

TENNESSEE CRAFT-SOUTH MEMBERSHIP MEETING - MINUTES

Sunday, January 18, 2026

1:00 pm (central)

Abraham Art Gallery, Winchester, TN

Attendees: Don & Gretchen McCance, Linda Kerlin, Margaret Murfree, Nancy Wallace, Denise Miller, Jenn McCoy, Anne Bagby, Merissa Tobbler, Kristy Abraham, Claire Reishman, Christy Teasley, Terrie Ponder Watch.

1. **Introductions:** Terrie asked attendees to share their name, location and medium. We had the following locations represented: Monteagle, Winchester, Sewanee, Broadview, Cowan, Ardmore, Estill Springs, and Tracy City. We had the following mediums represented: mixed media, pottery/clay, painting, book & print making, gel printing, and textiles.
 2. **Tennessee Craft Report:** Denise reported that the 1/17/26 Chapter Chat Zoom was well attended and packed with good information about the organization plans for 2026. There is a search underway for a new Tennessee Craft Executive Director. Mary Grissom, the new Marketing Manager, will be coordinating the newsletters and social media for the state-wide organization. Information for the newsletter must be submitted by the 1st week of the month. E-newsletters will be sent out the 3rd week of each month. Members will have the opportunity to be featured in an Artist Spotlight in upcoming social media posts. Information was shared about **Handwork 2026**, a year-long collaboration that will celebrate Craft in America, for which Tennessee Craft is a partner: www.handwork2026.org. A country-wide open studio is being organized for July 18-19 that will include 30 artists from each of the 50 states. More information to come about all of these efforts. Denise will be representing our Chapter at the upcoming annual Board Retreat which will be held at MTSU.
 3. **Studio & Gallery Tour:** Merissa reported that planning is already underway for the 2026 Studio & Gallery Tour. We will be looking for more artists to participate in the Bell Buckle and Wartrace areas. We will also be looking for more artists to exhibit in the Legion Hall and Spencer Room at St. Andrew's-Sewanee School. The brochure will undergo an upgrade this year including the introduction of a QR code that will link the user to an interactive map. The Empty Tables initiative raised a little over \$2000 for food insecurity issues in 2025 and will be a part of the tour again in 2026. The Exhibition was a big success at St. Andrew's-Sewanee School and will be included again in 2026.
 4. **Treasurer's Report:** Claire reported that the Chapter has \$2890 in the bank with all bills paid. The 2025 Studio & Gallery Tour broke even.
 5. **TN Craft-South 2026 Events:** Linda shared information about upcoming Chapter events:
 - Sunday, April 26**, 1pm - Sherri Warner Hunter Studio, Bell Buckle
Speaker: Renee Busdiecker - addressing a variety of issues related to owning and operating an Art-Based business.
 - Sunday, August 23**, 1pm - Linda Kerlin Studio, Monteagle
Lunch by the Lake, bring a chair, a dish to share and an example of your work
 - Friday, November 13**, 4:30pm - Frame Gallery Gifts and Arts, Sewanee
Brief membership meeting followed by a Sneak Peek reception featuring work by artists on the 2026 Studio & Gallery Tour
 - Saturday & Sunday, December 5 & 6** - Studio & Gallery Tour 2026
- Shakerag Workshops:** Some spots are still open for the Shakerag Off-Season quilting workshop March 6-9. For information about this opportunity plus information about the June Shakerag Workshop offerings please visit: www.shakerag.org. Summer Study Scholarships are available for Shakerag Workshops, Arrowmont School of Arts and

Crafts, & Appalachian Center for Craft - must be a TN Craft member to apply for a scholarship. Visit: www.tennesseeecraft.org for information and link to application.

6. Kristy Abraham, Curator of Abraham Art Gallery, was our speaker.

Kristy shared her journey to becoming an artist which started at a young age when she proclaimed to her mom that she wanted to be a “starving artist” when she grew up! Kristy credits her family and her school art programs for fostering her love of the arts. Kristy is particularly proud of the Nomadic Project that she created and implemented. Learn more about Kristy’s journey and her creation of art in all 50 states at: www.thenomadicproject.com. Kristy taught art at the secondary level. She feels strongly about the value of art programs in schools - art can open emotions and dialogue. Kristy shared her journey to creation of the Abraham Art Gallery. Sweat equity allowed Kristy and her family members to transform a building in downtown Winchester from a dated, segmented space into a bright and open gallery. The work they put in was credited toward the lease which helped the bottom line significantly in the first year of the new business. Kristy addressed the process of an artist approaching a gallery or shop for representation. The percentage that the gallery receives from sales is warranted because a gallery or shop can expose the work to more potential customers, help the artist raise the price of the art, potentially expose the art to commercial buyers, and feature the artist in exhibitions. Don’t give up if it takes awhile to hear back from a gallery owner. Kristy shared several stories that illustrated the fact the opportunity leads to opportunity!

Please visit www.abrahamgallery.com for information about the Print of the Month Club, upcoming workshops and special events. Be sure to stop in the Abraham Art Gallery the next time you are in Winchester!

7. Meeting attendees visited with each other, enjoyed refreshments, and toured the gallery. We wish to thank Kristy Abraham and the Abraham Art Gallery for hosting our Tennessee Craft-South Membership Meeting.

