

Bulletin

What's Inside

Page 2		Flourishing Workshop
Page 4		Bancroft Library Tour
Page 5		New Council Member
Page 6		Council Minutes
Page 7		Membership
Page 8		Calendar and Colophon
Page 8		In Memoriam

Number 161
December 2025



FOC Council Members

President Evelyn Eldridge	Vice President Elena Caruthers
Treasurer Dean Robino	Secretary Michael Starkman
Council Members Fred Jun Raoul Martinez	Ann Marie Foley Katie Leavens Martha Slavin
Alphabet Editor Carl Rohrs	Bulletin Editor Nancy Noble



Holiday Greetings penned by Cassandra Wilson

Photos from the FOC Holiday Party are available in the Color Version:

Bulletin in Color

To view the *Bulletin* in color: please visit the FOC website under Publications:
<https://www.friendsofcalligraphy.org/pages/publications.html>

Dear Friends,

I hope you're tucked in somewhere warm and cozy, and that your hands are all limbered up, because here we are in the middle of the winter holiday season, and there are so many opportunities for lettering—nametags on gifts, writing and addressing greeting cards, labels on food at festive get togethers, and writing thank you notes, all good ways to practice. I hope you're using lots of color and fancy flourishing, and using any new lettering styles that you might have learned in recent classes.

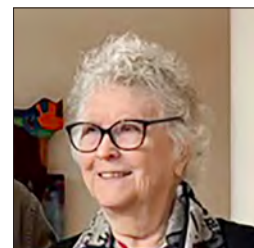
We have a wonderful lineup teachers again for 2026, some on Zoom, and some in person. Be sure that you check out upcoming classes, which are listed on the Classes page of our website: www.friendsofcalligraphy.org.

In September, the Letterform Archive in San Francisco hosted a visit by several FOC members. Rob Saunders showed a selection of calligraphic materials from their archives. Check out their impressive online archive at www.letterformarchive.org.

The FOC Council met for our regular November meeting, in person at Raoul Martinez's home. While Zoom is convenient, it isn't the same as meeting in person, and it was great to see everyone again. An added treat was that we lived up to our reputation as foodies with a marvelous feast.

Winter might be my favorite season—I love being able to dress in layers or wear cozy sweaters and the colorful scarves that my daughter has knitted for me. I'm sending you all wishes that you, too, stay warm, especially your calligraphy hands!

xxx ooo *Evelyn*



Flourishing Workshop with Katie Leavens

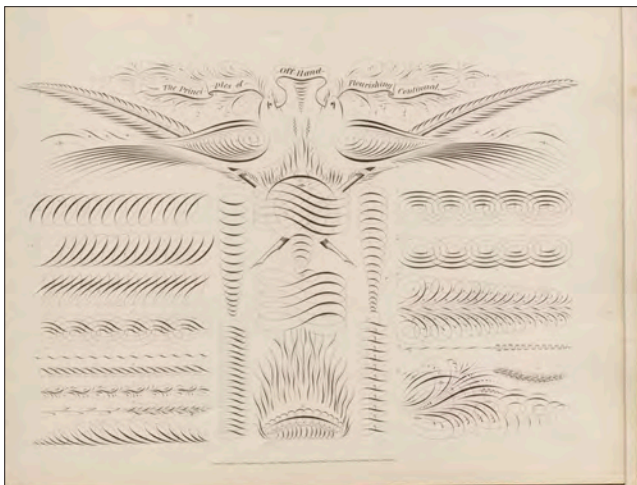
By Joan Passarelli

On the last weekend in October, eleven FOC members came to the Letterform Archive in San Francisco to learn about flourishing from instructor Katie Leavens.

Katie, an illustrator and calligrapher with extensive background in design, first disabused us of some beliefs we might have had, often perpetrated by social media: that there are only certain defined ways to flourish each letter, that flourishing is done quickly, and that calligraphers can just throw off flourishes freehand. Actually, she explained, nearly all flourishes are designed carefully, through many iterations, and then traced for the final version.

