

Notable AX

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Jane Simpson, Executive Director, AX

Melanie Craig-Hansford, Board Secretary, AX

To keep things new and interesting with the Notable AX column, I'll be asking guest writers to contribute on occasion. AX Secretary Melanie Craig-Hansford has kindly agreed to write this instalment. Melanie is a poet and a visual artist who lives in Erbs Cove. Thanks, Melanie!

I'm a Maritimer who, like so many others, spent my working life elsewhere and resettled back home in retirement. I spent 27 years teaching high school visual arts and working as a teacher-librarian in Kingston, Ontario. My love of art and literature served me well as I shared my passions with my students. I hoped to ignite their interest in creative pursuits, and many of my students went on to have careers in the arts. I love teaching and sharing my love of the arts with young people and adults, and I know first-hand how helpful it can be to our well-being and mental health when we have a creative outlet. Picasso said, "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life."

Now that I'm retired, I've found a "home" at AX. I've met many like-minded people and work with wonderful volunteers who have given so much of their time to get this new centre up and running.

I'm thrilled to be working with AX to schedule diverse and exciting programming for our community. Lisa White (also a Nova Scotia College of Art and Design grad and a visual arts teacher at Belleisle High School) and I will be chairing a committee to get this programming off the ground. But we need your help. If you have any ideas about programs, classes, events or workshops you'd like AX to offer, we want to hear from you. Just send a note to info@axartscentre.ca.

We've heard there's a need for after school and March Break and summer arts programming for young people; for workshops in drawing and painting, photography and sculpture, craft and writing workshops, for all ages. AX will also have music and film nights and much more, including interactive art exhibits for the public, with some components geared specifically towards the younger members of our community. As we get these things up and running, we'll post information on our website, www.axartscentre.ca, and on our Facebook page. We're also fortunate to have local authors Gerard Collins and Beth Powning volunteering to offer literary activities at AX, and these events will be starting shortly after the centre opens in the New Year. I, for one, have a poem that is just waiting to be "slammed" at our first open mic poetry reading!

All of this doesn't happen in a bubble, however. We need your participation and your ideas, we need volunteers, we need members and we need donations. Because AX has charitable status, your donation or purchase of a membership can reduce your taxes significantly. On the first \$200 donated to Canadian charities, you may receive over \$49.

Any donations in excess of this amount can cut your tax bill by almost 47%. That's an extra \$47 left in your pocket for every \$100 donated!

For information on donating, becoming a member, and reviewing our schedule of programming (when things get rolling), or if you have any ideas of classes and workshops you might like us to offer, please contact us by email: info@axartscentre.ca or visit our website at www.axartscentre.ca, where you can print a membership / donation form and pop it in the mail.

Why not look at supporting those charities that are meaningful to you this season, especially the ones right here in your own backyard? You can help by donating your time as well – AX will need lots of assistance with supporting the gallery, working at events, and helping with promotion.

Please get in touch, and see you at the AX centre in the New Year!

Melanie Craig-Hansford
AX Secretary