

## Next Meeting:

Thursday, January 15th  
at 7:00 pm  
at the Scherer Center  
12202 First Street, Yucaipa

For the YVAA meeting  
schedule click here:  
[2025-2026 Schedule](#)

## January's Featured Artist is Debbie Strong

Join us this month for  
a presentation by  
photographer  
Debbie Strong.



Norway Northern Lights

# Yucaipa Valley Art Association

## January 2026, Vol. 37

### President's Palette



Happy New Year members! The start of a new year always brings new resolutions, perspectives, and ideas for many people. For our members, it brings new opportunities, activities, and new art to share for 2026. We are excited about the new year! We have new featured artists coming up, a new artist of the year to give an award to, plus our Spring Art Show to motivate us to create new art and take more photography.

We had a wonderful and busy December that engaged our members to participate in our fun winter activities. Some highlights for December included the Winter Art Exhibition reception, the larger Winterfest organized by the City of Yucaipa and the public art exhibition at Village Bread. We received great community exposure from our local newspaper through their social media platform and in community event announcements.

The Christmas potluck and craft night was a fun way to connect with our members. We got to share some amazing food, conversations, and photos at the gathering. The Christmas Party was a great way to have fun and capture the holiday season with members. Our team of volunteers worked diligently to plan and organize all these events. I want to thank everyone who helped out and attended that made them such a success. Special thanks to our members and corporate sponsors who have donated this year and have helped us reach some of our yearly goals. **Happy New Year!**



Zully Martinez,  
YVAA President

## Featured Artist for January is Debbie Strong



Photographer Debbie Strong.



## Featured Artist News



The Yucaipa Valley Art Association will host photographer, Debbie Strong, at the Thursday, January 15th meeting at 7:00 pm, where she will share her astrophotography journey taking photos of the Aurora Borealis and Milky Way taken in various countries. Come check out her amazing and fascinating photography which will be presented as a journey through locations and images.

Debbie Strong has lived in the City of Yucaipa for more than 25 years. She is a freelance photographer whose work has been featured in Joshua Tree Voice, Yucaipa News Mirror, Living with Wildfire magazine editions, and an art gallery exhibit in downtown Los Angeles.

Debbie retired as a fire captain from CAL FIRE in 2018, after a rewarding 30-year career in the fire service. Debbie is working on the second chapter of her life by embracing storytelling, starting with her camera in hand, poetry and journaling as she travels to various countries, capturing stunning landscapes, street photography and astrophotography images. Debbie has traveled extensively abroad and around Canada.

She was fortunate to be mentored by amazing, talented photographers - Casey Kiernan, a Documentary Filmmaker from Joshua Tree, CA and Scott Robert Lim a Sony Artisan from Los Angeles, CA and Rachel Jones Ross, a Sony Artisan from Alberta, Canada. Her photographic inspirations include Scott Robert Lim, Annie Leibovitz, Ansel Adams, Casey Kiernan, Rachel Jones Ross, Albert Dros and Alyn Wallace. Debbie likes the saying “If you see something that moves you, and then snap it, you keep the moment.” Linda McCartney.

When Debbie is not behind her camera, she enjoys camping, hiking and painting. Debbie has an upcoming memoir titled *“Hearts in Focus”*, which is an exciting blend of traditional memoir, photography, and poetry, exploring the multi-faceted way that grief and healing show up in our lives.

To find out more about Debbie Strong's photography, visit her website at <https://debbiestrongphotography.com> or visit Debbie's author website at <https://www.debbiestrongauthor.com>. You can follow Debbie on social media on Instagram: [@debbiestrongphotography](https://www.instagram.com/debbiestrongphotography).

## Christmas Party Potluck and Crafts!



Mona Kadah works on her Christmas reindeer painting.



Bob Norris paints the reindeer canvas project.



Vici Haag works on the Christmas craft ornament.

