

## Lees Slips

### Please Save Lees Slips!

Thank you to our members who donate their slips to us. Lee's will donate 1% of the total. We received \$370.45 from the Lee's program for a total of \$742.18 for 2014.

Lees will send us money if YOU:

- give them to a board member or art class student
- mail them to WAG, PO Box 157, Westport Point, MA 02791

NOTE: Please don't circle anything on the slips!

## BrushStrokes Deadline

Friday, April 24 for the May/June 2015 issue. Send info to:  
Mary Sexton  
66 Peaceful Way, Tiverton RI 02878,  
914-217-7900 or email  
[info@westportartgroup.com](mailto:info@westportartgroup.com).

## Members Gallery

All members are eligible to have their artwork shown in the Members Gallery. Send 4 or 5 digital images with titles, plus a brief bio or artist statement to Mary Sexton at [info@westportartgroup.com](mailto:info@westportartgroup.com) for inclusion. It's FREE! Please participate.

## Youth Art Month

The month of March is designated for promoting art and art education throughout the United States. The goal is to emphasize the value of promoting art for all children. Observe Youth Art month by joining art educators, parents, librarians, leaders of youth organizations, businesspeople, and students to celebrate the arts. On a personal level, engage in art activities, including museum visits, with your own children or grandchildren!



## Board Meetings:

Thursday, March 12, 1:00 PM

Thursday, April 9, 1:00 PM

### 2014 – 2015 WAG OFFICERS

**Mary Benefiel**, *President*  
**Paul Vien**, *Vice President*  
**Heide Hallemeier**, *Treasurer*  
**Peter Lenrow**, *Recording Secretary*  
**Nancy Mackay**, *Corresponding Secretary*  
**Sharon Connors**, *Membership Secretary*

### COMMITTEES

<b>BUILDINGS &amp; GROUNDS</b> <b>Bruce Hubbard</b>	<b>NEWSLETTER</b> * Mailing, Toni Keavey
<b>GALLERY MANAGER</b> <b>Sarah Brown</b>	<b>PROGRAMS</b> <b>June Roche</b>
<b>EXHIBITIONS</b> <b>Sue Prideaux</b>	<b>HOSPITALITY</b> <b>Nancy Nagle</b>
<b>Barbara Chadwick</b>	<b>YOUTH EDUCATION</b> <b>Emily Sutton</b>
<b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b> <b>Doris Magovern</b> Nancy Mackay	<b>EVENTS</b> <b>June Roche</b>
<b>WEBMASTER</b> <b>Mary Sexton</b>	<b>NOMINATING COMMITTEE</b> <b>Madeleine Ferraz</b>
<b>CLASSES</b> <b>Barbara Healy</b>	<b>MEMBERS AT LARGE</b> Judy Keeley Sharlie Sudduth
<b>MARKETING &amp; PRESS RELATIONS</b> <b>Christina Glaser</b>	

\* Position is open.

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# BrushStrokes

WESTPORT ART GROUP

March/April 2015

## President's Letter

### SNOWY WITH A CHANCE OF CREATIVITY

Although the weather has been challenging, we are making progress on our building construction. It is so exciting to stand in the new studio under construction and imagine all the wonderful events that will take place within the space. We are busy planning spring and summer events and adjusting to the exciting realization that we'll have a beautiful, new studio. Thank you to all who have contributed to make WAG's growth possible.

To present our new wing to the community, a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony is planned for Friday, June 26 along with a reception for the Open Juried Show, June 27 – 28. We'll welcome warm weather in May with an Evening Plein Air demonstration followed by a six-week course throughout June. Kids' Art Workshops will resume in May and Kids' Art Camps will take place July 13 – 17 and July 27 – August 1.

WAG will participate this year in the South Coast Artists Open Studio Tour: July 18 – 19 and August 15 – 16. In August, a dozen WAG members will travel to Monhegan Island, Maine for an inspiring week of painting en plein air. We will round out the season with our traditional Summer Community Show with the opening reception on August 21 and the show running for ten days to August 30.

These are just a few of our programs and events scheduled for the spring and summer season. In addition to our weekly classes of painting, drawing and figure drawing, a Pastel Workshop is scheduled for September 12 – 13. Please check our website ([www.westportartgroup.com](http://www.westportartgroup.com)) for more events and details.

