



(860) 434-7802 90 Lyme Street, Old Lyme CT 06371 LymeArtAssociation.org

September 6, 2025

Greetings,

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Lyme Art Association is scheduled for Wednesday, October 8th at 5:30 pm. I hope that you can attend. Refreshments will be served at 5:00 pm. We will be reviewing the past year's activities here at the Lyme Art Association and will also be voting on the Board of Directors slate and nominees for Life Membership.

The following items are attached:

- 2025 Annual Membership Meeting Agenda.
- Board of Directors Slate
- Life Member Nominees
- Proxy Authorization form. If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting, Lyme Art Association Bylaws allows you to authorize another eligible voting member (Elected Artist, current Board member, or Life Member) to cast your votes. **Please be sure to gain the agreement of your proxy holder** to cast your votes. This is very important – an eligible voting member may hold no more than two proxy votes, and proxy holders must be aware of whose proxies they hold. Return your completed Proxy Authorization form to Lyme Art Association, preferably by Monday, October 6, but by no later than 5:00 pm on October 8.

Only voting members whose dues are current are eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting. If you have any questions about your dues, please contact the office. You may renew at the gallery, call us at (860) 434-7802, or renew online at <https://lymeartassociation.org/membership/>.

The Annual Meeting will also be Elected Artists' final chance to vote on the new candidates for Elected Artist status. Voting will close immediately following the Annual Meeting.

I look forward to seeing you on October 8th.

Sincerely,

Michael Centrella
President



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PROXY AUTHORIZATION

For

Annual Membership Meeting, October 8, 2025, 5:30 p.m. at Lyme Art Association

Lyme Art Association Bylaws allow a voting member of the Lyme Art Association (Elected Artist Members, Life Members, and current Lyme Art Association Board Members) to authorize another eligible voting member to cast his/her vote(s) according to this proxy authorization. Only voting members whose dues are current are eligible to vote at any Annual or Special Membership Meeting of Lyme Art Association.

Please be sure that your designated proxy holder agrees to hold your proxy and has signed this form before submitting it to the Lyme Art Association. A voting member may not hold more than two proxies at any membership meeting.

**To be valid, this signed proxy authorization must be received
by the Lyme Art Association no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 6, 2025.**

I, _____, hereby authorize _____, a voting member of the Lyme Art Association, who has agreed to cast votes on my behalf at the Association membership meeting referenced above.

Check one:

____ This proxy authorization applies to any matter put to a vote at this meeting.

____ This proxy authorization applies only to the following matter(s) included on the agenda for the meeting.

1. Election of Directors
2. Election of Life Members

Signature of member granting the proxy

Print Name

Date

The Proxy Authorization must be signed by the proxy holder before the beginning of the Membership Meeting.

Signature of proxy holder

Print Name

Date



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AGENDA
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 5:30 pm

Light refreshments will be served at 5:00 pm, prior to the meeting.

The mission of the Lyme Art Association is to promote and cultivate an appreciation for representational fine arts by holding art exhibitions, conducting educational programs for the benefit of its members and the greater community and by owning, maintaining, and preserving an historic building and galleries in Old Lyme, Connecticut.

1. **Call to Order, President's Remarks** – Michael Centrella, President
2. **2024 Annual Meeting Minutes Review & Approval** - Michael Centrella, President
3. **Executive Director's Remarks** - Elsbeth Dowd, Executive Director
4. **Strategic Planning Report** - Maura Cochran, Committee Chair
5. **Treasurer's Report** – Katherine Simmons, Treasurer
6. **Investment Committee Report** - Steven Ross, Committee Chair
7. **Audit Committee Report** - tbd
8. **Election of Directors** - Katherine Simmons, Nominating Committee Chair
9. **Election of Life Members** – Michael Centrella, President
10. **Artistic Policy & Exhibition Committee Report** - Beverly Schirmeier, Committee Chair
11. **Gallery Sales Report** - Paul Michael, Gallery Manager
12. **Education and Activities Report** - Lorraine Yurkewicz, Committee Member
13. **Buildings and Grounds Report** – Paul Michael, Gallery Manager
14. **Development Report** – Elsbeth Dowd, Executive Director
15. **Newsletter Report** - Katherine Simmons, Editor
16. **Other Business**
17. **Final Remarks, Thank You** - Elsbeth Dowd, Executive Director
18. **Adjournment of Meeting** – Michael Centrella, President



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Annual Membership Meeting Minutes

October 9, 2024

Members Present: Linda Boisvert-DeStefanis, Susanna DalPonte, Rick Daskam, Donna Gilberto, Sunil Howlader, Sarah Stifler Lucas, Donna Martell, Jack Montmeat, Richard Nazzaro, Howard Park, Steven Ross, Matthew Schwager, Dennis Sirrine, and Len Swec

Board Members Present: Del-Bourree Bach, John Beatty, Michael Centrella, Maura Cochran, Debbi Goodman, Randie Kahrl, Paul Loescher, Jeanne O'Brien, Beverly Schirmeier, Paul Sellier, Katherine Simmons, and Lorraine Yurkewicz.

