



# HCAA Newsletter

*This newsletter is supported in part by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council.*

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- Installation/deinstallation days/times
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## A Message from HCAA President-Elect Eileen Cave:

### Summoning Our Muses through Exploration

The signs of “pandemic coping” in the creative industry are increasingly evident. In March, I had the opportunity to see the Broadway show “MJ,” starring Myles Frost, a Bowie State University student. A lifelong fan of Michael Jackson’s music, I thought the voice and acting of Frost reincarnated Michael, and it was thoroughly entertaining—each and every moment. The show was sold out, and walking around in the area, seeing all the long lines for Broadway shows—the theaters are back. It was so inspiring!

In our local arts community, as we return to the “new normal,” I am anxious to see how my creative muse will now appear. I coped with the isolation of the lockdown these past two years by researching a variety of master artists and participating in online museum programs for arts educators. The art museums and state and local arts organizations stepped up during this time, expanding virtual tours, workshops, and communities of discussion via Zoom. To enhance my art classroom instruction, I took a deeper dive into artistic works by Alma Thomas, Yayoi Kusama (Queen of Dots), Walter Anderson (The Seven Motifs), Georgia O’Keeffe, and David Driskell, reviewing exhibition resources and biographies about the artists’ lives. YouTube was a great source for interviews and documentaries



Eileen Cave, HCAA President-Elect

about these artists. I was attempting to thread a social justice perspective, under the new concept of advocating for the arts through the arts, aka activism. Each of these artists, in addition to their impact through their artistic works, are/were dynamic forces for social, environmental, and cultural justice that resonated with my K-6 grade students. My students’ artwork has been very vibrant, in Black History Month, Women’s History Month, and Earth Day environmental advocacy exhibits; modeling and critiquing so many, vastly different artistic styles may impact my painting style. I have a canvas on the easel and new sketches scattered about. As spring slowly awakens, hopefully all our HCAA members will enjoy new opportunities to be creative and sell in the new normal!

I would like to share one business opportunity: Shop Made in Maryland, which is a new business incubator opening in College Park, Maryland, in the summer of 2022, is accepting artist applications. For more information, see <https://www.shopmadeinmd.net/>.

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## Monthly “Challenges” to Improve Your Art

by Aimee Doyle

In order to grow and improve their work, most artists need to proactively push themselves from time to time. Probably all artists are familiar with traditional methods such as classes or formal art critiques. But not everyone may be familiar with the on-line art challenges I discovered as I researched this topic on the Internet. There are many kinds of art challenges—daily, weekly, monthly—but all generally require the artist to complete a series of works over a designated period of time. Often, the challenges will offer prompts to jumpstart the artist’s creative juices. However, artists are not required to use the prompt list and many choose to be spontaneous each day. These online events also encourage—but do not require—participating artists to post their work online.

One common theme for sparking creativity and artistic growth is for artists to choose a challenge that requires them to limit themselves. Artists might choose one subject (e.g., 30 days of water color landscapes, 30 days of photographing trees), one tool (e.g., brush, pen, pencil, charcoal), or one style (a variety of subjects in the same style) to work on for a month. Many of the challenges operate on the theory that constraints spark creativity. Typically, a second goal is to encourage artists to develop a daily “art habit” and increase discipline.

In my wide-ranging and rather random search for online challenges, I found the following ideas particularly intriguing. They range from the very specific to the very general.

**The January Challenge** – is hosted by the British organization “64 Million Artists!” which is a social enterprise that works to spark creativity in everyone and to connect creatives around the world. For January of 2022, the themes were the following: “We are Human – 31 challenges to explore the senses, the natural world, and what makes us human; We are Culture – 31 challenges to explore our identities, cultures, and communities; and We are Connected – 31 challenges to explore what happens when we create together.” Each day of January had prompts to encourage artists to explore these themes. Tens of thousands of artists—visual artists, sculptors, musicians, writers, and performers—participate in **The January Challenge** each year. Check out <https://64millionartists.com/thejanuarychallenge/>.

**Junicorn** – takes place during the month of June and focuses on a single subject. This is a magical month where, each day, the challenge is dedicated to drawing unicorns. These can be traditional unicorns, other animals enhanced with horns, or playfulness with the shape and texture and style and number of horns themselves. A prompt list from 2020 included the words Gothic, Ghost, Warrior, Futuristic, Royal, and Undead. Simply google “Junicorn” and have fun. Artists can also explore some of the best Junicorn art at <https://www.deviantart.com/tag/junicorn>.

