

Dear Artists and Friends,

As another busy year comes to a close and a new one begins, we continue to thank you for supporting the gallery in many meaningful ways. Each year we rely on our members to gallery sit, bring food to openings, chair and hang shows, help with maintenance, encourage friends to join, and donate through your renewed membership and show entries. Your active participation is greatly appreciated and needed for us to prosper.

The 2018 council was elected during our annual meeting in October. Returning to the Council are: Chip Rutan, President; Pam Carlson, Vice President; Peggy Price, Secretary; Susan Malan, Treasurer; and Council members, Barbara Morrissey, Elin Dolle, and Ellen Gaube. Newly elected to the Council are Andria Alex and Jerry Reed – replacing Nancy King and Bob Gantner. Please join me in thanking Nancy and Bob for their extraordinary contributions and service to EAA. Last, but certainly not least, Kay Brigante and Janet Rayner will be continuing their great work as Co-Administrative Directors.

One of our primary focuses this past year was continuing our efforts to maintain and upgrade the gallery. We installed a new roof, repainted the ceilings in the north and south rooms, built new cabinets in the *Gantner Gallery*, replaced our two very old air conditioners, designed and installed a new outside sign, refinished the foyer floor, and began the task of installing LED lighting specifically designed for gallery and museum environments. The *Gantner Gallery* is the former *Exit Gallery*, recently renamed in honor of Bob's many roles during his approximate 20 years on the EAA Council.

Following our success last year, EAA applied for another "Supporting Arts in Place" grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts. As of this writing, we are waiting to hear back on the exact amount we will be receiving. EAA also renewed its efforts to be on the Essex Savings Bank's Community Investment Program, which provides donations to area non-profit organizations on an annual basis. Please consider voting for EAA when the ballots are available!

Last but not least, EAA showcased the artwork of our creative community during the 2017 season. We began the year with an exhibition of student artwork from Valley Regional High School, which was followed by our five themed shows. During our busy rental season, we welcomed back "Five Women Painting," the impressive students of the Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts, and hosted a juried show sponsored by Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue. Capping off our season was a return of The Valley Railroad Train and Riverboat Show, and our biennial "Chilly, Cheap & Chili." EAA members also continue to have the *year-round* opportunity to exhibit artwork at the Essex Corinthian Yacht Club. It's been a busy year!

We hope you will continue to support the Essex Art Association during the 2017 season and beyond.

Sincerely,



Chip Rutan
EAA Council President