

May 2013

meet the artist

Gourleys in the gallery

by Gerri Young

About 20 years ago, Vanessa and Eugene Gourley of Christiansburg both lost their spouses and needed to create new lives for themselves. He had two children; she had four. They missed adult relationships and decided to reach out through a local hospice group. That's where they met and, as they say, the rest is history.

Married for 14 years, children all grown, these days they travel whenever they can and practice their chosen artistic endeavors; he with a camera and she with paintbrushes. The fruits of their labor are currently on display through June at the Montgomery Museum & Lewis Miller Regional Art Center, in Christiansburg.



Vanessa Gourley stands by several of her watercolors of local birdlife.



Gene Gourley stands by a selection of his photographs in the Montgomery Museum exhibition in Christiansburg.

Members of the Blacksburg Regional Art Association, the Gourleys have had numerous displays at the well-known museum. This display starts in the entrance hall with a collection of watercolor paintings of birds by Vanessa and continues to the second floor where large landscapes and flowers in watercolor and oil are on display.

Born in West Virginia, Vanessa grew up in North Carolina and Virginia and always knew she would be an artist. She went on to get a degree in fine arts from Virginia Commonwealth University and a bachelor of arts and masters in art education from Radford University. She later taught art to middle and elementary school students in Pulaski County, something she really loved doing, and some art classes at Radford University.

Upcoming

May 19

Figure Drawing

The Artful Place, Downtown Blacksburg
6–8 p.m.

Life drawing classes have moved from MishMish to The Artful Place. Contact Diana Francis (diana@creekmorelaw.com) to be placed on notification list. Cost is \$10.

June 7

First Friday Art Walks

Downtown Blacksburg
5–7 p.m.

Take a self-guided tour of all of the gallery spaces in Blacksburg any time you like, but on First Fridays participating galleries will remain open until 8 p.m. Gallery Guide and Art Walk brochures available in downtown stores, the Virginia Tech Visitor's Center and participating galleries.

June 28–29

Watercolor Workshop by Sidra Kaluszka
Unitarian Universalist Church, Blacksburg
9 a.m.–4 p.m.

A Blacksburg resident, Kaluszka holds a bachelor of fine arts from Virginia Tech and a master of fine arts from Radford University, with a double major in watercolor and ceramics. The cost is only \$50 for both days, and space is limited to 25 participants. Contact Nancy Norton (nancypnorton@comcast.net) to reserve your space.

July 19

Delight Exhibit Opening Reception
VTLS, Inc., Corporate Research Center
5–7 p.m.

Don't miss the reception for this joyful, BRAA-sponsored exhibit of 50 paintings representing artists' interpretations of delight. (See more information at Exhibit Opportunities on page 3.)

Gourleys continued continued from page 1

"Kids are such fun to teach, they would be so excited to see the things I drew on the board," recalled Vanessa. "But, as a teacher, you don't have much time to be an artist yourself." Now retired, Vanessa especially enjoys painting in oil. "Oil is my first love," said Vanessa. "These days I'm still practicing with watercolor and recently took some classes. My mother just couldn't understand why I took classes as an adult when I taught art myself for so long!"

Like many artists, Vanessa doesn't just concentrate on one medium. She has done sculpture, pottery, jewelry and stained glass. "Guess I'm still searching for my style!" she said.



photo: Gerri Young

Vanessa Gourley looks on while Gene Gourley finishes wiring a frame for hanging in the Montgomery Museum exhibition.

"One can never be satisfied with their level of skills or achievements. Every new person, place or scene can teach you something if you are perceptive and inquiring. Art is a life long pursuit of building skills," said Vanessa, still sounding every bit the art teacher.

Eugene, known as Gene, is a native of Detroit. He obtained his bachelor's and master's in biology from Eastern Michigan University and his doctorate in zoology from the University of Florida. For 30 years he taught biology at Radford University.

Also retired, Gene now has time to indulge his love for photography. "I was given

a Kodak Duo-Flex camera when I was eight years old and I've been taking photographs ever since," said Gene.

"In high school, I was a member of the photography club where I got first-hand dark-room experience with developing, enlarging and printing," he recalled.

Things have obviously changed since then.

"I obtained a Minolta single lens reflex camera about 40 years ago and used it until film was no longer available. Since then, I have used a Nikon D70, which is perfectly functional; although newer cameras with more advanced technologies are now available."

