

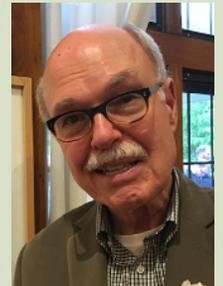


Great River Chapter of the American Society of Botanical Artists

September 2018

Message from the President

I had a conversation with a botanical artist whose day job is teaching elementary school kids art. It has its problems, she said, and not because her students don't want to be there. They do. They just don't know—not necessarily, at any rate—what they're supposed to do when they arrive. "Why is one handle on this pair of scissors so much bigger than the other?" a girl wanted to know.



No doubt she was an outlier, an exception to the rule. Still, she did give her teacher pause. Is this what we're now up against? she, the teacher, wondered. And I, in turn, wondered the same. Was this student's plight more descriptive of the challenges we face as botanical artists than the ones we say we face?

We say that an important part of our mission is to educate our public about botanical art, and to that end, I do believe we've done good work. Jane Hancock's multi-paneled display at last year's "Inspired by Nature" exhibition on how a work of botanical art is created is a fine example. So is this newsletter. And this year's show at the ever-popular Minnesota Landscape Arboretum will surely extend our reach, as well. But will education about *botanical* art be enough when education about *art*, period, is in peril? I don't think it will. The rarefied world in which we live is far removed from the ordinary concerns of most people, and not much less so from most practicing artists. We labor patiently (or not!) over our easels, dreaming of what we're sure our work will look like should we ever finish, while our public is entirely ignorant of our predicament and, more to the point, thoroughly indifferent. Meanwhile, our compatriots, full-time artists that they are, simply do not have the luxury of patience. Their deadlines come more often and with greater urgency. It's not enough for them to do a summer art fair. They must do an art crawl, too, and the state fair, and their commissions, and every other opportunity to show and sell their work. When you're punching the clock—even if it's your own clock—your time is not your own. And here am I, still thinking about adding another layer of paint. Perhaps then my work will "pop."

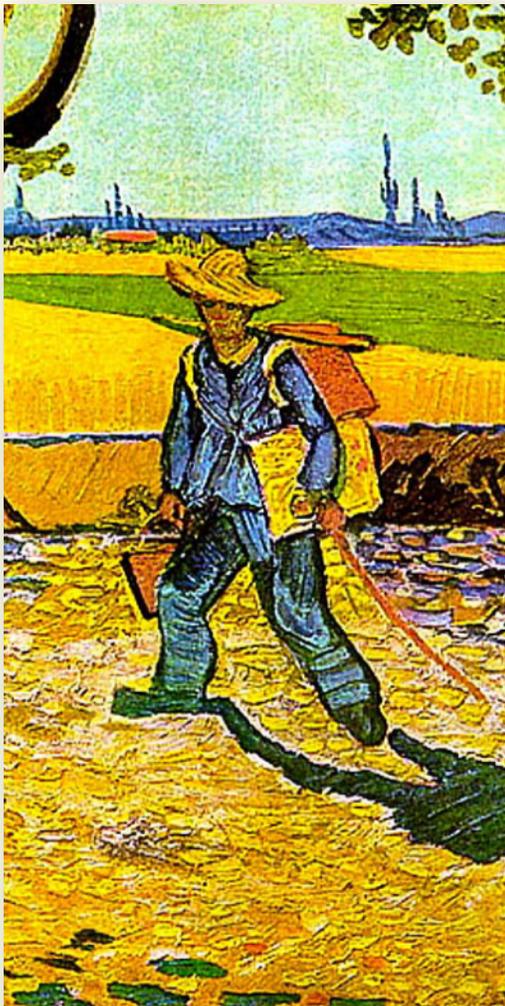
Do not get me wrong. I am not denigrating the labor-intensive, time-honored practices we employ, quite the contrary. For it is these practices that have not only defined our work, they have given the public whatever botanical art masterpieces there are. That is a great achievement all by itself. But surely, the reason masterpieces are masterpieces has as much to do with their subject matter as with the skill with which they were made. Something in the plants inspired those artists to create works that were themselves inspiring.

