AHA Moments

Aromas Hills Artisans meeting, Thursday, July 9, 2026, 6:30 p.m., Aromas Grange
Meeting chair: President Jane Rekedal

With 18 in attendance, the meeting started with everyone introducing themselves and their media. There were two first-time attendees: Jeff Clark and Coleen Colla.

Jane shared the news that Andrea McCann had died last week after a long illness. She was a truly gifted artist and volunteered much of her time and talents to AHA planning, projects, and events. She was also an active Grange member and a dear friend to many in AHA and the Grange. It was suggested that we rename the AHA scholarship program to the "Andrea McCann Memorial Scholarship." Another idea was to purchase a tile on the Community Park pillars as a memorial to her, as she helped design that incredible community project.

The art sharing theme was "texture" and several members shared their work on that theme. Linda shared her watercolors from the Art Outside event at Laurie Tholen's house.

The next Art Outside opportunity will be Friday, July 16 at 1 p.m. at Gizdich Ranch in Watsonville.

The next AHA meeting will be Thursday, August 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Grange. The art-sharing theme will be "Sun and Moon" inspired by the solar eclipse on August 12. Louise Coombes will be the leader.

Jayne Camic circulated a sign-up sheet for volunteers to sell raffle tickets at the Aromas Day booth. We need at least two people per shift. It's our largest fundraising event of the year and funds the AHA Scholarships.

She also mentioned that all remaining **donations of artists' work for the annual AHA raffle should be brought to the next meeting, on August 13—the deadline for submitting**. The artwork will be displayed at Aromas Day on Sunday, Aug 30, and the raffle will take place at the Holiday Art Festival, Nov 21 and 22. All artists need to send a photo and description by August 13 or sooner to Louise Coombes at joyousquilter@gmail.com so that she can create the brochure. Descriptions should include artist name, medium, and value of the artwork.

After introductions of members and guests there was a nice exchange about the thought-provoking question: "If you had $50 to spend to further your art pursuits, what would you buy?" Answers included glass (plus shipping), gourds, a donation to AHA, a light box, gouache-based markers, membership to AHA, pen pastels, paints/canvas, screws, watercolors, and beads.

Laurie Tholen is in charge of the table layout for the Holiday Art Festival. There will be 32 spaces available, and a sign-up sheet was circulated for those who were fairly certain they planned to be there. Set-up will be Friday at noon.

Jane Rekedal mentioned that the San Benito County Arts Council has generously offered eight free tickets (a table) to AHA for members (and their significant others) to attend their annual "Art of Eating" fundraising gala at Paicines Ranch. For those interested in attending this lovely event with delicious food, they should contact Jane at 831-566-4576.

Maureen O'Hara shared a box of shells for anyone interested and cookies from Freedom Bakery in celebration of her upcoming 71st birthday.

Pajaro Valley Arts' annual "Sculpture IS" display is up and ready for viewing. Some of AHA's artists have participated in the past.

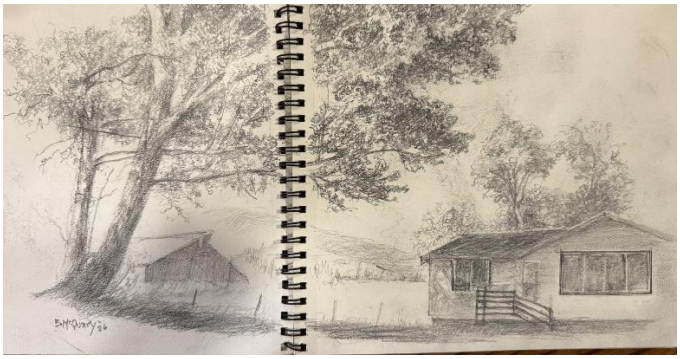
Location: Sierra Azul Nursery & Gardens
Sculpture IS: In the Garden 2026
Exhibit Dates: June 1 – October 31, 2026
Sierra Azul Nursery & Gardens
2660 East Lake Ave, Watsonville
Open Daily: 10am-5pm

Art that was shared included:

Andrea McDonald –hand-built wet slab pieces

Tim McKay—pachyderms, watercolor

Shelley Trabucco – gourd lamp and a photo of the light patterns it makes


Bill McQuary—pencil drawing

Jeff Clark—recycled wire

Monika Hassler—mosaic

Linda Bjornson—watercolors