

Letter to all Signature Artist Members Re: Bylaws Proposed Update Approved by BWS Board of Governors on April 23, 2023.

The BWS Board of Governors recently undertook a review of our membership categories in part because the number of Life (non-dues-paying) Members is now greater than the number of other Signature Artist members. Overall, our membership is aging and we realized we need to foster a younger membership who will help us achieve BWS goals and carry us forward.

At the same time, we recognize that BWS has become overly dependent on the volunteer work by the board membership. As an all volunteer organization, we depend on the involvement and commitment of all members, not just a select few. We want to encourage participation and volunteering by the whole membership: to serve on long or short-term committees, help with events, promote BWS and a wide range of other tasks that can be done in person or remotely. We strongly believe in the proverbs “many hands make small work” and that “two heads are better than one.” (source: first recorded in John Heywood’s Book of Proverbs (1546).

To help accomplish this, we are proposing amendments to the BWS Bylaws in three areas:

I. Amend the definition of Life membership to promote greater volunteer participation in the BWS

To help retain our older members, BWS instituted Life Membership several decades ago, eliminating the dues requirement after a Signature Artist achieves 75 years of age and at least 5 years of membership or 25 years as a Signature Member. However, the increased numbers are affecting our finances.

In order to encourage participation in activities that promote the work and growth of BWS, we propose to make Life Membership an emeritus status by adding a volunteer requirement. We feel Life Membership should be an honor bestowed upon those who have contributed to the organization. We will use a nomination process,

Letter to all Signature Artist Members Re: Bylaws Proposed Update Approved by BWS Board of Governors on April 23, 2023.

applications for which will be reviewed and voted on by the board. We also increased the length of time members who are 75 years old have to have been a member from five to ten years.

No changes will impact existing Life Members and this change will not be implemented for five (5) years so those who are close to the current threshold will still qualify under the previous bylaw definition.

II. Expand the qualification for Life Membership to include recognition of Associate members.

Since Associate Members can and do contribute just as much to BWS achieving its goals as do Signature Members, we expanded qualification for Life Membership to include Associate Members.

III. Adding a Student membership to encourage the participation of emerging talent in BWS.

In order to attract younger members, we propose creating a student membership category.

We'd love to have BWS continue to grow and support not only those new to watercolor but to continue to deliver what is needed to carry watermedia into the future, improving its recognition to be an exciting medium in which to work. We want to see BWS survive for another 100+ years. With your help we can.

Current BWS-Bylaws-UpdatedFeb2022 [Click Here](#)

Proposed BWS Bylaws [Click Here](#) (Changes shown with yellow highlight)

Sincerely,

BWS Board of Governors