continued on page 2

That's what we should be educating our public about through our art—how extraordinary nature is. Sitting in Lynne Gildensoph's botany lectures at the Minnesota School of Botanical Art, I could not help but marvel at the wonder of it all. All of us there could not help but marvel. The mechanics of transpiration alone, for example, the means by which water molecules entering a tree's roots are pushed and pulled up hundreds of feet to the top of the tree's canopy, there to be recycled in the atmosphere above is, well, nothing short of amazing. When we watched "The Queen of Trees," an exceptional documentary about a giant sycamore fig tree in Kenya's outback, we were both bowled over and humbled. The world of that tree and the tiny wasp that pollinates it was so much more astonishing than anything we had imagined. It was more cut-throat, more precarious, and yet more teeming with life than our most eye-popping works of art. (Indeed, it had so much life, we thought the movie should be X-rated).

We owe it to our public to convey something of this "green force that lights the fuse" (Dylan Thomas). If we make botanical art to please ourselves, all well and good. I mean that. Let us take pleasure in our work and not apologize for that. But if we do have our public in mind, let us make an art that inspires awe. Yes, let it be as good as we can make it. But let it also be as wondrous as the life of the plants we've been inspired to paint. We owe it to them, too.

- Scott Stapleton



Gogging to the ASBA conference in October but not sure how you're going to get there?

Consider riding with someone who's already driving.

Scott Stapleton has room for some. Perhaps others who are also driving would be willing to do the same.

If so, let Scott know at scottstapleton@gmail.com and he'll do his best to match drivers with riders. See you in St. Louis, (botanical) Louis's!



Doing a Little Sketching Outdoors, *hmmmm*?

How about signing up for a pair of pages in the GRC's Sketchbook Exchange Project? (See the March newsletter for a complete description of the project.) Cynthia Larsen, Scott Stapleton, Marilyn Maltby, and Marian Adcock have all claimed their pages. Below, are the next three in line:



You'll notice they all have something in common:

They're missing your artwork!

Send Cynthia an e-mail right now declaring your interest, and she'll see that the book will come to you. She can be reached at jlarsen195@aol.com.

An Additional Message from the President: "What Is Our GRC Elevator Speech?"

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is working on a 150-word text that will convey to its public what is "sexy" about botanical art. It's for our "Inspired by Nature" exhibition in November and December, of course, and the Exhibition Committee is helping them with that, unhh, teaser.

By coincidence, we, the chapter of the GRC, have been asked a similar question by the ASBA. Gillian Rice, the editor of the "Cross-Pollination" column that appears in *The Botanical Artist*, has invited us to submit a 500-word description of what is distinctive about our chapter.

"Choose an overarching theme for the article," the instructions read. "Also remember that the purpose of the column is to facilitate the exchange of ideas." Dry details about what we do are necessary, but, really, the point of the column is to confirm that our chapter contributes to the cross-pollination that the ASBA promotes.

We've accepted the invitation. The deadline is Sept. 25. Quite likely, I'll be writing it, but that isn't a given. There are a number of people with a longer history and just as good writing skills that could do the job. Whoever does it, however, will still need input from you, the chapter.



So, the elevator doors have closed, and you are inside with a curious passenger. What would you tell her about our chapter that would entice her to want to know more? You've got 500 words. Go.

Send your response to Scott at scottostapleton@gmail.com.

Monthly Studio Days

September 14

Highland Park Library
1974 Ford Parkway, St. Paul
10:00 - Noon

October

No Studio Day
(ASBA Conference)

November 9

Place and time to be determined.

Join other members for an opportunity to work on a project of your choice in watercolor, graphite, or colored pencil while you socialize with other members and exchange ideas. The group meets on the second Friday of each month. Locations and times may change from month to month. Bring your own light if you wish and a beverage/snack if you desire. Contact Cora Wortman crwortman@earthlink.net (763-493-4810) if you have questions or are interested in a different day, time, or place.

