

Mt. Gretna Campmeeting News

February 2026



2026 MGCA Board Officers

At the January 20, 2026, Board of Managers' Meeting the following individuals were reelected as MGCA Board Officers for 2026:

- Pat Wilmsen, President
- Miles Bojanic, Vice President
- Kevin Burd, Treasurer
- Marcie Lloyd, Secretary
- Joe Lamont, Officer at Large

Thanks to these individuals for volunteering again to serve the Mt. Gretna Campmeeting Association.

A Winter That Whispers

Snow comes to Gretna softly,
as if it knows the way –
better than I do some winters.
It settles into the woods,
layering the familiar with quiet,
turning paths into pages newly written.

The trees stand close together.
Too close, sometimes.
Their bare branches lace the sky,
each one holding its place
in a story longer than memory.
Snow clings to bark and pine,
brightening the dark greens,
gentling the edges of stone and earth.

Written by Kevin C. Wells

And in the stillness, there are sounds –
the creak of trees shifting in the cold,
the hollow knock of a woodpecker
somewhere unseen,
boots crunching –
the same sound I've heard before,
never from the same feet.
Wind moves through needles
like a hymn I don't quite remember learning.
The cottages listen. The woods remember.
And winter, unhurried,
keeps watch over Mount Gretna –
not a season of absence,
but of beauty held quietly,
waiting, whether anyone is listening or not.

HELP TACKLE HUNGER

Souper Bowl Soup-to-Go

SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 7, 2026
9AM until soup is sold

at the Mount Gretna
United Methodist Church
(front entrance in parking lot).

Cost:

\$8.00 /quart
\$7.00/quart if you bring
a can of soup for each
quart purchased.



Soups will include:
Thai Butternut Squash
Coconut Curry Lentil
Creamy Tomato
Tortellini
White Chicken Chili
Portuguese Potato
Sausage & Greens
Greek Lemon Chicken
Beef Vegetable
and more....

As part of a national Tackle Hunger event (<https://tacklehunger.org>), all proceeds from the soup sale along with the canned soup collected will be donated to the Lebanon County Christian Ministries.



Tick-Tock... Time is Running Out...

Members are reminded that if they wish to take advantage of the 2% early payment discount for their 2026 MGCA Annual Assessment, it must be paid in full by February 28, 2026.

If not paid early, Members must pay the full assessment by June 30, 2026. Members may also take advantage of the three-payment plan by making three payments—February 28, April 30, and June 30.

A Call for Support

*From Ted Martin, Chair of the
Grants & Funding Committee*

The Grants and Funding Committee is in **URGENT** need of new members. This committee identifies funding opportunities, prepares grant applications, and supports fundraising efforts that help sustain and grow the MGCA's initiatives.

Do you have experience or interest in grant writing, fundraising, nonprofits, budgeting, or research? The committee would love to have you whether you have professional expertise or just would like to help strengthen the financial future of our community.

Please contact the MGCA Office if you are interested or have any questions.



Photo Credit: Dan Duda

Member Spotlight: Celebrating Our Neighbors

The heart of Mount Gretna beats through its people along with the creative energy that gathers them together. From quiet cottage conversations to shared cultural experiences, our community is shaped by individual neighbors and the institutions that bring people to Gretna, season after season, in the spirit of learning, connection, and discovery. The Member Spotlight continues to celebrate those stories, lifting up the many ways neighbors contribute to the rhythm and character of the Campmeeting.

This month's Member Spotlight turns its focus to a neighbor that arrives each summer with easels in hand and curiosity at the ready: the Mount Gretna School of Art (MGSA). A welcome presence in the Campmeeting, MGSA has become part of Gretna's cultural life. Our community is enriched through its students, faculty, cottages, and public programming. What follows is a closer look at how this summer institution has taken root here, and how its commitment to art, accessibility, and place continues to strengthen the creative energy of Mount Gretna.



The Campmeeting As a Classroom

Written by Kevin C. Wells

Each summer, Mount Gretna settles into a familiar and much-anticipated rhythm. Easels line paths, painters gather beneath the trees, and conversations about light, color, and observation drift through the Campmeeting. At the center of this seasonal transformation is the Mount Gretna School of Art. The School provides a residential summer program that has become a welcome and valued part of the Campmeeting.