To draw free-flowing shapes, warmup is key. "Warm up your muscles, warm up your brain," said Katie at the beginning of both days. "Get in the body-and-head-space." We started our practice with big, gentle circles, ovals, and curves, moving from the shoulder, and using lots of space and paper. Although some classic calligraphers worked by suspending the arm over the paper, without touching it except for the pen point, we didn't have to emulate that ideal. Katie provided small glassine envelopes for us to rest our hands on as needed to help us achieve a smooth glide even while touching the paper.

Throughout the two full days of the workshop, Katie shared historical examples, from Van de Velde in 17th-century Netherlands through 20th-century signature writing. In her extensive class handout, she also isolated elements from them for us to study and practice, like spirals, ribbons, and direction changes. She regularly gave us time to try making and combining those shapes ourselves.



In one particularly helpful exercise, she provided a couple of pages of words she had lettered in different hands, but with the ascenders and descenders unfinished. We traced those words as a starting point and then built out our own flourishes from them.

Using copious sheets of newsprint and tracing paper, we iterated over and over, cultivating a playful, "what-if" attitude. Katie circulated among the students, always finding something positive to point out before making suggestions for improvement.

Another useful session was on analyzing flourishes—first historical examples, and then our own. We used colored pencils to outline curves, find their tangents, and shade the areas within them, which helped us develop our own ability to assess the weight and balance of each part of the flourish.



Although most of the historical examples had been done with pointed nibs, Katie reminded us that many calligraphers have successfully flourished with broad-edged ones as well. She shared this pro tip for flourishing with a broad edge: After writing your letter without the flourish, come back later with a flexible broad-edged nib one size smaller. Start from within the letter you have and go out from there to make your flourish. With the smaller nib, it will be easier to trace the curves, and the width you achieve when you press harder on the second nib will be about equal to the width of the "thicks" in your original word.

On Sunday, Letterform Archive director Rob Saunders popped in and invited us to a show-and-tell session. He pulled wonderful examples of flourishing from the collection and introduced us to them. An original copy of the *Universal Penman* and a



katie's workshop

Continued

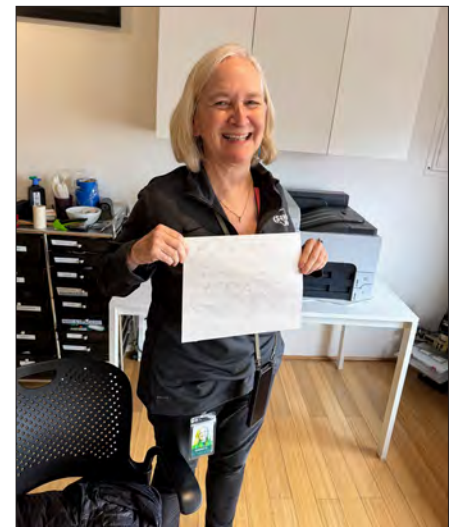
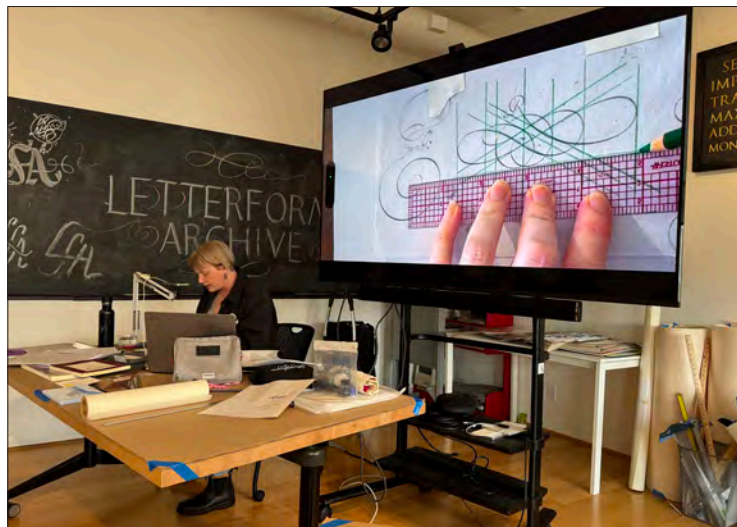
manuscript from Van de Velde himself were among the class's favorites.