Looking forward to your participation!

Calendar

Sept 14 Studio Day, Highland Park Library (p. 4)

Oct 1 Last date for submissions to "Inspired by Nature" (p.4)

Oct 11-13 ASBA Annual Conference St. Louis (p. 2)

Oct. 25 Drop off "Inspired by Nature" artwork at MLA (p.4)

Oct 26-Dec 26 GRC "Inspired by Nature" Exhibition
MLA (p. 4)

Nov 3 Wendy Brockman workshop, "The Color Green"
MLA (p. 5)

Nov 4 "Inspired By Nature" Opening Reception, MLA (p. 4)

Nov 9 Studio Day, time and place to be determined (p. 4)

Nov 10 Wendy Brockman workshop "Dry-Brush
Painting," MLA (p. 5)

Dec 8 GRC Annual Meeting, Wayzata CC (p.15)

Dec 27 Pick up "Inspired by Nature" artwork at MLA (p.4)

Calling all Great River Chapter Botanical Artists!

Registration is open for all GRC artists to enter the 11th Annual "Inspired by Nature" Exhibition.

This is one of the most exciting exhibit opportunities in our chapter history as our artwork will be featured at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Reedy Gallery. What a privilege we have to show our work in such a prestigious venue with the added feature that it was voted the #1 Arboretum in the country by USA today!

- New this year are awards for Best of Show, First time entry, and People's Choice from Wet Paint and Dick Blick. (Rosedale store)
- Free admission to the Arboretum to participating artists for the duration of the exhibition.
- **All entry materials are on the GRC website under the "Exhibits" tab.**
- All entries must be received by October 1, 2018
- Questions? Email Suz Galloway, Exhibit Chair. galloway1297@msn.com
- Volunteers are needed for the exhibit. Contact Terry McFarland terry.mcfarland@comcast.net



Exciting additions to the 11th Annual GRC “Inspired By Nature” 2018 Exhibition! — Save the Dates!

We are thrilled to announce that the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is sponsoring two workshops for GRC members surrounding the opening of our 11th annual exhibit! Minnesota artist Wendy Brockman will be conducting two workshops specifically geared for GRC members. Her delicately detailed work captures the complexity and fragility of the natural world. Her imagery includes nests, feathers, plants and shoreline elements.

Widely exhibited, Wendy Brockmans’ art has been included in many group and solo exhibitions. Her work has received national and international exhibition awards and is held in public and private collections throughout the world.

Both workshops are in the Tashjian Bee and Pollinator Discovery Center, the McVay Learning Lab.
Space is limited to 15 each.