A huge thank you to the WAG Board and active members for volunteering and for participating in programs, exhibitions, and events. Whether it's a trip to the museum, art show, class or construction, for decades WAG members come together to make it all happen. What a great organization.

I think of WAG as hip and historic!

Always be inspired  
Mary Benefiel, *President*

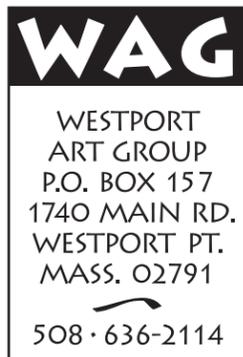


[facebook.com/westportartgroup](https://www.facebook.com/westportartgroup)



Parsons Reserve in Dartmouth, MA...one of our favorite spring plein air painting locations.

If you would like to donate to the WAG Building Fund, send a check to P.O. Box 157, Westport Point, MA, 02791. Please make checks payable to Westport Art Group, Inc.



## Dates to Remember

March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

March 4, 11, 18, 25

March 5, 12, 19, 26

Monday Essential Drawing

Wednesday Figure Workshop

Thursday Painting Session

April 6, 13, 20, 27

April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Monday Essential Drawing

Wednesday Figure Workshop

Thursday Painting Session

## WAG Calendar of Upcoming Events

### Spring Evening Plein Air Painting Demonstration

Tuesday, May 19

6 to 7:30 pm.

\$5.00 suggested donation.

Instructor: Robert Abele



### Kids' Art Camps and Workshops

Saturday, May 23

Kids' Art Workshop

Saturday, June 20

Kids' Art Workshop

Monday – Friday, July 13 – 17

Kids' Art Camp

9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Monday – Friday, July 27 – August 1

Kids' Art Camp

9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Contact Emily Sutton:  
[emilysutton@gmail.com](mailto:emilysutton@gmail.com)



Clockwise from top: Sarah Desjardins created a snowy watercolor from the window at Howland Hall during a Thursday Painting Class, Emily Sutton painting at Peckham's Greenhouse, Robert Abele's demo painting, Summer Plein Air Painting at the New Bedford Yacht Club, J. James Gallagher's Hand Carved Folk Art Flying Fish.

### Spring Evening Plein Air Painting Class

Tuesdays, May 26,  
June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

5 to 7:30

\$60 per six-week session

Instructor: Robert Abele

Contact Barbara Healy:  
[edlundhealy@comcast.net](mailto:edlundhealy@comcast.net)

### Juried Show/New Building Ribbon Cutting Celebration

Friday, June 26

Opening Reception & Ribbon Cutting  
Ceremony, 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Friday, June 26 – Sunday, June 28

10 AM to 4 PM

Contact Sue Prideaux:  
[suzy101@comcast.net](mailto:suzy101@comcast.net)

### South Coast Artists Open Studio Tour at WAG

July 18 – 19 & August 15 – 16

Contact: [info@westportartgroup.com](mailto:info@westportartgroup.com)

### River Days

Saturday, June 6

With the Westport River Watershed  
Alliance.



### Plein Air Painting on Monhegan Island

August 1 – 8

Contact Mary Benefiel:  
[marybenefielart@gmail.com](mailto:marybenefielart@gmail.com)

### Summer Community Show

Friday, August 21

Opening Reception, 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Saturday & Sunday,  
August 22 – August 30

10 AM to 4 PM

Contact Sue Prideaux:  
[suzy101@comcast.net](mailto:suzy101@comcast.net)

### Pastel Workshop

September 12 – 13

Instructor: Rosalie Nadeau

Contact Barbara Healy:  
[edlundhealy@comcast.net](mailto:edlundhealy@comcast.net)



## From the Classes

### Please Note:

The Monday Drawing and Thursday painting classes are being held at Westport Point United Methodist Church's Howland Hall during construction.

The Figure Workshop is being held at Sandywoods in Tiverton.

### Essential Drawing

Mondays at WAG, 9 am–12 pm

Learn the basics of drawing!

