

Art Advisory Committee Report: February – May 2025

Submitted by Karen Kaiser: Committee Chair

BPAC Meeting: June 13, 2025

Community Sketch Group

We continue to hold sketch groups each Saturday morning. We have an average of about 6 or 7 per meeting, with a low of 3 and a high of 28. The most popular was a supply swap day on February 8. We are holding another supply swap on July 19. We have worked to add branding to help promote the group and related programming at the Farm. Karen has developed an “Art Works” monthly newsletter and has created signage. Tom continues to promote the group through social media. A big thank you goes out to the Farm staff and the marketing staff for their help in organizing and promoting this and all our art events.

2nd Saturday Art (Watercolor) Class

Karen Kaiser’s art classes meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month at noon, generally in the Chesapeake. In February’s class, *Dip Pen Doodles* students explored quill and ink drawing with India ink on top of watercolor. On March 8, participants of *Hoppy Spring* used collage and watercolor to create a frog in a pond. On April 12, Tom helped by leading the Whimsical Cottage watercolor class. May 10 also featured watercolor for *Tea Time*. We had tea from HTeaO, snacks, and Mother’s Day-themed balloons.

These classes are designed to accommodate all skill levels and cover the basics of watercolor and other user-friendly media. We have between 8-10 paid enrollees in each of these classes, plus two who attend on scholarship. Cost per student is \$30, with 25% going to the Farm for facilities usage. The remaining funds help cover program expenses and supplies, including a few take-home supplies for each class so students can continue to develop their skills. Karen donates her time to these.

Last Saturday, Still Life Drawing Class

Emily Broussard led a still life drawing class in the Baker Building at noon on the last Saturday. Students brought their materials. Emily taught some basics of how to draw objects from real life. In March, students drew vases, boxes, a dress shoe, and a tea kettle. In April, a 3-D printed urn, soda bottle, bananas, and a vintage toy spinner were drawn, along with the boot that was used as a model for many of the boot carvings done by Charlie and his students.

Emily’s class, like Karen’s, is designed to accommodate all skill levels. The class is offered in exchange for donations, which we hope will work as seed money for some basic furnishings in the new art studio. About 8-10 have attended each class thus far, with donations totaling about \$80 per class. The space and Emily’s time are donated.

Red Chair Lecture

On March 22, we offered a Red Chair Lecture entitled *The Mind’s Eye* by artist Mick Swindall. Mick is a North Texas Native and former graphic designer turned full-time painter. He came from Alabama to talk about his work and offer what he called a Trunk Sale. He spent the week prior in residence conducting a study of the farm and the area. He created several paintings based on his study, which he included in the show. His total sales were over \$6000, with 25% going to the Farm for facilities usage. His pieces were displayed from March to May in the Baker Building Gallery.

Show Me How Festival

The Show Me How Festival was rescheduled for rain from Saturday, April 5, to Friday, May 16. Tom and Karen were present with flyers and signs for both the Community Sketch Group and the classes mentioned above. They created drawings at the festival to hand out as promotions as well. Unfortunately, even May 16's festival was cut short due to storms.

Additional Art Programming

The Farm staff has done a fantastic job coordinating with various artists to offer children's art camps as well as the Painting with Bram Bevins Bob Ross-style workshops (May 29-31). Please see the Russell Farm Supervisor report for more information about these events.

Facilities

In March, the renovation of the garage to convert it to an Artist's Studio began. As of this writing, it is currently underway. We look forward to seeing this space take shape. Thank you so much for the donations from the community, both in time and treasure, that helped make this possible.

We continue to have concerns about the effects of heat on the spaces available to us. All of our classes occur on Saturday afternoons immediately following the morning sketch group.

Unfortunately, this peak time begins the warmest part of the day. As of this writing, A/C in the Chesapeake remains in the planning stages. We look forward to progress there.

Upcoming Events

Over the coming months, we plan to continue the classes listed above. We are currently planning our third annual Art Camp for Grown Ups in August. We coordinate several local artists as instructors. Our last two of these events have successfully pulled in folks from around the area. We hope to continue that experience. In addition, Tom has begun planning the next Red Chair lecture. A pop-up art show is also in the works from a local photographer.