

SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF ART

Docent Council Board Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2023

Family Resource Center 9:30 a.m.

Board Members Present: Teda Pilcher, President; Pattie Firestone, Vice-President; Cindy Anderson, Secretary; Tommie Rae Barnett, Treasurer; Mary Ellen Alden, Membership; Susan Lowe, Adult Team Co-Chair; Denise Klassen, Adult Team Co-Chair; Andrew Baker, Student Team Co-Chair; Barbara Ross, Research; Irene Stone, Evaluations Co-Chair; Gretel Rothrock, Webmaster; Patty Santiago, Coordinator of Docent Programs

In Attendance: Patsy Hicks, Director of Education

Not In Attendance: Nicola Ghersen, Student Team Co-Chair; Christine Holland, Evaluations Co-Chair; Shirley Waxman, Nominations Chair

1. **Call to order:** President Teda Pilcher called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
Action Item: A motion to approve the Board minutes of the October 9, 2023 meeting was made by Tommie Rae and seconded by Susan. The minutes were unanimously approved.
3. **Board Reports:**
President's Report –Teda Pilcher
 - Teda reported that the vote to change the Docent Council touring calendar to align with the Museum's fiscal year was unanimously approved by the Docent Council at the October 18th Docent Council meeting. The touring calendar will now begin on July 1 and go through June 31, retroactive to July 1, 2023. New Active Docents moving forward will begin to accrue touring hours in the summer following their training.
 - There were several questions regarding the Provisional Class that came up at our last Board meeting. Teda, Pattie Firestone, and Patty Santiago met to discuss them and identified several common areas of concern. One was that since the Adult and Student Touring teams are so large right now, the large number in the docent pool may make it problematic for all docents to tour their required eight tours a year to remain in active status. This brought up the idea of putting a cap on the number of Provisionals accepted into the Docent Training Program in the future.
 - Teda commended the Student Touring teams and staff for their service to our community. The number of students touring the museum and participating in the community outreach programs are making the museum come to life for many young people. Kudos to all!

Vice-President's Report – Pattie Firestone

- The Lotusland Tour was a big success. 12 docents attended. Thanks to Provisional Sandy DeRousse for leading one of the tours, and Shirley Waxman for allowing several members of the group to park in her driveway across the street.
- Holiday Party update – the Holiday Party is still on for December 11, 2023 from 4-7 p.m. Unfortunately, a new venue needs to be located. The McCormick House is our first choice, as it is convenient and owned by the museum. Patsy will check on its availability for that date and time and will get back to us. Patsy conveyed that it would be lovely to use that space as a resource for this and other docent events. It was also mentioned that the curators and museum director had been invited in the past. We thought this was a nice idea, especially since this will be Amada's first holiday experience as the museum's director. It would be a pleasant way for her to get to know the docents in an informal setting. Patty Santiago will send out invitations once the location has been confirmed. Pattie will need a group to help with the decorations. Other venues Pattie is considering (if the McCormick House isn't available): the Tasting Room, at the Grassini Family Vineyards downtown, Frequency Wine Company on Anacapa, the Museum of Contemporary Art on the upper level of the Paseo Nuevo, or other wineries in the Funk Zone.
- January 31 – The Broad & MOCA– 2.25hr each way. Transportation by van for 23 people (14 have signed up) will be around \$100/person. The price will go down if more people sign up. Pattie is waiting to hear back from The Broad about the price for a docent-led tour. She will work out the budget to include the snacks offered on the trip.
- Meet and Greet Provisionals and New Actives in February & March
 - Pattie is seeking 9 Active docents or Board members to volunteer dates and times when they could host a light Lunch or a Wine & Cheese in an informal setting. This was a tradition that was put on hold during COVID, and we are seeking to bring it back since it was a way for the new docents to connect on a more personal level with the current Active docents outside the museum setting.
 - Pattie will send out an email in January to all docents (Provisional and Active) requesting them to sign up for a lunch OR a wine & cheese Meet & Greet for those specific dates (the hosts suggested) and to indicate their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices.
 - Pattie's committee will assign people to their choices.
 - In Mid-January, invitations will be sent to the individuals from their hosts. We are hoping for an average of 9 invitees per host.
 - The Meet & Greets will take place in February & March.
- April 14 – 18 – Washington, DC

