



Grant County Art Guild - Our History

The Grant County Art Guild was formed in 1968. A group of 35 local artists had gotten together to put on an Art Show for Fourth of July at the Silver City Woman's Club. It was such a success that they decided that there was a need for a local art group. They met at the Pioneer Antique and Art Gallery on Pinos Altos Road the first week in August to form the Grant

County Art Guild. The Guild was formed to **PROVIDE A COMMON BOND BETWEEN PEOPLES SHARING THE SAME COMMON INTEREST IN FINE ARTS AND CRAFTS.** At the next meeting on August 28, 1968, the meeting date was set for 7:00PM on the 2nd Friday of each month. Each meeting contained an instructional program and a Critique of chosen paintings. The first elected officers were: President - Barbara White; Vice-President - Ruben Gonzales; Secretary - Roberta Ramsey; Treasurer - Chase Webb; Public Relations - Ray White; Parliamentarian - Joe Goforth; Directors - Walter Toy, Fortunato Torres, Joyce Brewer, and Frances Biebelle. Members mentioned in the minutes of the first year were: Elwa Estes, Belva Bradd, Mary Gage, Carolyn Cann, Jo Bounds, Mary Phifer, Alta Cloudt, Lorena Haston, Fern Livermore, Ruth McKinney, Irene Key, Arlene Foster, Marvynne Wygant, Helen Himes, Mrs. E.R. Williams, Jimmie De Braal, Becky Garcia, and Virginia Croom.

The Fourth of July Exhibit for 1969 was well attended and the annual MARCH Exhibit at the Silver City Public Library was started. Exhibits would continue to be held at local businesses around town and an ARTIST OF THE MONTH Exhibit would be set up in 1971 at the Grant County Bank (now Bank of America). ART IN THE PARK was started in 1974.

A local contractor, Frank Tatsch, had purchased and rebuilt the old Methodist Church in Pinos Altos and offered the use of the premises to the Grant County Art Guild for use as an art gallery in exchange for watching over the building. The PINOS ALTOS CHURCH GALLERY opened its doors in May of 1975 with the public able to watch artists at work in the MEET THE ARTIST program. The Gallery would be open each Saturday and Sunday through the summer with 2 artists showing each weekend.

The Grant County Art Guild has been active in the community also. An ART scholarship at WNMU was established in 1976 for an art major. During the summer months, one Saturday each month, children's art classes would be held in Gough Park from 9-12. The Guild donated \$250.00 to help build the pavilion in the park. In 1977 the Junior Art Guild was formed, held monthly meetings with art projects, and had Artist of the Month exhibits at McDonalds.

Through the years, the Guild has donated ART BOOKS to the Silver City Public Library in memory of deceased members (Sometimes also parents and spouses.). In 1980 awards were established to reward members for their participation: ARTIST OF THE YEAR Award and the MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD.

In 1986, in cooperation with Mr. Tatsch, the Purchase Prize Award Exhibit was begun to establish a permanent exhibit in the Church Gallery. Artists living in New Mexico were invited to enter and have their pictures purchased for the Gallery. Participation by the public was encouraged a few years later by the Most Popular award. It is still our largest project with visits by the public being our most important support.