

## 2015 Year End Class Report

By Emie Stewart

2015 was another outstanding year for AGMC's education program. During 2015, we offered approximately :

- 40 workshops;
- 12 ongoing, multi-week classes;
- 35 cabbing classes;
- 8 casting labs;
- 9 enamel labs; and
- 7 classes taught by Jurgen Maerz (5 weekends).

Over 400 club members participated in one or more of these. Over 40 club members donated more than 2000 hours in 2015 to teach these classes and workshops.

These classes and workshops included faceting, silversmithing, fused glass, special glass techniques, enameling, stone setting, pearl knotting, special metalsmithing techniques such as keum boo and granulation, making steel stamps, tool making, wire work, and precious metal clay, along with special lapidary materials such as Ethiopian opal, turquoise, and amber. In addition, we had several members step forward to become new instructors and share their interest and skills with the club.

For the third year in a row, AGMC hosted master goldsmith Jurgen Maerz for several advanced silversmithing workshops which included advanced fabrication, professional finishing, stone setting, professional tips and tricks, and torch control. His classes are always sold out. He has been scheduled for 4 additional workshops in 2016. Scheduling in advance helps minimize the impact on other classes. Mr. Maerz's classes are at no cost to the club: students pay Mr. Maerz's instructor fee, which covers his time and travel expenses, in addition to the usual AGMC building usage fee. In fact, several new members have joined AGMC specifically to take classes with Mr. Maerz! In addition, his classes enable our 12+ silversmithing instructors to continue learning new skills that they then pass on to their students.

I am very pleased to see the casting group and the enameling group continue to grow. Many of those labs have been completely full. The casting labs have expanded to 3 days in order to allow the students time for their wax work, including spruing their wax models. In addition, AGMC has a new member who is very proficient in casting and who will be teaching several workshops in various casting techniques. The wire work classes have also proven to be very popular, and I look forward to seeing them continue in 2016.

AGMC's education program generates over 50% of the club's annual income, and is critical for both getting and keeping members, and for the club's financial health. As the club's operating expenses have continued to increase over the years, we have been able to increase our class offerings to generate additional income to cover those expenses without raising the \$3/hour building usage fee. However, the current classroom is in use most week nights and weekends. We can no longer continue to increase the number of classes without additional space.

In July 2015, the membership approved the construction of a new classroom. This new classroom will effectively add an additional 7 days each week to the schedule! The electrical work has been completed, and the club is in the process of obtaining permits for the remainder of the work. Once the new classroom is finished, we will be able to drastically increase the number of classes, ***provided that members volunteer to teach.*** I am hopeful that these additional classes and workshops will generate enough income that we will not have to raise the building usage fee.

If you are interested in teaching, I have put information and a teaching request form on the club's website at [www.agemclub.org](http://www.agemclub.org). It is located under the Classes tab. I am also including it in the class information that is emailed to the membership each month. If you are interested in teaching, please contact me and I'll be happy to help you.

In conclusion, 2016 will be my final year as Class Supervisor for AGMC. I have enjoyed developing and expanding AGMC's education program over the past few years. I've accomplished the goals I set when I was first elected to this position, and I am looking forward to 2016. I plan to spend the next few months developing a succession plan for a smooth transition at end of this year that will hopefully minimize disruption to our classes. It is critical that the classes continue to generate income for the club so that we don't have to raise the building usage fee. If education is near and dear to your heart like it is mine, let me know if you are interested in helping with AGMC's education program. I will be looking for volunteers to mentor during the year so that they can hit the ground running if elected for 2017.

Thank you to everyone who so generously donates their time and talents to teach classes, workshops, and labs at AGMC. You are the reason our club is so full of energy and life! I want to also thank Jesse Baum and Stephanie Makatura for their assistance in preparing this report.