There are 10 people who have signed up for this trip so far, and 5 rooms out of 10 have been reserved at the Cosmos Club.
- New Idea

Pattie read about a Santa Barbara Mural tour and contacted Michael Gutierrez to give us a tour of our own local murals. Pattie will see if we can get a map and drive to the different murals instead of doing a bike tour, which is customary for his tour. We need to choose a date for this yet. More to come.

Secretary's Report - Cindy Anderson

- Thankfully things have been quiet, and there have been no requests for flowers or cards. Thanks for sending in your reports before the meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Tommie Rae Barnett

- The Savings account balance with additional interest of \$2.89 is currently \$10,386.85. The Checking account balance as of October 31, 2023 is \$6,939.67. An additional \$850 of Docent Dues were deposited on November 1. These dues were collected from the Provisional class, and the amount will be reflected in next month's report.

Membership Report: Mary Ellen Alden

- Our roster this year currently has 62 Active docents, 43 Sustaining docents, and 20 Provisional docents, for a total of 125 docents.
- Teda reported that she spoke with Jean Smith this morning and Jean has decided to move to Sustaining status. Denise will let Wendy Hunter know that Jean will be leaving her touring team.
- Two members have asked for excusal from the “no more than 4 misses” requirement for attendance at Docent Council Meetings.
 - Five other docents have either missed 4 meetings or not signed in. Mary Ellen will coordinate with Patty Santiago to figure out what's going on. It was discussed that attendance at the meetings is important since the Education Department has brought in speakers for our benefit to enhance our tours and our understanding of the exhibits and art that is on view, as well to keep us together as a group.
 - It was brought up that sometimes it is difficult to sign in for attendance because of the line being so long to do so and the small space allocated for the attendance sheet. We will try moving the attendance sheet to the Visitor's desk to see if that will help improve the ease with which docents sign in.

Adult Teams: Denise Klassen

- Denise reported that adult tours were primarily Highlights Tours early on with special exhibit tours of Ellsworth Kelly and *Flowers on a River* joining mid-October. The turnout overall has been very good with only one Highlights Tour with zero attendees this month. Ten Talks and Community Speakers tours continue to shine.
- As discussed, the previous month's pages were removed from the Redbook with the hope that this would help docents correctly complete their tour information in the book.
- The idea of having docents introduce themselves to the new staff members at the Visitor's desk has been effective. The staff members are getting to know the docents and are promoting their tours when visitors arrive.
- Denise brought up the importance of clear communication regarding the scheduling of the special Friday Focus tours. If Adult Tours might be impacted by either the number of guests in the tour or by what galleries/activities will be utilized when the tour takes place, letting Denise or Susan know will help them communicate to the docent leading the tour that might be effected. Currently, there is a tour in January with 120 guests. More details will be provided when they are known.

- It was requested that the statistics report indicate not only how many Special Request tours there were each month, but also show what was toured and how many visitors were on the tour.

-The recalculated statistics for the Summer Months are indicated below. The October statistics follow.

