

# The Arts Insider



## December 2020

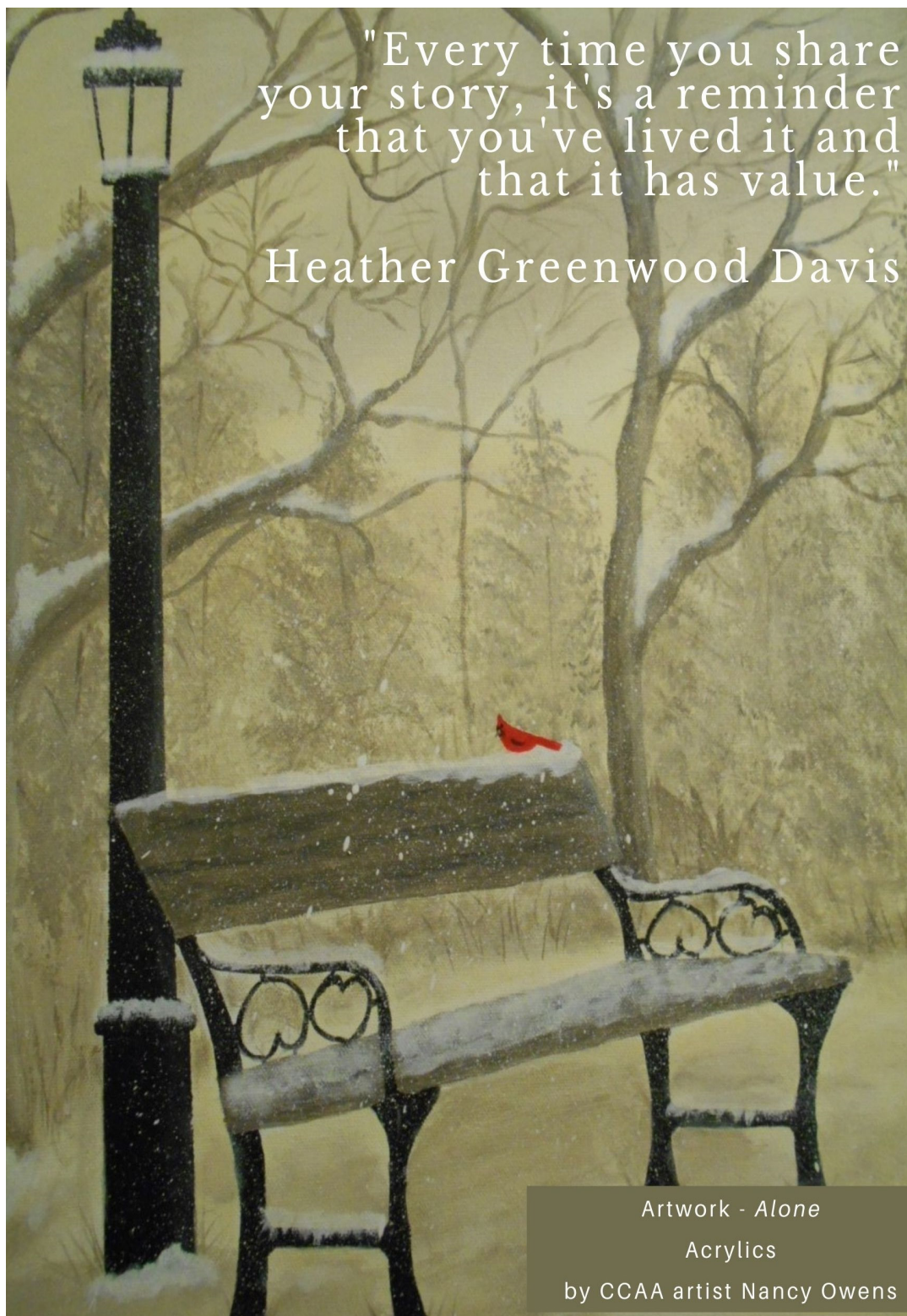
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"Every time you share your story, it's a reminder that you've lived it and that it has value."

