



## Quarterly Member Newsletter January/February 2026

### A message from your President:

Hello WAOTC members,

I was really at a loss on what to say in a newsletter. After all, I'm not a writer. I am a Nurse by training, and an artist in my heart, so I'm not a lover of writing. What I do enjoy is connecting with people on a personal level and I love to lift others up. (That's probably the Nurse in me, too!) My goal as your President is to promote our mission and support our Members...So let's chat!

2025 was a banner year for the WAOTC. Quick facts: Our membership grew 40% and we were integral in generating and donating over \$1500 to local wildlife organizations. I am very proud that we are truly satisfying the mission of our group by spreading beauty and education through our art! We held five shows together, one in collaboration with another art group. I don't know if other groups can say that, but I know we can and that's all because of ALL OF YOU! You poured your hearts, your art, your energy and your enthusiasm into the shows, and surpassed entry goals which made all this possible. I'm so very grateful to each of our members for their participation, however big or small. And you should be proud of yourselves, as these achievements belong to you!

Looking forward into 2026, I am hopeful that you will continue that same level of participation *or get even more involved* because we have a lot planned yet again! We kicked off the new year with a bang show at theArtWorks in Wilmington. The art you brought to this show is fabulous, resulting in multiple sales. If you haven't had a chance to see it yet, make sure to stop by before it comes down on March 15. The board decided to make our meeting time more interactive, and so we're hosting a potluck Meet and Greet Member Meeting in Wilmington next. See more information about this under the Save-The-Date section below.

A new website is soon to launch. On that note, I would ask you if you haven't already, to send us a short bio, headshot (professional or casual, your choice) and at least 3 to 5 photos of your works. This will allow us to create an individual Member Gallery on our website.

Obviously, our newsletters will continue to keep you updated. We have two shows already arranged for this year; our signature juried shows in the Spring and Fall. The April exhibit will be in the Calabash area in a huge venue at the Brunswick Plantation. In the fall, our show will again be in Wilmington. We also expect a couple of other shows. As the Wildlife Artists of the Carolinas, we are looking to expand our presence and are



## SAVE these DATES – Shows, member meetings, etc.

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### April 23 – April 26 – “Wild & Free” Exhibition & Sale

Now in its fourth year, this is our annual members-only juried awards show. This year, we are taking the show a little South of Wilmington to a large and beautiful event space in the Brunswick Plantation & Golf Resort in Calabash. This location will introduce a new community to our group and the additional space will help us have our largest member-only show yet to date.

Registration opens March 16. Prospectus coming soon.

### June – Summer meeting, date/time TBD

**September 24-25** – Our annual “Into the Wild” Open Fall show (members & non-members). We are coming back to the beautiful Events on Front in Wilmington for this one annual signature exhibition and sale.

**November 3**, 2:00-4:00pm at Hannah Block Community Center in Wilmington – this will be our last meeting of the year

Also in the fall, we are hoping to organize a visit to one of our supported wildlife charities. More to come on this.

As we find additional show opportunities for our members, we will add them to our line-up and let you know.

## OTHER EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

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**February 13-25, 2026 - Southeastern Wildlife Exposition (SEWE), Charleston, NC** – this annual event is a celebration of the great outdoors through fine art, live entertainment and special events. It's where artists, craftsmen, collectors and sporting enthusiasts come together to enjoy the outdoor lifestyle and connect through a shared passion for wildlife. A few of us have planned to attend and spend our weekend in Charleston. If you plan to go, let us know so we can all meet there.

**Saturday April 26 - Art in the Park at the Kiwanis Park, Hampstead** – organized by the Greater Topsail Chamber of Commerce, this will be this event's second year. Last year, several of our members shared space under a large community tent and art panels provided by the Chamber, or set up under their own individual tents. We don't have all the information yet. When we do, we'll share it with you.

**May 9, 2026 – Art Exposure Open House and possible “art under the tent” for WAOTC members, Hampstead, NC** – Now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year, Art Exposure, located is US HWY 17 in Hampstead, is recognized as the art hub (gallery, studios, classroom, frame shop, event space and more) in the Greater Topsail area. The annual anniversary open house draws a crowd every year.

WAOTC has been offered the gallery's outdoor space to set up a large tent in the grass to show and sell our members' art. We are also able to borrow art panels from Pender County Arts to display your artwork. The size of the tent would be split by those sharing the space and the cost of the tent determined by the size of the tent we rent (based on how many of our members commit to participate). For example:

- \$275 for 20x20 tent, with \$60 delivery and set up, accommodates 10-12 artists (about \$30/artist)
- \$325 for 20x30 tent, with \$60 delivery and set up, accommodates ~20 artists (about \$25 each)

Every artists would get equal space under the tent with a display panel and a chair. There is space for bin work as well. All sales would be handled by the gallery, and a commission applies.

If you're interested in exhibiting under the tent, we need to know. Several of our members have either studios or gallery space inside Art Exposure; priority under the tent will be given to those who don't.

## Welcome New Members

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Welcome new members who joined our group since our last newsletter. We are so excited about continuing to grow into and expand into new territories in the Carolinas!