Founded in 2014, MGSA was created to address a growing need in arts education. It is an immersive program devoted to painting and drawing from direct observation, grounded in nature and focus. From the beginning, the school has emphasized depth over scale. Each summer, MGSA welcomes just 24 students – 16 core students and 8 studio seminar students – supported by a faculty of 12-15 instructors and visiting artists. This intentionally small structure allows for a rigorous, highly personal learning environment in which students are encouraged to slow down, look closely, and develop their own visual intelligence.

MGSA is designed to complement, not replace, traditional college art programs. Students arrive from universities across the Mid-Atlantic and beyond, often referred by faculty who recognize a particular interest in observational practice and landscape-based work. Over seven intensive weeks, students experience a level of focus that many describe as transformative. One such student is College of William & Mary art major Katelyn Workman, who is using a Catron Summer Grant to develop her landscape painting and drawing skills at the MGSA. She says, "I am excited to be in a focused art environment with the opportunity to explore location-specific study areas. I am looking forward to



Photo Credit: Mount Gretna School of Art

trying different mediums and faculty approaches to expand my understanding of the art-making process. The time of focused study will benefit and enable growth in ways the demands of academic rigor prohibit at times.” Over seven intensive weeks, this kind of immersion allows students to slow down, work with sustained focus, and experience artistic growth that is difficult to achieve within the constraints of a typical academic semester.

That level of immersion is widely recognized as one of the most valuable aspects of intensive summer study. As Glen Cebulash, professor of art at Wright State University, explains, “One of

the great benefits of a summer program are the immersiveness and the intensity. Students who attend places like Chautauqua and Mount Gretna come away with the type of discipline they need to navigate careers in art. In addition, being among other equally talented and committed young artists is both challenging and inspiring.” At MGSA, this combination of focus, peer engagement, and sustained effort creates an environment in which students sharpen their technical skills while developing the habits of discipline and community that support long-term artistic growth.

Accessibility and affordability remain central to the school’s mission. MGSA maintains a scholarship program that supports students across income levels, including supply stipends for those with the greatest financial need. Tuition is intentionally aligned with comparable programs nationwide, while fundraising and donor support help cover the true cost of instruction, housing, and meals. The school has earned the trust of families, partner universities, and a growing national, and increasingly international, community of supporters.

A defining feature of MGSA is its connection to Gretna and the Campmeeting. The school owns and maintains three cottages within the Campmeeting and an additional cottage in the Heights. Stable housing is provided for students and faculty each summer. Living and working together in these cottages promotes collaboration, shared responsibility, and lasting relationships. Alumni frequently cite cottage life as a defining part of their experience, noting that the sense of community is as influential as the instruction itself.

Gretna’s landscape and character are inseparable from MGSA’s educational approach. The wooded setting, historic cottages, and walkable town create an environment uniquely suited to an art school embedded in its surroundings. While students occasionally travel beyond Gretna for urban painting experiences, most of their work centers on our town’s natural beauty and quiet complexity.

The Campmeeting community has played an essential role in MGSA’s success, offering early encouragement, ongoing support, and a welcoming spirit. In return, MGSA enriches Gretna’s cultural life through open studios, public lectures, pop-up exhibitions at the Hall of Philosophy, and opportunities to host students for meals.

As MGSA looks to the future, its focus remains steady: long-term stewardship, educational excellence, and continued integration within Gretna. Each summer brings new artists, fresh perspectives, and renewed energy, affirming MGSA’s role as a respected and welcome presence in the Campmeeting – and as a vital part of Gretna’s artistic tradition.

Please visit www.mgsoa.org for more information or contact Jay Noble at jnoble@mgsoa.org.

Proposed Changes to the MGCA Rules and Regulations and Bylaws

As discussed at their January 20, 2026, meeting, the MGCA Board of Managers is recommending a number of changes to the MGCA Rules and Regulations. The Board distributed a draft of revised Rules and Regulations to the Membership as a “first reading” with the January meeting materials. A “red-line” copy of the Rules and Regulations is posted on the MGCA website at [Draft Rules & Regulations Revisions](#).

Members are encouraged to review the proposed changes to the Rules and Regulations and submit their comments to the Board at Office@MtGretnaCampmeeting.org.

The Board is also recommending a change to the percentage of Voting Members that constitute a “quorum” for Membership Meetings. This change will require an amendment to Article V, Section 9, of the MGCA Bylaws as well as Membership approval. The proposed change to the Bylaws will be sent to all Members with the materials for the February Board of Managers Meeting and will be posted to the MGCA website in February.