Heather Greenwood Davis



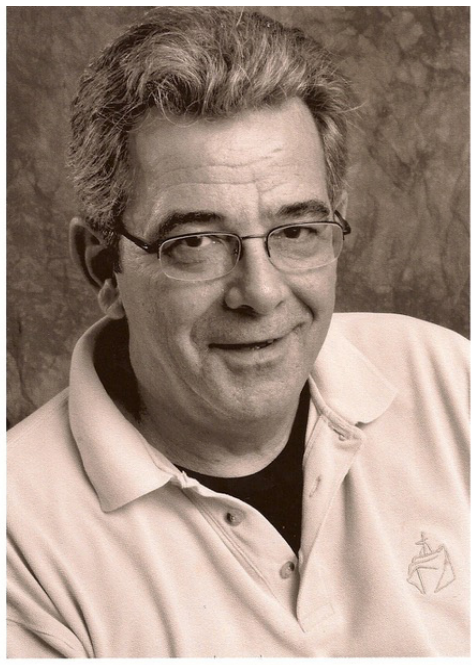
Artwork - Alone

Acrylics

by CCAA artist Nancy Owens

# President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,



Well, after a particularly brilliant President's letter was lost to cyber interference, here is my second offering. Even though my writing muse is on break, I will try my best.

The first half of our fiscal year was fraught with many Covid-19 interruptions, and we, like many other organizations had to look for new and creative ways to accomplish our goals and objectives. This included offering a "Restart and Complete" program for organizations that were closed down last March, continuing our retro gallery shows on Sunday and Wednesday, and producing our Friday evening, subscription music programs on YouTube.

Our next steps were to continue and expand our ART BOX program to provide 1,000 art boxes for our county's third graders. These were distributed through the Board of Education with major assistance from the La Plata Target. We partnered with the Charles County Rotary for a public art project with the Neighborhood Creative Arts Center at the Dorchester Community Center in La Plata. In November,

we approved over \$40,000 in Community Arts Development grant applications, and look forward to developing a virtual Theater Arts Education program. We will also be supporting our High School Theatre Production endeavors and looking for more ideas to continue our support of the arts in Charles County. If you have any ideas contact us.

We hope that all of you were safe and secure during the recent Thanksgiving Holidays, and that Providence will provide you with an equally safe and secure Christmas time for you and your families.

Happy New Year real soon! ☺

Sincerely,

*Robert*

Robert K. Rausch

President, Charles County Arts Alliance



## The Maryland Citizens for the Arts Annual ArtLAB Goes Virtual



On November 20, 2020, Charles County Arts Alliance (CCAA) Administrative Specialist Mary Whitmore attended, ArtsLAB 2020, presented by the Maryland Citizens for the Arts (MCA). ArtsLAB is a professional development symposium and travels to different parts of Maryland each year. ArtsLAB is a place where artists, arts professionals, advocates and more, come together to discuss current issues and concerns facing the arts sector.

Like many other programs this year, ArtsLAB was held virtually. The theme was Decolonizing the Arts. The sessions covered a Legislative Outlook, Arts & Entertainment Districts and Local Arts Advocacy, and a panel discussion on Decolonizing Artistic and Hiring Practices.

Each session was presented by highly skilled and experienced leaders from across the state. Presenters offered a unique perspective into their experiences, allowing attendees to consider new applica-

tions to integrate in their respective communities. Some key takeaways from the event included: suggestions to “keep arts advocacy fair, just, and equitable” by creating a statewide artist database, making space for regular conversations with artists, and A&E districts providing affordable spaces to support artists and organizations; potential local programs promoting local heritage through a “cross-generational arts effort”; and ways to decolonize hiring practices by making public rejections of racism, allowing any member of the community to participate on hiring committees, and ensuring boards are accountable to their organization’s mission.

