

SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF ART

Docent Council Board Meeting Minutes

October 9, 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; Nicola Ghersen, Student Team Co-Chair; Barbara Ross, Research; Christine Holland, Evaluations Co-Chair; Irene Stone, Evaluations Co-Chair; Gretel Rothrock, Webmaster

In Attendance: Patsy Hicks, Director of Education

Not In Attendance: Patty Santiago, Coordinator of Docent Programs; Andrew Baker, Student Team Co-Chair

1. **Call to order:** President Teda Pilcher called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
Action Item: A motion to approve the Board minutes of the June 14, 2023 meeting was made by Christine and seconded by Denise. The minutes were unanimously approved.
3. **Board Reports:**
President's Report –Teda Pilcher
 - Teda thanked everyone for accommodating the change of day and place to Mondays at 9:30 a.m. in the Family Resource Center for our Board meetings this year. It is much appreciated.
 - Tommie Rae, Pattie Firestone, and Teda worked this summer to review the budget. Balancing the budget is not an easy task and an increase in dues will be expected for everyone (Sustainers included) - possibly as soon as next year. We are encouraged to pay attention to the budget reports this year so we can make an informed decision as we contemplate a change in dues. The long-standing docents in attendance felt it has been more than 15 years since dues have increased.
 - Teda followed up on the discussion we began in June about aligning our touring year with the museum's fiscal year. It was a unanimous decision to make this change. Denise moved and Christine seconded the motion. The motion read, "We move to change the Docent touring calendar to start on July 1 and run through June 30 (retroactive to July 1, 2023) to align with the museum's fiscal year." Teda will present this motion to the Docent Council at our October 18th meeting so this change will be integrated into our By-Laws.
 - Pattie Firestone also pointed out that some of the changes that were made during COVID have not been integrated into the By-Laws either. It was suggested that she create one document to reflect the changes she referred to in order to present them to the Council as well.

Vice-President's Report – Pattie Firestone

- Pattie presented Nicola with her 10-year pin in honor of her service to the museum.
- Pattie spoke about the enriching events and trips she is planning for the year. They include the following:

Lotusland Tour – Thursday Oct. 19 at 1:30-3:30pm – Tour is limited to 20 docents, carpooling or park at Shirley Waxman's. I have paid \$600 (half). Members of Lotusland contact Lotusland directly: (805) 618-2283 or alee@lotusland.org. Contact Pattie.Firestone@gmail.com to reserve your place. Pay Pattie Firestone by \$60 check or Venmo at the Oct. 18 Docent Council Meeting. Two Provisional Docents in the Provisional Class are also docents at Lotusland and will lead our tour – Mike & Sandy.

Holiday Party – December 11, 2023 from 4-7pm? – suggestions of location from the Board meeting?

January 31 – The Broad & MOCA– 2.25hr each way. Cost and transportation TBA. I plan to get sign-ups in November to see if we should rent transportation or not. The Broad wants to charge \$50 per person to have a docent led tour. Could I ask one of our docents to lead our group? Other ideas?

April 14 – 18 – Washington, DC

Book your own airline flights ASAP. Rooms are reserved at the [Cosmos Club](#) 2 blocks from Dupont Circle Metro and next door to the [Phillips Collection](#) (with Bonnard and Cezanne exhibitions scheduled for that time). To reserve rooms, call 202-387-7783 or email fd@cosmosclub.org. Mention you wish to book in the “**SBMA Docent Group**” block (10 rooms) to get these discounted rates until March 14th. Breakfast included prices range \$218-\$388 (plus 16% taxes) depending on size and location in or next to the historic building. I'm planning one group morning visit per day and only one dinner together. You are encouraged to self-organize the rest of your time. Check the SBMA Docent website for many other museums, historic sites and theatres to visit in DC and make your own reservations.

- Monday - [National Gallery](#)
- Tuesday - [Glenstone Museum](#) van to Potomac, MD, art from 1950 - present, indoor & outdoor
- Wednesday – [National Museum of African American History & Culture](#)
- Thursday - [Freer Gallery](#), & [Sackler Gallery](#). (Including Korean artist Park Chan-kyong and James McNeill Whistler: Streetscapes, Urban Change)
- There is an extensive list of museum in the DC area to help our group self-organize their afternoons. All of these museums have places to have lunch. I can make reservations for dinners in DC but I want to give the group time to make individual plans if they want.

Please feel free to contact Pattie with any suggestions or recommendations.

Department of Education: Patsy Hicks

- Patsy reiterated her support of the logical decision for us to change the touring calendar to coincide with the museum's fiscal calendar.

