

## **A Fond Look Back at Pine Shores' Four Decades**

**On Feb. 9, 1981**, eleven artists met in the Stafford Library, then located at 94 Stafford Ave., Manahawkin, to discuss formation of an art association. Notices were published in five newspapers, and a committee was selected to draft bylaws and name the organization.

In July, 33 artists signed on as charter members and installation of officers followed. Our first outdoor exhibit was held on the Stafford Township Town Hall grounds in August of the same year. During that first year PSAA sponsored six art shows and membership soared to 57. Shows were also held at Burlington County Hospital, Mount Holly and Ocean County Malls, and exhibits at local banks were initiated.

In February 1983 the first children's drawing class was conducted, the first art trip organized (to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC), the first Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission (OCCHC) grant was received (for \$225), and the first scholarship (of \$200) was awarded to a Southern Regional High School student.

In October 1984 the first adult classes were held, and by 1987 membership had reached 92. In 1990, the organization, sponsored and supported by Stafford Township, formally moved to the second floor of 94 Stafford Avenue, where we remain today. In 1991 art history lectures began at the Stafford Branch of the Ocean County Library, the OCCHC grant reached \$763, our scholarship was upped to \$500, and we began judging posters for the Stafford Fire Company. By year 2000 our facility became handicapped-accessible, and membership reached 320. Today our membership is approaching 350. We sponsor four children's classes a year, 12 gallery shows, two judged art shows, four art history lectures, two museum trips, 11 free demonstrations by renowned local and regional artists.

This year we have provided many adult classes in all mediums. Portrait sessions are offered on Thursday evenings from 7pm-9pm. The gallery is open to visitors on Sunday from 1pm to 3pm. The gallery is also open every Thursday from 10am to 2:30pm for Do Your Own Thing, and from 3pm to 5pm for Artists Helping Artists.

Since 1983, PSAA has awarded a scholarship to a Southern Regional High School art student. In the past few years that amount has been \$1000 yearly. We have partnered with the Beach Haven Community Arts Program, Ocean County Library, the Ocean Cultural and Heritage Foundation, Bass River State Park, Friends of Barnegat Lighthouse State Park, the Stafford Fire Department and other local and regional organizations to sponsor art and culturally related programs.

The PSAA gallery is used every day for open sessions, workshops, meetings and demonstrations. We thank Stafford Township for the use of the facility and for their ongoing support of our organization.

*Irene Bausmith*