



Mark Your Calendars!!
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
10A-11:30A
VBMA Holmes Great Hall

Site Teams
Program Observations on 2024-2025
Proposed Programs for Funding

E-Newsletter Volume 6
February 29, 2024



Greetings Circle Members,

I hope you were able to attend our blockbuster Valentine's Day breakfast at the beautiful Vero Beach Yacht Club, with outstanding speaker and art educator, Pearl Lau. If you missed it, please read the committee reports below for a recap and photos.

I'm thrilled to report that we have 30+ new members so far this season, and I want to extend a warm welcome to every one of you! Our goal is for you to feel such a part of The Circle that you will continue with us as long as you call Vero Beach home (or part-time home). We want to help you get to know the VBMA programs that we support, learn how we ultimately decide to spend our dues, get to know your fellow Circle members, and become involved with committees - as much, or as little as you'd like.

To help you do just that, we will host a New Member Reception on Thursday, April 4th, at 3:30PM. Please mark your calendars and watch for details in your inbox.

All members should have already received their invitation for the March 13th General Meeting and Program Observation Presentations. If you have not received yours, please contact me at trudy@tphllc.com for the information. This is your annual opportunity to hear directly from fellow members who have personally observed the programs we are considering, in action. It's a perfect time to invite guests to learn about our work, and we will have special raffle opportunities for guests and the Members who invite them.

Lastly, we wish a very fond farewell to our amazing Circle VBMA Liaison and Development Coordinator, Natalie Murdy, and hope for her happy return to her family in Charleston, SC. We will miss her dearly.

On that note, we ask for your patience as the Steering Committee works to perform some of the important meeting invitations, RSVPs, and many other functions that Natalie so competently handled. Please bear with us while the Museum searches for a new Development Coordinator, which we do not expect to have in place until next Season.

With Deep Appreciation,

Trudy Powers Hoffman
Chair

What is a Giving Circle?

Trudy Powers Hoffman

A new member recently asked: "Are we a Giving Circle?" Here is a definition:

"A giving circle is a form of participatory philanthropy by a group of individuals who form a voluntary association to pool together and donate their money and/or time. The group then decides together how to allocate these resources to support charitable organizations or community projects. Groups may also seek to increase their awareness of and engagement with the issues covered by the charity or community project. Sponsored giving circles can be hosted by a larger nonprofit organization. The combined donation of the circle will often have a greater philanthropic impact on the recipient than smaller individual donations."

According to Philanthropy Together, giving circles follow these 5 steps:

Gather, Discuss, Decide, Give and Engage

It's a perfect description of what we are a Giving Circle.

Membership & Special Events

Catherine Cooke & June Fitzgerald



The first of six member-only events took place at the Museum on Sunday, February 6th. The "After Hours Private Docent Tour & Reception" was well attended. Circle member - Kate Walsh along with fellow VBMA docents, Ruth Lentini, and Hester Bloom - guided 3 groups of 20 through the Museum's new "Ancient Egypt & The Napoleonic Era" exhibit in the quiet museum. Everyone raved about the tour and the delicious wine and nibbles served at this special event.

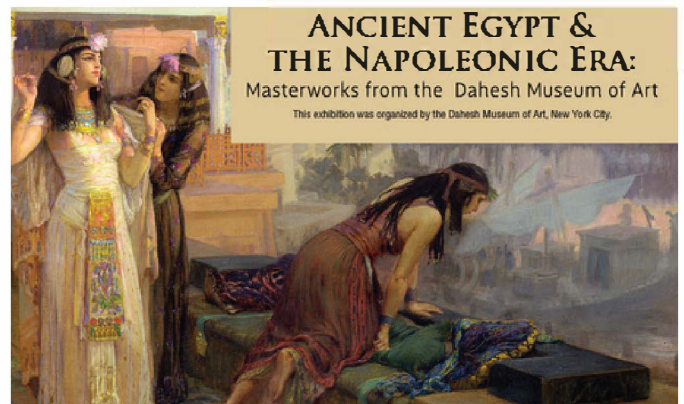


The "Mad Hatter's Tea Party" was held on February 22nd from 4-6pm, hosted by June Fitzgerald at her gracious home in the Bermuda Bay community. Catherine Cooke and June underwrote this lovely catered event and June welcomed 50 members. Tea, Prosecco and sandwiches were served, and one-of-a-kind fascinators added to the atmosphere and completed the "Mad Hatter" theme!



"Windsor Gallery Tour & Lunch" - the three outings: Tuesday, February 27th and Thursday March 14th starting at noon and Tuesday April 9th at 10:30am have all been sold out. These events filled up quickly, but don't despair, often plans change and those on the wait list will be next in line. Please call Catherine Cooke at 516-330-1786 to be added to the wait list. For those who have already signed up, please let Catherine know as soon as possible if you need to cancel, so the next person can attend in your place. The cost is \$50 per person, payable to Windsor Properties Inc. The Abstract Expressionist exhibition, "A Piece of Waterfall in the Sound of Crickets" features the work of Costa Rican artist Federico Herrero.

