



Wild Art News

Winter 2024



Notes from the Editor

Winter greetings to all of you! I hope that you have been having an inspiring and productive winter. Please enjoy the postcards from my collection.

If you are interested in learning more about history, culture, literature, travel or art from the comfort of your own home, I recommend Smithsonian Associates at <https://smithsonianassociates.org/ticketing/> (accessed 2/6/24). The lectures are given by experts in their respective fields, often based on their recently published books. The cost of sessions is reasonable, especially if you become a member. My personal favorites are the Studio Art courses. (<https://smithsonianassociates.org/ticketing/studio-arts/>, accessed 2/6/24)

Please let me know any resources that you use that would be helpful to other member of Indiana Wildlife Artists so that I can feature them in a future issue of *Wild Art News*.

Sara

Winter 2024 IWA President's Message

Not being a native Hoosier, I was blessed to find myself situated near two state parks that have become near and dear to me – Turkey Run and Shades. Both parks have many special features and I love to hike in both of them – especially when they are less crowded. Because I enjoy these two parks so much, I have become involved in the group Friends of Turkey Run and Shades States Parks. This group exists to enhance the programs and work to help make both parks beautiful natural areas.

The main fund-raiser for the Friends group each year is helping run the Eagles in Flight event at Turkey Run in January. We hold a silent auction during the weekend which has become a favorite activity for event participants. During Covid, we arranged to have the auction online and it has worked so well we continue to do it that way. I have worked on the auction committee for many years and have been co-chair for the last two years.

If you haven't heard of Eagles in Flight, I would encourage you to look into attending it sometime. Besides for the obvious activities focusing on American Bald Eagles, there are programs on birds of prey, owls and bird banding. Both weekend mornings find us waiting on a bridge at dawn in all kinds of weather to see eagles flying from their nesting area to where they fish during the day. There are also trips to nesting sites and owl hikes in the evening. The programs are based at the Turkey Run Inn. It's a fun and informative weekend for both adults and children.

Marianne, Marianne Darling Ballenger, President, Indiana Wildlife Artists



American Bald Eagle from the Eagles in Flight program.



Mark Booth with feathered friend, a peregrine falcon. Mark gives an excellent presentation on Birds of Prey. Co-chairs for Eagles in Flight 2024, Deb Foxworthy and Marianne Ballenger, take a break from the activities.

Speaking of eagles, here is Spirit, the eagle that my husband sponsors for me as my Christmas present every year. She was hatched at John Ball Zoo, in my hometown of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and now resides at the Raptor Rehabilitation Center of Kentucky, Inc. (RROKI). For my birthday, he sponsors an owl named Soren, also at RROKI, for whom I wrote the following tanka that is now part of my MFA thesis. Laugh and enjoy!

The Best Gift Ever (A Tanka)

I don't like birthdays
obligatory presents
more stuff I don't need
Sponsor an owl for me
his heart-shaped face is my gift



Featured IWA Member Jennifer Moore Smith

Please meet Jennifer Moore Smith. Jenny thinks that she has been a member of Indiana Wildlife Artists (IWA) since 2015. The most important influences on her artwork have been photographers for National Geographic as well as Ansel Adams, Georgia O'Keeffe and the Impressionist painters.

Jenny's medium is photography. She notes that she only knows digital photography and has no true experience with film or use of a dark room for development. However, she has invested much time in learning how to photograph (being self-taught) and how to use digital editing techniques. Jenny realizes that the "GREAT OUTDOORS" is truly a sanctuary for her. She finds that going out to "shoot" reduces stress, fills her soul with joy and keeps her perspective (attitude) in check.

Jenny finds inspiration from - and is motivated to create - by nature (light, details, colors, shapes). Anywhere outside including weather events and travel experiences. She will look at architecture or culture (photojournalism) subjects in addition to plants, animals, etc. Her artistic style has changed over time as she has become more aware of what motivates her.

Indicators of success for Jenny include:

- personal satisfaction from a photoshoot;
- good feelings when her work is accepted in juried shows. Jenny notes that, of course, it also feels good to win an award, but the juried acceptance is more valuable to her;
- being asked for photography advice;
- being asked to judge art shows for others. She was the judge for the Muncie Camera Club's annual awards for 2023;
- being asked for her images for media/social media Jenny was asked to populate the annual report for Community Enhancement Projects, Inc. (www.cepmuncie.org, accessed 2/6/24). Over time, several Instagram accounts have asked to repost her images for marketing purposes.

