

LOCAL ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

CAROL WILKINSON



My work is primarily done in black and white using pen and ink on Bristol board. I love to make artistic challenges for myself using only line and dot.

I can draw very realistically as seen in Image #1, which is a portrait of my son James, but to do portraits the subject has to be very personal to me. Image #2 is a drawing from a photograph of amber glass grapes that were lit up with Christmas tree lights. I was fascinated with the shapes of the tonal values and the range of lights and darks. I really enjoyed creating this drawing.

In Image #3 I let my sarcastic side come out by drawing a series of circles and then put the faces of people who had been in the headlines over a two week period. Taking the faces out of context changes how you see the facial features and it really distorts the image. I then connected the circles with arms and hands.

Another theme in my work is how civilizations have stacked and staggered boxes to create living spaces. Image #4 is of Marrakech, Morocco. I was struck by the contrast between the filth and decay and the expensive rugs that

were hanging from the roofs as well as the hundreds of roof top satellite dishes. Most of my work is black and white and it reproduces very well. I will be selling prints on card stock in mats that are cut to standard frame sizes and will also have greeting cards made. The pieces shown here have been exhibited at either Cedarhurst Center for the Arts, in

Mt. Vernon, and/or the Tarble Art Center Drawing and Watercolor exhibit at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois.

I have a BFA in Art Education and an MS with a concentration in Art Education received from SIUC.

I taught Art at Mt. Vernon Twp. High School for 33 years retiring in 2004. Since my retirement I have been actively involved with the Independent Artists' Studio where I go two days a week and work on my drawings. I am also the chairperson of the docents at Cedarhurst



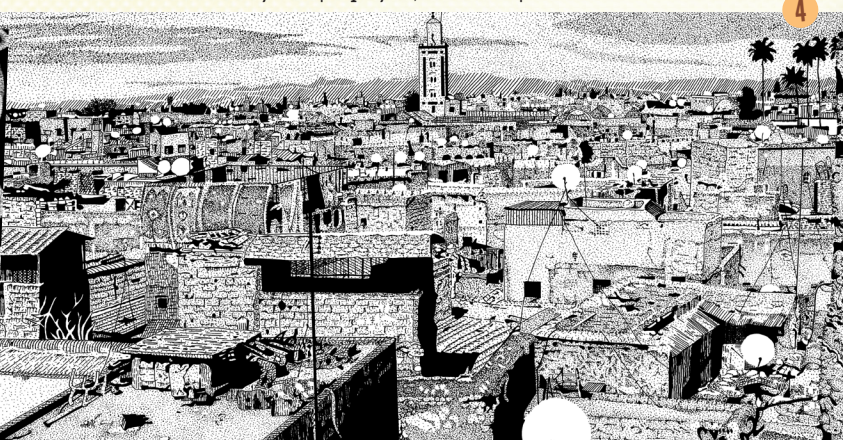
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Center for the Arts in Mt. Vernon, IL. I make arrangements for all of the docent led tours at Cedarhurst and help train new docents. As a member of the Sculpture Park Committee I help select and site new sculptures at Cedarhurst.

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7 BENEFITS OF LAUGHTER

LAUGHTER MAY INDEED BE THE BEST MEDICINE

April is National Humor Month—the perfect time to get the giggles, not only for an emotional lift, but to boost your physical health as well. Several studies have shown that laughter can cause physiological changes that improve your well-being. Have a good belly laugh and do your body (and mood) some good.

IT REDUCES STRESS. Laughter has been shown to decrease cortisol, epinephrine and adrenaline, hormones that are associated with increased muscle tension, elevated glucose levels, higher blood pressure and more.

IT INCREASES FEEL-GOOD HORMONES. Laughing increases the production of serotonin, endorphins and other neurotransmitters known to improve mood.

LAUGHING BOOSTS YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM. When you laugh, your body produces more white blood cells called lymphocytes, which kill or defend bacteria and viruses.

HUMOR IMPROVES COGNITIVE FUNCTION. Research as shown that students who were able to laugh while learning remembered the material longer and had higher test scores than those who did not.

LAUGHING HARD TONES YOUR ABS. You've heard people say, "My stomach hurts from laughing so hard." There's a reason for that. When you laugh, the muscles in your stomach expand and contract, similar to when you intentionally exercise your abs.

LAUGHTER HELPS YOUR HEART. When you laugh, blood flow increases and your blood vessels function better, which can help prevent cardiovascular problems.

AND IT RELAXES YOUR MUSCLES. Because laughter reduces stress hormones and increases feel-good hormones, it relaxes muscles from head to toe. A good hearty laugh may be the best remedy for tension.

IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE

- How to Use #Hashtags for Content Marketing Success
- How to Adopt a Shelter Pet
- Four Ways to Use Social Media to Grow Your Email List
- Five Dog Breeds That are Good with Children



→ HOW TO USE #HASHTAGS FOR CONTENT MARKETING SUCCESS ←

Hashtags are used on almost all major social networks now, but not always effectively. Do you know how to make the best use of hashtags when posting content for your brand? Here is a quick guide on how to use them successfully.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE HASHTAGS?

Think of them as keywords that can be used to organize messages social networks. They basically help with searching and grouping messages with given hashtags. Hashtags are preceded by the pound sign (#) and can be a word or a short phrase (e.g., #Hashtag or #ThisIsAHashtag).

WHO DEFINES HASHTAGS?