A special Egypt-themed "Cork and Canvas" event in the VBMA studios is planned for Thursday, March 21st from 6:30 - 8:00pm. The cost is \$45 per person. The Museum provides all materials and attendees can bring their own beverage and snacks. There is lots of interest for this night as well, so please make sure to add your name to the wait list. Thank you for your participation and enthusiasm for these member-only events.



A Tribute to Immaculate Mary “Mackie“ Duch

Diane Wilhelm

We mourn the recent loss of one of our original Circle members, Mackie Duch. She was on the Steering Committee and spearheaded the Site Visits during her term.

Mackie's first love was to her husband, Dick, two children and many grandchildren. Her other loves were for children, art and friends. All of these combined to define a warm, friendly and loyal individual.

She brought these loves to the many different organizations that she was involved with, where friendships and successes always followed.

As Mackie loved a cocktail party, members of Island Club have made a contribution to our April Closing Reception in her honor. She will be missed!



Site Visits/Program Observations

Lori Lazorik & Anne Golensky

The Program Observation teams have completed their site observations and are gearing up for the program presentations for our March 13th meeting. Circle members were reminded of the impact our cumulative support can have in our community when Pearl Lau, a gifted art educator, shared her experience facilitating A+ART at our breakfast meeting. A+ART, a program for young adults on the autism spectrum and with other cognitive challenges, was one of the programs funded by The Circle last season and successfully ran this past fall.

This year, 20 committed Circle members have come together to share a slate of VBMA community access programs with the membership for consideration. We have all enjoyed working together as a group and creating presentations that communicate what The Circle is passionate about: the value of making the creative art experience accessible to all in our IRC community.

Through these presentations, we'll learn more about these six programs; how they were experienced by our program observation teams; their first hand impressions and stories of the powerful contribution the creative experience can have on a wide variety of populations.

In appreciation to the Program Observation teams for their dedication and work, we will be enjoying a 'Thank You' luncheon on March 4th.

To review Sara Klein's slides on the six proposed programs for funding consideration presented at the January meeting, please [Click here](#) to view.

Hospitality

Diane McGinn & Mary Wright

The February Breakfast Meeting at the Vero Beach Yacht Club was a wonderful success. Members and guests attended in record numbers and left with rave reviews. Thanks to Shawn Witmer, manager at VBYC - the food, ambiance and service were outstanding, and also to Pearl Lau, our guest speaker and the recipient of Circle funding for the A+ Art Program in 2023. Also, huge thanks to Sophie Bentham Wood, VBMA Director of Marketing and Communications, for her tutorial on how we can use our social media pages to promote the VBMA and spread the word about The Circle.

Lastly, thank you to our amazing Hospitality Committee for their efforts in making the February Breakfast event the best ever. Members and guests are already looking forward to next year. If you'd like to join us, please email me at dmcginn14@gmail.com. Hospitality is always open for new volunteers!



Secretary/Treasurer

Joy Ann Coll

YOUR DUES SUPPORT COMMUNITY ART PROGRAMS!

Your membership dues support art enrichment programs for groups of all ages in our community. At the February breakfast meeting, we learned how our dues have impacted special needs individuals and their families. The impact has been profound and transformational. We thank you for supporting these programs through your membership dues.

In addition to art program support, we gratefully acknowledge those who have donated additional funds to help offset our costs to provide our program meetings, the Opening Tea, the February Breakfast, and the Closing Reception. If you are willing and able, we encourage you to donate additional funds to our administrative fund to offset costs for these critical meetings in support of The Circle's mission and goals. Because of your generosity, we are on pace to exceed our membership and financial support over last year. Thank you for helping to make The Circle a success!

Donations to the admin fund can be made at any time during the year and do not have to coincide with renewal of your membership. Please consider donating admin funds either online at vbmuseum.org/thecircle, or by mailing a check made payable to VBMA and mailing it to Joy Coll, Treasurer, 8745 Seacrest Dr., Vero Beach, FL 32963. Thanks again for your support!



Meet Cathy Fountain

Cathy Fountain is the oldest child in a family of 12. She grew up in a big old house in Pittsfield NH, the daughter of the town doctor, who was the son of the previous town doctor. Blessed with a happy and active childhood, she went on to graduate from Newton College of the Sacred Heart majoring in English. She married the Boston College beau she met in her first month of college. Upon graduation, following her love of fashion and art, Cathy embarked on a focused career in retail.