**World Watercolor Month** – in July is an annual global charitable event that supports arts education. It was founded by the organization Doodlewash® and is devoted to the media of watercolor and gouache. As the website states, “It’s a month to inspire people to paint with watercolor while raising awareness for the importance of art and creativity in the world. And anyone can join the celebration from master watercolorists to artists just starting out with watercolor! The ultimate challenge is completing 31 watercolors in 31 days. Or artists can simply post when they can! It’s just about maintaining a regular art practice and having fun!” Check out [www.doodlewash.com](http://www.doodlewash.com).

*(continued on page 3)*

### 10 Challenges!

by Diane Elliott

- Portray the same subject two times, using two different light sources
- Use the same subject two times, to convey two different moods
- Portray the same object two times, using two different mediums
- Add an additional medium to a work
- Close your eyes and draw a random line or paint a random shape, and then create something with it.
- Limit your palette to one color
- Pick your least favorite color and use it to portray a favorite subject
- Look at one of your works or a favorite work by another artist, pick out a small area, and create a new work examining that area in greater detail
- Portray two objects together that wouldn’t naturally be in the same space
- Think of a character from a book or movie, and create a work in what you imagine would be the style of that character

(Monthly Challenges *continued from page 2*)

**Sketchathon September** – prompts the artist to fill up at least one sketchbook page every day during the month of September. The objective of the challenge itself is to form a sketching habit and create a beautiful, full sketchbook by the end of the month. The theme or subject matter of the sketches is completely up to the artist. Take a look at “A Kick in the Creatives™,” which posts online art challenges for each month of the year (they also have a podcast and a blog): <https://kickinthecreatives.com/sketchathon-september-art-challenge/>.

**Inktober** – was created by artist Jake Parker and takes place in October. It focuses on improving skills and developing positive drawing habits. If an artist has been struggling with a particular technique, Inktober might be a good time to get daily practice with that technique. In “Frequently Asked Questions,” the site states, “Inktober is just a framework to get yourself to draw better, flex a little, and/or have some fun with your art. Inktober is a *challenge* NOT a contest to see who the best artist is. It’s a challenge to see how much you can improve your art in a month, and to be inspired or to help inspire other artists to do the same.” Inktober provides single word prompts for each day. To get a sense of the prompts, visit <https://inktober.com/>.

Curious about the other months of the year? Google “art challenge” and “February” (or choose your birthday month) and enjoy the search results.

## HCAA CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

**"Right Brained Image"**  
March 5, 2022–May 14, 2022  
Franklins Restaurant and Brewery  
5121 Baltimore Ave., Hyattsville, MD 20781

RECEPTION  
April 10, 2022, 3:00 PM—5:00PM

Hyattsville  
Community  
Arts  
Alliance

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT Pamela Kaappinen: [maeh4746@gmail.com](mailto:maeh4746@gmail.com) OR VISIT: [WWW.HCAAONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.HCAAONLINE.ORG)

**"A Vision Awakens"**  
March 5, 2022–May 14, 2022  
PRINCE GEORGE'S PLAZA COMMUNITY CENTER  
6500 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD

RECEPTION  
APRIL 24, 2022, 3-4PM

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**"Color and Light"**  
March 5, 2022–May 14, 2022

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## Retiring into a Life of Art

by Pete Pichaske

When I was trying to decide whether to retire from full-time work as a newspaper journalist a half-dozen years ago, I made a list of pros and cons for doing so. Thinking of that list now, I realize that some of my assumptions in favor of retirement were not so well reasoned—that I could make almost as much as a freelance writer, for example (not even close), or that I could write and publish a novel (write, yes; publish, no).

On the other hand, some of my arguments in favor of retirement turned out to be spot on: that my health, both mental and physical, would improve, for instance, and that I could and would spend more time with my grandchildren. But the argument for retiring that quite possibly turned out to be the smartest and most accurate was this: that I could have more time to pursue a decades-long hobby of nature photography, and actually make a little bit of money from it.

I'm not the first person to consider retirement an opportunity, at long last, to spend more time doing something I love. Even a cursory search of the Internet turns up plenty of support for the idea. "Retirement is the perfect time to turn an interest into something that you master," advises the website [newretirement.com](#).

"Picking up an art hobby not only helps you stay young in your mind, but it also improves your creativity, communication skills, and is a way to express your emotion," adds [Retirementtipsandtricks.com](#), specifically addressing a creative pursuit like photography. [Samarthlife.org](#), the website for a community of seniors in India, rhapsodizes even more about the benefits artistic hobbies can have on seniors, noting that hobbies can improve memory power, lower your stress level, and more.