In flourishing, perfection isn't the goal. "We should embrace the humanness of pen and ink," said Katie. And even as we studied beautiful flourishing from the past, Katie encouraged us not to revere it too much but to make it our own. "Think, 'what if I did something different?'" she said with a wink.

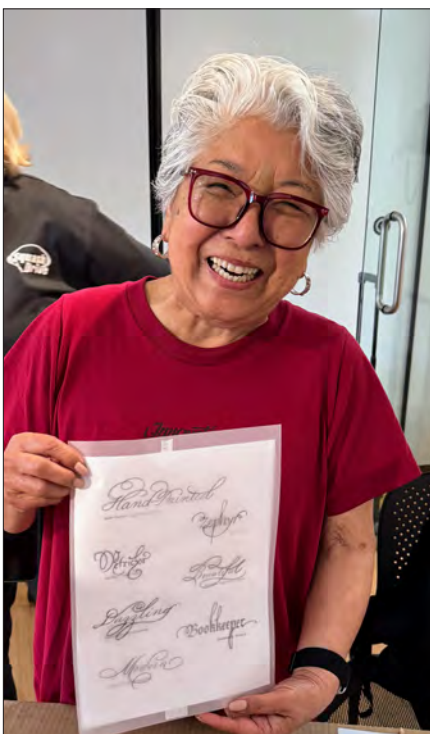
Sign up for future FOC classes at <https://www.friendsofcalligraphy.org/pages/classes.html>.

To learn more about the Letterform Archive and schedule a visit, go to <https://letterformarchive.org>.

To learn more about Katie Leavens, go to kleavens.com.



Above and top right: Katie demonstrating her flourishing techniques. Right: Sarah Cortes sharing her work. Bottom left: Dorothy Yuki showing her finished page. Right: Classmates with Katie Leavens, fifth from left.



Manuscript visit to UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library

By Sarah Lewis Cortes

When calligraphy master Francesco de Castello woke before dawn to start his delicate pen strokes at the first sunlight, far away at the Benedictine monastery of San Sisto, in Piacenza, Italy, in 1474, 10,000 KM away from San Francisco, no one in Europe had even heard of America. 550 years later, 12 lucky FOC members travelled only a few short miles to the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley, to spend an afternoon learning from Francesco's lavishly inked *Antiphonarium Officii* manuscript for the choir.



Antiphonarium Officii, Francesco de Castello, 1474. Part of a set of lavishly illuminated choir books commissioned for the Benedictine monastery of San Sisto, Piacenza, Italy.

Thanks to FOC member Chris McDonald, an archivist at the Bancroft Library who worked with us to facilitate the visit, we viewed over a dozen original manuscripts from among the Library's treasures. Selected for a range



of calligraphic scripts, expert hands, exceptional illumination or illustration, and historic and literary interest, the manuscripts

featured outstanding examples of Textura, Bâtarde, Italic, Carolingian and other scripts. Several of us had just finished Raoul Martinez's recent FOC Textura class, and he led us in placing some of the manuscripts in the context of exemplars he had used for class.



1450-1475, Book of Hours, Rouen, France. Textura script.

While the Bancroft, like many libraries, has digitized a fraction of its collections, most are only partly digitized. Many volumes remain entirely digitally unavailable. From observing methods of pricking the vellum or parchment to create lines to guide the calligrapher in the scriptorium, to the presence of actual ruled lines faintly visible, the visit reminded us of the advantages of viewing manuscripts in person. For another example, amazingly, hidden faces revealed themselves in Francesco de Castello's subtle majuscules, when viewed carefully up close.



