

Plein Talk



The Newsletter of the Washington Society of Landscape Painters

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Summer 2009

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members of WSLP,

As I write this, it is the latter part of August. It has not been the hottest or the muggiest on record, but it has still been August. Plein air painting tips for the DC area are as follows: (1) Sunshine: The obvious, of course, is sunscreen and umbrella; (2) Rain: Just the umbrella; (3) Nosy Nellies: Many times people want to watch us paint and tell us about their artistic cousins who are just learning to paint, yada, yada, yada. The best you can say is something like "The sun is moving and the shadows are disappearing! I'm sorry I can't talk right now I've only a few minutes to do this"; (4) Deer ticks: The "coolest" way to look like a seasoned plein air painter is to pull your socks up over your pant legs. This is extremely stylish and the fashion police will love it! Nancy and I have both had Lyme disease and it is no picnic; (5) Yellow jackets: Stay away from their nests, which are usually around bushes or timbers close to the ground. Beware of fuzzy gray things flying in and out of the bushes. Yellow jackets are nasty wasps, and I inadvertently stepped in one of their nests. Boy, were they ticked off! Five of them chased and stung me: one on each hand through my garden gloves, two on my thigh through my jeans, and one savored pure flesh on my calf. It took three weeks to recover from these stings...fortunately I am not allergic, nevertheless I certainly had a reaction; (6) Mosquitoes and gnats: The new perfume for men and women is "eau d'Off." You can find it in hardware stores, drug stores, and most any place. Since it smells so wonderful, the flying critters will have to find another host. Mosquitoes absolutely love me. I read recently that these sucking bugs are attracted to people who have low zinc levels or who use turpentine, like (house) painters. Too bad OMS doesn't count; (7) WSLP t-shirts: For special attention, wear your shirt announcing that you are a member of this historic prestigious organization. All we really want is some good press; (8) Hot and humid days: I found this latest gimmick at the county fair last week. It is a tiny battery-operated fan that you can hold up to your face or attach to your easel. For the watercolorists in the group, they could blow the hot air on their painting to make it dry faster. I will bring a sample to the meeting in September.

Barbara Nuss

President, WSLP

Member News

Nancy Wallace participated in the Paint Wayne plein air festival, in May, 2009.

Leonard Justinian just came back from Italy, having taken 1,1147 digital pictures. He is painting watercolors on Public Access TV once a month, which was shown on June 15, 19 and 25th. He is also teaching at OLLIE, and extension of George Mason University.

Marietie Chamberlain was juried into and participated in Plein Air Easton July 19-26. She will be painting in France and Holland for three weeks in September, 2009, specifically the Lanquedoc Rouissillon area mountains, rivers, woods, vineyards, canals, (Canal du Midi), the Mediterranean Sea, and marshes.

Bethanne Cople painted in West Palm Beach FL, Tucson, AZ, and the Carmel Art Festival in California. She held a workshop at Great Oaks Manor in MD in April, and had an April solo show at South Street Gallery. She also participated in a group show at Huff Harrington Gallery in Atlanta, GA.

Nancy Tankersley won an Award for Excellence in painting the figure at the Academy Art Museum members show for the painting *Monday Morning at National Airport*. She was juried into and judged the first annual Mountain Plein Air competition in Allegheny County.

Yolanda Frederikse will exhibit at The Washington Printmakers Gallery; the exhibit is titled "Water, Wings, and Wildflowers" and includes her monotypes of C & O Canal and Potomac River images along Maryland and Virginia.

Margaret Huddy will teach watercolor on the Cunard Line's *Queen Victoria* from December 19-Jan 5, 2010. One of her paintings was chosen to be the centerpiece of the 2009 Christmas ornament to be sold by the White House Historical Society.

Barbara Nuss painted in the Paint Wayne plein air festival and won a juror's award. She also participated in the Mountain Maryland Plein Air event, and was accepted into Gallery CNY in Central New York state.