As a journalist starting out in the 1970s, I often shot photographs as part of my job. It was a common practice in those days, especially in community journalism, where I got my start. As the years passed and I worked for bigger newspapers with full-time photographers, I nevertheless stayed involved with photography by shooting images of the outdoors.

That sort of photography became more of a passion after my first visit to the American Southwest a quarter-century ago. The photographs I came home with left me so enamored of capturing outdoor images that I bought my first quality camera and began seeking out sites closer to home that offered picturesque fodder for a budding landscape photographer.

But frequent travel and time for perfecting a new skill can be hard to come by for folks working full-time at a semi-demanding profession—especially if those people are also raising a few kids. And so, my ever-growing love of nature photography, for the longest time, always took a back seat to more practical concerns.

Then came retirement, or at least partial retirement.

One of the first things I did in retirement was join the Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance and start exhibiting my photographs. One of the next things I did was take more and more one- or two-day trips to nearby scenic areas—Blackwater Wildlife Refuge on the Eastern Shore and the Shenandoah Mountains, in Virginia, for example. And one of the next things I did was start carrying my camera with me on my day hikes in the area.

*(continued on page 5)*



Red rock country in Southern Utah, a photo from Pete Pichaske's early visit to the Southwest

(Retiring into Art *continued from page 4*)

What I discovered was that places like Lake Artemesia, in Greenbelt, and trails such as the Indian Creek Trail, the Anacostia River Trail, and the many others in the area, can offer plenty of opportunities for an outdoor photographer to ply his craft. And that discovery, I found, led, inevitably, to a happier, fuller retirement. The companionship in HCAA, the calming walks in the natural world, the pride of coming up with a pleasing photograph that I could give (or, occasionally, sell) to friends and admirers—it all adds up to a better, more fulfilling retirement.

“Retirement is a wonderful stage of life, but after the initial excitement wears off, some people wonder what to do with all their newly found time,” according to a post on the website for The Woodlands, a retirement community in Fairport, N.Y. “Take advantage of your retirement and explore new hobbies. It’s never too late to try something new.”

I couldn’t agree more. For me, that hobby is outdoor photography. For other members of HCAA, it’s painting or sculpture or ceramics. For others outside of the club it’s fiction writing, dancing, gardening, involvement in a cause, or learning a new language or to play a new musical instrument. The possibilities, let’s face it, are endless. And the rewards are innumerable. You don’t have to be a retiree to pursue your artistic side. But it sure can help.

## HCAA Calendar April–June

April	April 10: 2–4 PM	Franklins Reception
	April 24: 2–4 PM	Prince George’s Plaza Community Center (PGPCC) Reception
	April 24: 2–4 PM	Solo Reception at PGPCC
May	May 6: 6–8 PM	Community Forklift First Friday
	May 7: 10 AM to 5 PM	Gateway Open Studio Tour
	May 7: Noon	PGPCC Solo Wall installation
	May 7: Noon to 6 PM	Riverdale Park Arts Festival
	May 14: 9 AM	Franklins installation “Kaleidoscope”
	9:45 AM	Fleisher’s installation “Dazzle and Pop”
	Noon	PGPCC Installation
	May 15: 2–4 PM	PGPCC Reception
June	June 3: 6–8 PM	Community Forklift First Friday
	June 4: Noon	PGPCC Solo Wall installation
	June 5: 3–5 PM	Franklins Reception
	June 26: 2–4 PM	PGPCC Solo Wall Reception

If we understood the enigmas of life,  
there would be no need for art.

Albert Camus

## Four Artists' Journeys

by Delia Mychajluk

This article is being written during March, the month particularly honoring women. As both a senior and a woman, I chose to write about several women artists who are also seniors. I have known these women for a number of years and have seen their art develop over time. I find each of these women to be inspirational in that they are continuing to evolve and grow, seeking new experiences.

**Margaret Boles** is the oldest of six children and grew up in a household where there was no one creating visual art. Her brothers played violin, and she was aware that her parents loved opera and theater, because they went to New York City once a year to celebrate their anniversary. Growing up, Margaret made a choice in school to sing rather than following an interest in art. As an adult, she taught first- to seventh-grade science for 30 years, and raised four children. At 62, Margaret retired and then took care of her parents.

She started making art, finally, at the age of 65. Her first course was in portraiture at Montpelier, and she then took art classes for credit at Prince George's Community College, including drawing, watercolor, and color theory. She enjoyed and appreciated the talent of the younger students in her classes. Making art and painting was, and still is, cathartic for her, freeing and peaceful.

Margaret describes herself as a lifelong environmentalist, and the science and political influence is visible in her artwork (particularly her collages). She has been concerned about racial and environmental justice and, as a teacher, worked with her students to empower them to advocate for themselves. As an HCAA member, Margaret shows her art on a regular basis and is an active member of Artists' Gathering, an art sharing/critique group.