1450 Book of Hours Rouen, France Detail

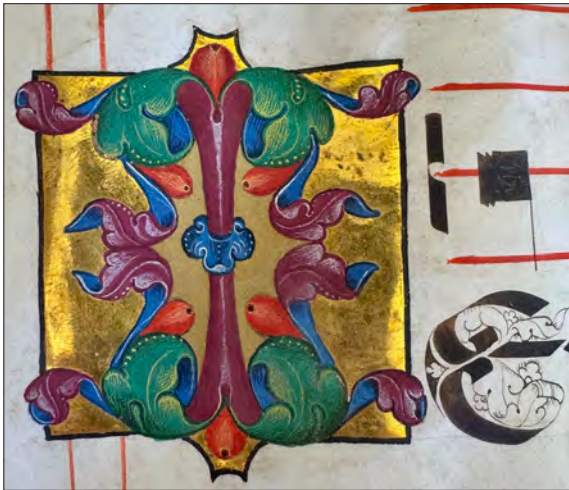
The centuries and thousands of miles separating us from the original calligraphers, illuminators and bookbinders vanished as we turned the pages of French, Latin, and Italian classics of literature, as well as sacred and musical texts. The nuances of individual scripts and hands came to life in an almost 1000-year-old volume in Old French: *Roman de Lancelot*, *La quête del Saint Graal* (Quest for the Holy Grail); *La mort de Roi Artur* (Death of King

Arthur). We were also able to view a 1450 manuscript of *Li Romans de la Rose, ou, L'art d'Amors*, a medieval classic by Guillaume de Lorris (c. 1230 AD) in Old French, in Bâtarde script.



1450-1475, Book of Hours, Rouen, France. Textura script.

The proximity of these exceptional manuscripts among the treasures of the Bancroft Library Special Collections provided an opportunity for FOC calligraphers and book artists to study and find inspiration for our current work, from these firsthand originals. The Bancroft holds hundreds of manuscripts, incunabula, and rare books, only a fraction of which we were able to view in a single afternoon. Fortunately, the library has been willing to welcome groups from time to time for study, research, and simply enjoying great works.



Antiphon I Majuscule Detail

At 4PM, we reluctantly closed the Antiphonarium and other volumes, spilled out into the afternoon sun near the Campanile at Berkeley, stepped back into the 21st century, and headed home, with new inspiration for our next FOC classes. FOC will continue to organize visits to other collections of rare manuscripts in the Bay Area, especially concurrent with 2026 FOC classes and workshops.

Note: Additional Images to the right and on Pages 6 & 7

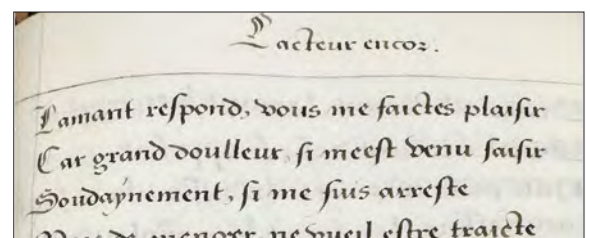
New Council Member Ann Marie Foley



What got me interested in calligraphy was a love of drawing and art, which moved into a love of lettering. Still now, I'll comment to a friend, "Oh, look at that delicious G!" Slowing down to focus on the shape of an A was, and is, such a pleasure. In college, I penned two wedding programs for roommates, who were brave enough to enjoy my self-taught Italic.

After moving to California from the midwest, I was lucky to take classes with the dear and fabulous Carla Tenret. I was a long-time student of hers on Monday nights. A student who was very inconsistent with doing her homework! I learned, on the occasions that I did my homework, that an amazing thing happens when you practice—you get better!

I've taken FOC classes over the years, loving all the teachers and especially enjoy Trivial Pursuits where we move from table to table, learning and soaking up the creativity of so many talented teachers and FOC members who also love the shape of an A! It's this sense of community that moved me to volunteer as the co-chair for the FOC 50TH Anniversary celebrations committee. I was delighted to use my organizational skills in service of FOC—this terrific, volunteer-run organization promoting the study and practice of calligraphy. And now, I'll see how I may serve FOC as a Council Member. Perhaps I'll even do some calligraphy practice!



French: Les deus amans de Lombardie, Normandy, 1500

Friends of Calligraphy Council Meeting Minutes

Sunday, 13 July, 2025
Starting time: 1:20 PM

Attending

Laura Bernabei, Elena Caruthers, Evelyn Eldridge, Ann Marie Foley, Fredi Juni, Katie Leavens, Raoul Martinez, Dean Robino, Michael Starkman. Guests: Meredith Klein, Nancy Noble, Dorothy Yuki. Excused: Martha Slavin

Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2025: Moved and approved. May 18, 2025 on AGM. Moved and approved.

Welcome

Evelyn thanked Laura, who was stepping down from the council, and welcomed Ann Marie, who was stepping in.