- Any requests for programming/finances should go through Patsy during this time since we currently have a temporary CFO.
- James has agreed to do 3 conversations about Contemporary art – Nov. 1, 8, 15 - time will vary. The talks will be in the Luria Activity Center and in the galleries. Kandy Luria (Nov. 15 talk) is eager to share her new knowledge as well.
- Charlie has also agreed to do a walk-through of the Ellsworth Kelly exhibit with the touring team.
- There was some confusion about the Fridays in Focus tours and how they impacted the 11:30 Highlights Tours. Going forward, it is important for the lines of communication to be open between the Docent(s) doing the Fridays in Focus tour and the Docent doing the 11:30 Highlights Tour.
- Patsy reported that there is a lot of programming going on at the museum and it's "inspiring, heartening, and gratifying" to see so many enjoying the museum and the art found within it.

Secretary's Report - Cindy Anderson

- Thanked everyone for sending their reports to her before the Board meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Tommie Rae Barnett

- The Savings account balance with additional interest of \$9.15 since June 30, 2023 is currently \$10,383.96. The Checking account balance as of October 1, 2023 is \$7,007.21.
- Total Docent dues for 2023-2024 collected as of October 9, 2023 is \$3,770 of the \$4,200 budgeted before the deposit of the Provisional dues. The budget will be balanced once 13/21 Provisionals pay their dues.
- All Docents, including the Provisionals, should have their dues paid by the end of October in order to be in the Docent Directory. Tommie Rae and Mary Ellen will connect with current Docents who haven't paid yet, and Cindy/Barbara/Patty will let the Provisionals know about paying their dues.

Membership Report: Mary Ellen Alden

- There are currently 61 Active Members – Doug McElwain returned to Active Status from Sustaining, and Ralph Wilson returned from his Leave of Absence last year.
- There are 51 Sustaining Members. Of these, 6 went from Active to Sustaining over the course of the summer (Dewhirst, Duncan, El Khazen, Hoffman, Howsam, Padgett). 5 of the 51 Sustaining Docents have not paid their dues (some for several years). In spite of many attempts to contact them, they have not given any indication of their desire to remain part of the Docent Council. Patty Santiago is planning on removing them from the Sustaining Roster this year.
- There is still some confusion among docents about recording tour hours vs research hours. Mary Ellen will remind them about the distinction so that actual tour hours can be tracked. Teda may put an article in La Muse to help clarify the issue as well. Mary Ellen will keep an eye on the hours so that if they seem a bit inflated, they may be in the incorrect category of hours tracked. Provisionals have their own sheet which is in the classroom where they will keep track of their touring and research hours each month.

Adult Teams: Susan Lowe

- Susan reported that there is still some confusion about where to write your tour information in the Red Book. It was suggested that the pages for previous months be removed from the book so that the sheets for the current month are easier to find.
- There was a lot of activity this summer and some juggling of teams occurred as a few new Actives joined our ranks, but everything seems to be set for the year and is running smoothly.
- The reinstatement of the 11:30 tour time on Fridays has proven effective. With the influx of a large class of new Actives, and the prospect of another large graduating class of docents next spring, it was felt that keeping the 11:30 touring time was a good idea so that there are enough tours for docents to give. One concern, that was already discussed in the minutes, was the conflict between a Fridays Focus tour and the 11:30 Highlights Tour. Again, communicating with each of the docents involved should help alleviate any surprises and help coordinate logistics as to where the groups may or may not intersect.
- Here are the statistics for the summer:

	<u>Highlights</u>	<u>James Castle</u>	<u>Ten Talks</u>	<u>Special Requests</u>
<u>July</u>				
# Tours Scheduled	28	11	2	5
# Tours Reported	28	11	1	5
# Attendees	178	101	6	37
Zero Attendance	2	0	0	0
Average Attendance	6.4	9.8	6	7.4
<u>August</u>				
# Tours Scheduled	29	10	2	5
# Tours Reported	29	10	2	5
# Attendees	180	57	24	24
Zero Attendance	1	0	0	0
Average Attendance	6.2	5.7	12	4.8
<u>September</u>				
# Tours Scheduled	33	7	1	4
# Tours Reported	33	7	1	4
# Attendees	166	57	15	23
Zero Attendance	3	0	0	0
Average Attendance	5	8.1	15	5.8

Student Teams: Nicola Ghersen

- Nicola reported on the success of the “Student Touring Boost for Fall and Beyond” meeting she and Andrew held on September 12 for all student team members. They went over different types of tours, touring logistics and other topics such as dealing with common behavior problems, the theme of the Artful Making project, and other relevant topics. Patty Santiago, Itoko Maeno, Molly Kemper, Andrew and Nicola all addressed the student touring docents at the meeting. After the presentations, the docents were divided into teams and they went into the galleries and had a chance to practice talking about their favorite piece to use with students. One docent was assigned to be a “disruptive” student and randomly displayed unwanted behavior so docents could practice responding

quickly and effectively to the disruption. In addition, other docents provided valuable feedback about each other's presentations. They are considering doing more activities together throughout the year.