Gene's photos on display depict some of his favorite subjects found in Montgomery County. Landscapes of the mountains and forests are intermixed with fun finds on his travels around the county. A mailbox mounted on a rusted, wheeled cart. A set of wooden "scare crows" dressed in VT clothing. "I hope the owners of those things don't mind me exhibiting these photographs!" said Gene, with a laugh.

Some of his wife's artistic interest rubbed off on Gene.

"As I travel, I am constantly looking for subject matter to photograph or paint in watercolor," said Gene. "I am continually surprised by the effect of lighting changes that make a subject I have seen many times before exhibit an exciting new perception."

The Gourleys actively participate in events at Montgomery Museum. "Last year, on Heritage Day, we did silhouettes of attendees and facilitated the making of collage portraits with children," said Vanessa. "I'm sure we'll be in this event again this year on August 24, but we haven't decided exactly what we'll do." ■

■ Now Showing

April 15 – July 15, 2013

(except where indicated otherwise)

Denisse Bento, ICTAS, Virginia Tech Campus (until mid-May)

Jeanette Bowker, Real Life Dental Care, 202 South Main Street, Blacksburg

Leslye Bloom, Warm Hearth Village, Blacksburg

Jeanette Bowker, Charlotte Chan, and **Nancy Norton**, Mill Mountain Coffee and Tea, 700 N. Main Street, Blacksburg

Charlotte Chan, Brown Insurance, 100 Hubbard Street, Blacksburg

Frances Frederick, ICTAS, Virginia Tech Campus (until mid-May)

Vanessa and Eugene Gorley, Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center, 300 S. Pepper Street, Christiansburg (through June)

Delbert Jones, See Mark Optical, 2401 S. Main Street, Blacksburg

Fred Jones, StellarOne, Arbor Drive, Christiansburg

Diane Relf, Pita Vera, 235 N. Main Street, Blacksburg, and VTLS, Inc., 1701 Kraft Drive, Blacksburg

Gerri Young, Zeppoli's, 810 University City Blvd., Blacksburg

Artsburg is Coming!

BRAA is partnering with five other community organizations in an exciting new venture called Artsburg. Artsburg is an informal collaborative effort by The Artful Lawyer, Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Center, Blacksburg Regional Art Association, Lyric Theatre/Community Arts Information Office, Mish Mish, and the Perspectives Gallery. Artsburg's goal is to promote arts and cultural activities in our community, particularly those that encourage creative expression by children and youth.

Den Bento was a driving force in the creation of Artsburg and has been representing BRAA in the early meetings of this group. Pam Congrove has agreed to replace Bento, who will be pursuing other ventures.

New River Art biennial exhibition open for entries

by Gerri Young

The 12th New River Art Juried Biennial Exhibition, organized this year by BRAA, opened for entries the first week of May. It will take its last entry on Aug. 29.

This biennial exhibition, one of the few in the New River Valley area, is being coordinated by the BRAA for the first time since 2007. The committee is made up of members Leslye Bloom, Gerri Young and Diana Francis.



Biennial responsibilities alternate among the BRAA, the Jacksonville Center for the Arts in Floyd, and the Fine Arts Center of the New River Valley in Pulaski. In 2011, Jacksonville led the way. In 2015, the Pulaski art center will be in charge.

Since the BRAA does not have a facility of its own, the committee contracted with Virginia Tech's Perspective Gallery for the show to run from Oct. 2 to Nov. 7.

"This year," reports Bloom, "we are making a big change. We decided to seek an online application service to greatly automate the whole process, saving time, handling of paper and CDs and making the jury process entirely online as well.

"We understand the online process might be a bit stressful for some of our artists," said Bloom, "but the system is quite user friendly and we have developed a help presentation with screen shots and advice for how to do it. Full information about our biennial exhibition can be found by searching for New River Art on www.callforentry.org. Online help is available as well to any artist who might be having a problem."

"We expect Call for Entry to speed up and simplify much of the traditional work on managing a show and we hope participating artists will agree," said Bloom.

By using this online system and marketing it via both traditional means and social media like Facebook and Twitter, the committee hopes to attract both a larger number of artists and younger ones. All 2D and 3D artists 18 and older within 150 miles of Blacksburg are eligible to apply. "This covers a number of colleges and universities with art students so we are really hoping to attract young artists to this show," stated Bloom.

