

DID YA KNOW...

In the late 70's word began to circulate that *Gallery* should be discontinued. Rev. Bill Gold, a major supporter for the event, left Richmond in 1974. The project had a few bad years, believed to be due to some leadership conflicts and poor management policies. It was obvious that if *Gallery* was going to succeed an updated business structure would need to be applied.

At this point, four active members of the church became involved in reorganizing the show. Elinor Kuhn, Donna Seldon, Barbara Mabe and Martha Woodbridge went back to Eleanor Lawrence's policy that in order for *Gallery* to be a success "Planning, manning and concluding the show is like any other business enterprise."

This leadership quad, that became known as *The Steel Magnolias*, adopted a sink or swim attitude. A volunteer training program was created. Advertising and artist invitations took on a more professional appearance. Display areas were enlarged and enhanced for viewer appeal. That year sales tripled, the next year sales hit \$10,000. Anna Stephens introduced computer accountability systems for tracking inventory and sales, attendance records and volunteer time. *The Steel Magnolias* were on a roll.....they began a buyer's night, added another day to the show, started a boutique, sold potted plants and hanging baskets.

The 80's brought new ideas and new talent: Trudy Atkin and Mike Coleman took joint chairs. The position of Treasurer was filled by Sally Youngs. Ann Coleman and Del George were added to the team. With each new project, member volunteers added talent and support to its success and profitability.

2015's *Gallery* Directors: Suzanne Jenkins, Howard Fabry, Beth Miksovic, Evaline Jones, and Laura Hastings, the Committee Co-Chairs and a crew of enthusiastic volunteers have put together an outstanding show for Richmond's art lovers. Congratulations are due for a job well done.

Pat Vaughn