unique art they could buy and share with those on their gift list.

The many talented women at the Montgomery County Assisted Living Center want to thank Antoinette Ray for the much needed, lovely aprons. The many artists and members of the Ouachita Artists Gallery want to thank the ladies at the Assisted Living Center for the gift of their time each month which creates a refreshing, colorful display for the Gallery. They also want to thank the many recent visitors and patrons of the Gallery, and to remind them the Gallery is open year round. Come see and be a part of the Ouachita Artists Gallery in Mt Ida. You'll be glad you did!

Friday Open Studio

Ouachita Artists Gallery and Studio is open on Fridays from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM. Members and non-members are encouraged to come in to paint, draw or sketch with other artists. It's a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and techniques – not to mention camaraderie with fellow artists. Come visit the Gallery any Friday and plan to stay as long as you want. Oh, and don't forget to bring your art supplies and creativity!

If you work at the gallery

If you are a volunteer and are scheduled to work in the gallery, and find that for some reason you can't make it, please try to find a replacement or at least notify one of the officers or Board members so we can get your day covered. We don't like for people to come to see us and find the doors locked. The winter weather and illness have caused problems for all of us, but we need to keep the gallery open the posted days and hours if at all possible.

We're on the Web!

Join us on Facebook on
Ouachita Artists page

See our blog at:
ouachitaartists.blogspot.com

Our website address is:
www.ouachitaartists.com

Program Meetings at the Gallery

by Patti Presley



Twenty dollars for a year's membership to any artists' guild is an unbelievable value. Whether you enjoy strolling in The Ouachita Artists Gallery after lunch on the Square, tagging on a little selfish time when conducting business at the Courthouse, or placing your own artwork in The Gallery, the miniscule investment is well worth it. What is really astonishing are other perks that come with a membership at the Ouachita Artists Guild, the monthly Program Meetings to name only one.

Carole Katchen, world renowned artist and many-times-over published writer, captivated members at January's Program Meeting with her distinctive style in oil painting. A celebrated professional artist for over 50 years, Carole now calls Hot Springs her home. She was gracious enough to share her artistic talent by breathing life onto a 20x24" white canvas within the 60 minutes allotted, using brilliant colors and whimsy. "Every inch of the canvas must be a painting in and of itself" Carole said. "The observer's eye must be brought full circle over the entire work, and they should be made to feel apart of the painting". Carole's paintings evoke feelings of celebration and laughter, and what else is art supposed to do but make us feel good? Those who experienced Carole's demonstration would agree they would have paid over \$20.00 just for that Program Meeting alone. And, they have eleven more to look forward to in the Ouachita Artists lineup of Program Meetings for 2014.

You may have missed Carole Katchen at the Gallery last week, but catch a glimpse of her wonderful, joy- provoking work on www.carolekatchen.com.

You can visit Carole's studio/gallery at 620 West Grand in Hot Springs. To chat with her personally while viewing her art, give Carole a call at 501-617-4494 so she can make herself available. And, above all, schedule time to attend the monthly program meetings at the gallery. It's a delightful perk of your membership and a great way to take home tips and tricks to enhance your own artistic creations, besides just making you feel good!