	<u>Highlights</u>	<u>James Castle</u>	<u>Ten Talks</u>		
<u>July</u>					
# Tours Scheduled	28	11	2		
# Tours Reported	28	11	1		
# Attendees	207	109	6		
Zero Attendance	2	0	0		
Special Requests	4	1	0		
Average Attendance	6.47	9.08	6		
<u>August</u>					
# Tours Scheduled	29	10	2		
# Tours Reported	29	10	2		
# Attendees	196	91	24		
Zero Attendance	1	0	0		
Special Requests	2	3	0		
Average Attendance	6.32	7.0	12		
<u>September</u>					
# Tours Scheduled	33	7	1		
# Tours Reported	33	7	1		
# Attendees	182	64	15		
Zero Attendance	3	0	0		
Special Requests	3	1	0		
Average Attendance	5.05	8	15		
<u>October</u>					
	<u>Highlights</u>	<u>Ellsworth</u>	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Ten Talks</u>	<u>Comm Speakers</u>
# Tours Scheduled	26	5	6	2	3
# Tours Reported	26	5	6	2	3
# Attendees	160	50	45	23	35
Zero Attendance	1	0	0	0	0
Special Requests	1	1	0	0	0
Average Attendance	5.9	8.3	7.5	11.5	11.67

Student Teams: Andrew Baker

- Andrew reported that over 534 students were toured by the docents in October. It seems that the tours are going smoothly. Team leaders are receiving support from other team members when replacements are needed.
- The Friday team has had a slow start, but they were included in the touring of a new Wellness-themed event designed by Patsy Hicks on November 3rd. Three small groups of half hour tours were given by the Friday team members, then each group went on to attend an art making class with teaching artist Loree Gold, and then a Meditation session in the Ellsworth Kelly exhibit. Mary Ellen attested to the fact that it was a great event. She said it was one of the best tours she has ever been a part of, and it was a pleasure

working with great kids who participated with enthusiasm and attention. The Wellness-themed event was well received and successful.

- Andrew let us know that there will be a large group of High School students touring on Friday, January 5th. It is a repeat of a “Career Day at the Museum” which proved to be very successful last year. All docents on that team will be needed that day.
- Some teams are also planning get together to attain camaraderie within the group.
- Andrew also mentioned that with the large docent pool, perhaps we should take a look at the commitment of new active docents touring students for four years. His concern is that with more people on the student teams, working people like himself who only have a limited amount of time to tour are not touring as much and may not be able to fulfill the 8 tours required to remain active. Team leaders should be made aware of this situation so they can help distribute tours to all members, especially anyone who is only touring on student teams. Many other team members may be on other touring teams, so they can get their 8 tours in more easily. Perhaps a 4-year commitment is too long now that we have so many members. We will re-evaluate this at the end of the year.

Research: Barbara Ross

- Barbara said that there has been a good response from docents who want to write a research paper. Manuel Rangel, class of 2023, has already submitted a preliminary draft about *La esteta en del drama* by David Alfaro Siqueiros, which is currently in Ridley-Tree.
- The Provisional Docents have selected their choices for their research paper on November 8 after a class presentation on the requirements for writing a research paper.
- Barbara distributed a list of all works of art in Ludington Court to the Board indicating those pieces that have not been researched, as well as those that have. She discovered twenty-three pieces need to be investigated. The earliest paper was done in 1976 by Penney Howard on *Portrait of Nadya* by Ilja Jefimovich Repin. The most recent paper was written by Mary Benedict, class of 2023, on *Woman in the Woods* by Winslow Homer.
- Barbara’s contribution to the November edition of *La Muse* is to provide a list of art in Preston Morton that needs research. She also highlighted one of the newest pieces that has been added to the gallery, *Portrait of Trude*, 1930 by Walt Kuhn. It is a recent gift to our museum from Nancy Schlosser in 2023.

Evaluations: Irene Stone

- Evaluations are well underway. Both adult teams of *Flowers on a River* and the Ellsworth Kelly exhibit are conducting their team evaluations. The three Highlights Tour evaluations that were scheduled this fall are being arranged.
- Student tour evaluations are being scheduled, working around the touring calendar, docents on trips, illnesses, etc. At this time 7 out of 32 have been completed. Only 25 more to go!
- The 3-minute evaluations of the Provisionals are scheduled for Wednesday, November 29. Three teams of evaluators are scheduled for evaluations from 11:00 – 1:30 on that day.
- Irene expressed her gratitude for everyone who is volunteering to complete evaluations. She was also heartened by the comments of many docents who look forward to the

feedback to improve their tours. Our Docent Council continues to be proud of its high standards and dedication to providing the best tours for the visiting public through this process.