Staff Present Elsbeth Dowd, Paul Micheal, Ann Chan and Sara Drought Nebel.

Call to Order: Beverly Schirmeier, Board President, called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2023 Annual Meeting Minutes Review and Approval: Beverly welcomed all in attendance and stated it has been her honor to serve as Board President these last two years. Beverly asked for any comments on the 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes. There were no comments or additions. Beverly asked for a motion to approve the 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes. Katherine Simmons made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Sarah Stifler Lucas seconded, all voted in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Executive Director, Elsbeth Dowd started by thanking everyone for coming. Elsbeth went over some of the new achievements from this year, the primary one being the CRM system, known as Neon One. Our mailing list continues to grow. There were 22 exhibits this year and a number of educational programs. Our finances are growing in the right direction, and we have a wonderful staff. More on all of these and other items in the reports that follow.

Strategic Planning Report: Maura Cochran, Committee Chair of the Strategic Planning committee, presented what the committee plans to concentrate on in the coming year. Maura said the Board plans to fine tune these four goals for the next year, Fundraising, Membership, Operations and Outreach. There aren't a lot of corporations to take care of all the area art organizations. We will be looking for businesses that have deeper pockets. Elsbeth has been doing a great job with outreach and she is going to continue to do that. The Board and volunteers will help make all these goals come to fruition.

Treasurer's Report: Paul Sellier, Treasurer went over the chart he included in the meeting handout. Revenue totals for fiscal year 2024 ending September 30, 2024 were \$551,000, which is an \$80,000 increase compared to 2023, very impressive. Revenues were up for virtually all categories this year except for grants, due to less funding by the State of Connecticut for cultural arts programs. Paul recapped the fundraisers for the year, Swing for Art, the Sea & Sky Soiree and the upcoming Palate to Palette. Entry fees were up by about \$13,000 and commissions were about \$8,000 higher than last year. Education was the biggest revenue generator this year at \$123,000, also higher than last year. Expenses totaled \$571,000. Expenses for operating the building were up by about \$12,000, much of that due to septic tank repairs. Payroll dominates the expenses. In recent years \$20,000 for payroll came from the Capital Campaign account. There was no Capital Campaign this year, so operations absorbed 100% of payroll expense. Annual insurance premiums now total close to \$45,000, which is almost double over the last year and they will continue to rise. In fiscal 2024 we incurred a loss of \$21,000, which is roughly the

amount that would typically be paid from the Capital Campaign account to payroll. We are planning the next phase of capital projects, most of which will make the building more user friendly and accessible. We are at full staff for the first time in a long time, and we have a leakproof and airtight building to last another 50 years at least. We ask you all to be as generous as possible with your support to LAA. At this point Beverly thanked Paul who is at the end of his term as Treasurer and asked for a round of applause for all Paul has done.

Investment Committee Report: Steven Ross recapped his written report included in the meeting packet. He reviewed the three investment accounts, Foster Caddell, Cooper Ferry and the Unrestricted account, which are managed by the Arch Group. We pay an advisory fee of 0.85%, which is less than the industry standard. The account total saw a 6.8% increase from the same date in 2023. The total return for the portfolio this year was 23.6%. There were no contributions to the portfolio this year because we are concentrating on capital improvement and in mid-October last year, we withdrew just over \$100,000 from the unrestricted account to pay for the skylight project as planned.

Audit Committee Report: John Beatty, Committee Chair presented a brief audit report, included in the meeting packet. This year's audit examined the new data entry system, or CRM, called NEON. John stated that the old Giftworks system was slow and did not do as much as NEON is able to do. The new system is QuickBooks integrated, and the cost is virtually the same as the old Giftworks system, after the initial set up cost. It is too soon to tell, but it looks like the new system should save 30-40 hours of employee time a month.