Her artistic goals for 2024 are:

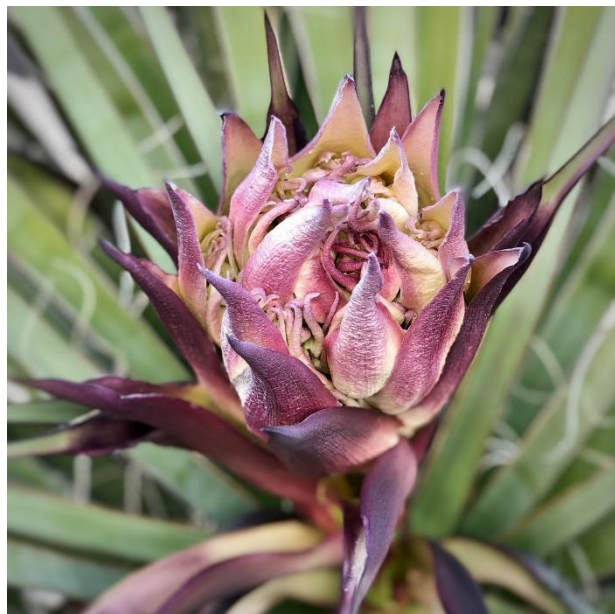
- to continue to challenge herself to see subjects from a different point of view – to get out of her comfort zone;
- to continue to educate herself on how best to use camera equipment and the iPhone. Jenny looks at many other artists' work and learns from them, too;
- to keep her travel opportunities varied;
- to learn more about birds and improve her technique when photographing them in action.

Jenny reports that membership in IWA enhances her enjoyment of being an artist. IWA gives her the opportunity to focus her photography on nature. Nature and things in nature are her favorite subjects. She also enjoys the people she has met in this organization.

As part of her interview, Jenny listed an impressive number of activities, among them:

- Member of Kappa Kappa Kappa, an Indiana-only philanthropic sorority for the past 50 years. This sorority raises funds to support education, the arts and charity with scholarships, community grants and impact grants within Delaware County;
- Member of the Muncie Art Students League, which is a long-time organization in Muncie focused on the arts and supporting the arts in our community. Jenny has served as Treasurer and an occasional presenter for this group;
- President of a local women's investment club;
- Grandmother to 11, which means lots of time attending the grandchildren's sporting events;
- She and her husband live on 15 acres, where she serves as the chief "yard groomer" (lawn mowing duties). They maintain a certified Red-Tail Land conservancy habitat (pond and prairie);
- Mother of 6 grown children, who are scattered about (OK, OH, IN, CO, London, UK), so she enjoys time visiting them or being visited by any of them and their families. They are hosting everyone during the Solar Eclipse in April. Jenny is looking forward to this incredible experience.

Thank you, Jenny, for being my first interviewee for *Wild Art News* and sharing some of your beautiful nature photography!





IWA Officers for 2024

President - Marianne Ballenger

Vice President – open

Treasurer – Diana Hunter

Secretary – Char Hulse

Exhibit Chairman – Jenny Smith

Exhibit Co-Chair – Char Hulse

2024 Prospectus Posted

The prospectus for the 41st Annual Fine Art Exhibit by Indiana Wildlife Artists is posted on IWA's website. (<https://indianawildlifeartists.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2024-Prospectus-FINAL.pdf>, accessed 2/8/24) The exhibit will be hosted at the Minnetrista Museum & Gardens, 1200 Minnetrista Parkway, Muncie, Indiana 47303. The IWA's Annual Meeting will be Saturday, August 24, 2024, with a business meeting, catered lunch, hanging the exhibit, presentation and awards ceremony. Entries are due after June 1, 2024, but no later than July 20, 2024. Please read the instructions carefully.

Contribute to the Indiana Wildlife Artists newsletter:

If you would like to write an article or be interviewed for a future issue of *Wild Art News*, please contact Sara Anne Hook, Editor, at shook@butler.edu.