Webmaster: Gretel Rothrock

- Gretel reported that she and Mike are looking to stream-line the webmaster position. In January, the position will be advertised amongst the docents and needed skills will be acknowledged in *La Muse*. They are looking for more of a team approach so that all of the work doesn't fall on one person, nor does only one person know how to update the website.
- Mike is working with Teda to update the By-Laws on the website as well as updating the job descriptions of the Board.
- A discussion followed as to getting timely information to the webmaster, and other docents, regarding de-installations and installations from the curators. Patsy let us know that there is only goodwill on everyone's part, but the curators like to be very careful about releasing information about the exhibits until they are certain what's going to be shown. Amada may be putting together a new communication system to facilitate communication between all interested parties.
- Gretel asked to speak with the Adult and Student Teams chairs to discuss some minor issues with formatting so that they appear the same on the website.

Nominations Chair: Shirley Waxman - absent

- No report

Provisional Class: Patty Santiago

- The Provisional class is currently at 20. Liz Salacci decided to drop the class due to the long commute and personal obligations.
- The Provisional class has been studying the Elements of Art and Principles of Design. The class also explored different art mediums.
- Much time has been devoted to the preparation of the Three Minute Talk. Evaluations will take place Wednesday, November 29th beginning at 11:00 a.m. The Provisionals met with their mentors a few weeks ago and got some good preliminary feedback and made important connections. They will each do a "mock" evaluation this week with Barbara, Cindy and Patty listening to their talks.
- The Provisionals have also begun the process of selecting artworks for their research papers under the guidance of the Research Chair, Barbara Ross.
- At the conclusion of the Three Minute Talk evaluations, the class will begin to discuss student touring. The Provisionals will be assigned the task of observing a student tour at that time. Hopefully, they will be able to observe at least one student tour by the end of January.
-A brief discussion was held about how to schedule these observations. Irene suggested that instead of just showing up on a student touring day that the team leader be notified that there will be a docent, or a few docents, observing their team members that day. It was suggested that if someone was being evaluated the Provisional could observe a different member of the team.

Department of Education: Patsy Hicks

- Patsy thanked everyone for doing so well this fall adapting to busy touring schedules and a full museum. She has heard snippets of tours as she moves about the museum, and what she has heard sounds good. She also encouraged us to continue to be flexible and understanding as new programs and ways of doing things are tried out.
- Patsy highlighted several upcoming events and exhibits. Some of them include:
 - The Doors Unhinged: John Densmore in Conversation with Andrew Winer* – Thursday, November 16 at 5:30 p.m.
 - William Wegman: An Introduction to His Art – Sunday, November 19, 2023 11:00 a.m.
 - The PBS documentary *América Tropical – The Martyr Mural of Siqueiros* is on YouTube and will also air on PBS.
 - There will be a Chinese Music performance in January to enhance the *Flowers on a River* exhibit.
 - James' exhibit *Made by Hand/Born Digital* – March 3-July 21, 2024
- A family guide for the Ellsworth Kelly exhibit is forthcoming. It may be of interest to the docents as it gives some questions parents might use to guide their children through the exhibit.
- The Gala event this Wednesday is the first major big event since COVID. It's also a nice way to present Amada to the public. Ridley-Tree will be closed Tuesday-Thursday in order to prepare for and to take down the event.

4. Adjournment:

Teda adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

There will be no Board meeting on Monday, December 11, 2023 due to the Holiday Party that afternoon-evening. However, **November reports should be completed as usual and emailed to the entire Board in lieu of the meeting.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Anderson
Secretary, SBMA Docent Council Board