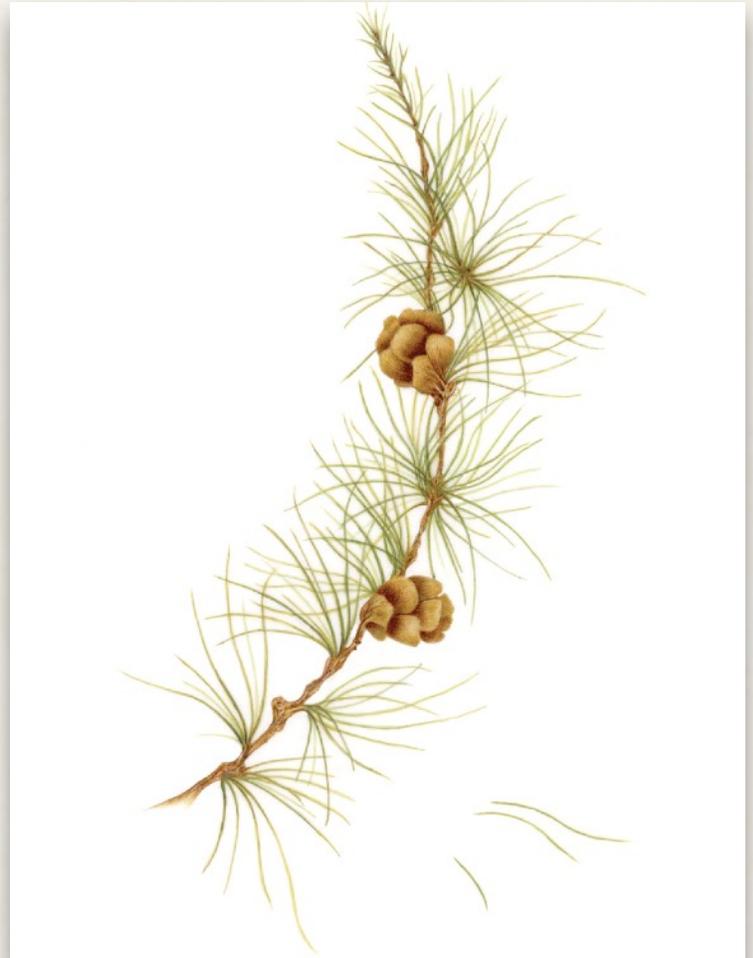
WORKSHOP #1 “Mixing and Painting Nature’s Variations of Green”
Saturday, November 3, 2018, 9:30-3:30

Beautiful, realistic botanical greens can be difficult to mix and work with. Explore the challenge of mixing just the right shades of green for your watercolor paintings with Wendy who will share her techniques and guide you in creating beautiful botanical greens. Bring a photo or sample of a green that you would like to match and be prepared for lots of fun color experimentation!
\$79 MLA members \$99 non-member includes Arboretum admission

WORKSHOP #2 “Dry-brush Botanical Painting Technique”
Saturday, November 10, 2018 9:30-3:30

Learn to build color and texture in your botanical paintings using layers of dry-brush watercolor. Through discussion, demonstration and individual instruction, Wendy will share her painting techniques and experiences.
\$79 MLA members \$99 non-member - includes Arboretum admission

To register, go to the Arboretum website www.arboretum.umn.edu and click on “Events and Classes” / “Adult Classes” / “Fine Arts & Crafts” / and “Painting and Drawing.” Then scroll down to Wendy’s workshops.



The *Flora and Fauna Illustrata* at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

By Gretchen Wagener Bureau, FFI Coordinator, Andersen Horticultural Library

The *Flora and Fauna Illustrata* (FFI) began in 2015 as a joint project between the Andersen Horticultural Library (AHL) and the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum (MLA). Former Minnesota governor Elmer L. Andersen, for whom the AHL is named, wrote in his autobiography that he likes to think in terms of one hundred years. With that in mind, the mission of the FFI project is to document MLA plants and animals for the next one hundred years through scientifically accurate fine art. The AHL archives and facilitates periodic exhibitions of the accepted works. The collection thus provides a visual regional and national resource to aid research and serve as an inspiration for further learning, discovery, and enjoyment.

What sets the FFI apart from more traditional florilegia is that it includes both plant and animal species. Another uncommon characteristic is that the artworks are housed at the MLA, a major arboretum that also provides the subjects for these individual pieces.

Currently, the FFI comprises 48 pieces, with 22 additional species on reserve for specific artists. 2018 marks the 60th anniversary of the MLA and the 110th anniversary of the Horticultural Research Center. To honor the numerous apple, grape, tree, azalea and other plant varieties introduced by the University of Minnesota, our most recent

call is an invitation for artists to select a specific “MN Hardy” plant, or its parts, and render it in scientifically accurate two-dimensional fine art (excluding photography and digital pigment prints).

The FFI is an ongoing project, and depictions of any plants or animals at the MLA—even those covered by previous calls—may be submitted for jury consideration. For more information about previous calls and submission requirements, please visit the FFI website. <https://www.lib.umn.edu/ahl/flora-and-fauna-illustrata> Check back often to see upcoming calls for art, including one for prairie plants that will be advertised shortly.