She spent several years buying Junior Specialty Apparel for Nugent's (a chain owned by Zayre's) and 18 years at Talbots Corporate office in Hingham, MA, in the ladies and kids divisions. Her experience also includes Chadwick's of Boston and J Jill. In these positions, she travelled to Japan and Hong Kong, as well as European markets searching for fashion trends and inspiration. She retired in 2018 from Appleseed's.

Cathy and her husband Chuck have been coming to Vero Beach for over 20 years. They love the cultural activities here and have a membership to the Museum. Chuck recently retired from his job as Journalism Professor at Northeastern University in Boston. He is the author of 4 books, and plans to keep writing in retirement. They have two children and two grandchildren and spend their summers and holidays up north with their family. They are avid golfers and love getting involved in the Vero Beach community.

Only 18 months ago, Cathy attended a Circle meeting as the guest of a new friend and heard the plea to volunteer. She joined The Circle's Communication Committee that day and now edits the newsletter and contributes to all other writing projects as well. Cathy loves the women and camaraderie of The Circle and especially appreciates the wonderful work for the community that The Circle generously funds.

Communications Update

Cathy Cronin

In The News... Don't miss the Vero Beach Art Club's 73rd Annual "Under the Oaks" Fine Arts & Crafts Show on Fri-Sun, March 8, 9 (9am-5pm) & 10 (9am-4pm) at Riverside Park. Be sure to look for our member artists who will be exhibiting!

The Communications and Membership Committees have been working together on a Welcome Kit for all new members. This will be available on the website as well as in hard copy. If you or a friend would like a hard copy of the Welcome Kit, please contact Joy Anne Coll. (And thank you to Stuart Weismiller who spearheaded this initiative!)

To help provide a quick answer to any question you may have about The Circle, we have compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Look for the FAQs on the website under "About The Circle" in the near future.

Members are our best brand ambassadors for spreading the word about The Circle. Help us get the word out! Send us photos with your Circle friends out and about together, at Museum events, celebrating birthdays, attending Galas, attending Special Member-Only events, or just having fun. Please email photos to Sue Van Der Stricht and Suzanne Roff. We will add them to the Photo Gallery on the VBMA social media pages, as well as on The Circle site.

AND, please send us any news you would like us to include in the newsletter. We want to acknowledge and share your accomplishments! Please click [here](#) to view Sophie's Social Media Tips.

Cheers to our members, Linda Teetz who was the emcee, and Diane McGinn and Gail Praus, who were two of the co-chairs for the *Let's Fiesta Wine & Dine* event benefiting the Hibiscus Children's Center. It was great to see more than 20 Circle members there that night supporting this wonderful organization.



Factoid from the Archive

Stuart Weismiller

For this issue's factoid, we look back to 2007 when The Circle members voted to fund an Intergenerational Art Program, supporting community engagement of Adults and Youth. This program combined two programs that used gallery visits and studio activities to serve senior adults and at-risk teens. VBMA partnered with DATA (Drug Abuse Treatment Association, Inc.) and the Senior Resource Association to offer this program to 18-20 youth and 10-12 senior citizens.

Wonderful opportunities and results occurred by combining these 2 audiences. The groups learned about creation and self-expression. Teens benefited from the help and support offered by a caring adult. The adults appreciated their role as a non-judgmental mentor and role model for troubled youth. In fact, the teens were more open and respectful than many seniors expected, breaking down the preconceived ideas around drug abuse and adolescent behavior. For all involved, viewing, learning and making art served to eliminate the generational stereotypes through sustained monthly interaction.

The Circle
2023-2024 Event Calendar

Mark Your Calendars!

Wednesday	March 13th	10-11:30A	General Meeting Site Visit Presentations	VBMA Holmes Great Hall
Thursday	April 11th	3-5P	Closing Reception & Final Vote	VBMA Buck Atrium

2023-24 Circle Steering Committee Members

Steering Committee Chair:	Trudy Powers Hoffman	trudy@tphllc.com	206 409-2484
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Site Team Co Chairs:	Anne Golensky Lori Lazorik	annegol@aol.com Lori.lazorik@gmail.com	203 525-2671 772 475-3753
Secretary/Finance Chair:	Joy Ann Coll	jacoll1118@aol.com	772 559-6288
Communications Chair:	Cathy Cronin	acathy.egan@gmail.com	914 772-0647
VBMA Circle liaison:	Robyn Orzel	roborzel@vbmuseum.org	772 231-0707

[Please click here to access the Member Directory](#)

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Suzanne Roff - Web manager, writer, editor suzrof@gmail.com
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Stuart Weissmiller - Writer, special projects, Factoid from the Archives stuart@weissmiller1.com

Please share your thoughts and suggestions with us.
about the Newsletter and The Circle web pages. We'd love to hear from you!