

# **A Proposal to Increase Chapter Outreach Through the Creation of “Colored Pencil Circles”**

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## **The Challenges:**

- To meet the needs of chapter members who live more than an hour's drive away from our Portland/Wilsonville meeting location.
- To identify ways to make the chapter more inclusive to artists in all portions of the state.
- To increase CPSA's reach to potential members by encouraging new experienced and artists to learn about colored pencil and join CPSA.

## **The Issues:**

One of the greatest benefits of chapter membership is the general meetings, held 10 times a year by DC 201. Meetings are free to members, and feature workshops, demonstrations, and other learning opportunities, in addition to providing members with a venue to meet and socialize with other artists. Those attending develop and build a strong camaraderie with fellow artists, sharing ideas and techniques with one another.

With the increase in gasoline prices, an “older” member demographic, and the distance some of our members live from the primary meeting location, we have lost, and are in danger of losing more members due to the time and expense required to attend a meeting.

DC 201 currently has approximately 75 members, and roughly half live farther than an hour from our meeting location in Portland/Wilsonville (“P/W”). In addition, there are potentially many more colored pencil artist members in the state of Oregon, but the distance they live from the P/W meeting location discourages them from joining. (Oregon is large enough that some potential members would need to travel 250-300+ miles one-way to reach Portland.) They may not have given our chapter a serious look because the name is “Portland,” which has the potential of making distant artists feel that they have little to gain by joining something so distant.

The possibility of creating a second chapter in Oregon has been raised by some in our chapter, and at least one member has stated that she dropped her membership because she did not wish to travel the distance to Portland, but that she would join if a new local chapter were formed. DC 201 would like to create an alternative to the possibility of splitting our membership into new chapter(s) to address the distance and potential lack of identification issues. We believe that such a split would create smaller and weaker chapters, each of which has a greater potential of failure.

## **Proposed Solution:**

DC 201 would like to create location-based meeting groups which we are calling “Colored Pencil Circles” (also known as “CP Circles” or “CPCs”) that would meet separately from the main P/W meetings, and which would meet on a different date so that all members could, if they desired,

attend both the main P/W meeting and a CP Circle meeting. This would attract DC 201 members who live within an hour's drive or less of the meeting location, although all DC 201 members would be free to attend P/W meetings and any CPC meeting they wish to attend. DC 201 would also like encourage any CPC to consider being host for a full chapter meeting if so desired.

The guidelines for the proposed CPCs would include:

- A minimum of five members would be required to form a CPC. The artists must be members of the National CPSA and of DC 201, although potential members would be allowed to attend two meetings before being required to join CPSA and the chapter in order to attend additional meetings.
- Each CPC would establish a regular meeting location that is published on DC 201's website (and perhaps the newsletter) so that all members can make note of it and attend if they wish.
- Each CPC would designate one DC 201 member (and an alternate, if they wish) to represent it at P/W meetings (either in person or electronically), and to act as the CPC leader to coordinate, communicate, and promote local meetings and chapter membership.
- The CPC leader would become a member at large of the DC 201 governing board, and would be required to communicate regularly with the board, working under board guidelines to ensure the CPC stays current with national and chapter information and plans.
- The CPC representative would be responsible for obtaining and communicating information given at P/W meetings at the next CPC meeting.
- Funds specifically raised by CPCs to support overhead expenses (rent, etc.) would be retained for use by the CPC for those purposes; but any funds raised in the name of the chapter would be retained at the chapter level.
- All membership fees, income from shows or workshops, etc., would remain at the chapter level; a CPC would not be allowed to collect membership fees in addition to the national and chapter fees required for chapter membership.
- CPCs would be eligible for financial support from the main chapter for speaker fees and other expenses as approved by the governing board.
- All chapter members would be eligible to participate in any chapter or CPC event (no closed meetings).

### **Benefits**

- CPCs would not need to form a board, have officers, or collect membership dues (nor would they legally be able to); they would simply meet with a focus on colored pencil art without the distractions of business matters.
- Members who find travel to the main chapter meetings a hardship would have a means to gather with other local colored pencil artists, receive the same information as other chapter members, without the need to travel long distances.
- The CPCs would provide input to the chapter board, and assist with chapter events; conversely, the chapter would provide needed support to the CPCs' local efforts.

- The CPCs would potentially reach more people who would consider joining CPSCA because they could attend meetings locally and still receive the benefits a statewide chapter can offer.
- The chapter would be strengthened by having representatives from across the state or region served, rather than from those members restricted to one metropolitan area.
- Rather than dilute resources, the CPCs would contribute to creating a larger, stronger chapter in support of its workshops, statewide shows, etc., as opposed to several chapters each trying to attract artists to participate in a show or workshop.
- Artists in more remote areas can increase the support for their work by belonging to a statewide and national organization rather than only a local one. Artists will find more support and more opportunities to promote their work by being part of a larger organization that has both state and national representation.

The circles would be identified by (for example): “CPSCA Portland District Chapter 201 – Corvallis Colored Pencil Circle,” abbreviated to “CPSCA Portland DC 201 – Corvallis CPC”