Another real plus for interested artists is a very nice awards package including nine awards totaling \$2,100. Funding for awards came from businesses and individuals in Blacksburg and Roanoke.

On May 1, the coordinators met with a few BRAA members to test the system and conduct training. "The service, called CaFÉ for short, is very well supported," said Francis. "We went through a couple hours of teleconference to introduce us to the system and train us in its use. The first application was received the very first day the show went live.

"Not only can our members and other interested artists use CaFÉ for the New River show, they can see other calls for exhibition entries registered with the system throughout the U.S."

Bloom has written a tutorial on preparing digital files at www.newriverart.org, and advises applying artists to print out the information page for the New River show (in CaFÉ) first in order to have the image requirements and file name guidelines at hand during the processing of their photos. "This will definitely save time when it comes to loading those photo files into the My Portfolio section of the site. Once that is done, the actual entering and paying is extremely easy."

Applying artists may pay online using Visa, MasterCard or PayPal. "We do encourage artists not to pay by check (though it is possible as well)," commented Bloom. "People who are reluctant to use online payments will be able to use checks but they should remember if they wait too long and the check does not make it to the committee by the Aug. 29 deadline, their application could be disqualified."

Francis reports everything is set to go. Find full information on www.newriverart.org, and on Facebook at New River Art.

"A lucky day in plein air painting is when nature, mood and skill all work well together by chance, capturing a moment in time that enables you to create everlasting magic."

~Roos Schuring (1974)

■ Exhibit Opportunities

The **Alexander Black Museum** is planning art exhibits in the Old Town Hall over the next several months. Any artist interested in exhibiting should submit 3–5 samples of work to Rhonda Morgan (at morgan@blacksburg.gov) who will present them to a committee that will determine show themes and timeframes.

Delight Art Exhibition

July 19 – October 14

VTLS, Inc. at the Corporate Research Center

This BRAA-sponsored exhibit invites works with an artistic theme of delight in any wall-hung or 3-D medium. Entry fee is \$5 per piece, with a limit of two entries. Cash prize will be awarded for Best of Theme based on voting at the opening reception. Entry **deadline is June 15**, but work will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis (50 piece maximum). Visit the BRAA website for more information:

<http://www.blacksburgart.org/>

Art on the Market

July 20

Downtown Blacksburg

This annual event is sponsored by Downtown Blacksburg, Inc., and is offered in conjunction with Breakfast at the Farmers Market. Applications to exhibit are available at www.downtownblacksburg.com.

Steppin' Out 2013

August 2–3

Downtown Blacksburg

This street festival fills the downtown historic district with artists and craftspeople and three stages of music and entertainment. 16' x 10' spaces are \$150. For more information, visit www.BlacksburgSteppinOut.com.

Heritage Day

August 24

Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center

Artists are invited to bring work to show and also work on site. The museum is also seeking donations of work for a silent auction. For more information, contact Sue Farrar at director@montgomerymuseum.org.

2013 New River Art

October 2 – November 7

Perspective Gallery, Squires Student Center, Virginia Tech

If you only apply for one juried show in 2013, make this the one!

Entry for this biennial show is now open with a fully automated online submission process at www.callforentry.org.

The opening reception is 5–9 p.m. on Oct. 18.

For more information, see article on page 3 or visit www.newriverart.org/.

In Memory of Dean Carter

BRAA founding member, Professor Emeritus, and celebrated artist Dean Carter died at his home in Blacksburg on May 2.

Carter helped establish the art department at Virginia Tech in 1950 and served as its head for 10 years. He taught sculpture, drawing, and art history from 1950 to 1992.

While the Virginia Tech's art department was being established, he and other artists at the university began talks of forming a small art group for critical discussion of their own work. The ideas for their organization grew and expanded and on January 15, 1950, a community art club named the Blacksburg Art Association was formed for all those "interested in increasing the opportunity for the enjoyment of art in Blacksburg."

The word "Regional" was added to the group's name around 1952 when the decision was made to become a chapter of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. By then membership had grown to include individuals from nearby communities.

(Information provided by Leslye Bloom.)

