



Established
1938

Manasquan River Group of Artists Newsletter

MRGA, P. O. Box 614, Manasquan, New Jersey 08736

December, 2025

www.mrga38.org

Greetings MRGA members!

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving, with lots of good food and great times with family and friends. In this season of giving thanks, I reflect upon how fortunate I am to interact with the marvelous people of the Manasquan River Group of Artists. I always appreciate how creative, talented and friendly everyone is, but also for the incredible support shown for each other as well. In November there were three receptions – for our member's show at Wall Library, Margo and Tracy's show at Brick Library, and for the show at Allaire. Many of our members came out to see the shows and congratulate the artists, even if they weren't exhibiting their own work. Many MRGA members came to the Allaire reception see the paintings and photographs by our members, and also to acknowledge our longtime member Pauline Mickle (aka my Mom) honored for her many artistic contributions. She was very impressed by the turnout, as was I.

In addition to the aforementioned attributes, MRGA members are very helpful! My job as president is so much easier because so many of you assist with art shows, refreshments, newsletters, email blasts, organizing events, photographs, administrative duties, and more. Thank you!

On that note, as we head into 2026, there are a few opportunities for those looking to join the fun. We need help with our art shows – ideally to assist the Show Director and then possibly take over the show at a future date. We are always on the lookout for new venues as well. At our December meeting we will discuss exhibition plans for next year. I am pleased to welcome our new publicity chairperson, Claudia Simes, who will be assisting with our print and social media. If anyone has a particular interest or skill and would like to help with any of our committees, please let me know.

Coming up on December 5th is our Holiday Party! We'll have lots of food and drink (non-alcoholic) starting at 4, a brief business meeting sometime in there, Holiday carols and activities, and a gift swap. Don't forget to bring a wrapped artsy gift, and your favorite appetizer or dessert. There will also be a video presentation of the Stars for Charity, showcasing all 97 of the beautiful stars created by MRGA artists. It's a wonderful way to start the holiday season!

See you soon!

Sheila

Sheila Soyster
President, Manasquan River Group of Artists

MRGA Executive Board and Committees 2025-2026

PRESIDENT

Sheila Soyster..... 732-674-2038

VICE PRESIDENT

Vinnie Nardone.....732.319.1772

RECORDING SECRETARY

Jackie St. Angel.....732.216.8568

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Susanna Anastasia.....732.449.9287

TREASURER

Laura Lutz.....732.371.6284

AT-LARGE TRUSTEES

Debra Herbster..... 908.380.7580

Beverly Sirianni..... 732.861.7354

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Barbara Calvo..... 732.996.0738

PHOTOGRAPHER

Melinda Saminski.....732.610.8626

DEMONSTRATIONS/SPEAKERS

Barbara Calvo..... 732.996.0738

HISTORIAN

Janice Collinson..... .732.528.7179

WEBSITE

Sheila Soyster..... 732.892.7692

PUBLICITY/SOCIAL MEDIA

Claudia Simes..... 732-288-3739

NEWSLETTER

MaryAnn Goodwin.....732.539.4150

SUNSHINE

Mona Kirk..... 732.223.2569

HOSPITALITY

Margo Fletcher.....732.259.7767

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Mona Kirk.....732.223.2569

MEMBERSHIP

Mona Kirk.....732.223.2569

NOMINATING

Linda Hejduk..... .732.714.0854

ART CLASSES

Sea Girt Lighthouse... .732.223.2569

Member Reminders

No January meeting - next meeting February 6

And...applications for Bay Head Art in the Park must be sent in by December 1

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION-

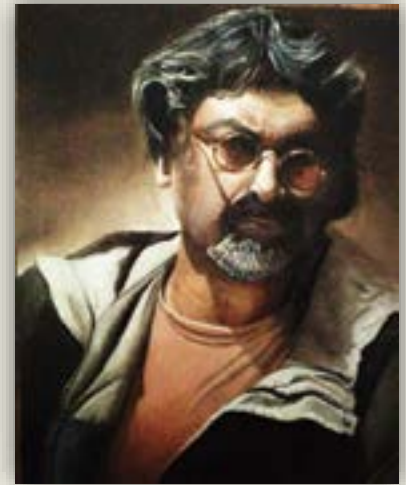
All submissions for the newsletter and changes to your address, phone or email should be sent by email to MaryAnn Goodwin at maryanngoodwinarts@gmail.com by the 20th of the month for the next newsletter. When announcing an award please give the title of your work. Photographs should include the names of the persons in them except for a large group.

Please visit the website for MRGA www.mrga38.org Our website is being updated regularly by Sheila Soyster. Please contact Sheila with any information: sheila624@comcast.net or 732-892-7692. Thank you Sheila.