Barbara Clark, Calabash, NC  
Cathryn O'Donnell, Leland, NC  
Christine Brubaker, Sunset Beach, NC  
Debi Pemberton, Apex, NC  
Diane Pinder, Hampstead, NC  
Gerri Mosholder, Sunset Beach, NC  
Heather Baldwin, Richlands, NC  
Heather Wettlaufer, Bolivia, NC  
Laron Stallings, Castalia, NC  
Linda Karaskevics, Little River, SC  
Lynn O'Connell, Wilmington, NC  
Marian Mackerer, Southport, NC  
Maryruth Groff, Calabash, NC  
Matt Donner, Charlotte, NC  
Missy Schwartz, Leland, NC  
Randy Brubaker, Sunset Beach, NC  
Robert Keating, Little River, SC  
Stephen Sullivan, Sunset Beach, NC  
Tina Lepsig, Calabash, NC

## WAOTC Website Update – **\*\*ACTION REQUESTED\*\***

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A new website is about to roll out! One new exciting feature is a members' gallery. If you have not already, please send a brief bio, a head shot, and 3-5 images of your work, and your social media account information to [waotcinc@gmail.com](mailto:waotcinc@gmail.com). Please make sure that your photos are high quality and showcase your artwork without frames or background distractions. We cannot simply take photos of your website or spend time cropping and editing. Send us actual photo files that showcase your talent!

### Applying to Art Shows – *Your art and your submissions represent you!*

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Given that art show season is here and we're all likely reviewing and responding to calls for artists, we thought we'd help you out with not just tips and tricks, but what should be the gospel for artists:

- First and foremost: THE PROSPECTUS - Every show has some sort of prospectus that list deadlines, rules and other important information about the show. Every show is different, so it is imperative that you read each show's prospectus in its entirety. There are no shortcuts and no cliff notes here.
- DEADLINES – all deadlines are critical and must be respected, as are specific times for drop off, pick up, etc.
- PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR ART – your photo is what gets your art into the show. Blurry photos, photos with distractions such as frames, parts of your easel or messy studio will not get your art into the show, no matter how good the art is.
- NAMING YOUR PHOTO FILES – this is important! You must rename your photo files (according to how the prospectus specifies) before uploading them to a show's application. For WAOTC shows, we typically ask you to name each photo file to match the title of your artwork...easy enough! And that brings us to the next point: titles.
- NAMING YOUR ARTWORK – We can't tell you enough what a bad idea it is to duplicate titles within a show ... if you have two paintings both titled "Egret" and the judge only wants to accept one of the egrets, how are we supposed to know which one was the lucky egret? While on the subject of titles, "untitled" is also not a good idea. One way that people connect to art is from the story that the art piece tells. The title is part of that story.
- FRAMES – Whether you pay for professional framing or frame your own, your frames are part of the package that showcases your art and YOU. Frames should always look pristine, glass and plexiglass free of scratches, and mats free of stains. Simple frames are best as they resonate better with buyers and create consistency within a show. Ornate frames (unless they are absolutely a critical part of the finished art) should be avoided. A buyer may pass on a piece of art that they liked because they hated the frame, or not even notice the artwork because the frame got all the attention.
- WIRE AND D-RINGS are the norm. A foolproof formula is D-rings attached at one quarter of frame height. Wire must be slack enough for someone to easily reach out behind the frame or canvas to hang your art on wall hooks, and the top of the wire should hang 2-3" from the top
- CANVASES – Some shows will require that even the canvases are framed. Others may be more flexible and will accept "gallery wrapped" canvases. Gallery wrapped canvases create a seamless, frameless appearance that



showcases the artwork on all sides. One-and-a-half to two-inch thickness is norm, but this may vary by show. Trust and follow the prospectus.

- **BIN WORK DESERVES THE SAME ATTENTION AND RESPECT:** Clear bags of appropriate size to the artwork, clean looking mats and proper backing are a must. You want your work to always look fresh. Print bags start to look worn-out when moving from show to show and that's when you know it is time to replace that \$0.20 bag!
- Know that galleries and shows will reject pieces that are brought in with dents, scratches and stains. But most of all, your art and how you present it is a reflection of you. When people look at your work, how do you want to be remembered?

## Member News – Help us help you!

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**Are you in an upcoming art exhibit/event/publication? Are you teaching a workshop? Do you have a major accomplishment? Let us know!**

We are happy to share your good news in our Facebook [facebook.com/wildlifeartistsnc](https://www.facebook.com/wildlifeartistsnc) and Instagram (@waotcinc) pages, but we don't always know. The most effective way for us to share your information is if you tag us on your posts and send us a direct message through Facebook Messenger or Instagram. You can also post directly on our Facebook group: [facebook.com/groups/wildlifeartistsofthecarolinasinc](https://www.facebook.com/groups/wildlifeartistsofthecarolinasinc)

## WAOTC contacts & links

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General inquiries, news sharing, etc.: [waotcinc@gmail.com](mailto:waotcinc@gmail.com)

Membership: [waotcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:waotcmembership@gmail.com)

Website [www.waotc.com](http://www.waotc.com)

WAOTC Facebook page: [facebook.com/wildlifeartistsnc](https://www.facebook.com/wildlifeartistsnc)

Facebook fan group

[facebook.com/groups/wildlifeartistsofthecarolinasinc](https://www.facebook.com/groups/wildlifeartistsofthecarolinasinc)

Instagram [@waotcinc](https://www.instagram.com/waotcinc)

**President:** Allison Fanelli

**Vice President:** Lourdes Rosas Rasdall

**Treasurer:** Dave Kilgore

**Secretary:** Terry Turley

**Members At Large:** Lisa Myers, Gwen Pikul, Sabine Baeckmann



*The Wildlife Artists of the Carolinas is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. EIN 92-4024608*