

Dear ACA members,

On Saturday, September 27, group of us met at the Kaleva Roadside Park for our second annual Fall get-together. It was a beautiful afternoon and a pleasant breeze blew through the gazebo. The ACA board provided brats and sauerkraut, baked potatoes and fixings and salads and desserts were provided by attendees. Everyone agreed that arts and culture enthusiasts are great cooks and bakers.

After socializing and eating Cindy Asiala, president, reviewed the goal of the ACA since its beginning in 2006: To promote the arts and culture to residents and visitors to Manistee County. Some of the ways this has happened: establishing the Quilt Trail, leading to historic sites in the area, forming the Museum Alliance which supports the 10 unique museums in the county, erecting sculptures such as the one honoring migrant workers and the James Earl Jones/Donald Crouch sculpture, subtitled: Mentorship can be life changing. In addition our website: allartsmanistee.com lists events of organizations and resources among our membership.

Groups were then asked to brainstorm ways ACA could be more relevant to their particular area of interest. The results were shared with the entire group and include these responses:

- Provide a venue for displays from area museums and art establishments
- Hold a series of lectures or classes to expose residents to art and culture (round robin)
- Include an open mic night where music performances, literary readings are shared
- Be part of a multi-cultural festival with all groups included: the tribe, Finnish, Polish, Latinos
- Set up a "Sculpture Journey" which leads to amazing sculptures in Manistee, Kaleva, Brethren
- Promote events and activities on Facebook and other social media
- Improve the website, collaborate with the Visitors' Bureau, update and distribute brochures
- Do a county wide assessment of needs in regard to arts and culture (20 year review of ACA)
- Encourage art and music in the schools
- Reach out to local population to encourage more participation in the arts

These are some of the goals the board will be considering in the coming year. We applaud your continued support, membership dues and donations are our only means of operation. The board will be planning an event in January, traditionally called "IceBreaker" to which all members are invited. Please reach out to Kathi Houston, kathwithani@gmail.com or Cindy Asiala, caasiala@jackpine.com or check your Spam if you fail to receive communication from ACA.

Sincerely, Cynthia Asiala and the ACA Board of Directors