Election of Directors: Governance Committee Chair, Kathy Simmons started by recognizing the Board members who are not standing for election this year. They are Debbi Goodman, Margaret Jane DeRisio, Erin Schaaf, Katherine Simmons, and Beverly Schirmeier. Then Kathy introduced the 10 Board members who are standing for election or re-election. The members on the slate for election, Del-Bourree Bach, John Beatty, Michael Centrella, Maura Cochran, Randie Kahrl, Lois Lawrence, Paul Loescher, Jeanne O'Brien, Lorraine Yurkewicz and David Zuckerbraun. Sarah Stifler Lucas made a motion to approve the slate as presented, Steven Ross, seconded and all voted in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Artistic Policy and Exhibition Committee Report: Beverly Schirmeier said the committee has been hard at work improving our policies and exhibitions. They work on getting all our wonderful jurors. Beverly has heard how the work has exploded this past year. Funding for awards has increased for some exhibitions, creating more award opportunities. Next year we will have a Diane Aeschilman legacy award as well. Next year we are planning on doing online submissions for our shows. Beverly thanked everyone who has served on the committee this year.

Gallery Sales Report: Paul Michael, Gallery Manager, went over the spreadsheet in the meeting packet. That spreadsheet shows that May was the best month in LAA history. The YTD sales figure is \$157,809 and we still have three months to go. Paul pointed out the list of exhibitions we have had and the ones coming up. Paul explained about the submission process and how it has become more and more busy which has led to the decision to proceed with digital entries in 2025, as many other organizations do already. Donna Martell asked if other people would be able to see the artists' shows. Paul stated that the staff is looking at places where we can list exhibitions, so yes, we are thinking about that. Elsbeth and Paul are still looking at different systems to use. Michael Centrella, noted that the average price per piece sold is \$789 compared to last year, when it was \$589. John Beatty stated that he thinks LAA is the best gallery in New England for art sales. Rick Navarro said he always thought this gallery was one of the best in the country. Beverly said that the Board, the committees and the staff have all been working very hard to make the gallery what it is today.

Education and Activities Report: Lorraine Yurkewicz, committee member gave a rundown of the list of events that took place this year, also in the meeting packet. Lorraine wanted to thank Sara Nebel, Jolie Collins and all the rest of the staff and volunteers that make all these events possible. Elsbeth commented that the programs we have here are all about bringing as many people as possible into this building and sharing our love of representational art. Thank you to the committee members and staff for all the work they've done. Beverly added that she thinks we have met one of the requirements in the Strategic Plan for bringing new people into LAA.

Building & Grounds Report: Paul Michael pointed out that the hillside has been cleared by volunteer Pete Lacey. Pete will continue to work with Suzanne Thompson to replant some native plants in those sections. Paul thanked all the volunteers who have helped in one way or another with the grounds this year. This year we had our septic chamber pump replaced. The Building and Grounds committee went through the building to look at short- and long-term projects. Pressure washing of the building will be taking place in the next few weeks and we will be getting rid of a few tree limbs in our parking lot area.

Development Report: Elsbeth Dowd, Executive Director, highlighted a few areas of support in her included report. Among them: the Kitchings Family Foundation Grant, the Town of Old Lyme and many of our usual grants, and some new donors for awards. Elsbeth recapped this year's special events, also listed in her report. The Annual Appeal will be going out in a few weeks and the January newsletter will have a full list of our donors who have given in any capacity in 2024. Elsbeth thanked all our volunteers and asked for a standing ovation for our outgoing Treasurer, Paul Sellier.

Newsletter Report: Kathy Simmons, the newsletter chairperson, encouraged anyone and everyone to consider writing an article for our newsletter. It can be on anything such as: contemporary artists, LAA founders, upcoming exhibitions, new paintings techniques, anything. So please think about contributing.

Other Business: There was none.

Final Remarks and Thank You's: Elsbeth stated that she is just so happy to be here and loves the flexibility and the staff she works with, including all the wonderful volunteers. She is looking forward to the coming year and thanks you for all your support. Michael Centrella asked for a standing ovation for Beverly Schirmeier our outgoing Board President. Beverly thanked everyone and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Adjournment of Meeting: Jeanne O'Brien made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Lorraine Yurkewicz seconded, all voted in favor. Motion to adjourn passed unanimously at 6:32 p.m.