## Fun December Party!



Our annual Christmas potluck and craft night was held on Thursday, December 11th, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Scherer Center. Members brought their favorite holiday dish or dessert to share with fellow members. The evening was filled with a variety of activities that made it a fun and festive night for members and their guests. There were holiday music, games and prizes attendees won and even a photobooth to capture the Christmas moments.

After the Christmas dinner, the holiday craft activity started led by members Zully Martinez and Karen Hoak. Participants were able to create a holiday themed art reindeer painting or Christmas ornament craft that they were able to take home. YVAA members had a merry time!

## Debra Wick is named “Artist of the Year.”



Artist Debra Wick and her first place ribbon win for her realistic painting of water droplets.



Art titled “Hope of Poppies in a storm” by Debra Wick.



Silhouette of a mountain lion, by Debra Wick.

## YVAA’s Artist of the Year



A water lily painting by artist Debra Wick.

YVAA member and multi-media artist, Debra Wick has been named “Artist of the year.” We are so happy that Debra is a member of YVAA and that we have had the privilege of seeing her amazing multi-media art on display at our events. Debra will receive an award this January 2026, acknowledging her as the winner for her regular monthly art show entries and ribbon wins in the various categories that members can enter in during the 2025 season.

Before retiring as floral designer, Debra Wick enrolled in watercolor classes, approximately 12 years ago, from then on, she was hooked! She studied watercolor techniques under the tutelage of Ed Sotello and Holly Warner. There was so much to learn and so many “rules” to break. As she progressed, she joined the Redlands Art Association to show her art in their gallery. Debra is also a member of the Pomona Valley Art Association, Loma Linda Art Association and Yucaipa Valley Art Association where she has the opportunity to show her art in their respective art shows as well as juried shows.

For Debra, beauty and color uplift the human spirit as they draw us into the awe and wonder of God’s creation. This is Debra’s aim which she pursues in her paintings and it is the reason that she shares her art with others. Debra likes to work in various mediums, including watercolor, acrylics and alcohol inks because they produce bold colors or interesting atmospheres of the subjects that intrigue her and stimulate her creative juices to put art to paper or canvas.

Congratulations to this very talented artist! We have enjoyed seeing her amazing and creative art throughout the year!

## Check Out the Village Bread Art Exhibition

Display Dates:  
12/1/25 to 3/2/26

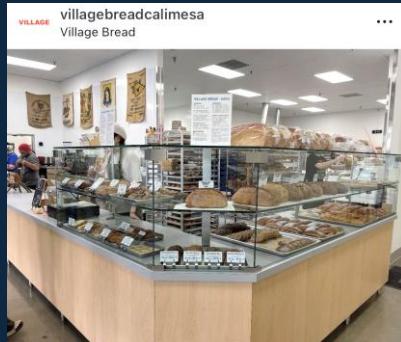


Visit this public art display at Village Bread Calimesa. They are open daily from 8:00 am to 2:30 pm.