Reports

Fiftieth Anniversary
Ann Marie: The year of festivities, remembrances, and demonstrations has been a resounding success. The committee's penultimate meeting will be on Monday, July 14.

Membership

Meredith: 2024–25
Renewed: Paid: 607, Honorary: 5, Honorary Spouse: 2, New: 83, TOTAL: 697 – up 1 from last year. 2025–2026
Estimated Membership Totals as of July 13, 2025. Renewed — Paid: 308, Honorary: 7, Honorary Spouse: 1, New: 7, TOTAL: 323 compared to 432 at this point last year. Meredith announced she will step down as Membership Secretary after this year. Everyone expressed tremendous gratitude for her amazing work in this role over so many years and grappled with how to manage membership without her. Dean, Evelyn, Raoul, Fredi, Ann Marie, Meredith to discuss how to go forward.

Treasurer's Report

Dean: Projected budget for 2025–2026 moved and approved. Transaction Report for April–June moved and approved. The budget for expenses for the *50th Anniversary Cookbook* was unanimously approved in email in May.

Workshop Committee

2025: Suzanne Moore – Summer Workshop; Katie Leavens – Flourishing, October, Letterform Archive
2026: Marina Soria–January, Gabriela Soba–February, Kathi Milici – April, Decorated Versals, David McGrail, – May, Nina Tran – Gothic Cursive, Nancy Hays Hills – September, Dorothy Yuki – Fall: Cut It Out.

Classes

Katie: Katie's English Roundhand class is in progress at Fort Mason. Meredith's Book of Kells class will be online, starting August 12.

Social Media

Katie: Views are up on both Facebook and Instagram. New "FOC Remembers" and "FOC Online" postings will resume in September to make time and room for Kalligraphia postings this summer. The committee will explore posting part of the FOC monthly calendar on social media.

Publications and Mailings

Mailings—Meredith: Envelopes for future mailings have been purchased. rgKatie will create the cover and alphabet initials for the next Membership Directory. **Bulletin** Nancy: Elena created the masthead for the last *Bulletin* and Suzanne Moore will create the next. The next *Bulletin* will be ten pages to accommodate the minutes from multiple Council meetings.

Alphabet—Meredith: Alphabet vol. 51, no. 1 will include a feature on Kalligraphia 2025.

Web Administrator

Raoul will research renaming the new FOC Bluesky account to Friends of Calligraphy.org.

Lecture Committee

Evelyn: John Prestianni – September, Suzanne Moore – March.

Trivial Pursuits

Evelyn: The coordinators for this past Trivial Pursuits, Evelyn, Nancy, and Fredi, will meet with next year's coordinators, Cassandra Wilson and Maya Togashi, on Saturday, July 19.

Events

Kalligraphia – Meredith & Katie, co-chairs: Intake and installation went smoothly. The reception was well attended. Jody Meese, Kestrel Montes, and Laura did a great job with the refreshments. The demos are going well. Attendance is increasing week to week. Photos are posted on social media. The exhibit checklist has been posted to FOC's events page, and there will be a link to it on Facebook, with the walk through pictures.

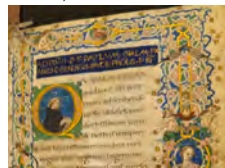
New Business

San Francisco Pen Show August 29–31, 2025, San Francisco Westin Airport Hotel. An email will be sent to Bay Area members to recruit a coordinator. Stanford Green Library visit. Katie will assess interest for this visit.

Adjourned: 4:13 PM.

Unanimous approval.

Edited for Publication



Almi viri Francisci Senesis vita Florence 1450

Friends of Calligraphy Annual General Meeting Minutes

Sunday, 28 September, 2025
Starting time: 1:20 PM

Attending:

Elena Caruthers, Evelyn Eldridge, Ann Marie Foley, Fredi Juni, Dean Robino, Michael Starkman. Guests: Meredith Klein, Nancy Noble. Excused: Raoul Martinez, Katie Leavens, Martha Slavin

Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2025 Moved and approved.

Reports

Fiftieth Anniversary
Ann Marie: A final report from the Fiftieth Anniversary Committee will come later.