Lyme Art Association, 90 Lyme Street, Old Lyme CT 06371

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS SLATE

Nominated for Election for a two-year term 2025-2027

Name	Brief bio and current Committees/Offices served
Debbi Goodman	Debbi is an Associate Artist who lives in East Haddam. She serves on APEC, chairs the Education and Activities Committee, and is co-chair of the Palate to Palette Committee. Debbi took on the task of making our entrance look beautiful in all seasons and does a wonderful job. (Third Term)
Brian McClear	Brian is an Elected Artist who lives in West Hartford. He serves on APEC and has been an active participant in LAA's activities, giving demonstrations and public talks. He spent over 25 years in the advertising world and now paints full time. (First Term)
Liane Philpotts	Liane is an Associate Artist who lives in Madison. She serves on the Sea & Sky Committee and the Development Committee. She is a physician. Liane was appointed to Board of Directors in May. (First Term)
Diana Rogers	Diana is an Associate Artist who lives in Clinton. She serves on the Education & Activities Committee and is an instructor at LAA. She is a former clinician and healthcare industry executive. (First Term)
Katherine Simmons	Katherine is an Elected Artist and retired Human Resources executive who lives in Glastonbury. She serves as Treasurer and chairs the Archive, Newsletter, and Governance/Nominating Committees and donates her graphic design services. Katherine served as President of the board from 2009 through October 2019. (Third Term)

Directors currently serving on the Board of Directors

Name	Brief bio and current Committees/Offices served
Del-Bourree Bach	Del is an Elected Artist and serves as Vice President and is on APEC and the Palate to Palette Committee. He is a professional artist who lives in Mystic, CT. (Second Term)
John Beatty	John is a Life Member of the LAA who served for many years as Treasurer and has chaired the Audit Committee. He lives in Old Lyme, CT (Second Term)
Michael Centrella	Michael is an Elected Artist who serves as President and is on the Governance Committee and Investment Committee. Prior to his art career, he was a Yale University professor who served on review boards, managed grant proposals, and wrote over 150 articles. Michael lives in Cheshire, CT. (Third Term)
Maura Cochran	Maura is an Associate Artist who lives in Essex, CT. She leads the LAA Members Plein Air Painting group and is chair of the Strategic Planning Committee. (Third Term)

Randie Kahrl	Randie is an Elected Artist who lives in Old Lyme. She is a licensed architect in Massachusetts who worked in residential design before retiring to Connecticut. She serves on the Education & Activities Committee. (Second term)
Lois Lawrence	Lois is an Associate Artist who serves on the Governance and Palate to Palette Committees. After many years practicing family law, she is now largely retired aside from consulting in her partner's cases. Lois lives in Stonington, CT. (First Term)
Paul Loescher	Paul is an Elected Artist who lives in Clinton. He is a retired architect who was Director of Facilities Planning for 25 years for Southern Connecticut State University. Paul is the chair of the Building Capital Projects Committee. (Second term)
Jeanne O'Brien	Jeanne is an Associate Artist who serves on the Development Committee and special events committees. She is a retired healthcare professional and has pursued oil painting for many years. Jeanne lives in Deep River, CT. (First Term)
Lorraine Yurkewicz	Lorraine is an Associate Artist. She serves as Secretary and is on the Education and Activities Committee and special events committees at LAA. She retired from Pfizer as Director in Clinical Research and lives in Old Lyme. (Second term)
David Zuckerbraun	David is a community member who is Vice President and Trust Officer at Essex Savings Bank. He has also worked at the Washington Trust Company and before that was engaged in private legal practice. David has served on the boards of many nonprofits, currently serves on the Development and Investment Committees, co-chairs the Sea & Sky Soiree Committee and lives in Niantic. (Second term)

Nominations for Life Membership

Deborah Goodman's constant presence at LAA brings joy to all our lives. Debby is an Associate Artist. She has served on the Board of Directors from 2013 to 2019 and again from 2020 through today. She co-chairs Palate to Palette, which is now celebrating its 10th year, chairs the Education & Activities Committee, and serves on APEC and Sea & Sky Committee. Debby quietly works behind the scenes to accomplish so much at LAA, from beautifying our front entrance, to bringing in sponsors, to providing help just when we need it most. We are so grateful for Debby's cheerful disposition and commitment to LAA.

Paul Sellier has been devoted to LAA for many years. He served on the Board of Directors from 2017 to 2024. He has been Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and has served on the Development, Palate to Palette, Buildings & Grounds, Capital Project, and Finance Committees. He has spent countless hours improving LAA's financial health and has contributed tremendously to improving the efficiency and professionalism of our operations on every level. Paul has worked tirelessly to encourage staff members and volunteers alike to never stop striving for LAA to be its very best.

Katherine Simmons is a wealth of institutional knowledge about LAA. She is an Elected Artist and served as President of the Board for many years. She served on the Board of Directors from 2009 to 2019 and again from 2020 through today. Kathy was recently Secretary and is on the Archives Committee. She is our newsletter editor and writes many articles, as well. She has put a tremendous amount of time into helping with LAA's marketing and publicity, creating all our exhibition postcards and designing invitations for all our special events. Kathy's steadfastness and commitment to LAA has been an example to us all.