Congratulations MRGA Members!



Elizabeth Grimaldi's Pastel *Sunset Over the Hook* was featured in the New Jersey State Senior Art Exhibition



At the Guild of Creative Art's Annual October Juried Show, and **Paula Shipman's** *Saint Ann Blues* received the Tom Wilczewski Memorial Award for Watercolor, and **Jackie St. Angel's** oil portrait *Strange Encounter* received a Realism in Painting Award.



Cheri Pessutti's Digital Artwork *Seeing Past the Scenery* is on display at Monmouth University's Pollak Gallery in the *Seen & Unseen* exhibit sponsored by Monmouth Arts.

Jackie St. Angel's oil painting, *Boys in the Band* is on display in the Catharine Lorillard Wolf Art Club's 128th Anniversary Juried Exhibition at the Salmagundi Club in New York City.

Jackie was also accepted into the NJ Watercolor Society and the Garden State Watercolor Society Open Juried Shows.





Melinda Saminski was awarded an Honorable Mention in the “Ding” Wildlife Society Photography Contest. Her photo of “Sunset Reflection over Ding Darling” will be displayed in the Sanibel, Florida wildlife refuge for a year.

Pauline Mickle was honored at the “Allaire through the Artists’ Eye” Reception for her many artistic contributions to Allaire.



Valerie Morrone was awarded First Place for her painting of the Foreman’s Cottage at the Allaire Show.

Janice Collinson won Third Prize at the “Allaire through the Artists’ Eye” exhibit



Valerie Morrone’s *Elves Goody Goody Greeting Card* was accepted in the *Illustration Then and Now Juried Show* for the Society of Illustrators & Salmagundi Club members



Margo Fletcher and Tracy Miller’s work will be on display in Brick Library through December 30th.

Emily Beezley’s paintings have been on display in the Spring Lake Theatre Upper Gallery. Closing Reception is Friday, December 5, 4-6 pm



ART CLASSES

Sponsored by:
The Manasquan River Group of Artists

Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:00 pm
At the Sea Girt Lighthouse



2025

December 2 & 9 – Karen Wachter – watercolor 732-202-8417
16 – Janice Collinson – watercolor 732-528-7179

2026

January 6 - Janice Collinson – watercolor 732-528-7179
13 & 20 – Bev Sirianni – watercolor 732-774-0014
27 – Arlene Newman – watercolor 732-682-3397

February 3 - Arlene Newman – watercolor 732-682-3397
10 & 17 – Melinda Saminski – pastel 732-610-8626
24 – Tamara Woronczuk – collage 732-998-8286

March 3 - Tamara Woronczuk – collage 732-998-8286
10 & 17 – Leona Lavone – watercolor 732-914-9941
24 – Barbara Calvo – pastel 732-996-0738

April 14 & 21 – Carol Ann Oporto – pastel pet portraits 732-504-7217
28 - Debbie Herbster – watercolor 908-380-7580

May 5 - Debbie Herbster – watercolor 908-380-7580
12 – End of Year Class

Instructed Classes - \$6.00

Catch-up Classes - \$3.00

Please call instructor before attending class for necessary information.

Any other information, please call Mona Kirk – 732-223-2569

MANASQUAN RIVER GROUP OF ARTISTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, December 5 4:00 pm

**MRGA General Membership Meeting
& Holiday Party**

Curtis House, Brielle

Holiday Party – Food, fun and friendship

October 31 – January 2

Wall Township Library Show

2700 Allaire Road, Wall Township

Painting pick-up January 2nd 12 – 2 pm

January 2 – March 30, 2026

Point Pleasant Beach Library Exhibit

McLean Avenue, Point Pleasant Beach

Painting Drop-Off January 2nd

Reception – TBA

Painting Pick-up March 30th 10-2 pm

No January Meeting!

Friday, February 6, 2026 4:00 pm

MRGA General Membership Meeting

Curtis House, Brielle

“Preparing Your Art for Exhibition from Creating to Hanging”

Presentation by Bob Stetz

Member Spotlight

John Troisi

John has only been a member of MRGA for two years, but his incredibly realistic oil paintings of seashells and sea glass have certainly made an impression on all who see them!



John with his "The Swaggy B"

John was born in South Ozone Park in Queens, NY, moving to Pequannock in 1960. There, he met Laurie, the love of his life, in high school. Laurie and John have been married 46 years and have two sons and four grandchildren.