Judith Spiegel, *Yellow Lady's Slipper*-*Cypripedium calceolus pubescens*.



Terry McFarland, *Silver Maple*
Acer saccharinum “Beebe”



Louise Magnuson,
Autumn Buckeye - *Aesculus*

Questions or comments? Contact Gretchen Wagener Bureau: 612-309-1239, or ffi@umn.edu.

Cleaning Out Your Botanical Art Closet?

The Andersen Horticultural Library at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is eager to fill in gaps in their holdings. With your help, they may be able to do it. In particular, they're looking for copies of the following publications:

Back issues of *The Botanical Artist*:

No. 1-22, 26, 28-30 (1996?-2003/04)

Vol 16, no. 4 (December, 2010)

Vol 24, no. 1 (March, 2018),

Two *International Exhibition of Botanical Art and Illustration* catalogs from the Hunt Institute of Botanical Documentation:

Contemporary Botanical Art & Illustration [1st International] (1964)

6th International Exhibition Catalog (1988), and

many of the *ASBA Annual International Exhibition catalogs*:

Numbers 1 - 13, 15

If you are able to help, contact librarian Kathy Allen at 612-301-1239, or kallen@umn.edu.



The Round-Robin at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

On July 29, twenty-five people attended a round-robin of presentations on pricing art work, the holdings of the Andersen Horticultural Library (AHL), and the Flora and Fauna Illustrata (FFI) florilegium housed at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. The event was the fourth in a series of special events sponsored by the GRC for the membership.

Suz Galloway, the chair of this year's annual "Inspired by Nature" exhibition and a teacher at the Minnetonka Center for the Arts, planned the event and led the pricing workshop. **Kathy Allen**, the librarian of the AHL, gave an overview of the library, plus a first peak at a recent spectacular purchase, the second and concluding volume of the Highgrove Florilegium, the sumptuous botanical art record of the plants in the garden of Charles, Prince of Wales, at Highgrove House in Gloucestershire, England. The third presenter was **Julie Friedman**, an assistant at the library, who showed examples of art work recently accepted into the FFI. She also talked about the history of the florilegium, including the name of the woman who made it happen, Suz Galloway.



Suz Galloway discussing the finer points of pricing art work.



Librarian **Kathy Allen** unveils the library's Highgrove Florilegium for the first time.

Judy Spiegel, a staff member at the library, describes a recent addition to the Flora and Fauna Illustrata project.



We understand the Highgrove is still available for purchase. But if you have to ask the price....

A backdrop for the presentation on the holdings of the library were the extraordinary George Nakashima tables and other furnishings.



Prairie Perspectives 2018

For the past four years, Nancy Sather, an ecologist at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, has assembled a veritable biome of naturalists, environmentalists, and artists of different stripes for a long weekend of workshops, lectures, tours of scientific and natural sites, and cross-fertilization at all hours. It's wonder-full. It takes place at the Shalom Hill Farm in Cottonwood County, Minnesota, a retreat center devoted to fostering an awareness of rural and environmental issues in the midst of numerous botanical treasures.

This year's retreat went from Thursday, Aug. 23, to Monday, Aug. 27. The twenty-two participants who took part heard presentations on the geological history of the region, the book *Art and Fear*, sketching and journaling in the field, the morphology of prairie plants, dragon flies and damsel flies, and the pioneering botanical artist, Emily Hitchcock Terry. That was on top of visits to eight sites, four of them via an up-to-date (and air-conditioned) Ecology Bus.

You'd think people would be exhausted from so much stimulation and fresh air, but, no—quite the contrary. They found time to bead spiders, peer through dissecting microscopes, twist basswood fibers into bracelets, carve walking sticks, look up at the starry heavens, and bid on books, art, and crafts during a silent auction. And talk. Talk over breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Before and after the presentations and workshops. In the hallways, the doorways, the library and the kitchen. Talk on the bus and at the sites—but not always at the sites. On the prairie, silence was also called for, the better to take in the wonder.