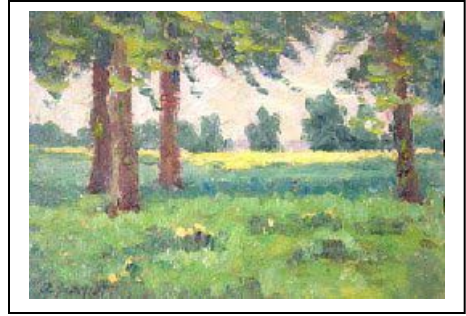
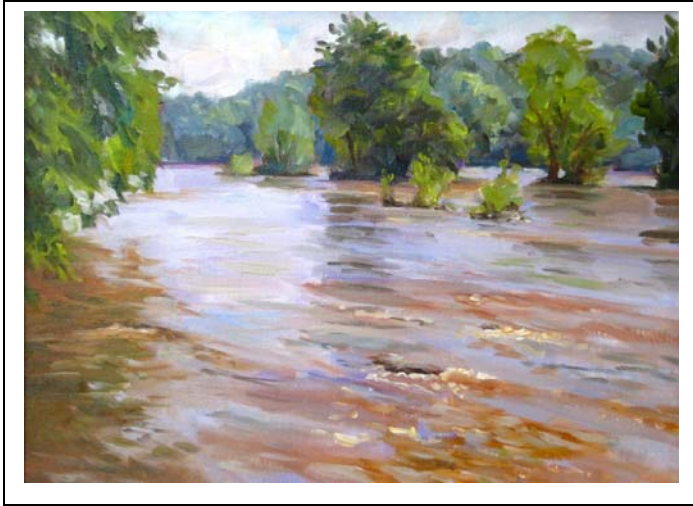
Christine Lashley won the top prize of \$1,000 at the Riverbend Park's 4th Annual Plein Air event for her painting *High Water*. The judge was Armand Cabrera and the painting had to be completed between 5:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. on the day of the event.

Genevieve Roberts enjoyed a trip to Madrid, Spain, where she found the exhibit of Sorolla at the Prada "breathtaking", and she thought of us all as she looked at his "wonderful rendering of light".

Tim Bell won First Place at the Allegheny Plein Air 2009 event in Frostburg, MD, and Second Place at the Paint Wayne 2009 event in Wayne, PA. He is teaching a landscape course at the new Easton Studio and School in Easton, MD.

Bill Schmidt had two paintings selected for the American Impressionist Society's 10th National Juried Exhibition, which will occur between October 23 and November 29, 2009 in Denver, CO. The two paintings are *Woods with Canola Field* and *Along the Zattere*.

Mary Kokoski, Andrei Kushnir, and Barbara Nuss will have an exhibit "The Potomac River School" at the Sandy Spring Museum, in Sandy Spring, MD, from September 16 through November 29, 2009.



Winning Images: *High Water*, Christine Lashley (above, left), *Woods with Canola Field*, Bill Schmidt (top, right), and *Along the Zattere*, Bill Schmidt (above, right).

Plein Air Adventures:

Painting out in plein air means bringing home more than just a colorful canvas with a few gnats stuck to it. Members of the WSLP have many stories to share. Here are two:

"Them 'r Pears" by Margaret Huddy

While driving down a country road in Lorton one day I saw the perfect spring scene, apple trees in full bloom with cows sheltered under them. Not wanting to trespass I went up to the farmhouse and rang the bell to ask permission to work on their property but no one answered. Across the street I saw a garage and went over to ask if they knew the owners. They said yes, I could call the owner, who worked at Lorton Auto Parts. When I spoke to him I asked if I could come on to his property and paint the apple trees. He said, "Sure can, but them 'r pears".