John's art was inspired early as he watched his artistic dad create community posters for neighborhood events. John was 7 or 8 at the time. John majored in art at William Patterson College but left before graduating to explore other pursuits. His diverse jobs include managing a taxi company for 18 years, building equipment inside mobile sports television trucks and an interesting stint at the United Nations for 7 weeks. There at the UN, John was charged with providing a special chair onstage equipped with a speaker in the headrest. John would plug in



the correct language to translate what the head of state who occupied the chair at the general assembly would hear. He would drag the chair behind the curtain until the next head of state's speech. He did this for 12 hours a day, a very tiring but crucial job. Currently, John works part-time in shipping for a small company that distributes weight-loss products owned by his brother-in-law, "a fun job working with family" says John.

Painting was something John did infrequently except for creating Christmas cards each year but on his 50th birthday, Laurie took him to Michaels where he was like a kid in a candy store and he started painting again. For 1½ years John painted everything in sight, even illustrating several children's books. Life again, got in the way and it wasn't until John and his family moved to Sea Girt in 2016 that he embraced painting full-time. While furnishing their new home, Laurie and John were looking for a painting to hang over the couch. John decided then and there that he would paint his own painting and create he did!

Living near the beach was a dream come true for John. Vacationing at the beach for a few weeks each year wasn't enough for this artist who lives and breathes everything coastal. John begins each and every day on the beach watching the sunrise. There, he witnesses the changing moods of the sea on a daily basis. This is what drives John's art. He then returns to his garage studio where he not only paints but constructs his frames and furniture for his supplies.

Looking around John's beautiful home, the walls are filled with paintings so graphic and detailed they look like photographs. The sunsets and sunrises are both dynamic and mesmerizing and the waves look as if they will crash right off the canvas. You can almost smell the salt air! John also paints other subjects for commissions. John has exhibited in both Monmouth County and Ocean County venues, amassing an impressive array of awards. Look for John's latest exhibit at the Red Bank Public Library in March and April of 2026.

Barbara Calvo



John's custom-built rolling palette and brush stands

November Member's Meeting

November's meeting was held during the Annual Luncheon at The Lobster Shanty. The Guest Speaker was Tom Rutledge. Tom Rutledge gave a moving and heartfelt presentation about his life and art.



Mona and Tom Rutledge



One of Tom's Works



Wall Library Exhibit

A reception was held on November 15th at Wall Library. The exhibit continues through January. Pick up of art work is January 8th 11am-1pm. Thank you to Debbie Herbster and Donna Ferris Co-Chairs for this exhibit.



*Debbie Herbster and Donna Ferris
Co-Chairs.*



STARS FOR CHARITY – *“It’s the most wonderful time of the year....”*

The holiday spirit is upon us. Why not share yours by bidding on one (or more!) original hand painted/crafted “Stars for Charity.”

The recipient of one of these beauties will love this thoughtful gift. Additionally, the result of this purchase will provide food for our neighbors in need.



Coordinator: Linda Hejduk



Please bid on a star from November 29th to December 14th on our Ebay store-new_dover_umc - using this UPC code then search Stars For Charity.



The Manasquan River Group of Artists is proud to be a major contributor to this annual event. This year, 50 MRGA artists created 97 stars!

MRGA Point Pleasant Beach Library Winter Art Exhibit

January – February – March 2026

Delivery of paintings – Friday, January 2nd, 10am - 12 noon
Reception – TBA
Pick up of Paintings – Monday, March 30th, 1 - 3 pm



- ENTRY FEE \$15 – Check only, payable to MRGA Please send check and entry form to **Sheila Soyster, 53 Serpentine Road, Brick, NJ 08724** or bring to December meeting.
- ONE FRAMED ORIGINAL WORK - No larger than 24 x 36”
- NO PORTFOLIO PIECES
- WORK CREATED WITHIN THE LAST 5 YEARS
- PREVIOUS MRGA AWARD PIECES NOT ELIGIBLE
- ALL EXHIBITED & SOLD ARTWORK MUST STAY FOR THE DURATION OF THE SHOW
- SHOW LOCATION: Point Pleasant Beach Library, 710 McLean Avenue, Pt. Pleasant Beach
- PUBLICITY: Local newspapers, MRGA Newsletter, Facebook Page & Website
- JUDGING: People’s Choice Award & Recognition of Artistic Excellence

Questions? Call show Coordinator - Sheila Soyster– 732-674-2038 sheila624@comcast.net

MRGA ENTRY FORM - POINT PLEASANT BEACH LIBRARY WINTER SHOW

ARTIST _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE # _____

TITLE OF ARTWORK _____

MEDIUM _____ PRICE _____

LIABILITY: MRGA Officers, Trustees and Members are not responsible for loss of damage of submitted artwork, however caused. Entry into this exhibit constitutes an agreement with these terms and conditions.

SIGNATURE _____