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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**First Friday on Aug. 4 at the Ocean City Center for the
Arts**

is also a celebratory block and birthday party

OCEAN CITY, MD — July 27, 2023 — The Art League of Ocean City invites the public to an expanded First Friday opening reception that includes a first-ever neighborhood block party and a celebration of the Art League's 60th birthday. The event is Aug. 4, 2023, 5-7 p.m. at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 502 94th St. bayside. Admission is free.

"This is a golden opportunity to come out and meet your neighbors at our first-ever combination First Friday, block party, and birthday party," Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League, said. "You'll enjoy a big 60th birthday cake, live music, new art exhibits, hors d'oeuvres, complimentary refreshments, book signings, artisan offerings, raffles, and the chance to participate in a community mural. We invite everyone to join us."

First Friday will spill into the bayfront courtyard of the Arts Center. Area businesses will provide hors d'oeuvres for the event, including Lombardi's, Blue Fish, Coffee Beanery, and Kona Ice. PKS Investments is sponsoring complimentary beverages. David Smith and Robert Johnson will demonstrate pottery throwing techniques.

The Thaler Gallery hosts an exhibition by three Eastern Shore artists who are masters of realism. The show entitled "True to Life: Contemporary Realism"

features the work of Megan Burak-Lowe of West Ocean City, Md., Gordon Inyard of Millville, De., and John Schisler of Georgetown, De.

Megan Burak-Lowe is a contemporary realist artist working mostly in oil. A graduate of Stephen Decatur High School and Salisbury University, she has won multiple awards in juried shows and galleries around Maryland, New York, and Washington, D.C. Several of her pieces have been purchased by Salisbury University as part of their permanent collection. Her inspiration is drawn from her emotions and the world as she sees it.

Gordon Inyard, a graduate of the State University of New York, creates paintings of vintage diners and other roadside structures and signs. He has exhibited and sold work in various galleries in New York, New Mexico, and California. Since moving to Delaware, he continues to paint similar indigenous images such as the diner in Seaford, De. and the Flamingo Motel in Ocean City. His preference is to use acrylic paint for its versatility.

John Schisler was born in Baltimore and began painting at the Conrad Miller Studio in Fells Point at the age of 17 where he began using Maroger mediums and the techniques of the Dutch Masters. He learned to make and use “black oil,” a basis for the mediums of such masters as Titian, Rubens, and Rembrandt. In 2011, John began to pursue a full-time career in art and by 2020 was juried into Plein Air Easton, one of the most prestigious outdoor painting events in the country.

The annual Beverly Bassford Memorial Juried Group Show continues in The Sisson Galleria until Aug. 10, when the gallery will switch over to the Artists Paint OC annual exhibit.

The Spotlight Gallery opens a show by three local artists honoring the August White Marlin Open fishing tournament. Joanne Guilfoil of Selbyville, De., a retired Professor Emeritus, completed paintings while writing the 50-year history of the White Marlin Open, a book with a planned release in fall 2023, and prints of these paintings will be on exhibition.

Jim Motsko will be exhibiting photos taken during the WMO. He has lived in Ocean City full time since 1970 and is the founder and president of the fishing

tournament. While attending the University of Maryland College Park, he worked as a fishing boat mate in Ocean City and has been in the real estate sales business since 1970.

Lisa Marie Penn of Ocean Pines, Md. studied at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore and in 2005 opened 2 Hot Art Chicks Gallery in her hometown neighborhood of Hampden. She currently works as a full-time commission artist out of her home studio and teaches Painted Screen Workshops with the goal of passing down this traditional Baltimore art form.

Erika Forsythe of Salisbury, Md. is the Studio E artist for August. A fine art photographer, her career includes touring on the national junior tennis circuit, hosting a CNN Headline News show, and farming raspberries to become a certified jam artisan. Georgia Tech, her alma mater, named her as one of the university's greatest African American Scholar-Athletes of all time. Forsythe intends for her photos to serve as moments of Zen.

Marisa Longo of West Ocean City, Md. is the Artisan in Residence for August. Just Tree Creations is the marriage of art & jewelry that developed from many years at Glitter & Gold, the artist's former location on the Ocean City Boardwalk. Longo's interest in jewelry is the organic nature of the many combinations of precious metals, genuine stones & shells.

The Staircase Gallery opens a new six-month show by a mother and daughter team. Laura Mayer Kelley of Salisbury, MD. changed course to focus on painting after a three-decade career in medicine and degrees from Harvard University and Emory University School of Medicine. Daughter L. Morgan Kelley grew up in Salisbury inspired by her grandfather who was a blacksmith and now teaches elementary art and science in Austin, Tx.

Art shows at the Art League's satellite galleries continue through August.

Debbi Dean of Berlin, Md. exhibits her work at the Coffee Beanery on 94th St. and Coastal Hwy. Barbara Stepura of White Plains, Md. shows her paintings in the Princess Royale lobby, 9100 Coastal Hwy.

The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting artistic expression and appreciation for the creative arts in our

community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs, and community art projects. Funding is provided in part by the Worcester County Arts Council, Maryland State Arts Council, and the National Endowment of the Arts, organizations dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.

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