"Artist accused of casing the neighborhood" by Margaret Huddy

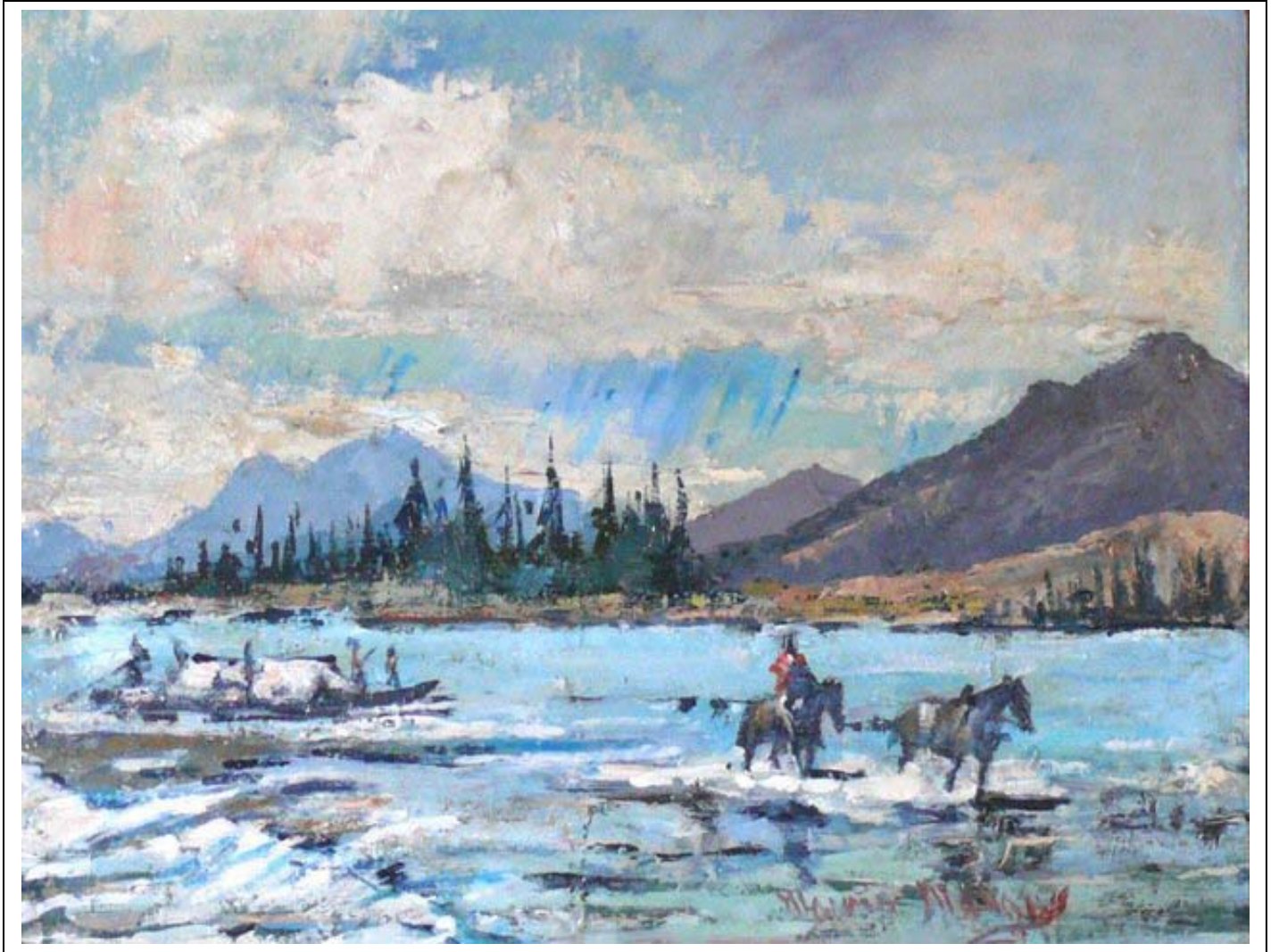
When I first moved to my current home in McLean, driving the same old van and using the same old camera with a long lens I found the muse of my life, a 250-year-old Sycamore tree living a few blocks from my house. I spent many days parked there, wandering around photographing it literally from dawn to moonrise as a source for my studio paintings. About six months later I met the neighbors and mentioned that I was inspired by the tree on their street. It was an "aha!" moment. They had watched me and recorded my license so that if there had been any thefts in the neighborhood they were going to send the cops after me!