- Fall student tours began on October 3rd, and it was reported that the student touring calendar is quite full already this year. The Friday touring team looks forward to updates as to how they can be involved while details of the new Fridays in Focus tours are established. Friday touring docents due for an evaluation have been told that these evaluations may have to wait for the time being since there aren't many currently scheduled. Nicola suggested that perhaps some Friday team members could fill in on other touring days, and special requests for Friday tours so that they can get their evaluations done sooner than later. Nicola wondered if some of the new actives could be evaluated on their student tours during the summer camp tours associated with the museum. Something to consider for next year.
- Student team leaders were reminded to keep a roster of who is touring to be sure everyone is getting a chance and fulfilling their responsibility to tour on the days they have signed up to tour.
- Waters and granola bars were purchased for the "Student Touring Boost". Tommie Rae let us know that anything over \$50 needs approval before reimbursement is issued.

Research: Barbara Ross

- Barbara is happy to be part of our Board and hopes to inspire many of our docents to write a research paper on pieces that currently are exhibited but do not have a paper written about them. Her plan is to start in the Ridley Tree gallery, then move to Preston Morton, the Asian galleries, and Ludington Court to determine what pieces need papers. There are many papers that were written in the 1980s with authors who are not familiar, but last year's class added 19 new papers to our collection. We should have another 21 papers from the new Provisional class this winter.
- Another focus Barbara intends to pursue is to submit an article in La Muse each month. October's article introduced the research process and included a listing of art in Ridley Tree that needs research.
- Another important responsibility of the Research chair is to review and edit all research paper submissions before entering them into the Docent website database.
- See the attached report for the lists of art needing research in Ridley Tree and Preston Morton. Please note that pieces on loan from the Hammer have been included because they are popular choices for Highlights Tours and hopefully, they will become permanent art in our collection in the future.

Evaluations: Irene Stone

- There will be 35 adult tour evaluations scheduled, including 5 Highlights tours, and 33 student team evaluations. Irene expressed how grateful she and Christine are for all those who have volunteered to be new evaluators this year. There are 12 evaluators for the adult teams and 13 evaluators for the student teams. They have met with both team leaders to review the procedures and request their assistance as the evaluation dates are established. For some adult teams, the leader will organize the entire team to evaluate each other. In others, the selected evaluators will arrange the evaluations. The student

team leaders have also agreed to help schedule the team so that new docents can be evaluated on their first or second tour, as they have done in the past.

- Christine and Irene have met with the evaluators to distribute assignments and discuss protocol. They have stressed with both evaluators and those being evaluated, that this peer review process is a learning process for both members. Evaluations on the first or second tour for new docents on the adult and student teams is to provide feedback early in the touring year to make their tours as strong as possible. They reiterated that the goal of evaluations is to ensure that our tours are factually correct, fresh, well balanced, interesting, and object oriented. Questioning techniques used in Student tours will be an additional area of focus provided for their feedback.
- There is one glitch at this time. Both Wednesday and Friday student teams have few to no tours assigned to them right now. Evaluations for these teams may need to wait until January.
- Successes and Concerns – The Docent Council takes pride in our evaluation program. We were reminded about the excellence our evaluation process represents, and the recognition it received at the Washington D.C. National Symposium a few years ago when several of our docents presented our evaluation process in one of the sessions. Team leaders were given High Five Touring Tips among other tips for successful touring. We all want to emphasize the positive spirit in which our evaluations are meant to be given and received. There seemed to be a lot of stress, and some push-back in a few rare cases, during the evaluations of the past Provisional class. Presenting the evaluations as a “coaching” opportunity may be a way to frame the evaluation. We are all here to learn, grow, and make our tours the best they can be. We also discussed the fact that some of the last Provisional class graduated with “pending” on their diploma, because they had not completed their final evaluation before graduation. This was an unusual situation that was posed at the end of the year: a family death, a serious injury to a family member, a unique travel opportunity, etc. which led to several Provisionals to put off their final evaluation until after graduation. It was noted that this was an unusual set of circumstances, however, it was also noted that the Provisionals should be held accountable for their attendance.

Webmaster: Gretel Rothrock

- Gretel thanked the Adult and Student team leaders for getting their touring calendars to her.
- Gretel mentioned that the By-Laws need to be changed to reflect the current job description for the webmaster. Talk of getting more help was discussed. Putting an announcement in La Muse to find someone who is tech savvy might prove effective.

Nominations Chair: Shirley Waxman

- No report

Provisional Class: Cindy Anderson read the report in Patty Santiago’s absence

- The Provisional docent class began September 20th with 22 participants. Since then, there has been one drop (due to too long of a commute), so the current number is 21.
- The Provisionals have been observing Highlights tours and learning about the basics of touring. They have also begun studying the elements of art. Their bios were published in

the October issue of La Muse. They are another impressive group of people that we are fortunate to have join our ranks.

4. Adjournment:

Susan moved to adjourn the meeting, and Christine seconded the motion. Teda adjourned the meeting at 11:28 a.m.

Our next meeting will be Monday, November 13, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the Family Resource Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Anderson
Secretary, SBMA Docent Council Board