\$15 per session

\$40 per 4-week month

\$50 per 5-week month

### Thursday Painting

Thursdays, 9 am – 12 noon

The Thursday morning painting class has been meeting at the Westport Point United Methodist Church while WAG's new addition is under construction. In the weeks to come, we plan to paint at various locations, including Peckham's Greenhouse. Winter classes are smaller allowing for more individualized instruction. Recently, painting activities have included working from photos with instructor Robert Abele presenting painting demonstrations. Soon, we plan to paint self-portraits and still lifes of fresh, spring flowers. You can find details and updates about classes through emails, [www.westportartgroup.com](http://www.westportartgroup.com) and facebook.com/westportartgroup. If you would like to be included on the Thursday Painting email list, please contact Barbara at [edlundhealy@comcast.net](mailto:edlundhealy@comcast.net) or [info@westportartgroup.com](mailto:info@westportartgroup.com). If you have questions, call Barbara Healy at (508) 636-6773.

\$15 per session

\$40 for a 4-week month

\$50 for a 5-week month

### Figure Workshop

Wednesdays, 9 am–12 pm

The fee is \$10 a session if paying monthly or \$15 a class. No instruction. Call Carolyn Winter at 401-316-8272 for more information.

Visit [www.westportartgroup.com/](http://www.westportartgroup.com/) classes for more information about our classes.

## Robert Abele's Atelier:

### OH OH OH IT'S MAGIC!

I have always believed the artist and the magician were similar. The magician uses imagery to marvel and amaze us during their flawless acts. Nothing beats seeing a woman sawn in half and then remarkably put back together. The crowd rises with thunderous applause at the feat before their eyes. We all know that it is an illusion and a secret that was handed down to the magician from a master. Then, it was tirelessly practiced until it was ready to be performed and amaze the audience.

This reminds me of the artist in so many ways. If we are doing what we should, practicing fundamentals, drawing shapes, defining forms and practicing perspective, when the time comes to create a painting, we should feel like well-oiled, creative machines.

The reality is our busy lives that get in the way of spending countless hours studying. Tools and tricks are produced to make us more productive. If you had to dig a six-foot deep hole and only had a spoon to do it, this would take an enormous effort unless someone handed you a shovel.

I see so many students struggling with composition and draftsmanship to the point some have given up altogether and thrown in the towel. If you are one of these people, I beg you not to quit and realize that it takes years to develop strong skills, just in the area of drawing alone. Painting is a bit different because there are more opportunities to mask your shortcomings. The problem is the artist has very few tools and tricks at hand to aid in painting but this is not true for drawing. Turning a photo upside down is one of them, which forces you to use the right side of your brain. Now the image is abstract, making you uncomfortable and thinking outside the box but making you a better artist!

There is not a professional artist alive that does not use some sort of device to help them compose their compositions.

Between the 1300–1400's the visual arts made huge advancements. This has been attributed to the use of optics invented by the Dutch. Almost all artists, who had the means, used the technology of their time. By tracing, the artist took a step closer to reality and marveled their audience with



Robert Abele at the Louvre

their talent. Ingres, Vermeer, Giovanni Battista Moroni, Angelo Bronzino, Van Dyck and the list goes on and on, all used optics in their work. Look at Van Dyck's paintings of armor; the detail is stunning. Look at the drawings of Ingres; the exactness of line is astounding.

This Renaissance lasted 400 years until the early 1800's; around the time the camera was invented. Van Gogh did not use optics to aid in his work, that's for sure, maybe absinthe, but definitely not a camera obscura. Still there were many Impressionists who did, Degas to name one. The point here is none of us would ever say Ingres or Vermeer were less of an artist for using a tool. I hate to see students fail because they are frustrated about their skills. Do yourselves a favor, try turning that photo upside down and perhaps invest in a digital projector and a light table. These tools and tricks will elevate your work to new levels and will give you the ability to spend more time painting. The hard work still needs to be done and the study of fundamentals is still essential. These tools and tricks will just get you over the hump.

Now, to all you purists out there who shun this "evil", like it is the plague, that is your choice and I understand your argument. Myself, a working artist for over 25 years, would never use a spoon to dig a six-foot hole. My first plein air painting was done in 1989 on Cape Cod and I have spent countless hours and done hundreds of paintings before nature and will always believe this is the best study for the artist.

As artists, pick your battles, look back to the past and follow the lessons learned by those who walked before you. Optics, devices, tools, tricks and more are essential!