Margaret Boles, Blue

**Sherrill Chase** grew up in Washington, D.C., the youngest of nine children. In her household, there was creativity and inventiveness, both of which have, in this writer's opinion, carried over into her art. Sherrill describes her mother as being very creative. She was involved in many crafts, such as ceramics, crocheting, and making flowers and hats. She also taught Sherrill how to sew. Sherrill's father was clever at repurposing materials to create things that would be helpful to the family, even creating a lawn mower out of an electric drill and venetian blind slats. Music was prominent in the house, as well. Sherrill's father played piano, and her mother sang in the church choir. Consequently, Sherrill took piano lessons after retirement.

After retiring, Sherrill also started pursuing art, through the Seasoned Adults Growing Educationally (SAGE) program at Prince George's Community College. In her art classes, Sherrill would learn a technique, then tweak it to her make it her own. As an artist, Sherrill describes her art process as "in the moment"—seeing something that inspires her and using that as a challenge to create. She rarely plans an art piece and does not pre-draw but lets the work evolve to the point where she's satisfied with it. Sherrill chooses not to limit herself to a single kind of art but wants to explore art in different forms—whatever appeals to her at the time. She is very inventive in her use of materials. Initially, Sherrill was reluctant to share her artwork. That changed when she received encouragement and positive feedback.

Sherrill is an active member of HCAA and regularly attends meetings. She is also an active member of Artists Gathering, and was instrumental in organizing on-going monthly Zoom meetings after COVID restrictions prevented in-person gatherings.



Sherrill Chase, Extreme of Consciousness

*(continued on page 7)*

(Four Artists' Journeys *continued from page 4*)

**Ellen Cort** was born in Guyana and moved to the United States as a 4- or 5-year-old. Her father passed when she was 4, and her mother when she was 9. Ellen described her mother as being very creative with breadmaking; her father was a carpenter and used to make furniture. As a child, Ellen learned to sew, making some of her own clothes around the age of 9 or 10, and learned to crochet and make macramé as well. As an adult Ellen lived, with her husband in England for seven years and then returned to Guyana, immigrating to the U.S. in 1984. She began working as a nurse in Guyana and continued to work as a nurse in England and the U.S. until retirement. When asked what she would do after retiring, she thought

about it, and said she wanted to paint, even though she had no previous art experience. Her first art class was in 1994 at Prince George's Community College. Her instructor was Gerald King, a well-known representational painter. Ellen found art to be challenging because she wanted to be as good an artist as King. After the first class, Ellen thought about not going back, but then decided to continue. She learned and shared techniques with her classmates. Ellen had a piece in the student exhibition her first semester. She pursued drawing and painting and eventually earned a degree, in part, because she finally took a dreaded math course.

Ellen is currently taking classes at University of Maryland Global Campus. She keeps a sketchbook in her bedroom and each morning, before getting up, does some drawing with her nondominant left hand. People and nature, especially flowers, inspire her art. Ellen is an active member of HCAA and shows regularly. She is also a member of Artist's Gathering.



Ellen Cort, Flower

**Nancy Sims** was born in Washington, D.C. in 1947, one of three children. She describes her parents as very hardworking. Her mother was part of the great migration from the South to the North. She took pride in her work as a domestic worker, and loved making beautiful table settings and flower arrangements for holidays and special family gatherings. Nancy's father built and repaired radios as a hobby. She saw him as someone who could fix and make just about anything. Nancy has a fond memory of her father working with her on a school project, making a fish mounted on cardboard with grated newspaper and paste. This was her first recognition of her father as artistic/creative.

At Theodore Roosevelt High School in Washington, when she was in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, Nancy was chosen to participate in a special job training program; she was trained as a junior illustrator. After graduating, she continued to work for the company she trained with, eventually moving on to work as a layout artist with the Bureau of National Affairs and then as a graphic artist at the American Geophysical Union.

During her adult years, Nancy took art classes at University of the District of Columbia, The Corcoran, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and computer and computer graphics classes at Montgomery College. During the riots in D.C. in the 1960s, she became serious about her art, using it to express her thoughts and feelings about what she was experiencing. She eventually moved from painting exclusively to working with other mediums, including stained glass. In recent years, Nancy has continued to paint but also uses objects and words in some of her art. Nancy's logo, Eye Choose Love, is representative of her art and art journey. Nancy has been a recipient of a PG County Arts and Humanities Grant. She is an active member of HCAA and is also a member of Artist's Gathering.



Nancy Sims, Butterfly Effect

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