Membership

Meredith: 2025–2026
Membership Totals (as of September 28, 2025)
Renewed (paid): 559, Honorary: 7, Honorary Spouse: 1, New: 17, TOTAL: 584. Meredith asked for a moment of silence to remember FOC member Beth Regardz, who died last Spring, Merritt Cutten, who shared a membership with his spouse Barbara Cutten, honorary member Claude Dieterich A., and Helen Fung's husband Wayne Fung. Meredith forwarded a video from Deanna Nim to the Social Media Committee of Ward Dunham cutting bamboo pens.

Treasurer's Report

Dean: Transaction Report moved and approved.

Workshop Committee

Elena: 2026: Marina Soria – End of January, Gabriela Soba – February, Kathi Milici – April, Decorated Versals, David McGrail – Summer Workshop, Nina Tran – Gothic Cursive, Nancy Hills – September, Dorothy Yuki – Fall: Cut It Out.

Classes

Katie: Meredith's online Book of Kells class was a success. Raoul's Textura class is ongoing in Albany. Rick Paulus's Calligrapher's Process class starts on November 1.

The 2026 class schedule will be emailed mid-November.

Social Media

Katie: Instagram: The top post was the Honorary Member Certificates, followed by Fredi Juni's Featured Member post and Carl Rohrs's Kalligraphia demonstration. On Facebook, Fredi's member post received the most views, followed by the Honorary Member Certificates and Carl Rohrs's demonstration. FOC's YouTube channel received 750 views; the most popular was Izzy Pludwinski's lecture, "The Hebrew Letter," followed by "The Brushwork of Kazuaki Tanahashi" and "Copperplate at the Harrison."

Publications and Mailings

Mailings: Meredith: The October 16 mailing will include *Alphabet 51:1*, *Bulletin 160*, and the Trivial Pursuits flyer. **Bulletin** – Nancy: *Bulletin 160* will include memorials for Claude Dieterich, Beth Regardz, Bettine Kuh, Merritt Cutten, and Dr. Wayne Fung, and articles about the Suzanne Moore workshop, FOC's participation in the San Francisco Pen Show and, in print, a brief introduction to a long article by Elisabeth Nisperos that appears in full in the online version. Michael Starkman penned the masthead. Going forward, on determination of the *Bulletin* editor, articles can be introduced in print and appear in their entirety online without additional approval.

Minutes continued...

Alphabet – Meredith (for Carl): *Alphabet* vol. 51, no. 1 includes features on Joan Iversen Goswell and Kalligraphia 2025. The next issue will feature a memorial article about Claude Dieterich A.

Web Administrator
Raoul: FOC continues to have the fifth highest number of followers among calligraphy organizations on Instagram with 4,648 followers and on Facebook with 5,070.

Lecture Committee
Evelyn: John Prestianni October 15

Events
Kalligraphia –Meredith: Over 100 people came to the opening reception and Andrea Grimes counted 408 attendees at the Kalligraphia demonstrations and presentations during the run of the exhibition. Photos and a video have been posted to FOC's Facebook page. The entire council congratulated and thanked Meredith and Katie.

Letterform Archive
Dean: FOC's visit to the Letterform Archive was a great success. Rob Saunders presented a spectacular spread of calligraphic materials, from Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts through contemporary books and broadsides, including pieces from Thomas Ingmire, Alan Blackman, and William Stewart.

San Francisco Pen Show Martha's report: FOC members volunteered to create calligraphic bookmarks August 29–31, at the San Francisco Westin Airport Hotel. The crowd was huge and there was tremendous demand – 1614 requests were received.

Retreat
Meredith: In August, Meredith learned that

Mercy Center will close at the end of October 2025. So far, no suitable new venue has surfaced. At this juncture, it is uncertain whether there will be a retreat in 2026.

New Business
Can Nonprofit Boards Vote by Email? – Dean: there was a preliminary discussion of the California Code on regulations for board votes by email, all members of the board must vote and the decisions must be unanimous, with no abstentions or objections. There will be a vote on procedures at the November 16 council meeting.

Priorities for FOC Donations to the Harrison Collection
Michael: Michael, Dean, and Laura Bernabei will meet with Judy Detrick, Carl Rohrs, and Andrea Grimes to discuss priorities for FOC donations to the Harrison Collection.