For this wannabe naturalist, the gathering was more than I could have imagined. Walking on Dan and Janeen Ruby's restored wetland and later, a genuine calcareous fen (a spongy wetland fed by underground springs) was humbling. So much life. Thick with it. Solitary blazing stars surrounded by towering grasses, and yet, there they were in all their glory. And the wind tossing everything about, and the sky above pressing down with sunlight. I listened to the naturalists share stories about their finds, and how their favorite specimens were faring, and the surprises they invariably came across. It was as if they were talking about their children.

It was an education about two kinds of botanical communities, the plant kind and the human kind captivated by them. And so I was. Sign me up for next year.

- Scott Stapleton



Kathy Creger Orchids at the Bakken

Kathy Creger's work has been shown at the Filoli and the ASBA's annual international exhibitions, including Minnesota's first such exhibition at the Weisman. She is represented in the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum's collection, the University of Minnesota's herbarium, and the Huntington in California. At a conference in Quito, Ecuador, she served on a panel of artists and scientists talking about the confluence of the two. Her paintings were exemplars of what the conference was about. She's shown at the Phoenix Art Museum, numerous local venues, and at the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society exhibition at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh, Scotland, for which she received a silver medal. Her show at the Bakken is her first solo exhibition.



Thirty-five works are on display. Does she have a favorite? "Is it really possible to choose among your children?" she

replies. Most are of the orchids she's collected and grown since college days when she bought her first five plants. Now, she's got somewhere between 150 and 175. That's down from the 700 or so at the peak of her obsession. They're all outdoors right now, basking in the warm, humid air. She gives them a spritz of water if she thinks of it on her way to work. In the winter, they come indoors, of course,

'though not until she's given them a trim. They grow too much. Her "Night-Blooming Cereus" (pictured below) grew twenty-eight buds. It's eight-foot-wide width is too big to come in the back door.

She does indeed get calls each week asking for advice on how to grow them. Among her peers, she is known for her work as an accredited judge for the American Orchid Society's exhibitions. She travels a good deal for those shows. Among her acquaintances, she's That Woman Who Can't Help Growing Orchids!

The hard part about painting them is not the composition, she says. For that, she tends to portray them as they are. It's getting the color right. The hot pink magenta of her *Broughtonia sanguinea*, a specimen she acquired in Negril, Jamaica, was maddeningly difficult to capture. After fourteen attempts to acquire a base color from which she could create its hue, she discovered Daniel Smith's extra fine Crushed Rhodonite Genuine—and an orchid (painting) was born.



The show is a summer show-stopper. It will be up until mid-October. Be sure to see it and then to ask Kathy how to grow yours. The Bakken Museum is on the west side of Lake Bde Maka Ska (formerly, Lake Calhoun), and is open each day of the week except Monday.

- Scott Stapleton

Congratulations to 3 GRC members accepted in the 2018 Minnesota State Fair



Suz Galloway

Quaking Aspen Stand

Suz Galloway

Quaking Aspen Stand

"This piece was originally submitted to Eloise Butler and rejected. I sat and looked at it for six months knowing that the content was good but not knowing what to do with it until I took it to my critique group (twelve artists who meet monthly). They suggested a dark background. I masked the entire group of five trees and then poured a Hunter Green and Sepia background and, voila, I had a neat piece that has been shown in two national shows in addition to the State Fair."



Pat Robinson Schmidt

Skeletal

When **Barb Björnson** is not painting botanicals, she enjoys making birds. This was her first year entering the State Fair in the sculpture division. Her Tri-Colored Heron bird sold before the fair opened.



Barb Björnson

Tri-Colored Heron

Pat Robinson Schmidt

Skeletal

After taking Painting Fall Leaves last year with Kathy Cregar, Pat was intrigued with the remains of a leaf apparently eaten by Asian beetles, and decided to paint it!