While these takeaways barely scratch the surface of Mary’s first experience at ArtsLAB, the CCAA is excited to integrate all her learnings as we move forward promoting all the arts in Charles County.

## Scholarship Applications for 2021 Are Now Available Online!

**Deadline to Apply is March 5, 2021**

The Charles County Arts Alliance offers a \$1,500.00 scholarship to an outstanding graduating senior from each Charles County public high school and St. Mary’s Ryken High School who plans to continue studying the arts at a four-year college or university.

Applications are available now, the deadline to apply is March 5, 2021. Click [here](#) to download an application and learn more about the scholarship. For additional information, contact the CCAA office at 301-392-5900, or [info@charlescountyarts.org](mailto:info@charlescountyarts.org). 📧



## CCAA - 2nd Fridays

The Charles County Arts Alliance goes live the 2nd Friday of each month in its new virtual lecture/performance series. Each month a different arts discipline is highlighted and features artists and programs from and with connections to Charles County and southern Maryland.



Carly Harvey kicked off our first program in November. Her interview was enlightening and entertaining as she made direct connections to Blues music and Afro-Indigenous culture and sang her own new song created as a response to the country's current Social Justice movement. Click [here](#) to see the program.

Log on to our YouTube channel, Charles County Arts Alliance, every 2nd Friday at 7:00 pm. Click [HERE](#) to subscribe to the channel today!

*See what we have planned in the months ahead!*

### December

Dance: *Dance Visions* with Sheryl Pollard-Thomas, dance instructor at McDonough High School's new dance program and selected dance videos from Charles County performers.

### January

Visual Arts: Charles County Inter-Generational Artist Panel Discussion

### February

Storytelling and Literary Arts: Panel Discussion and Poetry Performances

### March

Theatre

### April

Open Mic (Mixed Disciplines)



## CCAA - 2nd Fridays

December 11 7:00 pm



*Sheryl Pollard-Thomas*

New Dance Instructor at McDonogh High School, La Plata

Ms. Pollard Thomas is the new Dance Instructor at McDonough High School. She is a D.C. native, her pre-professional training at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (HS). S.U.N.Y.@ Purchase College is where she received a B.F.A. in Dance. She was also trained at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater School on a Merit Scholarship. She has served as Co-Chair of the Department of Dance at the Boston Arts Academy for twelve years and dance teacher for 18 years. She has also served as Adjunct Professor at Harvard University and at George Mason University. Ms. Pollard-Thomas has conducted master classes in the Lester Horton dance technique, the official technique of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, in Italy, Germany, Detroit, NYC, Miami and Boston. She is on faculty at City Dance DREAM and Assistant Director and Residential Director at the Earl Mosley's Institute for The Arts. She lives in Fort Washington, MD with her partner and one of her two daughters.

To learn more about McDonough's new dance program, click [here](#). ↪



## The Bag Lady By Tracy Morgan



The smell from the room summoned me inside. It was like looking at an apple seed floating a large vat of milk. Her small frame was almost swallowed up by the white linens placed about her hospital

bed. Her dusty, gray strands of hair that had been weakened from a lack of attention were sprawled against her pillow, searching for a place to rest. Oversized wrinkles, tawny age spots, and time and circumstance had taken her body prisoner. Her sunken face was barely visible amongst the hospital-grade pillows, but there was something so familiar about her.

This was the bag lady.

I'd been volunteering with our sick and shut-in ministry for a little more than eight months. I loved volunteering with an overwhelming passion, but today I felt ashamed.

Like most of the kids who lived on the east side, we were bused to a school on the other side of town. Several of us continued attending school there once the mandatory term expired. To do so, we had to ride the city buses. This meant we had to get up with the chickens, but we didn't mind because riding the city buses made us feel mature. The driver would take a direct route downtown and then we'd have a brief wait before boarding another bus to the west side of town.

Downtown was always full of urbanites engaged in the hustle and bustle city life brought. Some would take time to drop their valuables in the public lockers lined up like little soldiers against a brick wall, and others would sprint by, leaving smells of expensive perfumes and colognes wafting through the air.