The following timeline outlines the readings of the proposed changes to the Bylaws, as well as the date of the Special Membership Meeting during which Members will be asked to vote on the proposed Bylaws amendment:

Bylaw revisions

Draft Timeline

- 01/19 - Executive Committee edits presented to the Board at Working Session. Ask for other comments/edits/revisions.
- 02/12 - Final draft sent to Membership as part of February meeting packet.
- 02/16 - Executive Committee presents final draft to Board at Working Session.
- 02/17 - 1st Reading
- 02/20 - Special meeting announcement emailed to members
- 03/01 - Newsletter announces special meeting
- 03/17 - 2nd Reading - if no major changes made after 1st meeting.
- 04/01 - Formal announcement of the Special Meeting to Membership.
- 04/21 - Special meeting, Zoom only, to be held prior to the regular meeting of the Board of Managers, vote to be held via EasyHOA portals.



Photo Credit: Pat Wilmsen



Photo Credit: Marcie Lloyd



Photo Credit: Kevin C. Wells

Assessing Our Trees for the Future

Few things define Mount Gretna more than its trees. They frame our cottages and paths, provide shade in summer, and shape the natural character that draws so many of us to this place year after year. The MGCA Board of Managers has budgeted for, and authorized Bartlett Tree Experts to conduct a formal “tree study” in Campmeeting in 2026. A tree study is an important tool in caring for our landscape.

Bartlett’s certified arborists will focus on trees with a trunk diameter of six inches or greater, including trees on MGCA property as well as trees on our Members’ property. These mature trees have the greatest impact on the Campmeeting’s landscape. By concentrating on trees of this size, the study will bring attention where it matters most for safety and long-term tree health. During the assessment, the arborists will evaluate the tree’s overall condition, looking for signs of decay, damage, or structural weakness that may not be visible to the untrained eye.

Equally important, this study will help identify trees that can be preserved and supported. Early detection of stress or disease allows for treatment that can extend a tree’s life, improve its health, and prevent larger problems down the road. In many cases, tree studies help to save trees.

Plans are for Bartlett to conduct the 2026 study in the early spring, and we should receive results within a few months of its completion. The Board and Tree Committee will review the study and share the results with Members. Members will be advised if any of their trees need a treatment plan to ensure they are receiving proper nutrients to stay healthy.

Trees in Gretna are tied to our sense of place and memory. Decisions involving them are never taken lightly. When removals are recommended, they are generally limited to situations where a tree poses a safety risk or is no longer viable despite best efforts to preserve it. These recommendations are based on professional standards and are guided by a vow to balance safety with respect for the natural environment.

As always, Members are reminded to “leave the leaves” around their trees. Leaves are a natural mulch for trees that return nutrients, suppress weeds, insulate roots and provide a habitat for beneficial insects. In short, leaves are the best way to feed the green canopy that defines our community!



Photo Credit: Pat Brosious

Mardis Gras Stroll with Band Musicians

Celebrate Mardi Gras! Join us for a short musical stroll, step-off at 4:45 p.m., on Friday, February 13. (This is the Friday before Mardi Gras.) We'll start at the Mt. Gretna Heights Community Building and end at the Hideaway. We will arrive at the Hideaway around 5 p.m., in time for happy hour!

Bring your kazoo (or sing-along voice) and march with our kazoo brigade, the Krewe d'Kazoo. All are welcome. No experience necessary. We'll have some free kazoos, if you don't have one handy.

Kazoos and musical accompaniment provided by musicians from the Mount Gretna Marching Band. Thanks to Michelle Shay and the Mt. Gretna Heights for assisting! To join the Band or get on its mailing list go to MountGretnaMarchingBand.com.



Jazz and Blues after the Stroll!

Come to the Stroll. Dine at the Hideaway. Then finish the evening at the Mt. Gretna Fire Hall listening to the Rhythmic Groove featuring Rose Hudson – starting at 7 p.m.