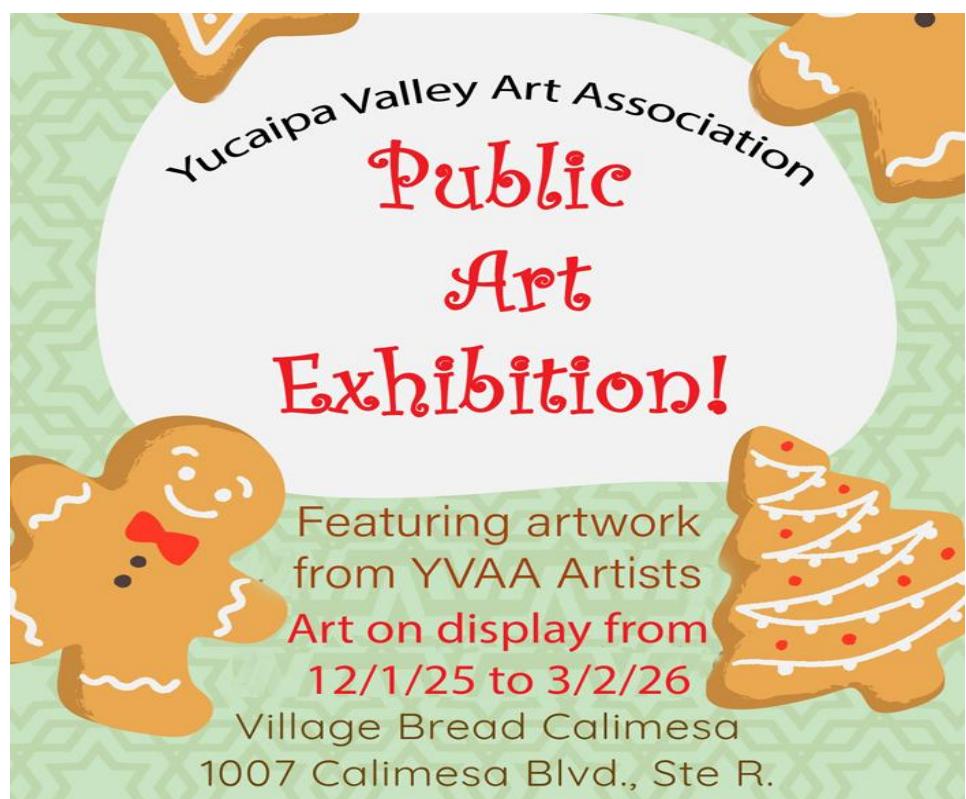


@VillageBreadCalimesa

1007 Calimesa Blvd.,  
Suite R, Calimesa



## YVAA Art Exhibition



Thanks to the organizing efforts of Enrique Lima, YVAA's Art Exhibitions Manager and our very talented artists, the Village Bread art exhibition is now on display this winter.

- Artists that are featured in this exhibition include Holli Z. Austin, Julie R. Evans, Tom Fontanes, Karen Hoak, Mario Martinez, Aubrey Sanchez and Debra Wick.
- To view a listing of all art on display click here: [YVAA Art Listing](#)
- This winter art exhibition includes creative and colorful artwork from several talented artists in various mediums including acrylic, watercolor, mixed media and photography.
- This is a three-month public exhibition that will run from Dec. 1st, 2025 to March 2, 2026 at Village Bread Calimesa.

## Winterfest Art Exhibition



The Winterfest Art Exhibition is still open to the public and featured artwork from eight YVAA members.

Visit the YVAA website for more details.



**“Spring Snow”** Acrylic painting by Karen Hoak who is one of the artist exhibiting at the gallery.



The YPAC gallery is open to the public for viewing Monday thru Friday from 4:00 pm -7:00 pm, located at 12062 California St. Yucaipa, CA.

## Community News

# WINTER BIRD WALK

COME FLAP YOUR WINGS WITH US ON A BEGINNER'S STROLL TO SPY SOME FABULOUS FEATHERED FRIENDS ON THE TRAILS!

**JANUARY 2, 2026**  
**THE WILDLANDS 10:00 AM**  
 CONSERVANCY \*Registration Required

We wanted to let our members know about the Wildlands Conservancy Oak Glen Preserve upcoming nature activities and events. There are two activities planned this January 2026 that members may be interested in.

The first is the the **Winter Bird Walk on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 at 10:00 am**. This is a great opportunity for photographers that are interested in catching some birds on trails or just taking photos the beautiful winter landscapes. Registration is required so click the link below.

The second activity is called **“A Walk in the Forest” on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026 at 10:00 am**. Join the staff at the conservancy for a relaxing walk through the preserve as visitors sketch plants, animals and the landscape around them. Participants will learn about field journaling and how it can enhance the observation skills and provide a deeper connection to the natural world. It is also a great art sketching opportunity. Basic journaling supplies will be provided by the staff. Registration is required to attend, click below. Please check website for cancellation or rescheduling of these events, weather permitting.

