



March 29 Special Edition

Valley Art News is a service of the City of Roanoke's Office of Arts and Culture and is brought to you twice a month. [Click here](#) for more information or contact the Arts and Culture Coordinator at susan.jennings@roanokeva.gov

Follow up from Artists Gathering

Many thanks to Arts Commission member Jeremy Butterfield for leading the meeting and former member Doug Jackson for facilitating and providing excellent notes after the meeting! Thanks also to our "sharers" from the VA Design Collective, the Small Business Development Center, the City's Office of Citizen Engagement and Visit VA's Blue Ridge. And most of all - thanks to the artists who attending and shared their knowledge, resources and ideas! We are providing this summary in hopes that those who could not attend will also send their ideas and suggestions. We are also hopeful that some of you will see an idea here you have been thinking about implementing and run with it - we will help you!

What individuals can do:

1. Send Susan updates for the biweekly newsletter
2. Try your hand at community building around the arts. Host a hands-on convening and see what comes from it. Susan will post in her newsletter!
3. Help us tell your story. As we grow the social media strategy, your story is key material.
4. Follow up with Susan with thoughts on a manageable arts conference strategy.
5. Sign up on the VVBR artists directory if you're not already on it. (Everyone at in the conversation can get a free presence as part of a member community. Even those not living in a member community can get a free membership for the coming year. Contact Brady at bwoolwine@visitvbr.com.

What the RAC will do:

1. Work with partners to rough out a training calendar for 2018-9 - watch for these in the newsletter!
2. Explore an arts conference strategy with partner institutions to see how we might add on to an existing effort or aggregate existing efforts for greater impact

3. Work with the planning district to reach out to artists complement the economic impact information on organizations with the impacts of individual working artists.
4. Work with the City's Citizen engagement Officer to develop the next phase of the #artinroanoke campaign.
5. Provide the links to some key web resources for artists in the newsletter.

What Partners will do:

1. Brady Woolwine with VVBR will provide information on scheduled conventions to the Market Gallery and others to explore opportunities to better help all arts partner present the community and monetize the potential of these visitors to our community.
2. The SBDC offers a newsletter on changes in social media. Contact Christina Garnett at cgarnett@roanokechamber.org.

Questions to explore:

1. How do we use public art to bridge the city and smaller partner communities throughout the region?
2. How do we tap our higher education institutions to build the arts and the regional economy?
3. What are the economic impacts of artists in our community?

Ideas and Brainstorming:

Jeremy gave an overview of what the RAC has taken on to promote and assists the work of individual artists. **What are your reactions or observations?**

- There was a consistent flow of information and opportunities I was able to take advantage of. I knew when to apply and not all panned out, but I was chosen for the stormwater project.
- There are lots of artists and arts organizations, but there is little overall coordination.
- Large gatherings may not be the best strategy. We need to get to know one another, perhaps smaller collaborative strategies will help.
- The social media training was good but this changes all of the time. We need more information on things like Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

The newsletter is very helpful. The last training strategy was geared to provide training and technical assistance to improve the digital footprint of the Roanoke Arts Community. We've seen the VVBR artists directory grow from a handful to 127 artists. **Is there additional training in this area that needs to be offered?**

- The RAC can continue partnering with VBR and the SBDC.
- Search Engine Optimization
- What graphic formats are best for what purposes
- What free resources are out there: How about a training/tour of the resources at <http://www.noexcuselist.com>
- Photography. We could use this workshop again.

- How do we optimize our time with social media and marketing? What's the right tool at the right time?
- We need practical, concrete tips, offered in a hands-on setting.
- How to monetize social media
- How to use online print services for our art, potentially to promote the community and benefit charities.
- How to sell experiences and art on Air BNB
- A review with feedback on our strategies. **(Christina offers that)**
- Could we have a small learning group, a cluster of complementary artists and businesses that learn together with a mentor?
- Could we have a createathon, intense professional support over a short period of time, or perhaps an arts speed-dating like quick-hit assistance from experts.

What are your specific ideas for a collective **next step in social media promotion**?

- We're using social media to promote public art; let's use it for galleries and individual artists.
- Engage youth in this piece. They are developing content, and we can promote it, creating community around #ArtinRoanoke
- Do a social media takeover, let artists show their work and process, life as an artist in Roanoke.
- Promote both visual arts and the other arts.

What training or resource would you like to see that's not currently provided in the community.

- We're missing a bit of the spirit we had when we had the Arts Council of the Blue Ridge in place, including:
 - Working with designers
 - Supporting and encouraging each others strategies, think Mary Bullington's great work on Facebook.
 - Building each other up
 - This is fun. Let's get together and do it. What do we need?
 - Space – aurora, 16 west, the green room and other spaces are available
 - LEADERSHIP- it's really about putting a little personal energy into making it happen.
 - RAC can potentially provide some support/scaffolding
 - We're still also missing the arts conference/festival gathering that can help solidify our energy. We miss marginal arts!