

VOLUNTEER NOW: Monrovia's Summer Art Walks

By Linda Fields Gold, Staff Writer
Posted: 07/18/2009 07:07:55 AM PDT

A couple of weeks ago, I got a press release titled "Monrovia's Summer Art Walks" and I duly placed the strolls in column listings. But down at the bottom I noticed "an all volunteer nonprofit organization dedicated to `enhancing the lives of those within our community through interaction with the arts and increasing the opportunities of our children through an art education."

Aha! Interesting. I just got off the phone after speaking with Bill Beebe, the current president of MAFA.

One of those instrumental in the early background of the organization was artist Mildred Lapson. She put together art exhibits and brought guest lecturers to Monrovia, starting in the late 1950s. MAFA was incorporated in 1965.

Today's association continues those traditions by teaching art to local students in the Village After School Program and by organizing artists' shows in local galleries. Plus, the three monthly summer art walks (the next one is July 25), the two-day show in October, and the Spring fund-raiser.

The new volunteer does not need to be a talented artist, he or she only needs to be interested in helping others learn about and to appreciate art - and that includes many, many different genres and media.

As a matter of fact, there are nearly 200 artists who belong to the MAFA and their media include paintings, drawing, acrylics, fused glass, pottery, jewelry, photography, body art, carved wood, lapidary and even weaving.

One of the things the group does is arrange to have exhibits by local artists in several galleries and other shops around town. For instance, there is a rotating display in the lobby of the Focus One Credit Union.

Plus member art may be viewed in the Aztec Art Gallery, California Wine and Cheese, Paint `n' Play Ceramic Art Studio and Gallery, and Night Owl Gallery.

The art walks are the last Saturday nights in June, July and August. Volunteers direct exhibitors to their display locales.

They might answer questions or help set up refreshments. The two-day art show in October requires lots of behind-the-scenes organization; it is a collaborative event. The hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and help is needed to book exhibitors, hand out pamphlets and assist with setup. As Beebe said, "We are looking to benefit young people; the next generation comes along and will take the reins."

People of any adult age are invited to volunteer, but folks are encouraged to follow through on whatever they do offer.

I asked Beebe if he had any additional thoughts on subjects that I might not have asked about. He wanted to make sure that we knew that the artists also needed to gain from the association; they need not only the support of financial success, but also to have their individual work and technique known by the community and larger audience.

Even if you just have a couple of hours a week or month, but are passionate about art, please think about volunteering your time and talents to the MAFA. Call (626) 802-7873.

Send information about your organization to features@sgvn.com, or call (626) 962-8811, Ext. 2252, or fax to (626) 856-2758.

VOLUNTEER NOW: Monrovia
Association of Fine Arts, 418 S.
Myrtle Ave., Monrovia
(626) 802-7873

Article used with permission of Pasadena Star News