You could set your clock by the bag lady. Every morning she made her way through the crowds of people. She never seemed to be in a hurry, and she never seemed purposed.

I laughed when the kids made fun of her. "Bag lady, bag lady, what you got in those bags, bag lady?" they taunted. The kids always threatened to take her bags and threw doughnuts at her from the 24-hour pastry store. I looked at her sleeping in that bed and was overcome with shame. I was ashamed of every giggle. My laughter made me complicit in her shaming.

I saw the medical chart at the foot of her bed. Her name was Emily Winston. I put her chart back, looked around the room for any additional identifying signs, and noticed three bags out of the corner of my eye. They still held a certain mystery for me.

"Open them." She lifted her emaciated arm and motioned toward the bags, "Go ahead. Open them," she demanded.

When I touched the first bag, little fibers wisped through the air as the bag gave way. There were charred children's clothing and blackened keepsakes inside. I was confused by what I found, but I wanted to know more.

She urged, "Go through them." At that moment, I began to feel as if I was intruding upon her life, but my curiosity forced me to obey her. I found Barbie dolls with singed hair and a man's watch that stopped at exactly 1:32.

The bag lady was no longer talking, but nodding to me to open the other bags. The room reeked of melted plastic, stale smoke, and sheer hopelessness as I reached for the other bags. I began involuntarily weeping for Emily. I desperately tried holding my tears back, but I simply couldn't. She'd

# LITERARY News

carried these bags for more than 15 years. Each bag carried its own weight of sadness and each weight bowed her body more and more. When I reached the bottom of the third bag, I found a newspaper article. I carefully pulled it out of the bag, hoping to read some juicy gossip about the bag lady or her life.

When I opened the article, a small key fell to the floor. I immediately recognized the key because my mother used to rent one of the lockers downtown. I picked it up, dropped it into my purse, and returned to the article. The headline read: Husband and Children Perish in House Fire. I couldn't breathe.

The next day I stopped by Emily's room and found nurses packing up her things. She'd passed away the night before. Emily didn't list any relatives or friends, so they were taking her things to the city dump. I yelled at them to leave her things alone. "I'll take them!" I shouted. I reached into my purse to call my husband and instead of grabbing my phone, I unexpectedly felt the cold metal of that locker key.

My husband loaded Emily's things into our car and we sped downtown to set up a locker rental for Emily's bags. It was the least I could do. When the monthly bill arrives, I think of her. I think of me. For years, she bore the burden of those bags. Day after day she passed by those lockers, not realizing she had a key to one of them at her disposal. All those years of dragging those bags through the downtown streets, the weight of them wreaking havoc on her muscular system and disfiguring the shape of her skeleton, only to discover she didn't have to suffer with those burdens. She had a key that would have relieved her from the shame of those bags and from the effect of the weight of them on her body and her life.

Many of us lead lives that are not that different from the bag lady's life. Sure, we may not have dragged unsightly sacks through busy streets, but we've borne burdens God never intended us to carry.

I thought of Emily often after she passed away. Every time I would be in a downtown setting, I saw her moving quietly, almost invisibly, through side streets and dodging small pieces of glazed

doughnuts and chocolate eclairs tossed her way by mean children who mercilessly tormented her. I heard the children's laughter as they thought of new names to call her every week. The more she ignored them, the louder the little bandits became, never realizing that Emily was a woman who meant something to someone. She wasn't just the bag lady, she was Emily Winston who carried bags she didn't know how to not carry.

Today, when I see Emily's locker key resting in a quaint little jewelry box on my dresser, inside a little velvet black bag I purchased specifically for the key, I imagine her reunited with her husband and children in a place where the streets are much more beautiful and the bags . . . well, if there are bags where she is, she's certainly not carrying them.