Proposal to purchase Suzanne Moore's Kalligraphia book for the Harrison Collection – Meredith solicited contributions to buy Suzanne Moore's book for the Harrison Collection. Moved and approved that FOC donate a small remainder to complete the purchase.

Adjourned: 4:02 PM.
Unanimous approval.

Edited for Publication



*Antiphon D Majuscule
Detail*



*Antiphon C Majuscule
Detail*

membership

Message from Membership Secretary

This is just a reminder that we are looking for someone to be the Membership Secretary for next year. A committee is researching various software programs to simplify this important job. If anyone is interested, or would like to know more, please email me at gkle@sbcglobal.net.

Love,

Meredith

Welcome, New Members!

Friends of Calligraphy extends a warm welcome to our newest member, Yvonne Novak. We're so glad you joined!

Gratitude

Members support FOC in many different ways. At this time, we express our gratitude to the members who have recently renewed or joined at the patron, sustaining and supporting levels:

Sustaining

Julia Roy

Supporting

Kathy McNicholas

Mail Crew Thank Yous

October 16 Mailing—Grazie Mille:
Laura Bernabei, Crew, International, PO Duty
JoAnn Brand
Bonnie Lai
Vicky Lee
Ilyana Leveque
Dean Robino, Crew, International
Meredith Klein, Czarina, International, PO Duty

November 13 mailing—Muchas Gracias:
Laura Bernabei, Crew, International, PO Duty
JoAnn Brand
Elena Caruthers
Meredith Klein, Crew, International, PO Duty
Linda Kruger
Dean Robino, Crew, International
Mary Ann Wight, Czarina

Thank you for both mailings to JoAnn Brand, who calls the crews, and to Georgianna and Andy Greenwood, for generously letting us use Georgianna's studio.

FOC Classes: SignUps Open Mid-November

Date	Time	Event	Details
March 10, 17, 24, April 7, 14, 21, 28, 2026	Seven Tuesday Nights 6:30 PM – 9 PM	Italic Meredith Klein	Zoom
May 26, June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, July 7, 2026	Seven Tuesday Nights 6:30 PM – 9 PM	Copperplate Raoul Martinez	In-Person: Albany Senior Center
August 1, 8, 15, 22, 2026	Four Saturdays 10:00 AM – 1 PM	Versals: Old & New Rick Paulus	Zoom
September 8, 15, 22, 29, 2026	Four Tuesday Nights 6:30 PM – 9 PM	Brush Script Katie Leavens	In-Person: Fort Mason
October 3, 10, 17, 24, 2026	Four Saturdays 10:00 AM – 1 PM	Beginning Calligraphy Judy Detrick	Zoom

FOC Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Event	Details
January 18, 2026	1:00 PM – 4:00 PM	FOC Council Meeting	Zoom
March 15, 2026	1:00 PM – 4:00 PM	FOC Council Meeting	Nancy Noble's Home
April 16, 2026	1:00 PM – 4:00 PM	FOC Council Meeting	Zoom
May 19, 2026	1:00 PM – 4:00 PM	FOC Council Meeting — AGM	SF Main Public Library Larkin Street

Colophon

FOC Bulletin #161 — Masthead: Grendl Lofkvist. Sumner Stone's Davanti & Appia; Large Side Column Type: Grendl Lofkvist's Unrepentant Uncial; Hermann Zapf's Optima for Headings. Adobe InDesign and Photoshop used for the layout and image editing. Proofreading: Kris Nevius. Photos: Sarah Lewis Cortes, Joan Passarelli and Dean Robino.

Copy Deadline

Deadline for articles for Bulletin 162: February 9, 2026. Please submit articles or questions to: Nancy Noble: nrnoble@sfsu.edu

Friends of Calligraphy

is a non-profit society of people interested in calligraphy and related arts. Membership is \$40.00 annually, and open to amateurs and professionals. Mailing address: POBox 42519, San Francisco, CA 94142;

FOC Website: www.friendsofcalligraphy.org

FOC Facebook: www.facebook.com/FriendsofCalligraphy

Instagram: www.instagram.com/friendsofcalligraphy

FOC Facebook & Instagram

Check our Facebook and Instagram pages. You do NOT need a Facebook or Instagram account to do so. Our pages are open to all. At the bottom of the FOC Web Page, click either icon: the F in a blue square, or the little red square camera outline.