IN TOUCH WITH THE PAST (Lani Browning, WSLP archivist)

*Early this year the WSLP received an e-mail from Mr. Don Mangus of Dallas, Texas, who said his dad, Marvin Mangus, a member of the old Landscape Club of Washington, D.C. (1955-1976), had passed away in February. This led me to review our archival records where I found a number of references to Mangus' early work and his very active participation in Landscape Club activities. In reporting his death to the WSLP membership I learned that current Society member, **Dick Ray**, was a long time friend of his. Dick has provided the following notes, in his own words:*

“Marv Mangus, who was very active in the old Landscape Club of Washington D.C. (forerunner of the Washington Society of Landscape Painters), was a personal friend with whom I painted on location a number of times in the early 1950's in places like Harpers Ferry, WV, Leesburg, VA, and Comus, MD. We were both “students” of Roger Rittase, an earlier member of the old Landscape Club of Washington, D.C. (1933-1975). In the late 1940's Roger taught an art class for the Welfare and Recreation Association at the Department of Interior where both Marv and I worked for the Alaskan Branch of the U. S. Geological Survey. In addition to his class instruction Roger guided and critiqued our painting on location. The association with Rittase was a strong stimulus to Marv's continuing artistic endeavors. Marv developed into a very fine artist, focusing primarily on landscape painting. He worked mostly in oils, although over the years he painted in other media, such as using acrylics in his later work. His landscape scenes were executed in a painterly manner, with broad brush strokes and strong colors, reminiscent of the style of some of the early 20th century American artists. Marv was one of Alaska's leading landscape painters, his work including not only the pristine scenes of Nature but often featuring old cabins, mine buildings, river boats, gold dredges and other reminders of Alaska's bygone years (See photographs below). His paintings have been featured in a number of one-person shows and on seven occasions his landscapes were accepted in the national competition of the prestigious Arts in the Parks program. For Marv, painting was an avocation that he pursued with a passion. (His professional career as a geologist in the discovery and production of oil in northern Alaska is well known, but that is another story).

In 1958 Marv left government employment to join the petroleum industry but wherever he traveled he managed to find time to paint. He settled in Alaska in 1962 and in his work across the state he had the opportunity to see some of the country's most spectacular and majestic scenes of Nature, and of course he painted them. Whether he was painting in oils or, in the latter part of his career, in acrylics, his work was simply outstanding. It was a pleasure to have been associated with such a talented artist.”



Lining Boats Up on the Koyukuk River near Coldfoot, Alaska, by Marvin Mangus (from private collection and courtesy of Mr. Gil Mull. Santa Fe, NM)

Upcoming WSLP Exhibitions:

“Near and Far” exhibition at Strathmore Hall in Rockville, MD (deliver paintings on 11/16/09)

“Small Treasures”, annual small works show of WSLP paintings at American Painting in DC (deliver paintings the week of 11/16/09)

- - - and don't forget our artistic venture with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to paint and exhibit our works of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed in 2010.

Pen and Ink (by Mary Kokoski)

Sometimes they are “Nosy Nellies”, at other times they are the Adoring Public, and the difference between them usually has more to do with me and where I am in my painting progress than with the curious onlookers themselves. Mostly, my interactions with spectators has been positive. That people find the activity of painting a landscape fascinating, even a bit magical, reminds me that I should never take it for granted myself. Still, it does help to carry a sense of humor in my paintbox along with the tubes of pigment and brushes.

I’ve often imagined having a little fun with those peering over my shoulder as I paint (especially if a paintout venue offers too many tourists and too few inspiring vistas). For example,

Tourist: “That’s cool.”

Me: “Thanks.”

Tourist (turning to his wife): “Look, dear, this artist has put unicorns in that field instead of the cows.”

Me (peering incredulously at the field): “Those are *cows*??”

Or, perhaps:

Tourist: “Hmmm, that’s interesting. So real! But. . . “

Me: “Thanks.”

Tourist: “But, what’s that black and red thing?”

Me: “What black and red thing?”

Tourist: “That (pointing at my canvas), up there in your sky above those trees.”

Me: “Oh, it’s just that asteroid. Over there (pointing at the sky).”

Tourist:

Me (scooping up more black and red paint on my brush): “Yeah, you’re right. It’s way bigger than what I painted a couple minutes ago.”

Happy painting!

Mary