## About the author...

Tracy Morgan is a graphic designer and photographer whose hidden passion is to become a superhero with extraordinary writing powers. Tracy specializes in logo designing, lifestyle portraiture, and event photography. She has a knack for capturing the visions of entrepreneurs and bringing those visions to life. Her eye for poses and portraiture and the ability to find those seemingly private moments in a crowd full of people is what makes her the photographer she is. However, what Tracy values most in life is her relationship with God, loving her husband of more than 34 years, cherishing her two adult sons, and spoiling her beautiful fraternal twin grandchildren absolutely rotten. ✨





The Maryland State Arts Council and its collaborating partners regularly offer a variety of resources, programs, and funding opportunities. Listed below is a few highlights. Information is updated weekly in the CCAA's Arts Newsflash. You can also view the Maryland State Art Council's December [Newsletter](#) and visit [www.msac.org](http://www.msac.org).

| Opportunity                                 | Description   | Date/Deadline    | More Information   |
|---|---|------------------|--|
| MSAC Programs                               | Funding, Resources, and Professional Development          | Ongoing          | <a href="http://www.msac.org/programs">www.msac.org/programs</a>   |
| MSAC Professional Development Opportunities | Free Online Offerings                                     | Ongoing          | <a href="http://www.msac.org/events/virtual-events">www.msac.org/events/virtual-events</a>                       |
| MSDE Statewide Arts resources               | Arts Together, Social Emotional Learning Through the Arts | Ongoing          | <a href="http://www.msdefinearts.org/statewide-arts-resources">www.msdefinearts.org/statewide-arts-resources</a> |
| Folklife Apprenticeship                     | Applications Open for the 2021-2022 Cycle                 | January 15, 2021 | Click <a href="#">Here</a>   |

## 2021-2022 Folklife Apprenticeship - Applications Now Open

### Applications Due

**Friday, January 15, 2021, 5:00 pm**

MSAC is pleased to announce that applications are open for 2021-2022 Folklife Apprenticeships. This grant supports traditional arts education through the teaching of skills from a master artist to a learner artist. Grants are \$5,000 each, with \$4,000 disbursed to the master artist and \$1,000 to the learner artist during a one-year teaching period. Applications are due Friday, January 15, at 5 p.m. Read the Folklife Apprenticeship guidelines and evaluation criteria [here](#).







MARYLAND ARTS  
INSTITUTE OF  
RACIAL JUSTICE

## **NEW WINTER SESSIONS!**

*A brave space for VIRTUAL  
learning about racial equity  
for the Maryland arts sector*

**FREE Registration opens 12/1**

- **Winter 2021 Academy:**  
*Understanding Race, Privilege and Bias*
- **NEW! Lunchtime Book Club:**  
*"How to Be an Anti-Racist" by Ibram X. Kendi*

**FACILITATORS: QUANICE FLOYD & ALYSIA LEE**



**mdarts.org**



maryland citizens for the arts

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER TODAY.



## Thanks CCAA Members for Your Support!

### Platinum Circle

Diane Rausch  
Robert K. Rausch

### Corporate

Community Bank of the  
Chesapeake

### Gold Circle

Ron & Marti Brown  
Andy & Jessica Dixon  
Bert & Emily Ferren  
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### Silver Circle

Roy & Kathy Jenkins  
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Stephen & Linda Dent Mitchell

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Joson Fine Jewelry & Home  
Boutique

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Arthur & Rosalind Ellis  
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Sally Goldsmith  
Dana Sue Lateulere  
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Roy M. Maier & Jimmie  
Roberts  
Henry McPherson  
John & Mary Lou Rutherford  
John & Lucy Snell

Joshua and Mary Whitmore  
Chancy & Sandra Wood

### Individual

Paige Ackelson  
Debora Almassy  
Dr. Theresa Alo  
Monika Faust Barilla  
Denise Bauman  
David Boarman, II  
Brent Bovell  
Justin Bowie  
Kim Bowie-Hendricks  
Alison Brooks  
Destiny Brown  
Nicole Brown  
Draya Bryant  
Johnathon Clinkscapes  
Nora Eicholtz  
Michelle Evans  
Roxana Gonzales  
Cynthia Paige Gossage  
Barbara L. Graves  
William M. Graves  
Olga Herrera  
Barbara Hufford  
Rebecca L. Hutchinson  
Angelica Jackson  
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Ivette Marcucci  
Vicki L. Marckel  
Julie A. Meisel  
Nadira Nunez  
Donna Pyles-Robinson  
Nolan Solomon  
Beverly Taylor  
Monique Walker