You do. You can place a pound (#) sign in front of any keyword in your message and turn them into hashtags. However, the power of

hashtags comes from other people using the same keyword(s) so that by clicking on a hashtag, you can get a group of other messages on that topic. You can do a quick search for keywords prior to posting your message to see which hashtags are popular or trending.

HOW CAN I USE HASHTAGS?

Here are some typical uses of hashtags:

- Express emotions: #surprised #frustrated #grateful #amazed
- Identify places, brands or events: #Hawaii #WeAreIntoArt #FallFest
- Make recommendations: #MustRead #MustWatch #NowPlaying
- Connect with like-minded individuals: #DogLovers #RoboRAMS

WHY SHOULD I USE HASHTAGS?

Two reasons: To increase exposure and organize your online content.

4 WAYS TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO GROW YOUR EMAIL LIST

Email marketing remains one of the most popular and valuable forms of marketing—but even your best email marketing efforts won't accomplish much if you don't have a good list of subscribers.

You're probably already collecting email addresses offline, and you may even have a sign-up form on your website or blog. But did you also know that social media can help you grow your list as well? Here are four simple ways to leverage the power of social media.

1. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SOCIAL SHARING.

Always repost your email content on social media to extend your reach. Any shares and re-tweets of your email campaigns open up the possibility of gaining new subscribers.

2. TRY A CONTEST OR PROMOTION ON FACEBOOK.

Run a campaign with a link to join your email list by offering the first 50 subscribers a discount, special promotion, or another

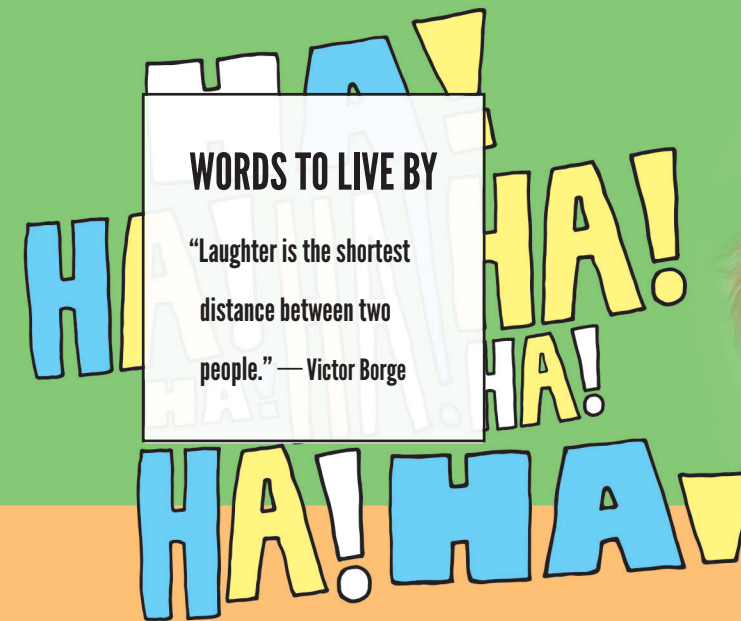
incentive. Also, several Facebook apps allow you to capture emails right on your Facebook page. It requires a little bit of integration but it isn't too complicated. Almost every email marketing system has its own Facebook app.

3. USE TWITTER'S LEAD GENERATION CARDS.

Twitter has a lead generation option, which is a dream come true for direct marketers. Subscribers don't have to leave Twitter to be added to your newsletter, and they can join your list with just the click of a button. You do need to sign up for Twitter Ads, but using the Lead Generation Cards is free.

4. ADD SOCIAL BUTTONS TO YOUR EMAILS.

When you send out emails, make sure you include buttons linking to all of your social media profiles. Driving your existing list to share on social media may seem backwards, but because your existing email subscribers already enjoy your content, they're more likely to share it with their social networks, expanding your reach.



HOW TO ADOPT A SHELTER PET

FIVE DOG BREEDS THAT ARE GOOD WITH CHILDREN

1. Boxer
2. Old English Sheepdog
3. Labrador Retriever
4. Golden Retriever
5. Mastiff

Spring is a popular time to add a furry friend to your brood, and adopting from a shelter is a fantastic way to go. Most counties have a rescue shelter or Humane Society with a constant influx of unwanted or abandoned animals in need of some TLC, so before you start calling breeders or pet stores, check your local shelter first.

Here are five things to consider before you begin the adoption process:

- Choose a pet whose natural traits fit your lifestyle. If you lead a busy lifestyle, choose a pet that doesn't need a lot of attention. If you want a lap dog, don't adopt a Border Collie.

- Spend time with an animal before you make a decision. If you're looking for a dog, observe how it relates to you. Often a dog will actually "choose" you if you take the time to notice. Look for an animal that's curious and alert but not fearful or jumpy. When approached, the dog should accept your advances.

- If you have other pets at home, look for one that interacts well with other animals. Avoid those that display aggression or extreme fear. A general rule of thumb when bringing a new dog into a home with an existing dog: Choose one that is younger and of the opposite sex.

- Take the whole family to the shelter. Sometimes a dog will respond differently to different people. You don't want to wait till you get home to find out that your new pet doesn't like kids.

- Bring your checkbook. Adopting a pet from a shelter is not free, though it's typically cheaper than what you'd pay a breeder or a pet store. Expect to pay a little more for younger puppies and for animals that have been spayed or neutered.

One last thought—25–30% of dogs in shelters are purebreds, so you don't have to go to a breeder or a pet store to get a pedigreed pooch. In fact, many shelters will note your preference and contact you if the breed you want comes in.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Six to eight million pets end up in shelters each year. Half of those will probably not be adopted.