Congratulations

Nancy Gehrig has a colored pencil drawing of a palo brea tree in the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators 50th Anniversary exhibition at the American Association for Advancement of Science in Washington D.C. The show runs from July 15th through October 15th.



Nancy Gehrig

Palo Brea

The ASBA 21st Annual International opens at Wave Hill in New York in September. GRC has three members who got into this wonderful show this year. Jane Fisher, Linda Powers, and Connie Scanlon.



Linda Powers

Cypripedium parviflorum var. *pubescent*,
Greater Yellow Lady's Slipper,
watercolor on vellum.



Constance Scanlon
Coneflower Past Prime

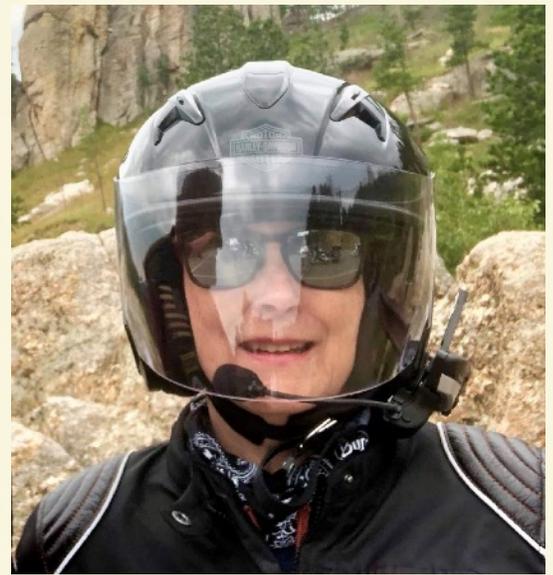


Jane Fisher *Bur Oak Leaf*

Lives of the Botanical Artists

By day, she's a mild-mannered GRC board member and a botanical artist who likes to paint her favorite plants. On vacation, she's LINDA CARTER, BOTANICAL BIKER!

Linda and her husband, Dave, have been riding Harleys for three years now. This past month, they teamed up with their daughter and son-in-law and a friend to attend this year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota. Afterwards, they toured the spectacular surrounding countryside, with stops in Spearfish, Lead, the Black Hills, Mt. Rushmore, Deadwood, Custer State Park, and (pictured below) Devil's Tower, WY.



Dave is holding up his senior National Parks pass.

The trips have botanical overtones, she says, honest. "You can see, hear, and smell the sights as you drive along. The drive was just beautiful." And all those rock formations, trees, wildflowers, streams, endless fields of sunflowers and glittery rocks? "They're all inspirations for my paintings."

- Scott Stapleton



Save the date for the Annual Meeting!

The GRC Chapter will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, December 8, at a new location--the Wayzata Country Club.

200 Wayzata Blvd. Wayzata 55391
952 473-8876

We've reserved two lovely rooms, the Bowman and the Garden rooms.



Kathy and Ken Ceolas' Garden Tour

Thirty GRC members and guests were treated to a tour of Kathy and Ken Ceolas' country garden Saturday, July 14, 2018. Located in Prior Lake, the ten acre property contains several flower gardens with a large variety of perennials and shrubs, and several annuals in a variety of unique containers. Included on this property are a vegetable garden, pond, wetlands and orchard with beehive.

We also discovered a swing and playhouse with a fairy garden!

Kathy and Ken were very welcoming, providing interesting information on plants, opportunities to take photographs and cuttings of many flower and leaf varieties for painting reference. Kathy even dug up a plant to share.

When they moved to this property twenty-five years ago it was a blank slate, then Kathy began her gardens and they have been growing and expanding ever since. In the spring she can spend twenty-five hours a week gardening, with time spent winding down after that.

The property is certified as a sustainable habitat by the National Wildlife Federation's "Garden for Wildlife" program.

Linda Carter, GRC member and long-time friend of the Ceolas, arranged our tour.



Scott Stapleton enjoying the swing.

- Louise Magnuson



Ken and Kathy Ceola, Linda Carter, Willy