The Rhythmic Groove plays jazz, blues, R&B, pop, and soul. This House Concert is hosted by the Mount Gretna Community Music Collective. Suggested donation \$15. [For more info, and to RSVP, click here.](#)

February Trash & Recycling Pick-Up



When snow and ice arrive in our corner of the woods, they can slow down more than just our morning walks. Trash pickup may be delayed when roads become slick or snow-covered. If winter weather impacts collection, updates will be posted on the TNT Sanitation website to keep everyone informed. Please visit www.TNTSanitation.com anytime. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Although Monday, February 16th, is a federal holiday, it is a business day for our trash collector, TNT Sanitation. **Regular trash and recycling collection will occur on Monday, February 16th.**

2026 events at the Mt. Gretna Fire Company

January 24 - **Pasta Dinner** - 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

February 7 - **Ground Hog Breakfast** - 8 am - 10 am, Grady @ 10.15

February 15 - **Bingo**. Doors open at 11 am - Games start at 1 pm, 20 Games

March 15 - **Bingo**. Doors open at 11 am - Games start at 1 pm, 20 Games

April 19 - **Bingo**. Doors open at 11 am - Games start at 1 pm, 20 Games

May 23 - **Pancake & Sausage Breakfast** -7:30 am -10:30 am

June 7 - **Bingo**. Doors open at 11 am - Games start at 1 pm, 20 Games

July 18 - **Community Picnic** at the Fire Hall 11 am - 2 pm

September 14 - **Wing Night @ Hideaway** 5 pm - 9 pm, Free Dozen Wings with Donation

September 26 - **Pig Roast** 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm \$25 All you can eat food, drinks

October 8 - **Fire Prevention with Lawn Fire Co.**

October 11 - **Bingo**. Doors open at 11 am - Games start at 1 pm, 20 Games

October 23 - **Halloween Parade** forms at the Jigger Shop 6:30 pm

November 1 - **Fall Buffet Breakfast** from 8:00 am - 11:00 am

November 14 - **Soup Cook Off** from 12:00 - 2:00 pm

December 12 - **Cookies with SANTA and Santa Shop** 10 am - 11:30 am



Please check our website: www.mtgretnafire.com or our facebook page for more information

They're always there for us – be there for them!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE
CLOSE TO HOME



**Mount Gretna United
Methodist Church
Collects Food and
Hygiene Donations
Monthly for Lebanon
County Christian
Ministries.**

**Drop Off Boxes or Bags
Weekdays From 9 AM to
12 PM. After Those
Hours, Leave Donations
by MGUMC's Front Door.**

**Countless Families Depend on the Food Bank for a Simple Holiday
Meal**

Rice (All Varieties, 1 lb. Bags or Boxes)
Whole Grain Pasta (All Varieties, 1 lb. Boxes Preferred)
Flour and Sugar (1 or 2 lb. Bags or Boxes)
Canned Fruit (15-Ounce Cans in Fruit Juice)
Canned Tuna, Chicken, Salmon (Approx. 9-Ounce Cans Preferred)
Chicken Salad and Tuna Salad Kits
Spaghetti Sauce (24-Ounce Cans)
Diced Tomatoes (24-Ounce Cans)
Boxed Cereal (Healthy Varieties with <6g of Sugar Per Serving)
Oatmeal (All Sizes and Varieties with <6g of Sugar Per Serving)
Ground Coffee (10-12 Ounce Bags or Tubs)
Tea Bags (All Varieties, Small Boxes Containing Approx. 20 Bags)
Assorted Seasonings
Salad Dressing
Olive Oil
Ketchup and Mustard
Mayonnaise
Soups (Low Sodium Preferred)

Toilet Paper
2-in-1 Shampoo/Conditioner
Men's & Women's Deoderant
Toothpaste (5-Ounce Tubes and Larger)
Children's Toothpaste
Children's Toothbrushes (No Adult Toothbrushes Please)
Pads & Tampons
Hand Soap
Dish Sponges
Dish Soap
Laundry Detergent

Monetary Donations Accepted
Checks Made Payable to LCCM or to MGUMC (note "LCCM Food
Bank" - Church combines all gifts into one check to LCCM).

Donate Through Mt. Gretna United Methodist Church or Drop Off
Directly at LCCM. For Hours, Visit www.lccm.us.

And the final photographs for our January photo album...



Submitted by Kevin C. Wells

Are You Connected to News & Info in Campmeeting?



On Facebook



Mount Gretna Campmeeting –
Click on Subscribe

Community Calendar

<https://www.mtgrettna.org/home>



Send your email address updates to:
Office@MtGretnaCampmeeting.org



Please visit and bookmark:
[mtgrettnacampmeeting.com](http://www.mtgrettnacampmeeting.com)