For registration, click the website: [Oak Glen Preserve Programs](#)

## See's Candies Fundraiser



Thank you to all the Members, family and friends that ordered from our See's Candies fundraiser this winter.

YVAA raised over two hundred dollars through this winter fundraising campaign.



Thank you to our corporate sponsor, PBLA Surveying for a generous donation at the end of the year, 2025.



Thank you to Atlas Storage & Business Center for their 2026 in-kind donation of a storage unit that helps keep our art equipment safe and secure all year long.

Website: [Atlas Storage](#)

## Become A Volunteer!



We wish to thank all the current board members for their ongoing help as we organize our winter and spring activities!

While we are thrilled to have filled some vacant board member positions, we have others that are still need to be filled. Below is a list of some of the open positions. Volunteer help is always needed and appreciated. If you have time and the skills, consider volunteering for a post and working with our team. Send an email to Zully Martinez at [yvaamail92@gmail.com](mailto:yvaamail92@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering as a board member.

### Summary Job Descriptions

**Secretary:** Responsibilities include note taking or audio recording the monthly board meetings from September through May. Transcribing the notes or audio into a written record of meeting minutes. Emailing meeting minutes to the board members after the meeting. This position would start in the fall.

**Membership:** Responsibilities include managing membership subscriptions and renewals. This includes collecting new membership applications, renewals, and payments. Maintaining a roster list of active members for use in communications, membership, and marketing. Updating addresses and emails on roster periodically as needed. Sending out welcome emails to new members using automated templates.

**Newsletter:** Responsibilities include gathering monthly announcements and information for newsletter publication. Requires newsletter journalistic style writing and editing. Knowledge of MS Word or Google newsletter template use. Conversion to Adobe PDF file and upload to Google drive. Ability to download and resize photos. The completed newsletter is emailed to all members and non-members who are interested in receiving it. Management of email database lists for members and non-members.

## Member News



YVAA welcomes new member:

- Randall Porter

We are glad he has joined our art organization. Visit his website for more info.

[www.randallscottporterprints.com](http://www.randallscottporterprints.com)

### BECOME A MEMBER or RENEW!

Download by clicking here:

[Membership Application](#)

#### Contact Us:

Yucaipa Valley Art Association  
P.O. Box 404  
Yucaipa, CA 92399  
Voice mail: (951) 755-4114

Email: [yvaamail92@gmail.com](mailto:yvaamail92@gmail.com)

#### Website:

[www.yucaipavalleyartassoc.org](http://www.yucaipavalleyartassoc.org)

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram, click below:



[YVAA FB](#)



[YVAA Instagram](#)

## YVAA 2026 Membership



It is the start of a new year! We want to share a friendly reminder to our current members to renew their membership this January. The YVAA membership is \$30.00 and by renewing for the year, members are guaranteed continued membership for inclusion to our season of art and photography activities for 2026. Members can pay their annual membership this month at the next YVAA meeting. We will have some extra forms handy for you to fill out at the January 15<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting.

Members can renew by paying electronically using our bank-linked Zelle payment method by using our email [yvaamail92@gmail.com](mailto:yvaamail92@gmail.com). Notify us of your Zelle payment for your new membership or renewal to the same email address. You can now pay your membership through our website by selecting the Membership tab. You can also send your membership payment via regular US postal mail to YVAA, P.O. Box 404, Yucaipa, CA 92399.

Renewing or new members can download and fill out the PDF application, mail it in, drop it off in person or send it via email to [yvaamail92@gmail.com](mailto:yvaamail92@gmail.com) So, send in your renewal forms right away!

**[Click here to download:  
MEMBER APPLICATION](#)**

To open, view and fill out downloadable PDF files you must have the FREE Adobe Acrobat Reader for PC.  Download <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

Not a member yet? Fill out the membership form and become a new member of YVAA and join our artist community.