

From The Foundation Board President & Executive Director

Letter from the Board President

Greetings!

As we began 2026 the Rock School Arts Foundation galleries are full of wonderful art created by talented artists. RSAF may be in a small town, but our galleries are always full of interesting art. We strive to have exhibits that are inspirational and thought provoking.

Not only are we interested in providing visual art, RSAF also sponsors Opera Carolina shows for the Valdese Elementary School and Homeschool students. For many, this is their first exposure to opera.

RSAF offers many different workshops for adults, from knitting to card making. We offer after-school classes and camps for kindergarten to fifth grade.

Rock School Arts Foundation is busy and strives to provide a wide variety of visual and performing art.

I hope to see you in our galleries soon.

ALAN

G. Alan Griffin
Rock School Arts Foundation, President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alan Griffin, *President*

Jenna Hazlett, *Vice President*

Helen Tueffel, *Secretary* Kristina Anthony, *Treasurer*
Patricia Deaton Jana Farris Linda Harvey Brenda Lyday
Ann Mullis Leslie Rostan Kathi Yarnall

The Rock School Arts Foundation's mission is to offer new and exciting exhibitions, programs and art education for adults and children; to serve as a cultural destination for tourists and visitors; and a resource for our local art communities. PLEASE renew your membership or become a member today!

The RSAF Endowment Fund is a permanent fund established with the Community Foundation of Burke County (CFBC), which makes quarterly grants to RSAF in support of our Mission. Please consider contributing generously to the CFBC fund and be sure to write "for benefit of RSAF" on the memo line.

Letter from the Executive Director

Greetings Arts Friends,

As you read through our 2026 newsletter filled with the events of 2025, I hope you see the dedication and love the foundation has for the artists, the arts community, and the visitors to the galleries and studio.

I am excited to see what the coming year will bring and honored to have been involved with the exhibits and events of 2025.

I thoroughly enjoy working as the executive director of this foundation. It still amazes me that I get to work with the amazing arts enthusiasts that make up our Board of Directors (a board that helps me add new arts experience and enhance existing events), the women in the Community Affairs and Tourism office, the artists, instructors and all involved who make our galleries and studio a success at the Old Rock School.

Rock School Arts Foundation, though small in comparison to some non-profits in the area, continues to be a vital part of the arts community. As I am sure it will continue to be throughout the coming year.

The successes of 2025 include:

- 5 Exhibitions and Receptions
- Art Classes and Workshops
- Annual Open Art Competition
- Artists in the Waldensian Room
- Middle and High School Art Student Competition and Exhibition
- Children's Opera by Opera Carolina Theater
Performed for Valdese Elementary & Homeschool Students
- Wednesday Figure Drawing Class
Hickory Museum of Art sponsored event
- Open Studio Thursdays
- Valdese Plein Air Festival

The events in 2025 were not only well attended, but enjoyable, rewarding and satisfying for everyone, especially me.

As we begin the schedule for 2026, I encourage you to visit the website, rockschoolartgalleries.com, throughout the year to see each unique art exhibition as well as the schedule for upcoming events and workshops.



Sharon Bowman, Executive Director, RSAF

Rock School Arts Foundation - 2025 Supporting Members

Individual

Andrew Atkin
Morris Baker
Jane Best
Richard Bush
Nancy Clausen
Missy Cleveland
Deborah Collins
Patricia Deaton
Stephen Eaker
Lucy Folger
Helen Gibbs
Lynn Graham
Linda M. Greenfield
Marcia Hill
Ella Huffman

Family

Mark Kastner
Kathy Kmonicek
Frank Mosca
Lonny McSherley
Susan Powers
Charles E. Smith
Judy Rider
Carol Turner
Elsie M. Whisenant
Alan Whitener
Joann Wilfong
Karen Yost

Sponsor

Huldah Bewley
Wendi & Karl Byas
Kat Cannelongo
Ann & Hugh Blackwell
Claudia Bujold
Richard Bush
Charles & Lori Clark
Judy Keever
Meredith Janseen
Margery Johnson
Stephan J. & Rosemary E. Ohnesorge
Ken & Marilee Stettler
Dr. Robert & Susan Stevenson
Judy Whitener
Kate Worm
Kathi Yarnall

Patron

Doris Burris
Joan E. Gardner
Alan & Lu Griffin
Dr. Allen & Barry Huffman
Phyllis G. Jacumin
Dr. John & Laura Lafferty
Dr. Edgar & Emily Lane III
Rose & Will Mueller
Steve & Ann Mullis
Jann Reese-LeFevers
Marsha Riddle
Melissa & Randy Smith
Eugenia Welch

Sustainer

Michael & Ann-Mari Alexander
Kristina & Craig Anthony
Chip & Tammy Black
Gregory Huffman
Marie & Marc Mitchell

Benefactor

Paul Deaton
James & Elizabeth Furr
Glenn & Linda Harvey
James & Linda Rostan
John & Janice Rostan
Dianne Searcy

Corporate/Club

Brinkley Insurance Agency Inc.
Heritage Funeral Service
& Crematory, Inc

Grants

Burke Arts Council
Grassroots Grant
Town of Valdese
The Community Foundation of
Burke County

Endowment

Pilot Club of Valdese
Linda Rostan
Kathi Yarnall
Stephan J. & Rosemary E.
Ohnesorge
Kathy Oravec

Please review the Foundation's Mission & Endowment Fund on the front cover & consider donating generously to support our 2026 programs.