Address Change

If your contact information changes: address, phone or email, please send the new information to: Membership Secretary: Meredith Klein, 707 Spokane Avenue, Albany, CA 94706; 510.527.0434; or gkle@sbcglobal.net.

In Memoriam Sr. Susannah K. Malarkey

1930 – 2025

It is with sadness that we mark the peaceful passing of Susannah on November 22, a week after her 95th birthday, at the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael convent house. Many of us knew Susannah through her position as director, along with Harriet Hope, of the Santa Sabina Retreat Center from 1983 to 2010. Her vision, acknowledging and honoring spirituality from diverse sources, "beyond denomination," transformed the center into a place where our retreats could flourish over the years. She was a remarkable woman who did much good in her 95 years, teaching, sharing her skills, caring for those in need, opening her heart to those within and without her community. She touched many of our lives, and even those who did not know her but who came to Santa Sabina in later years experienced her vision.

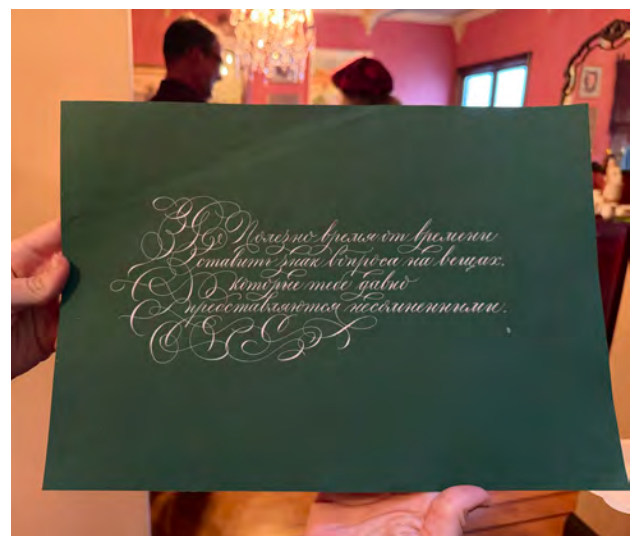
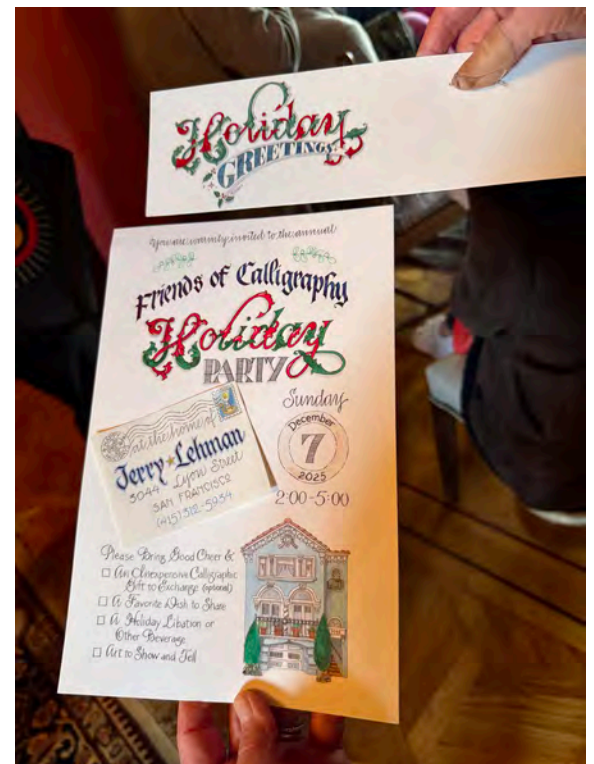


Above: Harriet Hope, paper maker extraordinaire, with Susannah.

Below: Susannah with Carla Tenret, Retreat Mom for many years.



for holiday party



A grand time was had by all as we ushered in the holiday season with a lively gathering at Jerry Lehman's beautiful home. Laughter, good food and sharing of work added to the festivities.