### Non-Profit Organization

African American Heritage  
Society of Charles County  
Charles County Department of  
Community Services  
Charles County Fair, Inc.  
Charles County Public Library  
Chesapeake Choral Arts Society  
Friends of Chapman State Park  
Ivy and Pearls of Southern  
Maryland Community Charities  
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Life Journeys Writers Guild  
Maryland Writers' Association -  
Charles County Chapter  
Mattawoman Creek Art Center  
Music Teachers Association  
of Charles County, Inc.  
Nanjemoy Community Center  
Neighborhood Creative Arts  
Center

Port Tobacco Players  
Southern Maryland Carousel  
Group  
Southern Maryland Decorative  
Painters  
Town of Indian Head

### Senior

Ruth Bailey  
Norma Baretincio  
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Martha Knight Clements  
Carol Corbett  
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Jill Smithson  
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Evans Thorne  
Paul Toscano  
Ernestine Ware  
Reginald Ware

### Youth

Ja'Leana Graves  
Sky Ann Hall  
Melissa Hatcher  
Jaden Hendricks





# CCAA Membership Form



Performing • Visual • Literary

*The mission of the Charles County Arts Alliance is to stimulate, promote, encourage and provide recognition of the arts and the creative spirit in Charles County, MD.*

## Show Your Support for the Arts by Joining the CCAA!

### The benefits of CCAA membership last year-round:

- CCAA Arts Insider monthly E-newsletter
- CCAA Arts Newsflash weekly E-update of arts events
- \$1 discount for each ticket purchased for Port Tobacco Players theatrical productions
- CCAA voting privileges
- And most importantly, the satisfaction that comes from actively supporting the arts in Charles County!

### Membership Categories (check one):

- Platinum Circle – \$500
- Gold Circle – \$250
- Silver Circle – \$150
- Arts Patron – \$125
- Arts Sponsor – \$100
- Arts Activist – \$75
- Family – \$50
- Individual – \$30
- Senior (60+) – \$20
- Youth (under 18) – \$10

### Business & Nonprofit:

- Corporate – \$500
- Business – \$250
- Nonprofit Organization – \$75
- Other (Donations) \_\_\_\_\_

*The CCAA is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization.*

*All membership dues and donations are 100 percent tax-deductible.*

**Renewal**

**New Member**

Name (exactly as you want it to appear in print):

Organization/Business (if applicable):

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

E-mail

### Want to volunteer? We'd love the help!

- ArtsFest Committee
- Budget/Finance/Audit Committee
- Scholarship Committee
- Events Committee
- Gallery Committee
- Grant Committee
- Membership Committee
- Outreach/Marketing Committee
- Administrative/Office Work
- Technical/IT Support

Charles County Arts Alliance  
P.O. Box 697, White Plains, MD 20695  
[www.charlescountyarts.org](http://www.charlescountyarts.org) / 301-392-5900  
[info@charlescountyarts.org](mailto:info@charlescountyarts.org)

# Arts Insider

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[www.charlescountyarts.org](http://www.charlescountyarts.org)

[info@charlescountyarts.org](mailto:info@charlescountyarts.org) 301-392-5900

Office Hours: 9:00 am – 2:00 pm, Tuesday – Friday

Street Address: 10250 La Plata Road, La Plata, MD 20646

## December 2020



THERE ARE SHORTCUTS TO HAPPINESS, AND  
DANCING IS ONE OF THEM.

VICKI BAUM



P.O. Box 697  
White Plains, MD 20695

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