Membership Rates

Individual.....\$20
Family.....\$35
Sponsor.....\$50
Patron.....\$100
Sustainer.....\$250
Benefactor.....\$500 & up

Yes, I would like to become a RSAF member

Yes, I would like to contribute \$_____ to the RSAF Endowment Fund

Please provide the following information and return your contribution to:

ROCK SCHOOL ARTS FOUNDATION, P.O. Box 837, Valdese, NC 28690

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE: _____

2025 OPEN ART COMPETITION -

Thank you to OAC Judge - Mary Anne Redding



First Prize:
Preeti P. Happer



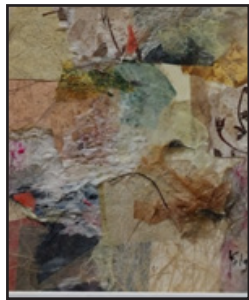
Second Prize:
Kate Worm



Third Prize:
Judy Whitener



People's Choice:
Diana Peeler



Honorable Mention
Lucy Folger



Honorable Mention
Eddie Kent Tallent



Honorable Mention
Summer Lail



Honorable Mention
Brenda Lyday



Honorable Mention
Charles E. Smith



Honorable Mention
Karen Yost

PLEIN AIR FEST

The Rock School Arts Foundation hosted the annual Valdese Plein Air Fest in September. Prior to the event, a workshop was taught by Manny A. Maldonado that welcomed artists unfamiliar with plein air techniques and those who needed a refresher. Maldonado also participated in the competition and won the People's Choice award. Entries judged by Kathy Oravec.

Twenty-three artists participated and these artists painted attractions all over Valdese. The event was a success, concluding with a public reception & wet sale. First Place Winner was Todd Derr, Second Place Winner was Matt Levine, and Third Place Winner was Maggie Watkins.



Winner: "
Todd Derr of Cleveland, TN

2025 CHILDREN'S OPERA

The Rock School Arts Foundation is happy to report that there will be two live performances of a Children's Opera in the Rock School Auditorium in 2026. The opera scheduled for 2025 had to be postponed to April this year. Carolina Opera Xpress with their highly trained singers will delight the students of Valdese Elementary School and Homeschool groups with "A Magic Flute". A Q&A session will follow each performance. This event was made possible by our loyal RSAF supporters and the Grassroots Art Program Subgrant/Burke Art Council. It is funded by NC Arts.



OPEN STUDIO

Open Studio is a time the Foundation offers the public. Rock School Arts Foundation's Studio 101 is open to anyone wanting a place to bring your supplies to create and enjoy other artists' company. Open Studio is held on Thursdays from 11am to 3pm.



Artists in the Waldensian Room

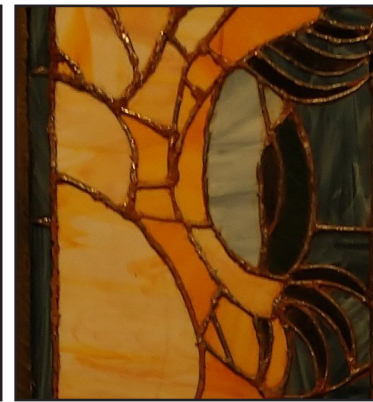
Eight local artists participated in a demonstration and sale during the 2025 Waldensian Festival. Artistic techniques included painting, books, animal portraits, and jewelry.

A.S.A. CLASSES

Instructors in the Spring and Fall Kindergarten through fifth grade after school art classes welcomed 25 students.



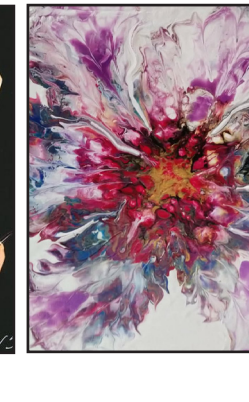
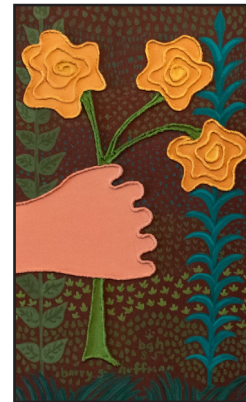
2025 ARTISTS' EXHIBITIONS



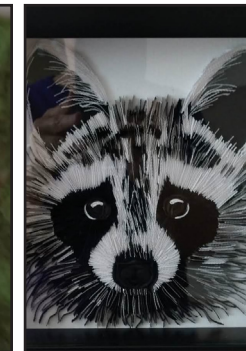
January 17 – February 14
Steve Brooks | Danny Bernard



February 28 – March 28
Lyudmila Tomova Smith | Derrick Chalfant | Lisa Dubs

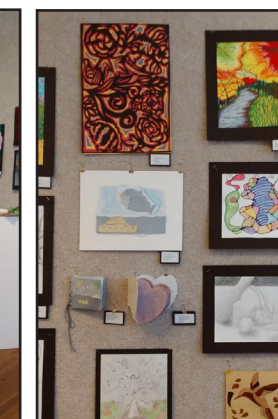
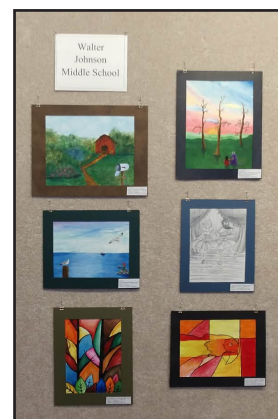


June 6 - July 4
Missy Cleveland | Tyler Stephens | Angie Micol



April 18 - May 16
Barry Huffman | Piedmont Painters

September 26 - October 24
DeDe Starnes | Beth Oczkowski | Millie Hefner



November 15 - December 31
RSAF Middle & High School Exhibition & Competition

ARTIST SUPPORT GRANT

RSAF again participated in the Artist Support Grant allocation process. Grants were awarded to artists in Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Iredell and McDowell Counties to advance their artistic levels. Funding for the grants is provided by Regional Arts Councils and the RSAF, with funds from the NC Arts Council.