Lunch, art talk and board meeting

Each month we now have a 15-minute presentation by one of our members about some aspect of his or her art. The presentation is from 12:15 to 12:30, following lunch and preceding the board meeting.

At our April meeting, Charlotte Chan (shown at right) generated some creative sparks by sharing the steps involved in her batik paintings as well as tips and sources for supplies. On May 10, Gerri Young provided materials and talked about her experience with making her own stamps. The June art spot will feature prospective member Steve White demonstrating his pochade box for plein air painting.

The **June 14** luncheon is at 11:30 a.m. at **Famous Anthonys** in Blacksburg. The art talk begins at 12:15 and the board meeting will follow at 12:30 p.m. Please send agenda items to Robi Sallee at robisallee@hotmail.com.



■ Upcoming (continued)

July 20

Art on the Market

Downtown Blacksburg, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

This event is sponsored by Downtown Blacksburg, Inc., and is in conjunction with the annual Breakfast at the Farmers Market.

July 20-21

Capturing The Mood and Light Effects in Landscape

This workshop will be taught by Marjorie Perrin from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Participants may work in watercolor or oils. Cost is approximately \$40. Contact Nancy Norton (nancypnorton@comcast.net) to reserve a space.

August 24

Heritage Day

Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Art Center, Christiansburg, 10 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

This event includes antiques, activities, art, food, and live music. Admission is free.

October 18

New River Art Reception

Perspective Gallery, Squires Student Center, Virginia Tech Campus, 5–9 p.m.

Enjoy the winning entries in this biennial juried show.

October 19

What a Relief: How Prints are Made

Mary Holland, from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts will be conducting a participative demo. Cost is \$10. Contact Nancy Norton (nancynorton@comcast.net) to register.

Rescue Mission permanent art collection competition

The Roanoke Rescue Mission has announced winners of the 2013 permanent art collection competition.

Larry Mitchell's fused glass entry, *Life Source* (right), was a second place winner. Finalists included Aileen Fletcher and Sally Mook.



VMFA announces visual arts fellowships

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is now accepting applications for its 2014-15 Fellowship Program. A vital source of funding for the visual arts and art history in Virginia, VMFA is committed to supporting professional artists as well as art and art history students who demonstrate exceptional creative ability in their chosen discipline and has awarded nearly \$5 million in fellowships to Virginians.

Professional artists who are citizens or permanent resident of the United States, as well as a current legal residents of Virginia, and have been so for at least 24 consecutive months prior to the application deadline are eligible to apply for \$8,000 fellowships. Awardees must also continue to be a legal resident of Virginia for the fellowship period of August 2014 – May 2015.

Professional artists who can clearly demonstrate a history of ongoing collaboration may apply together with one set of documentation but must fill out separate application forms, noting names of collaborators. Collaborative applications must be delivered or mailed in one package. Collaborating winners will receive one \$8,000 fellowship to divide among themselves.

The application deadline is Fri., Nov. 8, 2013. Applicants are notified of awards by letter the first week in February 2014.

For more information and an application, visit <http://www.vmfa.museum/fellowships/>.

Gauging Interest for Newport Project

Ava Howard would like to renew interest in developing an art community in Newport and establishing artists' studios and galleries in the Newport Rec Center. Those who are interested may contact her at ava@vt.edu.

BRAA officer needed

The treasurer's position is open. If you are interested in this key volunteer position, please contact Robi Sallee at robisallee@hotmail.com or Nancy Norton at nancynorton@comcast.net.



The art featured in this month's nameplate is "Greenbriar" (above, oil, 24" x 36") by Fred Jones. This and more of his work can currently be viewed at Stellar One.



BRAA Officers

- Robi Sallee**, president
- Nancy Norton**, co-vice president
- Danie Janov**, co-vice president
- Tom Barnhart**, membership
- Vikki King**, treasurer



www.facebook.com/BlacksburgArt

Send Facebook news postings to:
Gerri Young at
younggerri@googlemail.com
or **Nancy Norton**
at nancypnorton@comcast.net

Twitter @BlackburgArt1

<http://www.blacksburgart.org/>

Please send BRAA news, photos, comments, or suggestions to Lois Stephens (stephens1@pemt.net) by the first day of the month for inclusion in the that month's issue.

Thanks to **Mish Mish** for providing printed versions of this newsletter.
Please support your local art supply store!